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PHILOSOPHICAL AVENUES

Advanced schools in Caesarea Maritima during the third century AD[1]

Adrian Muraru[*]

Abstract: A short overview of Caesarea Maritima is succeeded by an examination of the schools dedicated to advanced learning in the capital of the Roman province of Palaestina during the third century AD. Although the available evidence is limited, it appears that these schools were quite numerous, primarily concentrating on religious education.

Keywords: Caesarea Maritima, schools, third century AD

Caesarea Maritima: General Presentation

A city situated on the shore of the Mediterranean, Caesarea Maritima (Caesarea of Palestine) was built on the site of a Phoenician colony called Straton's Tower, most probably bearing the name of a king of Sidon in the 4th century BC. The one who embellished the city with buildings and gave it an outstanding makeover was Herod the Great, king of Judea and a client king of Rome (the character in the gospels), a ruler known for his remarkable architectural achievements, among which worth mentioning are the renovation of the Second Temple of Jerusalem, the erection of the fortress at Masada and of the Herodium. It is Herod himself who gives the name of the city: in honour of Caesar Augustus, the city will bear the name Caesarea and will emulate the models of other Gentile cities.

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[1] This paper is a partial result of my contribution titled "Some Notes on the Caesarea Maritima of the Third Century AD: Schools and Interpretation," presented at the fourth edition of the Conference: International School on Methodology Applied to the Social and Humanistic Sciences, held in Chișinău, Republic of Moldova, on November 19-20, 2020. Selected excerpts from the text were published in Romanian in the volume *Origen. 2022: Homilies and Annotations on Numbers. Annotations on Deuteronomy*, pages 23-26; 31-35; 40-45; 58, and 69, by Polirom Publishing House in Iași.

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The city had been colonised by the Jews as early as the 1st century BC, who thus joined the Phoenicians. The Romans annexed it to the Province of Syria in 63 BC, and then ceded it to Herod in 31 BC. Nevertheless, the profile of the city, as elaborated by Herod, is that of a Roman 'pagan' city: if the port is a culturally neutral building, other buildings, such as the forum, the temple dedicated to Rome and to Caesar Augustus, the theatre, all indicate a 'pagan' city (see also Bull et al. 2017). Tiberieum and Hadrianeum will later on enhance the 'pagan' character of the city. Administratively, the city is run just as other Hellenistic cities: it has a 'senate', magistrates, and a royal resident.

When Judaea becomes a Roman province in 6 AD, Caesarea will become its civil and military capital, replacing Jerusalem. Under these circumstances, the city population rapidly increased, being estimated at around 70,000 inhabitants[2] of different ethnic origins and various religious identities. This seems to have been the cause of numerous revolts: in 26 AD, the Jews living in the city revolt against Pontius Pilate's decision to display the banners of the Roman eagles on the Temple Mount, while in 66 AD the slaughter of birds in front of a synagogue will spark the Jewish revolt leading to the destruction of the Temple in Jerusalem. In 70 AD, following the suppression of the revolt, many Jews were killed in Caesarea during the games celebrating Titus' victory.

Vespasian transforms the city in a colony (Pummer 2016, 174) in 71, turning it into one of the four colonised cities in the region of Syria and Phoenicia. The city is administered, as many others within the empire, by elite that could afford to support the city current expenses. However, Caesarea is the most economically developed city in Palestine.

The status of the city stands out clearly, from the Jewish perspective, in the Mosaic of Rehob: mostly inhabited by non-Jewish population, and situated outside the territory inhabited by the Jews after their return from the Babylonian captivity, the rules regarding sacrifices, kept all over the territory of Israel, do not fully apply in the case of Caesarea (Habas 1996; Levine 1996[3]). Nevertheless, the city was, even in this difficult situation, the home to many Jewish scholars. *Pirkei Avot* (6.9) tells how a third generation tanna, living in the 2nd century AD, Jose ben Kisma, was lured to leave Caesarea of Palestine

[2] See the estimates made by Reinhard Pummer, 2016, p. 174.

[3] Levine (1996, p. 399) confirms this: the Greek inscriptions of Caesarea that make reference to the life of the Jewish community follow the classification of offices as present in the diaspora, but they also contain elements specific to the Semitic inscriptions of the Palestine of that time.

in exchange of a great amount of dinars, gold and precious stones, but he refused to leave the 'great city of scholars and scribes'.

The emergence of Christianity brings more diversity in the city's already complex religious landscape: Paul the apostle is accommodated in Caesarea by Philip the deacon as the Christian Scriptures indicate (see the Acts of the Apostles 21: 8; also 6: 1-5). It is here that Peter baptizes Cornelius the centurion (the first one to be baptized among the Gentiles – see the Acts of the Apostles 10: 11), thus becoming a place of refuge for the apostle Paul when he was in danger in Jerusalem (see the Acts of the Apostles 9: 30). Eusebius of Caesarea, bishop of the city in the 4th century, draws up a list of the bishops of this see, Theophilus being mentioned first in the 2nd century AD.[4] It may well be the case that among the 'Jews' executed by the Romans after Bar Kochba's revolt were also Christians, since the distinction would have been difficult to make by someone unfamiliar with the situation in the East.

In the 3rd century, the population of the city is both multi-ethnic and multireligious. This implies tensions, as it is always the case wherever that may happen, but it equally means reciprocal influences. The Roman, Greek, and Oriental cults co-existed side-by-side. Samaritans[5], Jews and Christians were permanently interacting with one another.

One may suppose that there were interactions between Christians and Jews[6], between Christian scholars and the Jewish scholars and rabbis of Caesarea: these are mentioned in writing both by the Christians, and by rabbinic sources, indicating several sources of information and, among others, generically referring to some minim (most probably Christians) who go into debate with rabbinic authorities [7].

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[4] See Eusebius of Caesarea. 1857. *Historia ecclesiastica*, 5.23.25. *Constitutiones apostolicae*, mention the bishops of the 1st century: Zacchaeus the tax-collector, Cornelius (the centurion?), Theophilus (the one Luke's Gospel is addressed to?), 1048b-1049a.

[5] For generic information about the Samaritan population of Caesarea, see Pummer, 2000, pp. 181-202.

[6] One has to notice the very reserved assumption in Stemberg, 2010, p. 438, who considers that such contacts between Jews and Christians would have been possible in cities along the Mediterranean coast, such as, for instance, Caesarea, but the Abodah Zarah can also be a sign of the Jews' reticence towards meeting the Gentiles.

[7] It is exemplary the conversation carried by Rabbi Abbahu with several minim (most probably Christians), conveyed by the Babylonian Talmud in the treatise Abodah Zarah 4a: Rabbi Safra, a Jew from Babylon present in Caesarea of Palestine, is approached by minim in a matter of scriptural interpretation. Receiving no answer, the minim denounce Rabbi Safra for incompetence before Rabbi Abbahu. The latter explains: Rabbi Safra is skilled in tannaitic teachings, but not in the Scriptures (as those from Babylon), while Jews from Caesarea, due to their endless polemics with the minim, studied the Scriptures thoroughly.

There have been discussions about the kind of interaction taking place between Christians (those known to us through their writings) and Jews. The lack of clarifying information encourages speculation: in the case of the Christian Origen, an inhabitant of 3rd century Caesarea, some posit a peaceful relationship with the Jews (de Lange), others speak about a competitional situation (Runia, Blowers)[8], or even about a superficial contact (Brooks).[9]

Caesareea of Palestine: Third century schools

A regrettable fact is that there is no mention of any active philosophical school in Caesarea in the 3rd AD. This does not however exclude the possibility that it once existed (the city was built as the 'pagan' counterpart of Judea; there were 'classical' institutions present; in the city that became the province capital, there was also an elite providing the conditions for a significant intellectual life), just as it could have been the case that certain disciplines had outstanding representatives in Caesarea. But mere conjectures are not enough to make up an argument.[10]

Similarly, there is no mention of any school of the Samaritans existing in Caesarea. It is difficult to estimate the situation of the Samaritan institutions in the city (whether they existed or not: the oldest Samaritan writings extant today were dated to the 4th century A D – the ones previous to this date must have disappeared during the Christian or Islamic anti-Samaritan persecutions, unless they perished due to the elements; Samaritan *halakhah* manuscripts extant nowadays go no further back than the Middle Ages[11]). The doctrinal differences between the Samaritans, on the one hand, and the Mosaic and Christian adepts, on the other, must have been subject of discussion (the

[8] According to Hirshman, 1996[1], pp. 74-75, Origen polemicises against rabbinical doctrines.

[9] For a discussion on perspectives, see Otto, 2018, pp. 98-100. For a bibliography of the studies focusing on the relationship between Origen and the Jews, see McGuckin, 1999, p. 23.

[10] Burrell, 1993, pp. 287-295, offers the text of a Greek inscription discovered on a marble column excavated in the area of the palace on the headland of Caesarea, according to which Varius Seleukos, curator of the ships of Caesarea, thanks his patron, Titus Flavius Maximus, philosopher (p. 291). Supposing that „philosopher" does not have a generic meaning in this case, we have here the confirmation that there was a philosophical practitioner in Caesarea of Palestine. Burrell considers that the inscription would have been made after the year 71, when Caesarea becomes a colony, but before Probus' rule (276-282). It is difficult to find out who this Titus Flavius Maximus was (his name is found on a tomb stone in Carthage and the person bearing it was a procurator Augusti in the Eastern provinces). His identification with Maximus of Tyre (Cassius Maximus Tyrius) is doubtful, given the name written on the column.

[11] See Pummer, 2000, p. 182.

Samaritans accepted only the Torah, with changes here and there as compared to the Jewish version, rejected the Mosaic traditions, and considered Garizim as the mountain indicated by God to perform the cultic ceremonies), but there are no written testimonies of Samaritan origin about all these facts. As such, what we know about the Samaritans originates solely from the way they were reflected in the Christian or Mosaic writings. For the 3rd century, we have only Christian witnesses belonging to Origen, of certain dating, which nevertheless convey nothing about any Samaritan 'school' or scholar.

Certainly, one may speculate about the existence of a Samaritan 'school', given that the city was very important for the Mosaics, with who the Samaritans were in direct competition. But then again, one cannot argue based on conjectures.

There is however mention about rabbinic and Christian 'schools' existing in Caesarea of Palestine in the 3rd century, and about the scholars in charge of them. Such mentions are present in various writings.

The available texts (both Christian and rabbinic) confirming the existence of such 'schools' are diverse in terms of authorship and dating.

Thus, we know the names of Christian authors (Origen, Pamphilus, Eusebius) who led 'research groups' or 'schools', and the writing of their works can be (even approximately) dated. For instance, the Christian Origen settles in Caesarea of Palestine in 232[12], following disputes with the Bishop of Alexandria, Demetrius (see Heine 2010, 145-170). From there he travels to various parts of the empire, thus settling in the multi-ethnic and multireligious city.[13] According to the relevant literature, Origen founded a 'school' in Caesarea, most likely following the model of the one he was in charge of in Alexandria.[14]

[12] Origen makes his first trip to Caesarea already in 215, so it may well be that his interactions with the Jews living in Caesarea took place prior to him settling down in the city (unless there had been Jews of Caesarea living in Alexandria at the time Origen lived there, without their presence being attested in the extant writings of the interpreter).

[13] In the 4th century, Epiphanius of Salamis conveys a piece of information that contradicts the Vulgate: Origen would have lived for only two years in Caesarea, and then moved to Tyre, where he lived for 28 more years. See Panarion, 1863, 2.403-2.406. Few contemporary authors give Epiphanius credit for this (see, for instance, Panayotis Tzamalikos, 2020, p. X).

[14]Information about the curriculum of this school and the authors studied there is provided by one of Origen's disciples, Gregory, who also wrote an Address of Thanksgiving to Origen, a discourse that has come down to us (see *Oratio panegyrica in Origenem*, 1857, col. 1051-1104). The relevant literature is quasi-unanimous in speaking about this 'school'; one has to notice that Eusebius of Caesarea gives us very little details about any institution run by Origen in Caesarea in his *Historia ecclesiastica*, chapter 6.

There seems to be a succession of the 'diadochi': this Christian 'school' of Caesarea is ruled, in the 3rd century, by Pierius, followed by Pamphilus, the master of Eusebius of Caesarea.

The Christian Pamphilus and Eusebius (the latter carrying out a prodigious literary activity in the 4th century, which goes beyond the area of interest of the present text) lived in 3rd century Caesarea, built an impressive library (gathering manuscripts and copying them), which implies at least the existence of a 'research center', but also of disciples: Eusebius was so attached to Pamphilus as his disciple that he called himself 'Eusebius of Pamphilus'. Pamphilus ran a 'school' and we know several names of disciples (Eusebius, Apphianus, Aedesius, and Porphyrius).

On the other hand, Mosaic literature gathers many testimonies – though unfortunately disparate and not always of great credibility, considering the way in which the texts conveying the testimonies[15] were written – about 3rd century scholars and rabbis connected, one way or another, with Caesarea of Palestine[16], and about scholars in charge of 'schools'. It was even hypothesized that there was a 'rabbinic academy' in Caesarea that would have produced the Nezikin Treatise in the Jerusalem Talmud. The hypothesis, which is a matter of controversy, is still under investigation at the moment.[17] This does not however imply that we lack the material needed to reconstruct an 'academic' rabbinical context in 3rd century Caesarea.

Hayim Lapin (1996) mainly focuses on two important names in the rabbinical tradition: Rabbi Jose b. Hanina and Rabbi Abbahu. The researcher's conclusion, taking into account what the written

[15] Thus, in the context of 3rd century Caesarea AD, both the tannaim and the amoraim are mentioned: Hiyya, Iosua b. Levi, R. Samuel of Nehardea, R. Hanina, Bar Kappara, R. Abbahu, R. Chalafta of Caesarea, R. Manna, Isaac ben Eleazar, Zuga of Caesarea, R. Hezekiah, R. Jochanan, R. Jose b. Hanina, R. Ammi, R. Marinos, R. Hoshaya. Some of them are inhabitants of the city, where they run 'schools', while others travel to Caesarea for discussions on religious matters or to mediate for their communities before the emperor's representative. A few episodes evoking the counselling offered by the rabbinical circles of Caesarea of Palestine are illustrated in Miller, 2006, pp. 294-295.

[16] The discussion of the credibility of the information supplied by the Talmud is ongoing: Jacob Neusner, for instance, has questioned the justification of attributing the traditions conveyed by Talmudic literature, coming up with principles of selecting the materials that can be attributed to the known authors of the Talmud with sound arguments.

[17] The hypothesis goes back to Israel Lewy in 1895: in his commentary on the Nezikin Treatise in the Jerusalem Talmud, he remarks that the latter must have been composed in a special place (the great number of Greek and Latin terms represented an important argument). One disciple, Saul Liberman, proposed as the place of its composition Caesarea of Palestine; another, J. N. Epstein, refuted the hypothesis. For a concise presentation of the idea, see Hirshman, 1996², pp. 469-475. See also Lapin, 1996, pp. 496-512.

testimonies convey to us, is that the 'Christian school' run by Origen and the 'rabbinical schools' contemporary to him in Caesarea have a similar organisation (a scholar surrounded by disciples, in relation with other scholars, masters or colleagues). Moreover, both types of schools were the product of wealthy elite that was establishing 'orthodoxy' in the context of its own religion, playing a significant transformative role. The significant difference Hayim Lapin notices between the two types of 'schools' is their commitment to what is external to them: the 'Christian school' assumes the Greek-Latin culture either polemically or peacefully, whereas the 'Mosaic school' shows openness only to the Aramaic-speaking audience (see Lapin 1996, 499-500).

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Back to the substance:
Interpreting Aristotle for a radical anthropology

Albert Piette[*]

Abstract: This article is presented as a reading of Aristotle, in particular his *Metaphysics*. It is not a philosophical or philological commentary. Written by an anthropologist on the basis of Aristotle's propositions, it is a plea for observation of the human being as a substantial unit. It proposes a radical change of scale for social and cultural anthropology, which is accustomed to observing social and cultural facts. By drawing on Aristotelian lexicon (substance, substratum, movement, predicate), the article attempts to clarify some possible points of observation of a human being in his singularity.

Keywords: Aristotle, anthropology, existential anthropology, substance, individual, human being, motion, stability

Aristotle: The new founder of anthropology?

For more than a century, in scientific institutions, the word 'anthropology' has been inseparable from at least two qualifications: social and cultural. This meaning has been reflected in its reconstructed history and in the choice of one of its founding fathers, Herodotus, known for his "Inquiries", a compilation of accounts based on his travels around Greece, in Egypt as well as in Asia Minor. Historians of anthropology rarely fail to recall the portrait of Herodotus as an ethnographer, characterising him as being close to the attitude of "anthropologists today": "curiosity", "a taste for the variety of customs and manners", the "respect" which refuses to rank (Weber 2015, 26-35) - this does not mean that he does not group them together as Greeks, Barbarians, Persians, and so on. Then, during the Renaissance, there were the travellers, missionaries and colonisers. Later came Gérando's methodological text in 1800: learn the language of the natives, understand them, don't judge, don't look at isolated

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individuals, etc. (Gérando 1969). And so the history of anthropology continued. “Anthropological theories are distinctive in that they are typically about social relationships”, an anthropologist noted (Gell 1988, 11). Most anthropologists would agree with such a definition.

Another history is possible. It would be the study of the human being, not as a social, cultural or relational being, but as existing as a human being. And it is indeed another story, with another founding father: Aristotle. Isn’t it said that Aristotle invented and organised all the sciences? What about anthropology? He was born in 384 BC. Herodotus was born in 485.

In his *Anthropologie philosophique*, Bernard Groethuysen contrasts the anthropology of Plato and Aristotle. While Plato does not make man the starting point of his anthropology, Aristotle “starts solely from the fact of man, from the psycho-physical construction of man”. Plato’s man would be like a foreigner in that “his soul would be out of place” (Groethuysen 1980, 49). “We could say, writes Groethuysen, that in Aristotle, the phrase ‘I am a man’ is given its full meaning for the first time”, whereas in Plato’s philosophy, the human condition is “a diminution of the soul” (Ibid, 51). With Aristotle, “normal man loses the negative meaning” that he had in Plato (Ibid, 58).

This is not, of course, a literal commentary on Aristotle's work, but a free reading, without entering into a debate with the many commentaries, such as might have arisen a long time ago, if it had been possible to give birth to an anthropological science. Today I call it existential anthropology, an anthropology of existents as separate substances[1].

The separate substance

Alongside metaphysics, which, according to Aristotle, studies being as being, the various “departmental disciplines” cut out “some section of what is” (Aristotle 2004, 1003a)[2]. In mathematics, for example, it is quantitative being; in physics, it is being in motion; in biology, it is being insofar as it lives. Why should not anthropology study being as a human being? It would answer, or at least seek to answer, the

[1] For this project, the reader can refer to another text of *Agathos*, in debate with Greek philosophy (Piette 2024). This present paper is a in-depth focus on Aristotle. I have left a few repetitions so that the two texts can be read independently of each other.

[2] For the translations of Aristotle, I have used Jonahan Barnes’s edition, except for *Metaphysics*, *Politics* and *The Nicomachean Ethics*.

following question: why are humans what they are? Aristotle insisted on the classification of the sciences and the disciplinary attribution of a topic to be studied. More often than not, researchers in one discipline do not bother to know what their topic is, and do not think about the division into which they fit and work, as things are taken for granted. This is understandable when there is relative clarity about what the discipline is about.

One of the merits of the Aristotelian discourse, then, is to encourage this reflection, which seems to me to be all the more relevant given that it is possible to question the 'liquefaction' of human beings in anthropology, which is interested in the being insofar as it is social or cultural, from the outset in its relations with others, and not insofar as it exists, that it continues as such. This is all the more relevant given that sociologies share this characteristic, and above all, as Francis Wolff has so clearly put it, that the principle of 'insofar as' certainly constitutes a filter, but it is also a way of 'saturating' the object, as if in this case the human being were only sociocultural-relational, were totally sociocultural-relational (Wolff 2010, 85-86).

Here is what Aristotle wrote when querying Heraclitus:

> Every realm of nature is marvellous: and as Heraclitus, when the strangers who came to visit him found him warming himself at the furnace in the kitchen and hesitated to go in, is reported to have bidden them not to be afraid to enter, as even in that kitchen divinities were present, so we should venture on the study of every kind of animal without distaste; for each and all will reveal to us something natural and something beautiful. [...] If any person thinks the examination of the rest of the animal kingdom an unworthy task, he must hold in like disesteem the study of man. For no one can look at the elements of the human frame-blood, flesh, bones, vessels, and the like-without much repugnance. (Aristotle. In Barnes, Ed., 1984, *Parts of Animals*, 645a)

The astonishment that things are what they are, said Aristotle: so why are humans what they are? Why should they cease to exist in order to become of scientific interest (Wolff 2010, 85)? This would be the challenge of anthropology: to study human beings insofar as they exist[3]?

[3] On Aristotle's anthropology, I refer to a collection of selected texts by Fraisse (1976). I will not necessarily follow Weil's analysis (Weil 2000). Cf. also Loux (2006). There is also Clark (1975) and more recently Keill and Kreft (2019).

It is with this in mind that Aristotle's lexicon is certainly provocative in relation to contemporary discourse, but it is also fruitful. One of Aristotle's central concepts is 'substance'. "The clearest case where substance is present is that of bodies", he notes (Aristotle 2004, 1028b). It is not a fixed and immutable entity, nor is it dissociated from "the primary underlying matter of things which have in themselves a principle of motion or change" (Aristotle. In Barnes, Ed., 1984, *Physics*, 193a) Of course, Aristotle uses the word "substance" with different meanings (Pellegrin 2009). But first let us consider this: Substance concerns "simple bodies" (Aristotle 2004, 1017b). Here I find the notion of "volume of being" that I recently proposed (Piette 2019; 2023). The volume of being, like substance, would be the reference point to be grasped, observed and followed, one at a time, as separate from other substances or volumes of being. "Given that there are some things that are separate and some that are not separate, it is the latter that are substances", wrote Aristotle (2004, 1071a). He even adds this, specifying the limit or enclosure of each substance: "the extreme point of a particular, the first point outside which no part of the thing can be found and inside which all parts of the thing can be found" (Ibid, 1022a). With their reality to be known, these substances are separated from each other and from the observer who wishes to observe them. Like the biologist who follows a distinct molecule with fluorescent markers from a sophisticated microscope to observe its fluctuations, the anthropologist can follow and observe human volumes.

Aristotle says that substances are such "because, far from their being predicated of some subject, the other things are predicated of them" (Aristotle 2004, 1017b). He asks: "Are walking and being healthy and sitting each a thing-that-is or not [...]? For none of them is either something that can exist per se or that can be separated from substance; rather is it the case that if there is anything here that is a thing-that-is it is that which is doing the walking, the sitting or the being healthy. It is things that are doing something in this way that it would seem more plausible to consider things-that-are, and for the following reason. There is, in their case, *something defined that underlies* and it is this which is their substance and particular. Its presence is clearly revealed by the very structure of a predication of this type": the good or the sitting is not said without there being an underlying subject (Ibid, 1028a). A substance is thus characterised by various qualities, actions, relational capacities or affections, at such

and such a time, in such and such a place, integrated and combined *into itself*, in the volume itself.

Bertrand Russell is probably not wrong to see the obvious in this text:

> Suppose I say 'there is such a thing as the game of football,' most people would regard the remark as a truism. But if I were to infer that football could exist without football players, I should be rightly held to be talking nonsense. Similarly, it would be held, there is such a thing as parenthood, but only because there are parents; there is such a thing as sweetness, but only because there are sweet things; and there is redness, but only because there are red things. And this dependence is thought to be not reciprocal: the men who play football would still exist even if they never played football; things which are usually sweet may turn sour; and my face, which is usually red, may turn pale without ceasing to be my face. (Russell 1995, 176)

Not to mention the fact that the same people who play football also do other things, before, after and to some extent during the game. It is this seemingly obvious fact - but what an obvious fact! –, which would the topic of anthropology, which would leave the study of collective systems such as football or kinship to other sciences.

Anthropological difference: Continuity and discontinuity

It is not just humans who are substances. But also, in particular, other living things (Aristotle. In Barnes, Ed., 1984, *Physics* 192b). We then discover that a substance is a unit associated with a "principle", a "form" that expresses itself in its apparent configuration but also organises it (Aristotle 2004, 1029a and 1041b). So, when faced with a substance, there is no doubt about answering the question "What is it?": "It is not a non-human, a dog or a tulip".

Let's go back to Aristotle's reasoning. "Man is born from man but not bed from bed", he wrote (Aristotle. In Barnes, Ed. 1984, *Physics*, 193b). The human being is first and foremost a living being**.** Aristotle says it again: the term life "has more than one sense, and provided any one alone of these is found in a thing we say that thing is living-viz. thinking or perception or local movement and rest, or movement in the sense of nutrition, decay and growth" (Aristotle. In Barnes, Ed., 1984, *On the Soul*, 413a). And Aristotle goes on to say that what characterises natural beings is "the principle of process" (Aristotle 2004, 1015a). In fact, there are two "sources of movement: appetite and thought" (Aristotle. In Barnes, Ed., 1984, *On the Soul*, 433a). At

the end of his reasoning, Aristotle establishes "the faculty of appetite" alone as the ultimate principle of life (Ibid.).

Then there's another question: What does it mean for a human being to be alive? What are the characteristics of the human being as a living being (Wolff 2010, 28ff)[4]? There are a number of them, proposed in several places in Aristotle's work. In it, the human being is a rational, talking, political animal, capable of hoping, of expecting the future, of counting, of understanding, of thinking, of perceiving good and evil, of having the largest brain, of standing up straight, of being bipedal, of being the only animal with hands, of being ticklish. I therefore consider that the question of a "common differentia" from which "specifically distinct animals would fall into the same division" (Aristotle. In Barnes, Ed., 1984, *Parts of Animals*, 643a) that the comparison between humans and other living beings, and the search for anthropological difference, belong to the work of the anthropologist. It is the properties that are identical to *homo sapiens* - the form, as Aristotle would say - that we should always be looking for, specifying the continuities and discontinuities that can be identified between living beings. To this end, Aristotle wanted to obtain "a clear notion of their actual differences and common properties" (Aristotle. In Barnes, Ed., 1984, *History of Animals*, 491a). Setting the human being as the privileged object of comparison (Ibid, 491a). Aristotle mentions the subtlety of the differences - always minimal - between beings (Ibid, 588b), specifying, for example, that "some of these qualities in man, as compared with the corresponding qualities in animals, differ only quantitatively: that is to say, a man has more of this quality, and an animal has more of some other" (Ibid, 588b).

From this interplay of continuities and discontinuities between living beings[5], here is a long quotation - which today may seem banal, but not necessarily, since the exercise of comparison deserves to be repeated over and over again with regard to the varied activities of humans and, for example, great apes in terms of their gestures, actions and modes of action:

> And if perception is present in them [animals], in some animals retention of the percept comes about, but in others it does not come about. Now for those in which it does not come about, there is no

[4] See also Aristotle (2004, VII, chapter 4).
[5] See the recent debate in Keill and Kreft (2019).

> knowledge outside perceiving (either none at all, or none with regard to that of which there is no retention); but for some perceivers, it is possible to grasp it in their minds. And when many such things come about, then a difference comes about, so that some come to have an account from the retention of such things, and others do not. So from perception there comes memory, as we call it, and from memory (when it occurs often in connection with the same thing), experience; for memories that are many in number from a single experience. And from experience [...] there comes a principle of skill and of understanding-of skill if it deals with how things come about, of understanding if it deals with what is the case. (Aristotle. In Barnes, Ed., 1984, *Posterior Analytics*, 99b-100a)

Aristotle leads the debate on three elements that are often discussed when it comes to 'anthropological difference': language, the rules and the tool, all of them imbued with the finalism characteristic of his work. In fact, language and the hand appear to be the central elements of hominization as seen by Aristotle. According to Aristotle (*History of Animals,* 488a. In Barnes, Ed., 1984), human beings possess a social instinct like certain animals, such as bees, wasps, ants and cranes, acting with a common goal in mind. Hence his well-known comment: "a human being is by nature a political animal". He adds: "For it is peculiar to human beings, in comparison to the other animals, that they alone have perception of what is good or bad, just or unjust" (Aristotle 1998, 1253a). In the same context of reasoning, Aristotle states that "no animal has speech except a human being", in order to express what is just and unjust, whereas other animals have a voice that expresses what is painful or pleasant (Ibid.). Aristotle distinguishes between sound, voice and speech. He explains that the voice emanates from the larynx because of the air inspired against the windpipe. It is present in many land animals, whereas sound is more characteristic of insects and fish. Speech, which is possessed only by humans, differs from voice in that the tongue is particularly mobile and loose, and is therefore capable of emitting articulated sounds. Aristotle wrote:

> It is in man that the tongue attains its greatest degree of freedom, of softness, and of breadth; the object of this being to render it suitable for its double function-both for the perception of savours (for man is the most sensitive of animals, and a soft tongue is most adapted to sensation, being most impressionable by touch, of which sense taste is but a variety), and its softness again, together with its breadth, adapts it for the articulation of letters and for speech." (Aristotle. In Barnes, Ed., 1984, *Part of Animals*, 660a)

What about the tool? Aristotle points to the upright posture of men and the liberation of the hand: “In man the forelegs and forefeet are replaced by arms and by what we call hands”. According to Aristotle, sitting upright develops understanding and thought because “the burden of a heavy body” obstructs “the intellect and of the general sense” (Ibid, 686a). And also: “the hands are instruments, and the invariable plan of nature in distributing the organs is to give each to such animal as can make use of it.” (Ibid, 687a) Whereas other animals have only one means of defence, “to man numerous modes of defence are open, and these, moreover, he may change at will; as also he may adopt such weapon as he pleases, and at such places as suit him; as also he may adopt such weapon as he pleases, and at such places as suit him. For the hand is talon, hoof, and horn, at will. So too it is spear, and sword, and whatsoever other weapon or instrument you please” (Ibid, 687a). And Darwin himself wrote: “Linnaeus and Cuvier have been my two gods, though in very different ways, but there were mere school-boys to old Aristotle” (quoted in Ross 1959, 112).

Thus, it is not so much the human in relation to such and such a non-human, as if both were only in relation - such a reading misses both the human and the non-human - that should interest the anthropologist, but rather the comparative characteristics of humans and various non-humans, in particular other living beings, in relation and outside the relation. This is “anthropocentrement”, with the human being remaining the standard of comparison.

With regard to anthropologists’ current great interest in non-humans, my criticism is aimed at 1) the strictly relationalist reading (centred on the ‘between’) of the relations between humans and non-humans, which misses out on both humans and non-humans, 2) the risk of equating one with the other, 3) the small number of works (in anthropology) that compare and contrast humans and non-humans (especially living beings) in terms of their modes of presence - an essential point in anthropology in the strict sense - in order to better understand humans. We would be doing too much or too little with non-humans. Too much, because of this equivalence; not enough because we do not have enough varied empirical data to make the comparison.

This objective of comparison seems to me to be essential for an anthropologist, as Buffon notes: “if there were no animals, the nature of man would be even more incomprehensible” (quoted in Gusdorf 1972, 373). It is not so much the answer - although it is not

insignificant - that I want to point out as important as the principle of the exercise, which remains very rare. If we are to describe animals in the continuity of their lives, then it is important not to be satisfied with philosophical notions of 'points of view' or 'subjectivity', and the anthropologist will need the skills of ethology, cognitive ethology and animal psychology. For the purposes of comparison set out here, it is important to describe the animal, including when it is not with humans, when it is not acting with humans, in relation to humans. But, I repeat, this focus on the animal, complementary to the focus on the human, can only be achieved in anthropology with a view to comparing beings and better defining the specificity of humans. In the spirit of comparison between species, what we should be looking for are properties that are common to individuals, thought of as results that are never fixed - even if the changes take place at a very slow pace.

"Why, we might be asking, is this thing here a man? This shows that the cause that is the object of inquiry is that by virtue of which the matter is in the state that it is in. And this cause is the form, and the form" (Aristotle 2004, 1041b). "For - writes Aristotle (in Barnes, Ed., 1984, *Part of Animals*, 640a) - man is generated from man; and thus it is because the parent is such and such that the generation of the child is thus and so." He himself specifies this formal principle, which has become very concrete, the reproductive seed: "For a given seed does not give rise to any chance living being, nor spring from any chance one; but each springs from a definite parent. And thus it is that from which the seed comes which is the origin and fabricator of its offspring." (Ibid, 641b) It would undoubtedly be open to criticism today to remain strictly Aristotelian, to insist on the idea of "germinative plasma" and to associate the germ cell with a rigid genetic programme, even though it is already linked to its microenvironment (Kupiec 2009, 81). Jean-Jacques Kupiec notes, however, that the concept of specificity remains a pillar of the current ontology of biology (Ibid, 270). Not so long ago Jacques Monod posited the "reproductive invariance" as the principle of living things, and variation or mutation as a mere accident of this "invariant form" (Ibid, 195).

A substance: Motion and stability

Anthropology as I see it is concerned with two figures: the figure of the human being in general, as we have just seen, but also, first and foremost, the singular figure of this individual. We have a substance: a

substrate infiltrated by a form. With a view to such an anthropology, Aristotle makes a clarification that refers not only to the reproduction of humans in general, but also to the reproduction of each individual in particular. “The substance of each thing is something that is peculiar to each thing is something that is peculiar to each thing”, says Aristotle (2004, 1038b), who goes on to explain, with regard to the individuality of substances, that “particular things have different causes. For instance, your matter, form and motive cause are all different from mine” (Ibid, 1071a). On this subject, Pierre Aubenque’s comments are very important: “Aristotle is not content with universal discourses and generic definitions: since things are singular, it is in their singularity that they must be grasped” (Aubenque 2009, 463). Aristotle himself notes: “For a principle of particular things must itself be a particular thing. It is true that man is a principle of man at the universal level, but there is no man in reality. Rather it is Peleus that is the motive cause of Achilles and your father that is yours.” (Aristotle 2004, 1071a) Once again, we have an organising principle of a substance, the “form” that gives it structure and unity.

What question is being asked now? Not “what is it”, or “what is man”, but “*ti hèn einai*”, and with a different meaning from that mentioned above: not “what was it to be, to live, to be alive for man”, but “what was it to live for so-and-so”, for Socrates for example? In Aristotle’s formula, the use of the imperfect tense is a challenge, as Aubenque points out. What was it to be for Socrates, or for any other individual? We are faced with the question of the singularity of individuals.

The principle of motion makes every human being a being in time, with, adds Aristotle in *The Nichomachean Ethics* (Aristotle 2009, 1169a), the duty to love oneself. He adds: “For each of them [things constituted by nature] has within itself a principle of motion and of stationariness (in respect of place, or of growth and decrease, or by way of alteration).” (Aristotle. In Barnes, Ed., 1984, *Physics*, 192a) Let us note that Heidegger (2001) draws a connection between this principle of movement on the one hand and “factical life” and its temporal deployment on the other. He adds that on this point – “movedness” and what happens to each person – Aristotle’s analyses have not been understood nor surpassed.

Each substance will thus move, grow, transform and take on characteristics that will be definitive or leave variable traces. According to Aristotle (2004, 1025a), an accident is “what pertains to

something and what it is true to assert of it, but neither necessarily nor for the most part". From the live observation of a volume of being, it is sometimes difficult, if not impossible, to distinguish, for each of the qualities and each of the acts, what might be relevant, necessary or accidental. Let us take an example from Aristotle: "someone is digging a trench for a plant and finds treasure. This finding of the treasure is an accident for the man who digs the trench. It is not the case that finding treasure necessarily comes from or after digging a trench, nor would one for the most part in doing some planting find treasure." (Ibid, 1025a) But as a result of this chance, this individual has become rich, started new actions and acquired new characteristics that now define him. Any insignificant gesture can have far-reaching consequences, and we wouldn't know until afterwards.

And it is here that Aubenque's interpretation of the use of the imperfect tense of the Aristotelian interrogation is interesting: it is when the individual is dead that it would be possible, once we have observed his deeds and actions, to better identify those that remained without consequences, those that had consequences (and what kind of consequences) and that we would determine his singularity, his "quiddity" to use the lexicon of commentaries on Aristotle. If we are talking about Socrates, we say socrateity, of Demosthenes demostheneity, and so on. "Only death, writes Pierre Aubenque (2009, 469), can, in the case of the living, halt the unpredictable course of life, transmute contingency into retrospective necessity, separate the accidental from what really belongs per se to the subject who is no longer." But it is also in the modalities of the act - speaking, eating, walking, digging, reacting to an event, in the details of actions - that a singularity, a socrateity or a demostheneity, is revealed. And these reactions and details are often predictable, or at least not so surprising if you know so-and-so. So you do not have to wait until death to analyse a mode of being[6]. "It's him", you might say. To describe substance in the process of existing, thoughts, gestures and words, the distinction proposed by Aristotle (*Posterior Analytics*, 73a-b. In Barnes, Ed., 1984) can regain some relevance: "what belongs to something because of itself belongs to it in itself", its "humanity" and also, more particularly, its socrateity or demostheneity, attributes that are neither necessary nor constant (Aristotle 2004, 1025a) but that

[6] On this point and its application to an observation of my own actions, see Piette (2017).

most often occur and accident by chance (Ibid, 1027a). What is at stake here is the singularity of continuity: a kind of core, parts of which are actualised in a situation, while others remain dormant, as moments go by. These parts of the core are found in the different roles and actions played by each individual. It is also these parts of the core that give each person a style of existing, which is found from situation to situation, in different actions. Never totally fixed, this core retains a certain stability.

In any case, Aristotle leaves an anthropological field, let's say, to be cleared. I do not mean to say that Aristotle would have given concrete form to anthropology as I claim from his *Metaphysics*, but it is conceivable that empiricists who had read Aristotle, had they existed in his time or just after, might have made similar choices, in order to develop anthropo-logy[7]. This is what still needs to be clarified.

Observing a substance

"Who, except the philosopher, is going to ask whether Socrates and Socrates seated is the same thing? If that is not the philosopher's job, who is going to ask whether 'Socrates' is the same as 'Socrates seated'?" (Aristotle 2004, 1004b) This would be precisely the job of the anthropologist, who would set out to observe the substance and its qualifications, modalising it, modulating it, spotting what remains identical, what changes, affections, the traces of what happens. The anthropologist would meticulously search moment by moment for what remains the same and what changes. Lalande (2006, 1048) defined substance as "that which is modified by change while remaining the same". If the opportunities in the human and social sciences had been different, and if this anthropological investigation had not been constantly postponed, philosophy might have spilled less ink on these questions of substance and predicates. It would have been up to empirical anthropology to play this role, which it has never taken on.

The substance cannot be missed, this volume thus identified and followed with a view to observing it: "The man remains a man and is such even when he becomes musical, whereas what is not musical or is unmusical does not survive, either simply or combined with the subject. [...]. one can gather from surveying the various cases of

[7] I would like to thank Olivier Renaut for having raised this question: what would Aristotle's empirical anthropology have been like if it had taken place?

becoming in the way we are describing that there must always be an underlying something, namely that which becomes." (Aubenque 2009, 430) When an individual A becomes b (cultivated, for example), it is only a modality of A that appears, more or less important, which does not transform all of A, which was undoubtedly non-b (but not completely) and many other things. In fact, this does not necessarily modify these other elements (a, c, d, etc.) and we can think that a set of elements of A were in fact preparing this modification b: its "potentiality", as Aristotle might say, who is trying to avoid thinking of change in terms of discontinuities of existence. "Potentialities as a whole we can divide into the in-born, such as the senses, the acquired by practice, such as that for flute-playing, and the acquired by learning, such as that for skills." (Aristotle 2004, 1047b) The anthropologist is forced to make a detailed observation of the continuous existence of the substance in order to identify what is maintained, what continues and what is modified. It is in what may appear to be details and a succession of contingencies, in the interweaving of words and actions, that the quiddity of Socrates or Demosthenes will gradually be revealed. This would be a way of sorting out the relevant details from the irrelevant ones. We find again a human being, this one, with a core made up of properties that necessarily characterise him or her not only as a human being in general but also as a particular one. Studying this quiddity of a being (Ibid, 1031b), which appears under, not under Socrates, but under Socrates standing, sitting, crouching, involves these meticulous observations of acts and their modes. I will say it again, it is important, in this perspective, to consider the volume of being, each substance, as the reference point for observation, in the monitoring of its continuous movement, revealing what is maintained, the stakes of a situation and of a moment motivating only a part of the volume, this part itself being infiltrated by elements (gestures, words, thoughts, etc.) that do not concern them but also by a style, this core that has already permeated other acts.

Questions emerge on a micrological scale: where do increases, decreases, displacements, alterations, generations or corruptions - in Aristotle's (2004, 1067b) words - come from? Are they partial? Do they concern the whole substance? Which parts? Where do they infiltrate? Little by little? Suddenly? Into the body? Into the mind? And with what kind of consequences? Beyond successive acts and qualities, it is the continuity of a potentiality that Aristotle wants to show, "without which being would lose all unity, at every moving

moment, at every new moment" (Aubenque 2009, 452). What then is or becomes essential, and what remains accidental? How can we distinguish between what remains and what has changed? Black hair today will be white in fifty years' time, or red in ten minutes' time after being dyed. He has gone from being single to married. He changes profession. But in all these cases, he remains tall or short, intelligent or stupid, with his own style. He moves to a new place, but he remains this or that. In his distinction between the different types of change, Aristotle (*On Generation and Corruption,* 319b. In Barnes, Ed., 1984) states that "there is alteration when the substratum is perceptible and persists, but changes in its own properties". And when a quality disappears, where does it go? Does it remain as power, as potential, in the volume of being? How does it leave traces? And what traces will an action or a gesture leave?

From a materialist ontology, I would find an invitation to think about the links between the fine descriptions of substance, in movement, and the very life of the neurons, cells and molecules present in the human body, those that remain while others disappear. The horizon is a form of neuroscientific anthropology, tending to follow the translation of acts and thoughts in the brain, the areas and neuronal circuits that are called upon each time. The continuity evoked by Aristotle's texts could provide empirical confirmation of the progressive origin of neuronal and muscular fixations, so that, for example, a given gesture occurs in the same way in a given individual. Let's take the example of walking and allow ourselves some hypotheses. Everyone has a particular gait, a particular walking speed, which varies from moment to moment, but certain characteristics are always present. There are several levels at which walking is constructed: the muscles (and bones) of the lower limbs and also the brain. A genetic component is present in both muscle cells and motor neurons. So, on the one hand, it could be a question of an individual's own control of the expression of genes leading, in the case of walking, to a greater or lesser concentration of molecules favouring a particular shape (long and stretched, or rather shortened) of muscle cells. Of course, these cells die and are replaced by others, but their location within the tissue and the expression of the genes are identical, thanks to the signals transmitted between these cells which ensure the integrity of the shape of the tissue. On the other hand, motor neurons, which order leg movement over time through a series of electrical activities, have been subject to plasticity during the development of the

individual. In the long term, this has led to a stable favouring of certain connections between motor neurons controlling particular regions of the muscle, with certain frequencies of 'switching on' of these neurons leading to greater or lesser speeds and intensities of contraction of the associated muscle cells. Let's not go into too much detail here, but there is a potential for empirical collaboration between anthropologists of substance and neuroscientists, even if the methodological framework for observation at different scales is not straightforward. It seems to me that anthropology will have acquired true disciplinary and scientific status when it thinks such research is possible and carries it out. Empirically, I say again, it is a challenge for the anthropologist to see from day to day what continues, what joins with what continues, what has effects, what is accidental and what remains.

Would such an anthropology have been a miracle in the ancient Greece of the philosophers? On the one hand, Herodotus, considered to be the founder of ethnography, set out to observe customs and rites. On the other hand, philosophical works present a major debate on what reality is and a questioning of the human being. It would have taken this miracle for an observer to be inspired by philosophical debates, to confront the philosophical debate with reality, not to find cultural curiosities, and to systematise his observations and research on the human being himself. The miracle did not happen. It could have. But it has not happened yet.

And so would this anthropology be a science? We know Aristotle does not believe that a "science of accidents" is possible (Aristotle 2004, 1027a). But he also values the spirit of discovery based on perception and experience (Aristotle. In Barnes, Ed., 1984, *On the Soul*, 402b). Aristotle keeps repeating that "all science is either of that which is always" but also "that which is for the most part" (Aristotle 2004, 1027a). And precisely, when Aristotle (*Posterior Analytics*, 87a. In Barnes, Ed., 1984) is looking for a kind of stability of the ideal scientific object separated from the variations of matter, he can find this stability in the continuous existence of a human being, in its continuous core, before comparing each one and looking for invariants in the structuring of volumes of beings. It could also be recalled that: "the account of certain things is based on the mode of combination of their matter, which some (e.g. honey-drink) being combined by blending, some (e.g. a besom) by binding, some (e.g. a book) by gluing, some (e.g. a chest) by nailing and some by a combination of combinations" (Aristotle 2004, 1042b). The desire to know (Ibid,

980a) could legitimately focus on human beings as they are in time, with their modes of internal structuring.

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From all the points developed in this text, rather than a return to the past, what can be interpreted as an Aristotelian programme seems to me to be a reversal of anthropology, or at any rate the foundations of a new departure. Allow me three more references: Paul Valéry, Francis Ponge, and the mathematician René Thom (who makes no secret of his Aristotelian filiation):

> Like a pure sound or a melodic system of pure sounds in the midst of noises, so a crystal, a flower, a sea shell stand out from the common disorder of perceptible things. (Valéry 1977, 112)

> Ah, you think the shapes (of the smallest objects, the shapes that surround and separate them, their contours) are unimportant? Come on! Let's leave this joke behind! They are of the utmost importance. [...] What we have learned about atomic disintegration should help us to form a sufficient idea of the formidable atomic restraining force constituted (or signified) by shapes, by the slightest contours. The centripetal effort represented by gears and bolts, locks, keys, chains, hooks, rivets and grappling hooks, and cements, and speeding movements that counteract each other, and electrified defence networks that balance each other out, their speeds offsetting each other - the smallest fragment of the smallest pebble, the smallest speck of dust, wisp of a match, breadcrumb or coelenterate hair. (Ponge 1965, 75)

> Tear up a painting, mutilate a sculpture, and the beauty disappears from the remaining fragments. One might ask what is the source of such unity. A naïve morphologist might say: 'It is the edge that limits the work that makes its unity: there can be no painting without a frame, no dance without a stage that delimits the dancers' lovemaking' [...]. But this condition, necessary though it is, is not sufficient.
> [There are also] various forms whose dynamic interaction will constitute a field, limited by this framework, and whose evolution will be governed by an extremely complex and refined organising singularity. (Thom 1990, 128)

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Eudaimonía revisited, and human well-being

Carmen Cozma[*]

Abstract: A concept of great interest in our incessant search for well-being, especially in the nowadays movement from crisis to crisis of a general evolution seriously marked by the challenges of cutting-edge technologies with the rise of AI, is *eudaimonía*. Coming from the teachings provided by eminent Greek philosophers and being always relevant, such a topic needs to be recovered if we want to develop the best of ourselves in a *humane* horizon of beingness-in-becoming in a real (and not artificial, and superficial) world. This crucial idea is to be valued as the purpose of a desirable life, finally designating the highest good for human beings with and in the variety of everything-there-is-alive. The attempt to revisit *eudaimonía* leads us to draw a comprehensive approach of tackling and activating at least part of the very own human potential for a 'life worth living' according to Socrates, which is so much required to be discussed with greater depth due to the particularities of the current complex and turbulent context we have to cope with; and eventually, to find a healthy and balanced humanistic perspective on life.

Keywords: *eudaimonía*, ancient Greek philosophers, well-being, moral philosophy

Being aware of the particularities – not at all calm and simple or happy – of the present time, but recognizing ourselves as agents in the search of ways and means to endlessly make life worth living, a wise and robust lesson is to be disclosed in the ancient philosophers' eudaimonism. A major concept of moral philosophy at large still challenges us in the attempt to create a sense of well-being, namely happiness: *eudaimonía*.

To genuinely comprehend happiness, we have to go back to the drawing board in the adventure of philosophical thinking (here, by reference only to the Western culture); thus benefitting from the core wisdom in life about a major theme linked to the *humane* that seems to

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be more and more at risk for the individual who is trapped in a hyper-technological consumerist society, with so many shallows, confusions and extremely fast changes in an instantaneous digital network – as Douglas Rushkoff (2013) called the "present shock".

The classical Greek term *εὐδαιμονία* / *eudaimonía* is usually translated as happiness or flourishing, thanks to the protection of, or having a good/benevolent (*eu*) deity/spirit (*daimōn*). It leads human being to strive into building and unfolding a complete good life; it connects to the ideal of the supreme good, "that at which all things aim", precisely the "one which we will for its own sake", as Aristotle stresses (*Nicomachean Ethics*, 1094a4, 20). And this ultimate goal that everyone follows is possible to be achieved on the route of knowing and practicing *virtue* (the Greek *ἀρετή* / *areté*).

According to the Stagirite, "the virtue or excellence of man will be such a moral state as makes a man good and able to perform his proper function well" (Ibid, 1106a20). *Virtue* or *areté* is "the midst way between excess and deficiency", a "mean between a too much and a too little" (Ibid, 1106a30, 1106b30-1107a); the greatest good being tied to the use of reason: "for man, the life according to intellect is best and pleasant, since intellect than anything else is man. This life therefore is also happiest" (Ibid, 1178a6-8).

In order to clarify the overall framework, the etymology of *eudaimonía* is productive. This Greek concept is a compound that can help us to better fathom something about the significance of *having a good guardian spirit* that steers us in the territory of which the *character excellence* means cross-referencing with the encompass of human well-being; the happiness, finally. The term of *eudaimonía* is originated in two ancient Greek words: *εὖ* / *eu*, meaning "well, good"; also "true, genuine", "luckily, happily", and *δαίμων* / *daimōn*, which means "divinity, spirit, divine power, fate, or god" (*Merriam-Webster's Encyclopedia of Literature*, 392).

From the very beginning of Western philosophical reflection, *eudaimonía* registered a widespread usage being linked to other notions that are important for human *well-being* – as the state of an individual or group to feeling healthy and happy. So, it is connected to some relevant Greek terms, like: *ευ εἶναι* / *eu einai* (being well);

μακάριος / *makários* (blessed, happy)[1]; *εὐτυχία* / *eûtychía* (good luck, good fortune); *ευ ζεν* / *eu zen* (living well). In the Hellenistic period there are occurrences that show the use of *eu zen* as interchangeably with *eudaimonía*[2].

One of the foremost terms in philosophy, *eudaimonía* involves, through its etymology, a sacral dimension especially in the Presocratics' thinking:

> In colloquial terms, to be *eudaímōn* was to be lucky, for in a world fraught with constant upheaval, uncertainty, and privation, to have a good spirit working on one's behalf was the ultimate mark of good fortune. Even more it was a mark of divine favour, for the gods, it was believed, worked through the *daimones*, emissaries and conductors of their will (McMahon 2006, 7).

According to the American historian Darrin M. McMahon, precisely because of its components: *eu* (good) and *daimon* (god, spirit, demon), the Greek word *eudaimonía*

> Contains within it a notion of fortune – for to have a good daimon on your side, a guiding spirit, is to be lucky – and a notion of divinity, for a *daimon* is an emissary of the gods who watches over each of us, acting invisibly on the Olympians' behalf. (Ibid, 3-4)

Usually being taken as *happiness*, the old Greek *eudaimonía* can be found not only in philosophical but also in psychological approaches, in intimate relation with *well-being* understood as 'the experience of health, happiness, and prosperity'. This syntagma – somehow, a nowadays buzzword - "includes having good mental health, high life satisfaction, and a sense of meaning or purpose. More generally, well-being is just feeling well" (Davis 2019).

Both terms, 'happiness' and 'well-being' are and are not distinct at the same time. But almost always they imply an ethical articulation, engaging the valences of the moral character and actions of a person. In a nutshell, we could take into account the significance of *moral health*, the so desired equilibrium into and of the auto- and hetero-

[1] However, William David Ross calls attention to a distinction between *eudaimonía* (activity in accordance with virtue) and *makarios* (meaning *eudaimonía* and the blessings of fortune). Ross, W.D. [1923] 1995. *Aristotle*. London: Routledge, p. 192.

[2] See the early and middle Stoic school with Zeno of Citium, Cleanthes of Assos, Posidonius of Rhodes, Chrysippus of Soli, and Diogenes of Babylon, mentioned by Diogenes Laërtius, Book VII. 87–88. See also Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, 1098b22.

reporting, aiming at what is morally 'good' for the own self but in balance with what is morally 'good' for others, humans and nonhumans alike; seeing that a wise man/woman is the one who has already acquired and is still developing a clear consciousness he/she is part of a greater living system social, cultural and natural.

"Well-being obviously plays a central role in any moral theory." (Crisp [2001] 2021) Among the ethical views to address this concept, we mention: welfarism – a version of consequentialism – and virtue ethics or aretelogy, which continuously deal with the key concept of 'happiness' or 'flourishing', with *eudaimonía*.

To a certain degree, *well-being* integrates happiness to be attained; even the latter is usually arising for short-lived states in different contexts of the real life of a person.

The psychologists consider that, to building the overall *well-being*, it is necessary to assure the functioning of five or six major types of well-being, which are interrelating, namely the emotional, physical, social, workplace and societal ones.[3] For example, Carol Diane Ryff and Corey Lee M. Keyes (1995) propose a theoretical model of psychological well-being encompassing six dimensions: autonomy, environmental mastery, personal growth, positive relations with others, purpose in life and self-acceptance.

[3] In her 2019 article "What Is Well-Being? Definition, Types, and Well-Being Skills", Tchiki Davis explains five types of well-being: 1. 'Emotional Well-Being' is "the ability to practice stress-management techniques, be resilient, and generate the emotions that lead to good feelings." The skills contributing to the emotional well-being are: "happiness, mindfulness, positive thinking and resilience skills." 2.'Physical Well-Being' is the ability to improve the functioning of human body "through healthy eating and good exercise habits". Some of the things that can help to boost the physical well-being are: "eating for health, detoxing the body, correcting nutritional deficiencies and removing plastic from home." 3. 'Social Well-Being', which is "the ability to communicate, develop meaningful relationships with others, and maintain a support network that helps overcome loneliness." Concerning the skills that contribute to a better social well-being, some are: "practicing gratitude, building meaningful social connections, managing the relationship with technology." 4. 'Workplace Well-Being': "The ability to pursue your interests, values, and purpose in order to gain meaning, happiness, and enrichment professionally". The key skills needed for workplace well-being are: maintaining work-life balance and finding the own purpose. 5. 'Societal Well-Being': "The ability to actively participate in a thriving community, culture, and environment". This type claims some skills possible to be built for greater societal well-being, such as "living your values, creating a plastic-free home, making positive impacts in other people's living, kindness".

We should note that, from the psychological point of view, a "science of well-being" has been developed. For example, Ed Diener imposed himself as a leading pioneer in scientific research on *happiness*, arguing for its aspect he coined "subjective well-being" that must be considered in a rich diversity of definitions to be applied to people at all times[4]. The quality of life, by priority the life satisfaction – deemed from physiology, psychophysiology, social psychology, psychiatry, communication and behavioural sciences, neuroscience positions, etc. – related to the nature of well-being in connection with the principles of hedonic adaptation and of utility is to be comprehensively examined on genetic basis, in ecological habitat and social context, by assessing "objective happiness" and "subjective well-being" (Kahneman 1999; Stone, Shiffman, and DeVries 1999; Schwarz and Strack 1999).

Beyond any differences, from both philosophical and psychological, generally cultural viewpoints, the *well-being* concept involves, in its core, the value regarding the centrality of the *quality of life* - for individuals and communities alike -, implicitly the ideas of wellness, health, prosperity, accomplishment (personal and social, cultural and natural), blessedness, flourishing, etc.; briefly, the good of life equilibrium and satisfaction widely; no matter the general context with particularities of global, consumerist, digital developments, at the same time of profound moral crisis as we can find ourselves today.

Intimately related to the so much wanted *happiness*, the *human well-being* imposes itself as the leading good cause or reason men/women not only project but also they permanently strive for.

In this sense, the wise learning we get from the ancient Greek philosophers represents a substantial and useful potentiality to be activated in our effort to take care of and to work for what eventually means the *ultimate purpose*, the *télos* / *τέλος* of human life: the greatest good as happiness (*eudaimonía*).

Avoiding a too hard concept such as *happiness*, perhaps that of *well-being* is more properly to be used. Both of them actually direct us toward the same meaning so much important for the thorough understanding of the essence of a life worth living, for its promotion and fully experience.

[4] See Ed Diener. 1984. Subjective Well Being. *Psychological Bulletin*, *95*: 542-575; Ed Diener (Editor). 2009. *The Science of Well-Being: The Collected Works of Ed Diener*. Dordrecht: Springer.

In general, the discussion is around the *morality of happiness*; *eudaimonía* covering an end in itself, with a powerful moral component.

A philosophy of happiness was unfolded by the Seven Sages, and, over the centuries, it has continuously challenged, inspired and educated humanity.

Seeing that the Greek *eudaimonía* refers not only to an experience about which human being is just momentary aware of – living it as a passing phenomenon -, we think that this notion is not exactly synonymous with happiness. Rather *eudaimonía* is closer to what, at the beginning of the third millennium AD, we name 'human well-being'. It, to some degree, supposes a process realized first of all in order of moral beingness-in-becoming; engaging a sustained effort of shaping and developing the *human* character on the route of *moral virtue*.

We disclose the roots of the contemporary 'well-being' in the ancient eudaimonism, built around the lasting human aspiration towards Good(ness) and Beauty, toward harmony and order, circumscribing the entire spread of life, as much as we have access to these values we essentially need them. It is the ancient eudaimonism, in which man and nature, microcosm and macrocosm are to be deciphered in a dialectical identity that certainly means, at the same time, difference and sameness.

The acuity of the spiritual crisis we traverse represents a serious risk and danger as regards the confusion and insecurity, the superficiality and violence, the loss of valuable benchmarks, the enslaving to technology and alienation from the nature; even the alienation from the human essence. Identifying and following viable paths of (re)discovering our authenticity in its best articulations are to be found by reconsidering the teachings of the ancient philosophers about *eudaimonía*. We can better learn to free ourselves from ignorance and to acquire axiological and normative elements of good choices in life, distinguishing the positive values, having confidence in them, adhering to them, and acting for their protection and achievement; that claims a *wisdom in life*, lucidity, good will, prudence, moderation, freedom, responsibility, etc. Thus, we discover support to understand and endeavour on the side of *moral health / moral equilibrium*, of 'human well-being' finally: "the central problem of ethics" as tracing the horizon of the "best life for all" (Bond 1996, 208-209); admitting that morality framework shows "how to reconcile the unavoidable

separateness of persons (…) with their inherently social nature" (Ibid, 211).

Mostly, with the earliest Presocratic thinkers till the late antiquity's philosophers, *eudaimonía* is applied to the whole life, and it is inevitably related to *areté*.

We must notice that acknowledging *eudaimonía* in its status of the ultimate purpose of human living doesn't mean to be easy to grasp 'how to achieve it'. Actually, this is one of the most tempting ideas philosophers have always dealt with, beginning with the earliest Western thinkers, the Milesians (Thales, Anaximander, Anaximenes), and subsequently flourishing during the Classical Age (Socrates, Plato, Aristotle) and the Hellenistic and Roman periods (with the major philosophical schools of Pyrrhonism, Epicureanism and Stoicism) – all of them tackling the problem of *eudaimonía* as the goal of life and placing it in *ἀταραξία* / *ataraxía* and/or *ἀπάθεια* / *apatheia*, meaning tranquility, imperturbability, freedom from passions and sufferings, equanimity.

We find a starting point in the teachings of Thales of Miletus, among the Seven Sages (*οἱ ἑπτὰ σοφοί* / *hoi hepta sophoi*) of ancient Greece. Even though just few fragmentary sources of his work survived, some evidences for his life and for his versatile so ingenious activities and opinions - as philosopher, mathematician and geometer, astronomer, engineer, etc. – are provided by many historians, philosophers and doxographers (see Dicks 1959).

Having an inquiring mind, Thales tried to understand what really does matter for a human being and for its well-being alike. Part of Thales' teachings is delivered by Diogenes Laërtius (I. 22-27; 37-38):

> "*Τις ευδαίμων, "ο το μεν σώμα υγιής, την δε ψυχήν εύπορος, την δε φύσιν ευπαίδευτος"*" / "Who is happy? (He was asked) 'He who is healthy in his body, enjoys soul wealth, and has a well trained nature'". And: "*Μη την όψιν καλλωπίζεσθαι, αλλά τοίς επιτηδεύμασιν είναι καλόν*" / "It is good not to take care of our external smartening up but of our '*επιτηδεύματα*'/*epitēdeumata* - meaning 'our works, occupations, actions, habits'" (Liddell & Scott). This is the way of life.

Apart from health, which is always desirable and necessary for all people, one must seek a 'wealthy soul', as happiness, which not accidentally is in direct conjunction with the 'well trained nature'.

The question of *eudaimonía* was considered by Socrates in connection with his particular concern for *virtue*. He focused on the

major role of wisdom to discover and, finally, to make a life worth living: "everything the soul endeavours or endures under the guidance of wisdom ends in happiness" (Plato, *Meno*, 88c). No less, in *Republic*, Plato shows a peculiar interest on the issue, mainly related to the superiority of *δικαιοσύνη* / *dikaiosúnē*, 'the just being more *eudaimōn* than the unjust' (Plato, *Republic*, 583b).

An enlightening lesson is given us as regards the meaning of a *good life*. The ancient Greeks teach us about the value of thinking - and often they teach us about a practice of such thinking – upon the supreme goal pursued by any human being throughout life: to achieve *εύ ζωή* / *eû zōḗ*, to live well, to get a *good life*. Primarily (but not exclusively), this supposes to live a *moral life* displaying the importance of *ἀρετή* / *areté* - the fulfillment of human potential and functionality, the human excellence.

We keep asking ourselves: What does mean 'living a good life'? What an ultimate good life is and how should it be(come)?

We may read, for example, in Book 1 of Aristotle's *Politics* (1252b29-30): "The city-state comes into being for the sake of living, but it exists for the sake of living 'well'". According to Martin, Smith and Stuart (2003, 5), "This phrase implies more than what is usually meant by 'living well' in English, which is to say 'being prosperous.' The Greek phrase implies above all a life lived in accordance with excellence (*areté*). Living a prosperous life is not necessarily in conflict with this notion but is certainly not the principal implication of living 'well' in Greek."

About this kind of *living well*, Aristotle (*Politics*, 1278b21-25) stresses that

> The goal or purpose (*telos*) of the city-state certainly encompasses physical existence and survival, but it is also more than that, namely, living 'finely' (*to zen kalos*).

And:

> The city-state that is truly a city-state must be concerned with excellence (*areté*); (…) a city-state is clearly … living … for the sake of a fully developed and self-sufficient life. (Ibid, 1280b6-8; 1280b29-1281a8)

So, an aretelogy comes to the fore, as part of moral philosophy concerned with *virtue* or the *excellence of character*, with its nature and with the ways and means to study and exercise it throughout life an individual experiences. Pursuing happiness (*eudaimonía*), as the end goal of everyone, meets the education of moral virtue (*areté*) as

the safe path to be followed. In Aristotle's vision, "Happiness requires both complete virtue and complete life" since "life includes many reversals of fortune, good and bad" (*Nicomachean Ethics*, 1100a5-10). The Stagirite considers that the highest aim of all human practical thinking is *eudaimonía*, claiming reason, deliberate choice, the knowledge of virtues and their practice, understanding the importance of the 'mean between excess and deficiency', the development and the manifestation of theoretical and practical wisdom, courage, justice, temperance, etc.

The philosophers of the Hellenistic age have approached important themes of *moral philosophy* that was considered in the function of guiding people towards leading better lives. Its key role was to live well, respectively to secure for oneself *eudaimonía*, for which a human being should endeavour; so, becoming the agent of more or less experiencing the *eudaímōn* life - a life that any rational being should be able to attain.

For Epicurus, *eudaimonía* is linked to tranquility. Here comes some of the meaning of 'well-being' as *eustatheia* / *ευστάθεια* (the steadiness, the inner tranquility, the just/good balance). In *Letter to Menoeceus*, the author features a happy life as one of *ataraxia* (*ἀταραξία*) and of *aponia* (*ἀπονία*), meaning the 'calmness' or 'tranquility of mind' and the 'absence of pain'. This was regarded by Epicureans to be the height of bodily pleasure, *hēdonē* (*ἡδονή*). In its turn, the virtue represents a means to happiness.

In Epicurean vision, pleasure is the final good of human being. Living well consists in living a life of pleasure. But what means the Epicurean pleasure? It has nothing to do with the vulgar comprehension of this concept, reduced to the immediate, bright and fleeting pleasure. Especially, it is far from the understanding of pleasure in the present time of hyperconsumption with the commodity fetishism and the instant happiness (that seems to merely be identifiable with lots of happy smartphone icons, for example), in a society of excessive materialistic consumerism, entertainment and advertising, which promotes a sort of 'bright hedonism' focused on the slogan "seize the moment/the day" - an attempt to translate just part of the Horace's phrase (*Odes*, I. 11.8): "*carpe diem*, quam minimum credula postero", which would completely mean: "Seize the day, put very little trust in tomorrow/the future".

We have to be aware of the fact that Epicurus' *hēdonē* is related to virtues, such as prudence, wisdom, courage, friendship, mutual trust,

justice, together with lucidity, discernment and sobriety, making sense through tranquility, peace or freedom from distress and worry (*ataraxia*), and in the absence of pain (*aponia*):

> When we say, then, that pleasure is the end and aim, we do not mean the pleasures of the prodigal or the pleasures of sensuality, as we are understood to do by some through ignorance, prejudice, or willful misrepresentation. By pleasure we mean the absence of pain in the body and of trouble in the soul. It is … sober reasoning, searching out the grounds of every choice and avoidance, and banishing those beliefs through which the greatest disturbances take possession of the soul. Of all this, the end is prudence. For this reason prudence is a more precious thing even than the other virtues, for a life of pleasure which is not also a life of prudence, honor, and justice; nor lead a life of prudence, honor, and justice, which is not also a life of pleasure. For the virtues have grown into one with a pleasant life, and a pleasant life is inseparable from them (Epicurus, *Letter to Menoeceus*, X. 27.131-132).

Following the path of virtue – taking into account that a prime virtue is *phronēsis* (the practical wisdom) - contributes to bringing the most amount of pleasure in man's life; and consequently, more happiness. "Of all these, the beginning and the greatest good is prudence" (Ibid, X. 27.132).

To resume, the *eudaímōn life* is a pleasurable life. A happy life is identical to a virtuous life; the main purpose being to "fulfill the good of the soul and the good of the body" as an agent "free from pain and fear", aims at pleasure as "the highest good in life" (O'Keefe 2014, 111-116). The Epicurean philosopher and poet Philodemus of Gadara (see Sbordone 1947, col. 5, 4.9-14) has suggestively emphasized a summary of Epicurus' doctrine on happiness, through the so-called "tetrapharmakos" or "the four-part cure". In four lines we find guidelines as regards the probabilities of living the happiest possible life: "Don't fear god, / Don't worry about death; / What is good is easy to get, and / What is terrible is easy to endure."

In their turn, the Stoics explained *eudaimonía* in connection with *areté*, too. They dwelled on the *eudaímōn life* as a morally virtuous life.

Being represented by great figures of antiquity (from Zeno, Cleanthes and Chrysippus to Seneca, Epictetus and Marcus Aurelius) and revived by some philosophies of Renaissance and of the contemporary era, the Stoic ethics has permanently maintained the interest in the problem of *eudaimonía* in unity with *virtue* and with the

wise agent. This is obviously in the ways of dealing with happiness and well-being as complete and self-controlled human life within different topics developed by the "new Stoicism" at the present time (see Becker 1998); with a focus on collective well-being, on humankind relationship with Nature, sustainable development, sagely acting, *eudaimonía* emergence from virtue, etc. (see Whiting et al. 2018).

In a Stoic perspective, *eudaimonía* is the human end for which, exercising *phronēsis*, virtuous thinking and behavior are required.

Zeno of Citium held that the true *good* consists in *virtue*; and a good human life is that the wise man can live aiming at the conformity to the *logos*. At stake is the famous Stoics' dictum, *τέλος: τὸ ὁμολογουμένως ζῆν / télos: to omologoumenōs zēn*. The route followed by a sage person is to 'live in agreement (or harmony – a homology) with nature', meaning 'in accordance with our own human nature as well as that of the universe' (Zeno, in Diogenes Laërtius, VII. 4; 87; 102, 127).

> If, as seems likely, Zeno derived the term *omologoumenōs* from *logos*, the formula may simply have been intended to convey the idea that one should live in accordance with the *logos* or one's essential self. It was made more specific (and perhaps less awkward) by Cleanthes's addition of the word 'nature' as that to which one was urged to conform: *telos esti to omologoumenōs tē phúsei zēn* (Fortin 1996, 202).

And there is a basic connection between *eudaimonía* and *practical wisdom*, according to Chrysippus: "*Phronēsis* is nothing other than *eudaimonía* in and of itself, but just is *eudaimonía*" (see Plutarch, 26. 1046D).

The Stoics identify the *eudaímōn life* as one motivated by virtue, the human (moral) 'excellence'. For Epictetus (*Discourses*, 1.4.18; 1.29.1), the progress towards excellence means to understand the true nature of one's being and to keep one's *prohairesis* / *προαίρεσις* (moral choice, will, intention, moral character) in the right state.

Eudaimonía claims the moral virtue as a necessary condition. This thesis can be found in texts of late Stoics. For example, in his *Moral Letters to Lucilius*, Seneca offers a veritable 'ethical guidance' for human *well-being*. In fact, the entire discourse can be summarized as the search for 'ethical perfection' (Gill 2003), pursuing *eudaimonía* about which each of us might learn and educate.

Also, the works of moral philosophy of Epictetus and Marcus Aurelius are testimonies for the major significance of guiding

ourselves in the territory of a science and art of living a 'good life'; and thus to activate as much as possible the capacities to morally shape a veritable human life and to flourish on the path of virtue.

Thanks to Arrian of Nicomedia, who copied down Epictetus' lectures and preserved them, we have the access to the *Discourses* (*Ἐπικτήτου διατριβαί* / *Epiktētou diatribai*) and the *Handbook* (*Ἐγχειρίδιον Ἐπικτήτου* / *Enkheirídion Epiktḗtou*) containing useful teachings about a rational, free, wise and happy life that must harmonize with "what is up to us".

In a similar key we have a lot to learn from the *Meditations: Thoughts to Myself* (*Τὰ εἰς ἑαυτόν* / *Ta eis heauton*) of Marcus Aurelius who imposed himself as a political leader and a moral philosopher. We can get valuable ideas for our times focused on be(com)ing a good individual, living in harmony with the nature, developing the reason in accordance with the universal *logos* that permeates everything-there-is-alive. This outstanding figure of the late Stoicism inspires us, beyond the historical and social context, to appreciate the real value and to build the moral virtues, no less to take into account the power of moral principles; finally, to reveal the potential of growing and flourishing the human excellence. Basic questions and answers deserve to particularly pay attention:

> What is your art? To be good; Waste no more time arguing about what a good man should be. Be one; Happiness is a good spirit/daemon, or a good thing. What then are you doing here, oh imagination? Go away…; Retire into yourself. The rational principle which rules has this nature that it is content with itself when it does what is just, and so secures tranquility. …For the good is with me and the just. (Marcus Aurelius, 10.16; 7.17; 7.28, 42)

It is worth noting herein that also the physician and philosopher Galen of Pergamon took the virtue of *apatheia* (*απάθεια*) – even though in a different approach than the Stoics – as a relevant one for human well-being, as we find, for example, in *Peri Alypias* / *Περί αλυπίας*[5]. Claudii Galeni Pergameni has scientifically stressed on the importance of the soul/spirit-body balance. We need *isoropia* (*ισορροπία*) of *pneúma* (*πνεῦμα*) and *sóma* (*σώμα*); and the emotions, especially distress or

[5] Translated in English as *Avoiding Distress*, this is Galen's 2005 writing discovered in a Greek manuscript, in Thessaloniki. See Antoine Pietrobelli. 2010. Variation autour du *Thessalonicensis Vlatadon* 14: Un manuscrit copié au xenon du Kral, peu avant la chute de Constantinople. *Revue des etudes byzantines*, *68*: 95-126.

lupè (*λυπή*) is to be avoided. Imposing also as a therapist of the emotions, "Galenus provides remedies in case of sadness, and depression, using his personal experiences" (Muraru 2019, 64). *Peri Alypias* (in Latin, *De indolentia*) bears witness to the ways of dealing with our vulnerable self and treating anxiety, following part at least from his own life-long; by *avoiding distress*, finally – so much needed in nowadays –, striving towards health and happiness.

Certainly, this paper brought to the fore just part of the precious legacy centered on *eudaimonía* the ancient thinkers have left about the possibilities of human well-being in the world we have access to. Knowing, reflecting on, comprehending and applying it in our lives could improve the quality of living, especially, in times marked by a lot of risks, doubts and general bewilderment when individuals and communities are looking for real fulcrums, for safe values and norms, as they grapple with serious challenges and difficulties.

Revisiting the works of the great classics of philosophy means to not maintain or even totally fall in *sancta simplicitas*, to not be easily manipulated, by anyone, for dishonest purposes; it means to not lose our very human autonomy, dignity and authenticity, and finally to slip risking to reach a complete denial of the *humane* from within us; and this, because of the abandonment into slavery and the life altering by "smart" machineries that invade the entire existence, engineering our behaviours, relations and experiences by technology, in an environment of appearances, of images mediated passive contemplation, of saturated consumerist culture by "amusing ourselves to death" (to quote Neil Postman), in the frame of the Debordian "society of the spectacle". Such characteristics bring about a lack of naturalness and spontaneity, an inhabitation of valuable creativity and the atrophy of moral sense, a loss of critical thinking and of temperance, and a concrete manufacture of alienation. No less, they cause the weakening of any aspirations, the temptation of inactivity and irresponsibility, since we have to cope with a sort of social insanity due to the autocratic reign of mass culture marketing. Indeed, as Guy Debord (1988) noticed a few decades ago, once the individual discovers himself as enslaved by the spectacle, which became "a pseudosacre," the human alienation and the meaninglessness increase, and the unhappiness gets stronger in the end.

We focused on *eudaimonía* as a signifier of the ultimate goal of human life, mobilizing us in discovering and exploring an extra power and enlightenment welcome at all times. Undoubtedly, as the pursuit of

happiness, it remains the ideal toward which all our toil will succeed to nurture the human well-being.

The ancients' philosophy of *eudaimonía* stands for a kind of moral *organon* in life, directing human conduct under the auspices of authentic values of life. It deserves to be inoculated in the daily practice, offering us guidelines for wisely deliberating, choosing, and decision making and acting; eventually, helping us to manage and to overcome the trials of life, and to ensure both individual and communal well-being just progressing in (and not giving up) our very own humanity.

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Rakhamim: A model of love and responsibility in the discourse of Emmanuel Levinas

Melchor L. Cuizon[*]

Abstract: Love is the most worn-out and debased word that humanity often utters. In modern times it is understood in the Freudian views as an instinct–dominated outlook whose function is instinctual gratification that is narcissistic and infantile. On the other hand, this type of love relation also reflects a utilitarian motive of using the "other" merely as a tool or means to an end and motivated by the maxim of quantifiable happiness or pleasure. This seemingly "love for – the – other" dominates the passionate aspect characterized by mere pleasure or genital sexual primacy, a "need-satisfying object". In contrast, the true essence of love is grounded on responsibility "for – the – other" as the good in itself as proposed by Emmanuel Levinas. The absorption of humanity towards this "disintegrated love" lurks a certain danger, *a danger as such*. This paper argues that (1) "love without lust" is possible as depicted in Levinas' discourse on "Being – for – the – Other" and (2) this concept of "love without lust" grounded on the "otherness of the other" is possible through the act of motherhood (*Rakhamim*).

Keywords: *Rakhamin,* love, responsibility, Emmanuel Levinas, other

Introduction

Emmanuel Levinas is regarded as one of the most renowned ethical thinkers of the twentieth century. Some scholars of philosophy labeled him a "philosopher of ethics" because he was the first to explore ethics phenomenologically. His notion of ethical subjectivity surpasses that of the Western tradition whose ethical discourse is structured according to the social construct, language, and ideology. Levinas' ethics is revolutionary because it focuses on the grassroots of ethical responsibility for others, primarily grounded on the inviolability of the "otherness of others", a living presence that cannot be denied nor ignored. This ethical concern "for – the – other" obliges us to respond

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and commit, and it is "these commitments that make us who and what we are." (Marcus 2008, 8). By elevating morality to a "face to face" relation with others Levinas makes a Copernican revolution of the meaning of philosophy from the "love of wisdom" to the "wisdom of love at the service of love" (Ibid, 19). Thus,

> Ethics is no longer a simple moralism of rules which decree what is virtuous. It is the original awakening of an I responsible for the other; the accession of my person to the uniqueness of the I called and elected to responsibility for the other (Ibid, 20).

If Aristotle regarded metaphysics as the first philosophy, Levinas on the other hand, regarded ethics as the first philosophy as opposed to the traditional view of being a specific field of philosophy. His recognition of ethics as the first philosophy is grounded on the principle of the otherness of others as the primary concern of any ethical relationship. This other as he proposed precedes any moral maxim or imperative. Although he acknowledges the importance of any moral system, however, this can only be valuable when juxtaposed with the "face of the other" whose living presence prior to the formulation and creation of moral maxims. This presence of the other cannot be ignored and whose vulnerability demands responsibility (Guenther 2006, Introduction). It is here as Levinas argues that the notion of the self is best understood as "facing the other" and called at the service of others. Thus, responsibility for the other takes priority over the conception of freedom. Freedom is understood therefore in the context of the face–to–face encounter with the other which commands and demands an obligation (Ibid, 40-43). The ultimate act of freedom as Levinas argues is the giving of oneself to and for the other. This responsibility for the other never exhausts because love and justice are infinite and this will always permeate as long as the other exists (Ibid, 48). This giving of oneself for the other in a theological perspective is one way also of filling up one spiritual needs (Ibid, 44).

Levinas' ethical subjectivity is a Copernican revolution of approaching the world for the subject as a precious burden from which the responsibility of the other (other – ruling) emanates in contrast to a world approached as a grand spectacle laid out before the subject to be enjoyed (self – ruling) (Ibid, 110). This his responsibility for the other is the grounding moment of love that transcends sentiment and mental state for it is an obligation demanded by one's humanity (Ibid, 110). However, this love and responsibility in modern times is understood

from the Freudian "libidinistic" interpretation of sexual drive that correlates with utilitarian ethics. As Wojtyla (2013, 47) remarks this understanding places the person as a subject that is "exteriorly" sensitized to sensory-sexual stimuli, which evoke the lived experience of delight. At this level, the person is disposed toward seeking sensory–vital pleasure resembles that of the animal instinct (Ibid.). Reducing love at the libidinistic level contradicts the very nature of the person *per se* because a person as a subject is equipped with "interiority" which directs him/her to dispose of one's sexual drive with utmost responsibility and sensitivity in the presence of others (Ibid.).

This Freudian understanding of love as an energy-driven model and instinct-dominated outlook lurks a certain danger. It is a love driven by pleasure whose *telos* (end) is merely self-gratification. A love driven by one's libido that requires something in return, a love that invests to generate a profit (Wojtyla 2013, 105). This utilitarian motive of love grounded on the pleasure-seeking principle is incapable of achieving the true essence of happiness / *eudaimonia* coined by Aristotle (human flourishing). It is this happiness that aims at the good of others as the good in itself that Levinas pursues:

> Authentic love does not mainly strive after union and fusion, it always respects the other's radical otherness and cherishes the other as unique; love is not primarily characterized by mere mutual pleasure giving and reciprocal affirmation, rather, it is expressed as acts of goodness for the sake of the other's best interests, often requiring self-sacrifice (Marcus 2008, 111).

This love as Levinas proposed is exemplified by the love of a mother to his/her child (maternal care), a love that emanates from the infant's sense of gratitude toward the "good" mother, toward the satisfying, "good breast." This paper argues that (1) "love without lust" is possible as depicted in Levinas discourse on "Being – for – the – Other" and (2) this concept of "love without lust" grounded on the "otherness of the other" is possible through the act of motherhood (*Rakhamim*).

Methodology

The method used in this research is interpretative analyzing and synthesizing important insights that are deemed relevant to the issue being explored. Included in these insights are some observations and

personal experiences of the researchers contextualized in the recent discourse of the literature which attempt to explore the thesis questions of the study.

Love as responsibility for – the – other

The Levinasian ethics is fundamentally grounded on the relation of the self towards the other person whose living presence is inescapable and irreducible. In a book entitled *Is It Righteous to Be* (2001), a compilation of the series of interviews of Levinas (1982–1992), discussing with Francois Poirie, Levinas situates his discourse in ethics as:

> A comportment in which the other, who is strange and indifferent to you, who belongs neither to the order of your interest nor to your affections, at the same time matters to you. His alterity concerns you. A relation of another order than that of knowledge, in which the object is given value by knowing it, which passes for the only relation with beings. Can one be for an I without being reduced to an object of pure knowledge? Placed in an ethical relation, the other human remains other (Levinas 2001, 48).

This face of the other is a sort of awakening that compels us to the responsibility that is neither negotiated nor even consented to by me. The face understood in Levinesian terminology is "moral consciousness" or "personality". The obligation compelled by the other is asymmetrical and non-reciprocal in contrast to a love relation conceived in mutual utility that is symmetrical and reciprocal. This love and responsibility are grounded on being for the other, whose existence obliges the self to a never-ending responsibility. Here the self or selfhood transcends from an egoistic subjectivity of René Descartes whose center is the "I", as the I "for itself" to the "one – for – the – other. This notion of love and responsibility toward the other is a possible response to the death of love in modern times. The face-to-face encounter with the other ruptures one's existence commanding one not to hurt, not to injure, not to kill, not to be hungry, not to discriminate, etc. The face of the other is a person who desires not to be treated merely as a means to an end. He/She is an irreplaceable subject who has a desire and wish to live the fullness of life, a life of *eudaimonia* (human flourishing).

However, the challenge of the time is also real; the notion of love and responsibility is reduced to commodities at the disposal of the ego. The secularization of sexuality of the twentieth century inspired by a

Freudian ethos regarded sexual activities as the highest of human experiences, orgasm as a form of spiritual ecstasy, and redemption as an aspect of sexual experience (Grabowski 2003, 7). The sexual revolution which aims only at the satisfaction of pleasure and desire has only created an increasing marital problem for couples and promiscuity for young people. The reduction of one person and the other as the object of sexual desires becomes a threatening epidemic of many sex-related diseases (Ibid, 9). Sexual activity, thus perceived becomes a utopian illusion that cannot deliver what it promises (Ibid, 8). In addition, the consumerist attitude of humanity has expanded and developed technology that undercut the sense of human contact as the foundation of every social relation. Technology isolates us from the other while offering a new search for intimacy to fill the void created by technology—a search that often gravitates toward sex (Ibid, 10).

In a survey conducted by the University of the Philippines in December of 2022 among Filipino youth aged 15 – 24, results show that 32 percent of male youth and 27 percent of female youth have sexual experience before marriage. Sex exposure in social media either intentional or incidental is the prime mover of why young people in the country indulge in any sexual promiscuity. This desire reduces the other person to an object of sexual desires and instinctual satisfaction that alienates one from the dignity bestowed upon them by rationality (Grabowski 2003, 89). The person reduced to the status of an object becomes a standing reserve (*bestand*) to use Heidegger's terminology. That is the other is taken only at one disposal after being used and serves their purpose. In addition, this reduction to a person's disability is discardable in the sense that they are not only disposed of, but also deployed, or order rather they are discarded once their utility is exhausted because they are only perceived at the level of an ephemeral quality that lacks stability and permanence (Rojcewicz 2006). This fact can also be conceived on how one uses power over the other, which is not accompanied by a development rooted in responsibility, human values, and conscience for the other. The advent of technology such as information, biotechnology, economics, and nuclear weapons to mention a few has given humanity tremendous power not only in response to the demand of existence but use it as a means of annihilating the other. The killings and murders of humanity in the middle of the twentieth century because of Nazism and Communism juxtaposed the killings of millions of people from the war between Russia and Ukraine to the recent dispute between Israel and Hamas.

People are senselessly killed by the increasingly deadly arsenal of weapons available for modern warfare. In whose hands does all this power lie, or will it eventually end up (Pope Francis 2015, 104)? The face of the other resists this possession or utilization as Levinas remarks instead, it invites and obliges us to take on a responsibility that transcends categorization and contentment. The face of the other adheres us to the fundamental commandment *Thou shalt not kill* (Hand 2009, 41-42). Love and responsibility for the other should not be taken from the alleged necessity of utility, self–interest, and violence but rather from a sound ethical concern and genuine spirituality for the other (Pope Francis 2015, 105).

***Rakhamim* (motherhood) is a model of love and responsibility**

For Levinas love is a fundamental human vocation, a gift of being. It is conceived primarily as the responsibility for the other that transcends feelings, emotions, and even reciprocity. It is an expression of goodness geared towards the interest of others, interests that may even require self-denial and sacrifices (Marcus 2008, 111). This he expressed in the series of interviews with Francois Poirie for instance:

> Love, however, is the proximity of the other the other remains other. I think that when the other is "always other," there is the essence of love. Perhaps he deplored it, but he also maintained in a certain way that the more other the other is, the more he is loved, or rather, the more he is loved, the more he is other (Levinas 2001, 58).

And,

> I think that responsibility is the love without concupiscence of which Pascal spoke: to respond to the other, to approach the other as unique, isolated from all multiplicity and outside collective necessities. To approach someone as unique to the world is to love him. Affective warmth, feeling, and goodness constitute the proper mode of this approach to the unique, the thinking of the unique (Ibid, 108).

Or

> Love goes further; it is the relation to the unique. It is proper to the principle of love that the other, loved, is for me unique in the world. Not because in being in love I have the illusion that the other is unique. It is because there is the possibility of thinking of someone as unique that there is love (Ibid, 50).

Also,

> The responsibility for the other is the grounding moment of love. It is not a state of mind; it is not a sentiment, but rather an obligation. The human is first of all an obligation. (Ibid, 33)

Can the principle be achieved or it is just a heavy burden interim of love impossible to commit? According to Levinas, this interim is depicted through maternal care, an experience of a mother who is capable of living their love as responsibility for the other. The love of a mother to a child ruptures her entire being, for it is a love of total giving from whom the child as the object of love completely takes over the ego of a mother. The undeniable presence of the child seizes the mother's egoism which is entirely consumed by the presence of the child. Thus, this love for the child is so intense that the mother is willing to give up and renounce everything for the sake of the beloved (Bloechl 2000, 31). The child evokes responsibility that reaches further than the life of a mother. A responsibility that cannot be measured in terms of autonomous freedom and cannot be founded in a free decision one takes upon oneself and by definition cannot be limited to what one, as a parent, has in his or her power. This love overflows with compassion in the presence of the child's vulnerability (Ibid, 30-31). This vulnerability is understood when "the whole self enters into relation with the other as a being 'for-the-other'—that is, a being susceptible to the other's initiative (Irina 2018). This is the notion of maternity described as the nature of care in Levinas' *Totality and Infinity* (Llewelyn 1995, 133). Maternity is a total being "for-the-other," and therefore, a "perfect image of vulnerability in Levinas' sense because of the physical susceptibility of a mother's body to the 'other'—that is, the child—whom she carries (Irina 2018).

Maternity is understood as an act of substitution. In giving oneself for the other (child), one anticipates and is fully aware of the responsibility attached to it rather than a response motivated by an act of pity and compassion. Actual maternity is "the complete being for the other," and ultimate vulnerability (Irina 2018). This all–consuming responsibility somehow diminishes the sense of autonomy as asserted by Immanuel Kant. For Kant, responsibility is grounded in the will that requires an active decision. Hence, responsibility for others is a choice deliberately made. In contrast, responsibility for Levinas is outside the will, for it is directed towards the inescapable presence and needs of the other. Thus, autonomy resides in whether or not one has to respond to this responsibility (Irina 2018). In the case of maternity, the nurturing care of a mother is evident from pregnancy to birth. The

child relied totally on the mother's nourishment and protection. Without this maternal care, the child can't survive and live. This is an absolute commitment of the self to provide anything and everything that the other needs as Levinas put it, "The self bears the weight of the world; it is responsible for everyone," involved in "a responsibility without freedom" (Irina 2018). This is not to say that the mother doesn't have the option to ignore the attached responsibility, she has all the reason to refuse, and however, the sense of responsibility can never be diminished. Thus, maternity for Levinas is a substitution; the mother is completely responsible, before herself, despite herself (Ibid.). Substitution in its clearest formulation depicts a self–sacrificing mother, whose radical passivism resembles an ideal ethical relationship in which the need of others takes precedence over the need of the self.

After thirteen years of marriage, we are gifted with a beautiful child at the age of forty – four. The pregnancy of my wife is not that easy, especially in her first trimester. Every day is a struggle for survival especially for the child. Eating and drinking become more difficult for her since her body does not accept it. I needed to rush her to the hospital sometimes just to recover her from dehydration. The desire to have a baby at all costs is instrumental in overcoming fears and the risk of pregnancy. The thought of the child is indescribable and consumes my wife's being for at last the long-awaited gift of the child has been fulfilled. The entire pregnancy was closely monitored by our doctor who treated it as a high pregnancy case given the vulnerability of my wife's age and her previous case of miscarriage. Although the whole pregnancy was a struggle, nonetheless, it went smoothly and my wife was able to deliver our child safely through the caesarian method.

In this aspect of maternal care, a mother–child relation is substantially that of the mother who gives herself totally to the child. In feeding the child, for instance, the mother gives herself to the child without reservation. This is maternal subjectivity or substitution as Levinas argues, when the child, whom she is expecting, will never be an object for consciousness but only as the other (because it is also of the mother), whose possibilities exceed what can be grasped in terms of her own (Irina 2018). Here love and responsibility are understood beyond reciprocity, the offering of one's property or possessions to the other, rather is the giving of one's substance for the other (Marcus 2008, 113). Love is primarily giving and not receiving, it is characterized by "care, responsibility, respect, and knowledge. That is to love means to commit oneself without guarantee, to give oneself

completely in the hope that our love will produce love in the loved person" (Marcus 2008, 121). Love, therefore, is an active power in humanity; it transcends walls and differences and aims at unity and inclusivity in the face of the other.

Conclusion

In a world where there is so much hatred, discrimination, and objectification which resulted in wanton killings and murders of humanity and the death of love in modern times which seems to be the revealing phenomenon of the period; it is high time to reevaluate oneself and his/her relationship with the other, a relationship grounded on ethical imperative. Substitution and responsibility in the context of maternal care may not be perfectly achieved or a mother may not perfectly fulfill the needs of the child, however, her failure does not necessarily brand her as a bad mother, but rather an affirmation of human limitation and capacity which she needs to strive in living out the challenge of the ethical principle (Bradley 2006). That is bearing the stranger (the other) as a nursing child, even if we do not have the reason or capacity to bear, the homelessness and exposure of the other speaks to us, inviting and obliging us to unconditional responsibility (Guenther 2006). This is ethical subjectivity proposed by Levinas, an ethics that does not consider only what I can do, but rather what I ought to do (Bradley 2006). This ethical subjectivity contextualized in maternal care is not only limited to women, this may transcend gender preference in a wider sense as Lisa Gunther (2006, 119-120) remarks "The maternal corpus, may or may not refer to the biological birth of the child because anyone can become a maternal body who can strive for substitution and work to become ethical".

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The metaphysical exposition of the concept of space in the *Critique of Pure Reason*: Methodological aspects

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Abstract: The Copernican revolution that Kant initiated in theoretical philosophy involves several types of transcendental arguments: expositions, deductions, and proofs. Among these, the expositions concern the concepts of space and time. Among the arguments put forth by the philosopher are those supporting the idea that space and time are not concepts, but intuitions. I shall briefly outline the main positions in *Kant-Forschung*, then present my own position. Space and time are, indeed, concepts, but not discursive ones; at the same time, they are intuitions because they directly relate to objects.

Keywords: transcendental idealism, transcendental arguments, metaphysical exposition of space, *a priori* intuitions, discursive concepts

One of the most complex concepts (*Begriff)* in Kantian transcendental philosophy is that of space. Since the philosopher explicitly argues that space is not a discursive concept, but an intuition, in the very title of the chapter where he presents these arguments (two types), he uses the expression 'metaphysical exposition of the concept of space.' This blatant contradiction naturally sparked many disputes in *Kant-Forschung*. Among the established exegesis, N. Kemp-Smith and H. Allison are the firmest in their positions. The former considers all four arguments of the metaphysical exposition to be weak, even circular, while the latter carefully attempts to prove the opposite. Building on the positions of these two scholars, I shall try to highlight a way which avoids the circularity of arguments and even provides an explanation for the possible pitfall in this direction of interpretation. I shall argue for the difference between concept and term, thereby implying a philosophy of language that Kant did not delve into, but which will resolve the announced contradiction.

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Kant presents his conception of space and time in his work *Critique of Pure Reason*, more precisely in the chapter entitled *The Transcendental Aesthetic*. The investigation of pure intuitions begins with metaphysical exposition. What is striking from the outset is the fact that the author, although arguing that space (and implicitly time) is not a concept, specifically a discursive concept, specifies in the title of paragraph §2 of the *First Section* that it is a metaphysical exposition of the concept of space. For the discussion of this issue, it is necessary to present the third argument, which makes the distinction between intuition and concept.

The research method is quite clearly specified by the author, and I believe many exegetes would avoid some problems if they considered it at the level of importance it holds. "By exposition (*expositio*) I understand the clear representation (although not detailed) of what belongs to a concept; and this exposition is metaphysical if it encompasses what the concept represents as given *a priori*. (Kant 1999, B38) The significance of the expression "as given *a priori*" is well illustrated by J.G. Schulze (*Prüfung der Kantischen Critik der reinen Vernunft*, 1789 edition):

> If I were to draw a line[1] from one point to another, I must already have the space in which to draw it. And if I can continue drawing as much as I want, endlessly, then this space must be given to me as unlimited, that is, infinite. Conversely, I can successfully generate a cylinder or a body only in space, which means I can do so because space is already given to me, along with the qualities that allow me to assume that points exist everywhere, and which allow me to generate endlessly the three dimensions of extension." (Kant 1999)

From this paragraph the meaning of the "condition of possibility" that the term "given *a priori*" carries can be inferred. The same meaning is preserved in the continuation of the transcendental process, in the chapters of *The Transcendental Logic*.

Kant's exposition of space (and, implicitly, of time) is divided into two directions, one concerning the apriority of the forms of sensibility, and the other concerning their intuitive nature. Although the arguments are similar for space and time, their expositions are nevertheless

[1] "For Kant, as well as for Newton, spatial quantities were not composed of points, but generated by the motion of points" (Freidman. 1998. *Kant and the Exact Sciences*, p. 83). This idea was also presented in an older article (Freidman. 1985. "Kant's Theory of Geometry").

different. In the case of time, the third point is a transcendental exposition, whereas in the case of space, the transcendental exposition is given by the fifth point. Beyond these minor differences, it is considered that the metaphysical exposition of space presents arguments of apriority in points (1) and (2), with the same situation encountered in the metaphysical exposition of time, while arguments of intuitiveness are presented in the metaphysical exposition of space in points (3) and (4), and in that of time, in points (4) and (5). I shall present below the first arguments, those of the apriority of the forms of sensibility:

> 1) Space is not an empirical concept that has been drawn from outer experiences. For in order for certain sensations to be related to something outside me (i.e., to something in another place in space from that in which I find myself), thus in order for me to represent them as outside <and next to> one another, thus not merely as different but as in different places, the representation of space must already be their ground. Thus the representation of space cannot be obtained from the relations of outer appearance through experience, but this outer experience is itself first possible only through this representation.
> 2) Space is a necessary representation, *a priori*, that is the ground of all outer intuitions. One can never represent that there is no space, though one can very well think that there are no objects to be encountered in it. It is therefore to be regarded as the condition of the possibility of appearances, not as a determination dependent on them, and is an *a priori* representation that necessarily grounds outer appearances. (Kant 1999, B38-39 / A23-24)

The exposition of the concept of time is similar[2].

What is striking from the outset is the tautological appearance: space is not derived from experiences, because space is necessary to have experiences. What is the actual argumentation? Of course,

[2] "Time is <1> not an empirical concept that is somehow drawn from an experience. For simultaneity or succession would not themselves come into perception if the representation of time did not ground them *a priori*. Only under its presupposition can one represent that several things exist at one and the same time (simultaneously) or in different times (successively).
2) Time is a necessary representation that grounds all intuitions. In regard to appearances in general one cannot remove time, though one can very well take the appearances away from time. Time is therefore given *a priori*. In it alone is all actuality of appearances possible. The latter could all disappear, but time itself (as the universal condition of their possibility) cannot be removed." (Kant 1999, B46 / A30-31)

Kantian exegesis is divided (Allison 1983), not only regarding the tautology or circularity of the argument, but also regarding the relationship between the two points above. Are they two distinct arguments or just two steps of the same argumentation?[3] On the one hand, Vaihinger (1922) argues that here we have a theorem supported by two proofs, the first being a direct proof, and the second an indirect one. In opposition to Vaihinger, Kemp Smith (Kemp-Smith 1918, 99-123) and Paton (1936) consider that the first argument is insufficient but that it is supplemented by the second. On the other hand, Allison (1983) considers that there are actually two distinct proofs here, each sufficient for the intended purpose.

Allison considers that the first point invokes two presuppositions: the first one stating that space must be presupposed if one can claim to have sensations about something external, and the second stating that space must be presupposed if objects are to be represented as external to one another. Since "external" is a term with spatial implications, it is easy to admit that Kant's expression is tautological. However, Allison argues that what is deceptive is not the argument itself but the way it has been constructed. What he considers to be the crucial point in the argumentation is the definition of "external sense" - that is, the sense through which someone becomes perceptually aware of the distinction between themselves (and their states) and objects. Analogously, internal sense is "the sense through which someone becomes perceptually aware of themselves and their states." (Allison 1983, 83) Starting from these definitions, the exegete considers that the tautology disappears, "the representation of space functions as a condition through which we become aware of things as being external to us" (Ibid, 83). In his opinion, here we no longer have a tautology simply because other beings can now be conceived who can attain an awareness of things or their own states, but through means other than spatial and temporal ones. However, the argument does not seem to be valid. The reason why the possibility of other beings perceiving things without the conditions of space and time makes the consciousness of perception not contain spatial representation for a rational being (in the Kantian sense, i.e., a being endowed with the generic consciousness discussed in the *Critique of Pure Reason*) is not clear. The first

[3] The idea of arguing in two steps is not foreign to Kantian exegesis, even regarding *The Deduction of the Categories* from 1787, where once again a division of the argumentation is considered.

statement of this argument, as interpreted by Allison, says that spatial representation must be presupposed where I have the consciousness of things external to me. The existence of other beings who have the consciousness of externality without spatial representation is, if not absurd, at least inconceivable for a rational being. The existence of these beings is not only a real impossibility (we have no guarantees that they can comply with the conditions of possibility of experience), but it is also a logical impossibility (the term "external" includes spatiality as a note of itself, so the term is completely lost if I abstract from this note, and it becomes contradictory in itself if I associate it with the contrary note, the lack of spatiality). Allison's idea could be extended in the manner in which Rorty (1979) discusses schemes of rationality, but I do not think it will bring any benefit. It is possible to think, without any corresponding intuition, but only as a simple concept, of a scheme of rationality different from ours. However, to have consciousness of such a scheme, I must leave my own scheme, which is impossible. From the perspective of my own scheme of rationality, it is impossible to conclude that there is another scheme, different from mine, because even if I were faced with the signs of this different scheme, I could only interpret them through my own rationality, which would make those signs either absurd or meaningless. But even if, absurdly, Allison was right and beings could be conceived to have the consciousness of externality without the aid of spatiality, I do not see how this would make the tautology disappear, because Kant does not refer to a being in general, but explicitly relates to human rationality. Furthermore, if it were to refer to a being in general, then the statement would need an argumentation specific to the nature of human rationality, an argumentation that is missing.

The second statement is addressed by Allison in a similar manner. The statement that spatial representation is necessary to realize things as being external to one another is not tautological in the exegete's opinion if the distinction is made between numerical diversity, quantitative diversity, and qualitative diversity. Thus, Kant's argument is reconstructed: "(...) Kant can be interpreted as arguing that, in order to be conscious of things as numerically distinct from one another, it is necessary not only to be conscious of their qualitative differences but also of the fact that they are located in different spaces. In other words, the representation of place, and therefore of space, functions for human experience as a necessary condition of the possibility of distinguishing objects from each other. Furthermore, as in the previous case, it is not

a logically necessary condition" (Allison 1983, 83). Not only are the arguments of the second statement similar to those of the first, but the objections that can be raised to the exegete are similar to those mentioned above. What Allison argues seems rather not a defense of Kant's ideas, as declared in the title of the work, but a contradiction of them. The conclusion that spatial representation is not necessary for the possibility of distinguishing external things, or of distinguishing them from the knowing subject, is contrary to the Kantian text: "Space is a necessary *a priori* representation (Kant 1999, B38/A24) ...", "Time is a necessary representation, which underlies all intuitions" (Ibid, B46/A30). Of course, the tautology of the statement, or the vicious circle of argumentation, do not disappear, but I will try to argue towards the end of the paper that it should not disappear either; on the contrary, the fact that it does not disappear is a consequence of Kant's theory of space and time. Given these considerations, I shall not present other viewpoints that attempt to avoid the tautology expressed in points (1) and (2) of the metaphysical exposition of space and time.

An interesting observation is made by Dryer (2017): "To recognize things as being red, someone must already have the concept of red. But this does not establish that this concept is not empirical. To observe certain things about ourselves, we must represent them in space. However, how can this fact prove that space is not an empirical concept?". This objection can be easily dismissed: the concept of "red" is not *a priori* because it precedes a certain experience, but because it does not precede any experience, as in the case of space and time, which precede any experience. Furthermore, the precedence in question here is a logical one, not a temporal one.

It is evident that Kant's intention here contradicts Leibniz; things depend on space and time, not space and time depend on things. In other words, the pure forms of sensibility are universal forms of all things.

The second argument for apriority is considered by the same exegete to be much stronger than the first, but essentially it supports the same thing, albeit in a positive formulation. The second proposition in the argument is actually the premise: "we cannot represent the absence of space, but we can represent space devoid of objects." Allison reformulates the argument so that its structure is more visible: "if X can exist (or can be represented) without A, B, C or their reciprocal relations, but A, B, and C cannot exist (or cannot be represented) without X, then X must be considered as a condition of

possibility for A, B, C, and their reciprocal relations." (Allison 1983, 86)

Kemp Smith rejects this argument on the grounds that it relies on a psychological impossibility to represent things without space. Other exegetes argue that here Kant asserts the impossibility of conceiving the non-existence of space. Of course, Allison, as mentioned above, considers that space is not logically necessary. Another example can be brought forth in favor of the necessity of space as a representation of things. The judgment "Every body has extension" is an analytic judgment (Kant 1999, XX, §IV). If it is analytic, it means that the concept of body includes the note of extension, and since all things (*Gegenstand*) are bodies, it means that they have an extension. Therefore, all things necessarily depend on their representation on the forms of sensibility (in this case, on spatial ones, but it can be easily shown that they also necessarily depend on temporal representation).

Allison considers that the psychological impossibility mentioned by Kemp Smith is actually an epistemic one, because space and time are conditions of possibility for phenomena. It is not possible to eliminate space and time while maintaining intuitive content in representations at the same time. "Like the first argument, this one establishes the *a priori* status of space and time representations by indicating their unique and foundational role for human experience." (Allison 1983, 89). But, unlike the first argument, the latter also highlights the fact that space and time (if we also refer to the corresponding argument for time) have their own content that remains when abstraction is made from anything empirical, i.e., from sensation in intuition.

The following presentations are classified as arguments in favor of the intuitive nature of space:

> 3) Space is not a discursive or, as is said, general concept of relations of things in general, but a pure intuition. For, first, one can only represent a single space, and if one speaks of many spaces, one understands by that only parts of one and the same unique space. And these parts cannot as it were precede the single all-encompassing space as its components (from which its composition would be possible), but rather are only thought in it. It is essentially single; the manifold in it, thus also the general concept of spaces in general, rests merely on limitations. From this it follows that in respect to it an *a priori* intuition (which is not empirical) grounds all concepts of it. Thus also all geometrical principles, e.g., that in a triangle two sides together are always greater than the third, are never derived from

> general concepts of line and triangle, but rather are derived from intuition and indeed derived *a priori* with apodictic certainty.
> 4) Space is represented as an infinite[4] given magnitude. Now one must, to be sure, think of every concept as a representation that is contained in an infinite set of different possible representations (as their common mark), which thus contains these under itself; but no concept, as such, can be thought as if it contained an infinite set of representations within itself. Nevertheless space is so thought (for all the parts of space, even to infinity, are simultaneous). Therefore the original representation of space is an *a priori* intuition, not a concept. (Kant 1999, B39-40 / A23-25)

In these expositions, Kant speaks of space (and time[5]) as intuitions, meaning that they refer directly to objects. If space were a discursive concept, then there would be something real that corresponds to it, and furthermore, what corresponds to it in reality should be such that space represents the common note of those entities. It is evident that in reality, something with the character of infinity cannot be known, which means that space itself cannot be perceived. However, since it is not perceived and yet we have knowledge about it, it must belong to our cognitive forms. At this point, two possibilities arise: in a Kantian manner, space may belong, as a form, either to sensibility or to the intellect (or even to reason, as a faculty of knowledge). By elimination, it is attributed to sensibility because if it belonged to reason, it would be an idea, and it would not be at the basis of experience but rather at the other end of its systematization. If it belonged to the intellect, it would mean that it is a pure concept, which would not be possible since it is not found in any function of the intellect in judgments. The

[4] In Fullerton's conception, space, as form, is coextensive with the matter that gives it content - in this sense, it is limited. (Fullerton 1901)

[5] "4) Time is no discursive or, as one calls it, general concept, but a pure form of sensible intuition. Different times are only parts of one and the same time. That representation, however, which can only be given through a single object, is an intuition. Further, the proposition that different times cannot be simultaneous cannot be derived from a general concept. The proposition is synthetic, and cannot arise from concepts alone. It is therefore immediately contained in the intuition and representation of time.
5) The infinitude of time signifies nothing more than that every determinate magnitude of time is only possible through limitations of a single time grounding it. The original representation time must therefore be given as unlimited. But where the parts themselves and every magnitude of an object can be determinately represented only through limitation, there the entire representation cannot be given through concepts, «for they contain only partial representations», but immediate intuition must ground them." (Kant 1999, A31-32/B47-48)

only possibility left is for space to be a form of sensibility. However, if space and time are intuitions and not discursive concepts, then the question arises: what sense does a metaphysical exposition of the "concept" of space (or time) have? In what sense is space (or time) a concept? It has been shown that it is not a discursive concept, and from this, it has been deduced, by opposition, that it is an intuition, but neither the categories are discursive concepts. They are pure concepts, but they are not intuitions. Are there other types of concepts to which Kant could refer? The distinction between representation and intuition must first be clarified. As an original representation, space is not a concept but an intuition. Could it be a concept as another kind of representation? If we also consider the theory of intellect and especially the relationships established between sensibility and intellect, new perspectives on this problem can be brought up. As far as I understand, we can speak of representations of things only when the intellect participates in the synthesis of the diverse. Moreover, the first step of synthesis, the apprehension in intuition, can be interpreted as the result of the action of categories on the diversity of sensibility. Along this path, spatial (or temporal) representation is necessary to be aware of things as being external to each other, or external to us, or successive, or simultaneous because they primarily relate to things. I believe that only after the transcendental object intervenes in the synthesis of diversity does sensation place the object as exterior to consciousness. A simple example is provided by "the judgments of perception"- improperly called so, as Kant himself considers (Kant 2002). In a judgment where the categories of the intellect do not produce the synthesis of diversity, we are not dealing with objects, meaning sensations do not rise to the level of concepts. Thus, the question arises whether in this situation the forms of sensibility still organize the matter of the phenomenon. I believe the answer is negative. For example, when we hold a stone in our hands, if we do not reach the synthesis of diversity through categories, all we can say is that we feel a weight, unlike the objective judgment about an external existence: "This stone is heavy." In judgment, more precisely in the representation of weight, isolated from its object, the reference to something external disappears, meaning no specific location in space corresponding to that felt weight is specified. However, I still feel that weight, so I am aware of my own state, meaning I am aware of a succession of my internal states. This observation must imply the contribution of temporal intuition in the judgment of perception.

However, I believe that this implication occurs only if it is accompanied by transcendental apperception, namely the possibility of the judgment "I think" being associated with those states. But the contribution of apperception is not necessary, because when I feel the weight, I do not have to affirm (and this is the case in judgments of perception) that that state belongs to me. Of course, this argumentation is possible only by considering the order of the synthesis of diversity, because otherwise, to say that in a previous state I felt a weight, I must be conscious that I felt that weight, meaning I must be aware of my own internal states, in other words, I must be given in apperception. To summarize, judgments of perception do not presuppose any synthesis of diversity produced by the intellect, but their analysis can only be done indirectly. However, when Kant speaks of time and space, he constantly refers to these forms as representations. Since they are representations, it means they are accompanied by the self-awareness of the knowing subject. This is also the argument that allows Kant in the chapter "Refutation of Idealism" and in the note from the 1787 *Preface* to the *Critique of Pure Reason*, which supports the ideas from the mentioned chapter, to consider that an awareness of internal states presupposes spatial representation. What the intellect gives to pure diversity is unity. Space and time as representations have this unity from the intellect.

As a general note on the metaphysical exposition, it is observed that each argument takes for granted what needs to be proven. This interpretation views the argumentation in a syllogistic sense, or at least as an inference leading to a conclusion. From here arise several problems, noted by Kantian exegetes. Firstly, if we are dealing with an argument, as mentioned earlier, then it does not achieve its goal, being circular. Moreover, these four arguments are part of the metaphysical exposition of the concept of space, in the situation where the third and fourth arguments explicitly state, "space is not a concept." How is it then possible to expose the concept of space if space is not a concept?

The solutions are multiple. They can be grouped into two categories: positive, which attempt various interpretations of the arguments so that they are not circular, or negative, which emphasize their circular nature and conclude their futility. I believe another interpretation can be supported as well. Taking Kant's expression of "metaphysical exposition" as a premise, several conclusions can be drawn. Kant understands by this expression "the clear (though not detailed) representation of what belongs to a concept; and this

exposition is metaphysical if it includes what the concept represents as given *a priori*" (Kant 1999, B38). In other words, the four arguments are not strictly inferences leading to a conclusion, but rather an analysis or explanation of a concept.

But the question still remains unanswered. Space is an intuition, yet Kant provides an exposition of the concept of space. This issue, I believe, encompasses two aspects:

1. What kind of concept is space?
2. Why didn't Kant provide an exposition of space as intuition?

It can be argued that space is indeed a concept, but not a discursive one encompassing common features of multiple objects. As a concept, it must belong to the intellect. However, its content is provided by sensibility, i.e., by intuition. Other concepts also have content provided by intuition, but they do not have intuition as their object, meaning that the entire spatial representation is not their content. Thus, the concept of space has intuition as its sole object. Therefore, clarifying the concept of space means representing its content, i.e., intuition. Clarifying the features of the concept is equivalent to specifying the features of spatial intuition. Thus, a pure concept of space is possible, which has spatial intuition as its sole object. This concept is expounded in the *Transcendental Aesthetic*. The same applies to the concept of time.

In this situation, another problem arises: why did Kant prefer an exposition of a concept, since the original representation is much more suited to intuition? The answer may be simple: since intuition is a direct relation to objects, and in the *Transcendental Aesthetic* sensibility is isolated from everything empirical or belonging to other faculties, an exposition of space could not be done as intuition, because intuition has no features and therefore there would be nothing to expose, only the concept about that intuition has features. An intuition cannot be expressed in language except through a concept. I believe that now we can also respond to the issue of the tautology of the argumentation. In fact, in the metaphysical exposition, we do not have deductive, foundational argumentation, but rather an analysis of a concept. Since the concept of space and that of time are based on corresponding intuitions, any argument that seeks to prove the resulting attributes can only be circular. All the properties of space, whether considered as a concept or an original representation, are derived from the corresponding intuition. If the arguments were not apparently circular, this would mean that they are synthetic, i.e., they

assert more about space and time than is contained in their intuitions, which is impossible, since the concepts were constructed based on intuitions. All four expositions would lose any meaning if they were to abstract from their corresponding intuitions. Furthermore, these points could not be expressed if intuitions did not have corresponding concepts. I believe this interpretation manages to reconcile the positions initially presented while consistently describing Kant's argumentation.

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Finding care through Filipino perspective and Heideggerian environmental thinking

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Abstract: Care is a vital context of human experience and is essential to a life of thinking that promotes the restoration of nature amidst the advent of technological challenges. The environmental crisis is more than just a mere disruption and human intervention in the natural environment. The absence of care as a shepherd implies humanity's negligence in granting technological structures that displace all other human values. This paper reflects on the interconnectedness of the Filipino perspective and Heideggerian environmental thinking and aims to demonstrate our fitting place with the world and not as lords and masters of the earth. This work explores the effects of environmental degradation and strives for an attunement of human existence that promotes environmental concern. It discloses the need to revisit the path of meditative thinking to live environmentally and to realize the significance of nature as home. Finally, this paper argues for the relevance of continually asking the question of the Filipino worldview concerning his relationship with nature.

Keywords: care, environment, Filipino perspective, Heidegger, meditative thinking, technology

Introduction

This paper explores the crucial landscape of care amid of environmental key issues and attempts a preparatory reflection as I unravel the hopes of how Filipino perspectives and Heideggerian environmental thinking reveal involvement in finding our appropriate relationship with the world. My aim is not only to suggest possible ways of linking Filipino thought with environmental issues by seeking critical engagement about emerging technological concerns but also to remind ourselves of the ways of learning about ourselves and the world

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within which the Filipino perspective is located. The question 'whether a Filipino perspective about care?' entails a logical assumption that there is a Filipino perspective about care. Is there a Filipino perspective on care? Fundamentally, my main contention is the quest for the meaning of the existence of Filipinos doing philosophy which could prepare a possible escape from a technological, calculative and manipulated view about nature, which also confined human beings, or could it lead us to a relentless drive for objectification and manipulation.

Heidegger's critique of technology concerns humanity's failure in understanding the essence of technology. Technological thinking controls and endangers humanity, leading to calamity. Heidegger's assertion towards thinking can be seen as a remedy to ecological crisis. In Heidegger's *Building, Dwelling, Thinking: In Basic Writings* (1993, 304), he stressed that our indispensable relation to being defines us as 'shepherds of being', rather than being the lords and masters. But, if we examined carefully what was happening, emerging technologies led us to interpret ourselves not as 'shepherds of being' but otherwise which have carried us into the age of environmental crisis. According to Heidegger (1993, 325), *enframing* is how Being manifests itself in the age of technology. *Enframing* allows human beings to reveal reality only as a standing reserve / *Bestand* (Heidegger 1993, 322); it limits one's way of thinking to make reality calculable and manipulate the world.

Scientific and technological thinking have now 'enframed' the natural world by transforming it into a mere object readily available for domination, consumption, and exploitation. Thus, the natural world has become a 'standing reserve' readily available for humanity's technical manipulation. Nature's furthering is aimed toward "driving on to the maximum yield at the minimum expense" (Heidegger 1977, 15). One's way of thinking, talking, and acting were consigned into the world of objectification and control. Humanity became what Heidegger calls 'a standing reserve'. Humanity's technological thinking causes a lot of cases of mismanagement and lack of proper control measures on the use of technology, thus resulting in an inauthentic human being in the world. Thus, for Heidegger, the only suitable response is "to pit meditative thinking decisively against merely calculative thinking" (Heidegger 1966, 53).

In *Building Dwelling Thinking* (1975), Heidegger narrates, "man dwells in that he builds… man is capable of such building only if he

already builds in the sense of poetic taking measure" (Heidegger 1975, 227). He declares that building is not just for construction and creation. It is through building that humanity attains dwelling. For Heidegger, etymologically speaking, the words 'building' and 'dwelling' were coined from the German term *bauen,* which conveys that we have to value, safeguard, protect, and care for, "specifically to till the soil and cultivate the vine" (Ibid, 147). Dwelling may also means safeguarding, it characterizes an ability to nurture and care for other beings. In this way, "mortals dwell in that they save the earth…to save really means to set something free into its own presencing…saving the earth does not master the earth and subjugate it" (Ibid, 150).

Methodology

This paper employs an interpretive method to identify significant insights about the concern that is being examined based from the observations of the writer. Findings that are related to the literature cited in the paper as it pursues to resolve questions regarding the Filipino perspective and the condition of man and nature in today's technological age. This study argues in favor of the need to re-awaken one's proper disposition with technology into an ethics of care that could lead to a way out from the existential crisis, which also enriches both the person and the environment. This study used descriptive and expository methods in presenting and describing Heidegger's concepts about technology, meditative thinking, and authentic and inauthentic existence. This study also employed critical analysis in evaluating Filipino behaviors, and practices, and to find the concept of care in the light of Heidegger's philosophy.

The technological *enframing*

Heidegger illustrates that while the sciences have tried to separate themselves from philosophy in order to reach their autonomy, their advancement however, has led to the completion of philosophy, it is in the sciences that philosophy becomes "the technology by which [man] establishes himself in the world," a kind of technology that Heidegger describes as *enframing*. Heidegger concludes that "the end of philosophy proves to be the triumph of the manipulable arrangement of a scientific-technological world" and declares this as "the beginning of the world civilization based upon Western European thinking" (Heidegger 1972, 57-59). Heidegger is not against science and technology, rather, he is in contrast to all forms of manipulation that

subdue nature. He says: "Let beings be" (Heidegger 1996, 30), for him, environmental distress is caused by technological understanding of beings. The maxim "To the things themselves!"—which he beautifully explains as "to let what shows itself be seen from itself, just as it shows itself from itself" (Ibid.).

Heidegger reiterates that we should not destroy nature, rather, we should take care of it. His ethics is identical to virtue ethics, for it features certain traits essential to the good life. His concept about dwelling towards sparring and preserving, is close to the perspective of preserving from something, i.e., to be safeguarded and to be cared for. We are called on to safeguard nature. We are not only shepherds of nature, we are also the guardians of truth. Guarding and shepherding are behaviors proper to human dwelling, and they are something of which human beings are capable. Thus, to spare and preserve is to regard nature in our care. We are tasked to be vigilant, to be watchful, and to respond to the appeal of calculative thinking. Calculative thinking has directed human beings to transform themselves into being the lords and masters of nature rather than as the 'shepherds of being', and this has brought us into the age of environmental crisis.

Enframing sets upon us, it does not only challenge us but it also orders everything into calculative thinking which commands and directs human beings into technical-calculative creature. It hides in this technical-calculative creature as it reduces one's actions into standing-reserve. It also diminishes its purpose and possibility, i.e., storing of resources. When *enframing* controls its way, one no longer encounters oneself in his essence, one fails to see and hear oneself as the speaker to and thus "can never encounter only himself" (Heidegger 1977a, 27). It compromises humanity and it shows no other way of revealing the world, since it is a challenging one, thus from where *Enframing* prospers, the supreme danger also appears.

On meditative thinking

The basis for Heideggerian ethics is meditative thinking for it shows one's engagement in the world. Meditative thinking leads the way toward a meaningful relationship with other beings. It also keeps the essence of truth and protects nature in general. One needs to evade this technological thinking since it confronts and subdues nature, thus leading to an environmental concern.

Heidegger's call for a meditative attunement with the world allows a way towards proper care for nature. He suggests a kind attitude

towards nature, not of domination and exploitation for these characterize an assault on nature, but of humility and stewardship of seeing the earth as what it is, thus taking care of it. Allowing nature as what it is could mean preserving and safeguarding. This caring outlook brings the essence of nature into things and also grants things themselves free from any form of the challenging character of technological outlook.

Humanity's drive for mastery characterizes today' technological period an displaces us in our fitting dwelling place. In Heidegger's *Building Dwelling Thinking* (1975), he discusses that the heart of dwelling can only be realized through our important meeting with different beings. We are tasked to safeguard, protect, and care for those beings. Consequently, Filipino's caring attitude leads to the preservation of nature, it does not challenge nature, rather, it avoids ways leading to a disturbed, bothered, and restless environment. In *Building Dwelling Thinking* (1975, 150), for Heidegger the word *bauen* denotes preservation. When one saves the earth, it means "to rescue it from ruin, to free it into its own essence, and to bring it under our care". Thus, to save the world means we need to revitalize it. The mechanical and calculative thinking of technology have challenged nature which ultimately destroy her. To preserve means to save the earth. If we allow beings to themselves and give their independence and self-standing, then, nature will appear into our awareness and show herself as a real worry for human beings.

For Heidegger, meditative thinking shows an important ground for our meaningful relationship with nature in general. It appeals us to prevent the exploitative and challenging revealing of things and nature in as a whole. Through this, it allows beings and the rest of nature to disclose themselves freely rather than the dictates of calculative thinking that governs in the age of modern technology. Meditative thinking translates towards a meaningful relation with the beings and nature that we encounter and thereby becomes a significant part of our lives. Thus, in accepting nature as an essential part of us, an authentic environmental concern also manifests.

Meditative thinking is the saving power that could help us from the many dangers of technology for it leads us a way out from *enframing* as a replacement to the calculative thinking of modern science. It allows us to have a better engagement with the world and helps us to recover from the dangers of *enframing*, thus, allowing nature to become significant for us beyond the concern science and technology.

Inauthentic existence manipulates nature and ourselves by holding sway to the challenging character of a theoretical and calculative mindset.

Filipino perspective of care

The perspective about care is personal since one's search for the meaning of one's existence is neither collective nor universal. Care for some could mean an enhancement to a culture, while for others it could be a people's way of life with emphasis to *linang*, usually referring to a land that has been cleared to prepare for it its sowing (Almario 2010, 167, 702). If one listens to the words that nature is telling, one could realize what really worried him, i.e., to be constantly faithful to what is really occuring and bring into public a particular concern. Humanity's care for others *kapwa* acknowledges our connection with others and for nature has been considered as one of the emerging concerns in the scientific discourse, not only from the ethical aspect of environmental viewpoint but also in terms of re-awakening people's environmental awareness. Such an attitude towards nature tends to care more for the environment. In general, it fosters environmental concerns to become much more central in public discussion, since much of the discussions of these issues are often limited to scientific and economic concern.

Filipino culture of *linang* could generate a better look into our actions and to think meaningfully beyond the technological framework. Filipinos, then could develop a better disposition towards this world- humanity's only home which is undeniably, an essential part of human existence. Quito (2008) reminds us that we need self-examination to know who we are. Failure to observe this reminder results in an inauthentic existence. This kind of existence occurs when one's action does not worry about any responsibility, neglects to exercise freedom, and just follows as what the crowd dictates. The worst of it is that when one fails to realize one's own action and has no understanding of it.

Filipinos have to re-awaken the sense of care for nature, we need not to take for granted our behaviors and practices. Failure to understand our behavior and practices leads us in inauthentic existence and the danger of losing our relationship with others. Inauthentic existence happens when we live by the dictates and influence of others or more specifically by doing what the 'they' said. We exist without autonomy and control of ourselves. We follow the dictates of calculative thinking on how and what we should do. We fall into a

kind of existence wherein one loses his own identity. In inauthenticity, a sense of responsibility, decision making, and uniqueness are lost, while in authenticity, one understands freedom and applies it. We have to re-evaluate our daily activities behavior and practices so as not to be 'enframed' by the calculative thinking of technology which has become enormously dominated and uncontrollable.

A similar point may be inferred when we neglect to care. The absence of care develops into negative Filipino behaviors, and practices which might result in no self-realization, a lack of understanding of what really matters, and a failure to take responsibility. The same goes with Heidegger's concept of inauthentic existence where *Dasein* failed to realize and listen to his own self, allowing the 'they' to take control of one's life, and taking no responsibilities for his actions. On the other hand, authentic existence requires a great command and control over oneself, one needs to listen to the call and return to a kind of thinking (meditative) and, take an action free from the calling of calculative and technological apparatuses. One can only hear and listen to the call of reflective thinking when one thinks meditatively. One can also hear and listen to the call of nature when one acts carefully.

Care as shepherds of Being

Heidegger declares that man is the shepherd of Being. He says, that man is 'thrown' from Being itself into the truth of Being so that he might "guard the truth of Being, in order that beings might appear in the light of Being as the beings they are." (Heidegger 1993, 334-335) To be a guardian of truth is, for Heidegger, to let things show in the light of being; to allow things to be themselves to let them free from any form of challenging forth; thus, to spare and preserve is to regard nature in our care.

> Guardianship means, is to be vigilant, to be watchful for the coming of destiny of Being, a vigilance that issues from a long and ever-renewed thoughtful deliberateness, which heeds the directive that lies in the manner in which Being makes its appeal. In the destiny of Being, there is never a mere sequence of things one after another: now frame, then world and thing; rather, there is always a passing by and simultaneity of the early and late (Heidegger 1971, 184).

Heidegger's view of nature as our dwelling place contributes to a positive ecological message, particularly his tone about humanity as a shepherd who cares for nature and not as an exploiter who masters and

manipulates it. Keeping in mind that our role as shepherds is to be cautious so as not to conceive ourselves as masters or lords but as guardians. For Heidegger, *bauen* also conveys that we have to value, safeguard, protect, and care for, "specifically to till the soil and cultivate the vine" (Heidegger 1975, 147). Therefore, dwelling is safeguarding, for it nurtures and cares nature in general. In this manner, "mortals dwell in that they save the earth…to save really means to set something free into its own presencing…saving the earth does not master the earth and subjugate it" (Ibid, 150).

Filipinos with a develop culture and a way of life search for their noble aspiration to become more human with their values such as justice, prudence, benevolence, truth, love, beauty, and friendship. Armed with these values, these serve as their compass in the midst of 'the dangers' of *enframing*. Heidegger (1977b, 23) says, "The essence of modern technology shows itself in what we call *Enframing*". He further emphasizes that through this *enframing*, human beings failed to encounter themselves and their essence in today's technological era. We as human beings lose our authenticity. We cannot be ourselves because of the predominance of technical and calculative reasoning. *Enframing* hides the truth: as he says, "*Enframing* blocks the shining-forth and holding sway of truth" (Ibid, 28). Thus, Heidegger suggests that through questioning, a free relationship to technology is possible, since questioning helps us transform a path of thinking by experiencing a modified relationship with other beings. If one is attuned, one can also experience a shift in attitude characterized by wonder and carefulness.

Modern technology has transformed humanity as the lords and masters of nature. Through meditative thinking, a way is possible for the saving power that could redeem humankind, for it allows us to cultivate our free relation to technology, releasement toward things, and openness to the mystery. The problem with technological thinking destroys other's life, we become mastered and disconnected components and brings ourselves as lords of the earth, thus falling into an inauthentic existence. It displaces all other human values and allows only one system of rationality. When one became 'enframed', one failed to reflect, and care was lost and we do not worry at all. As Marcuse (1964b) asserts, technological rationality has led to a one-dimensional society.

> Since reality, identity, and freedom lose their natural potency, Marcuse spoke of one-dimensional reality, behaviour, or thinking. The fear or challenge is that "Everything cooperates to turn human instincts, desires and thoughts into channels that feed the apparatus… The relationships among men are increasingly mediated by the machine process" (Marcuse 1941, 420).

In today's modern age, we are trapped in what Heidegger calls *Enframing* (*Gestell*). *Enframing* for Heidegger is the essence of technology, it represents beings as standing reserves, it covers up the truth and it limits one's way of thinking. It also limits the possible truths and worst loses our authenticity because of the predominance of technical and calculative reasoning. For Heidegger, we must gain intelligibility as the essence of thinking. Intelligibility leads us into an open relationship with beings and to the mystery of nature. Filipino views tend to always live by the influence and dictate of others. Technological apparatuses have controlled humanity's thinking. Control and manipulation displace care. When one is consumed by technology, one neglects to think and reflect on why we do such behavior or perform a certain action. Thus, to find care is to re-awaken our values and return to ourselves to regain our autonomy. If we understand care and are aware of it, then we can avoid committing again those behaviors, and practices that lead to inauthenticity. One becomes inauthentic because of our "forgetfulness" and "just drift along with the latest trends" (Guignon 1993, 234). Inauthenticity results when one just follows what the 'they' said without looking back to its origin.

Care as antidote to 'equipmental' attitude

Heidegger claimed that the characterizing feature of modern life was the 'forgetting of Being'. He has expressed his concern to understand and critically reflect on the increased technological transformation. Modern people think about humanity and nature in general as things to be used and thus, to be consumed as efficiently as possible. Technology as a whole dominates and challenges the rest of nature. Heidegger articulates that, "everything is taken as a standing-reserve to be manipulated and formed that ultimately causes much harm regardless of its benefits" (Heidegger 1977b, 16-17). He has been bothered by calculative thinking, for it is progressively being espoused unreflectively in the modern and technological age, which causes for the concealing of our authentic nature and the corruption of our

reflective attitude towards the way of revealing which holds in modern technology. Technological intervention and modernized technologies make manifest a dominant order that manipulates people which has brought the individual into the era of existential challenges. Meditative thinking ss a way out from scientific, calculative, and power-seeking interests of modern technology as the possible escape from the dangers of calculative thinking. Negative Filipino behaviors and practices were very similar to Heidegger's concept of Dasein's inauthentic existence. We should aim to grasp our 'our-selves' and individual interests and then rise above it to a more universal perspective, and not to surrender to a socialized and superficial mode of being ('they-self'), this Heideggerian journey leads us away from inauthenticity to authenticity.

The earlier Heidegger of *Being and Time* (1962) pursues to retrieve the ignored question of the meaning of being, i.e., "what it means for something to be?" We have disregarded this question because we prefer to think of what it is to be. We have forgotten to live and we lost to experience the mystery of existence, thus, we cannot be ourselves because of the predominance of technical and calculative reasoning. To care is to appreciate, and respond appropriately to the things that we encounter, it avoids how we look at nature through the narrow lenses of our own interests. We treat others as means and not as ends. This kind of attitude to nature is dominant in the natural science. Natural science treats nature as a set of mere objects. Most of the time, we treat people as what Heidegger terms 'equipment' as if they were tools and instruments, rather than the beings as they are.

Thus, this 'equipmental' attitude toward nature constitutes an inherent threat to the self-standing of nature as it awaits technology's challenging use, characterized by domination. This prevents nature from expressing her very own self and structure, thus, it degrades nature. Throughout our quest, can we really ultimately feel a new kind of 'care' for the rest of nature that lies beyond ourselves? Whatever possible term for such an endeavor, the most important qualification is that Filipinos meditatively distinguish and create their own discourse as persons who assert the relevance of continually discussing the question concerning care for nature.

Conclusion

This paper tried to establish the claim that Filipinos have a fundamental concern for others. Critical in today's age is the role of

technology in our attitude towards nature and care for the environment. Thus, a return to a kind of thinking (meditatively) is necessary to look more closely into re-awakening Filipino perspectives on caring. There is a need to revive these caring values and nurture them to bring them into the public sphere. One has to redeem oneself from the dangers of technological thinking. Similarly, Heidegger's concept of *Dasein* underlines the significance of realizing our ethical relation with others and to the natural world. Both the Filipino perspective and Heidegger's environmental thinking encourage us to reflect on our fitting relationship with the rest of nature. It is through the ethics of care, that to leads to an escape from the calculative thinking. Thus, this paper endorses meditative thinking as an important component to 'equipmental' attitude and technological reform toward a deeper understanding of our existence.

Filipino perspective about care and Heideggerian environmental thinking reveal a similar concern for the environment and an appreciation of the interrelatedness of all beings. There is a need to foster meditative thinking which promotes the value of care in restoring nature and as an alternative to technological rationality. Both perspectives feature the vision of living within a flourishing nature and offer significant questions toward the development of a better definition of our appropriate place in the natural world.

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Moral psychology as ethical practice[1]

Bogdan Popoveniuc[*]

Abstract: The development of GenAI, exhibiting intelligent behavior without comprehension, challenges traditional views that link morality to comprehension, emphasizes the crucial role of moral psychology in advancing humanity and argues for a significant paradigm shift to address the negative impacts of digitalization, virtualization, and increasing reliance on AI in moral and legal matters. It explores the complex recessive relationships between ethics and morality, as well as between moral psychology and moral philosophy. The paper critiques the current state of moral psychology, which is overly focused on positivism and often neglects the nuanced nature of moral judgments. It is argued that this approach relies excessively on "computing thinking," which diminishes the subjective and emotional aspects of morality. The paper advocates for a humanistic psychological perspective grounded in a comprehensive ethical foundation, emphasizing the importance of emotions, cognition, social evolution, and character development in shaping moral behavior. It highlights the critical role of moral character and critiques purely rational approaches to ethics and morality. This "second-generation cognitivism" (e-cognitivism) must incorporate the enactive, embedded, embodied, extended, and mainly experiential and emotional aspects of the mind. This shift is crucial for preserving human understanding and preventing the surrender to a technological singularity. Considering its profound influence on human self-image, the necessity of embracing a pedagogical and visionary role in psychological research is underscored.

Keywords: e-cognitivism, moral consciousness, scientific image, scientific paradigm, technological singularity

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The aporias of psychology as science

The invention of GenAI, by far surpassing the famous Turing (1950) test, proves that knowledge, competence, and intelligent behavior are possible without comprehension (Dennett 2017). Computer programs can outrun human performances at cognition-based tasks simply by manipulating symbols, which we know for sure they don't understand at this moment (Searle 1980). The moral dumbfounding phenomenon, notable in moral psychology, also gains new significance. As a teacher, I've always had this strange feeling that something seemed lacking about some very good responses from my students when they could not develop them further. I preferred to convince myself that they understood, but other subjective motives affected their ability to articulate their thoughts clearly. However, the GenAI was the living proof that the students' dumbfounding could result from a genuine lack or improper understanding (this alternative being supported by their improper justifications). Understanding is a step further than merely knowing something (Rowley 2007). One can be competent and exhibit intelligent behavior without comprehension. Hence, the moral dumbfounding (Björklund et al. 2000), with all its rightful, but convenable narrative-based contentions (Jacobson 2012; Wylie 2021), discloses the possibility of moral competence without comprehension.

What can psychology, and moral psychology in particular, learn from the impressive performances of Generative Pre-trained Transformer AI? Roger Mucchielli (1974) contends that human facts have some characteristics that make them incompatible with the approach from the natural sciences. The human fact is *global*; it cannot be thoroughly decomposed into distinct parts to be analyzed because it is a heterogeneous synthesis, at a different level of complexity, of a multidimensional reality. The additive summation of biological, social, and cultural factors cannot provide an adequate picture of its nature. Human fact is the *expression of a set of meanings, values, and concepts experienced* by the subject who is acting. As such, it requires comprehension, not only intellectual competence. It is also incomprehensible in the absence of an *analogy between the observer and the observed*. Understanding psychological experience requires both empathy (cognitive, nonetheless) and implies the impossibility of demoting the subject to the instance of an object without losing the very essence of what is desired to be understood. Human fact means, at the same time, *the attestation of an individual presence*, that of the subject who lives, feels, values, and which unfolds in time and space as

consciousness. Finally, human fact is *influenced by the reciprocity of observation*. The awareness of the observer's existence - whether as a virtual presence like God, a social instance such as common sense, or a psychological structure as Super-Ego - alters the unfolding of the psychic fact as such. Consequentially, human fact is inherently moral, as the last three characteristics are morally laden.

For these reasons, Psychology's epistemological project to become a hard science is misleading and detrimental. The human psychic is not a physical object like a neural network; it has an informational nature and a genuine design. Its complexity and irreducibleness to physical laws arise from several fundamental characteristics of its mechanisms, among which are the coexistence of heterogeneous motivations and mechanisms, their "impurity" within any behavior, and the fact that there is not (always) a single explanation of conscious impulses. From an epistemological perspective, there always remains a dependence on theoretical understanding and perception of the world in the sociocultural context. Psychological knowledge involves a complementary First-person - Third-person or an emic-etic approach (Headland et al. 1990). "The subjectivity of consciousness is an irreducible feature of reality" (Nagel 1986, 7). Without it, we couldn't do any objective science, not even psychology. The "scientific image" of the psychic (Dennett 2017) or "a view from nowhere" (Nagel 1986) distorts our understanding of the human psyche and could be detrimental to the evolution of (self-)knowledge in our species.

The main reason is that psychology has a self-referential epistemology. Thus, any conception of psychological functioning affects cognition. Aside from neurological studies, which serve as a complementary aspect that of deciphering the biological underpinnings of human psychology, a comprehensive, integrative, and inherently self-referential psychological theory is needed for experimental research. Any experimental study is constructed based on theoretical supposition. The instruments used are limited to their proprieties. You can study the water in which you are diving using a thermometer, a spectrophotometer, or a refractometer. Each can give you only the presumed qualities. Analogous, selection bias is present from the very beginning of any research in psychology. Most of the grand theories on human psychology are inevitably based on faith-based systems and on some common-sense conceptions. Their first principles are bound to be untested and untestable by nature (McAdams & Pals 2006). These principles are confined to what can be understood through human

phenomenological experience. Similarly, moral psychology inevitably relies on general theories (common or philosophical) on morality that are part of human self-image. Any progress in scientific psychology ("scientific image", in Dennett's terms) brings about changes in common conceptions (manifest self-image), which will create new hypotheses and research, changing the scientific image and so on.

Complexity of moral psychology

The moral realm has its own aporias, and the relation between ethical considerations and human psychology is complex and multifaceted. This connection involves not only how moral beliefs shape individual behavior and thought processes but also how psychological factors influence our understanding of morality. The interplay between moral values and psychological experiences can lead to conflicts, ambiguities, and profound insights. This and the following features highlight the need to examine both aspects to fully understand moral psychology.

First, there is no clear distinction between moral/ethical and immoral/unethical, despite how obvious it may seem. Any rational delineation rapidly encounters anecdotic counterexamples, insoluble dilemmas, and opposing interpretations. Moral competence is based on character formation, meanings, and intersubjective negotiations within a (shared) space of understanding.

Second, people's conduct in life is oriented by their values - those "trans-situational goals, varying in importance, which serve as guiding principles in the life of a person or group" (Schwartz 2017). These values cover the entire range between selfish assertiveness to moral prosocial behavior (Hinde 2009). Individual morality was evolutionarily built by the requirements of managing the relationship between individual and group's needs, survival and welfare of the groups, and relation with nature (Schwartz 2017). However, only the social-focused values from Schwartz et al. (2012) hold true moral significance, even as nature-focused values gain recognition for their moral relevance in the context of climate change and resource depletion. From Schwartz's values catalog, only self-transcendence values of *universalism* and *benevolence* can be considered moral values *per se*. In comparison, *conformity* and *tradition*, while group-oriented, may conflict with equally righteous needs of other groups and subject to become unethical. Value pluralism holds that values are not mutually exclusive, allowing for a more nuanced approach to moral

dilemmas compared to moral values relativism or fundamentalism. The distinction between morally "good" values and individual or group "valuable" values is crucial. It is not easy to differentiate values that form the ethical infrastructure ("infraethics") (Floridi 2013) and morally "good" values or "truly" ethical values. Some of the purported moral "foundations," such as loyalty, authority, or spirituality (Haidt 2012), are not ethical *per se*. "High levels of trust, respect, reliability, privacy, transparency, and even freedom of expression, openness, and fair competition" facilitate good decisions and actions but also can form the group-bonding base for a cohesive, efficient society of Nazi, terrorist, or fanatics (Floridi 2013). Evolutionary foundations, rules, or rational utilitarian decision-making cannot secure the morality of judgment and conduct. The ethical character of morally good deeds lies in a sort of comprehensive virtue practice. Similar to the exiled concept of character from psychology, for the sin of resisting operationalization, virtue ethics is unrightfully dismissed by failing the situationist challenge (Ahlenius 2021) to provide action guidance (Annas 2014). Virtue and character cannot be acceptably computed on a trait-based model of personality, so they were largely sidelined in psychological research.

Third, the *a priori* cognitive mechanisms of moral intuitions add another layer of complexity to the intricacy of the affective-cognitive foundation of moral judgment. Not only are moral judgments based on deontological or utilitarian reasoning, as most psychological research studies seem to support, but the infra-logic of moral intuitions comprises complex heuristics as well. Individuals can arrive at the same "gut feeling" of good or bad on different or combined paths: the role-model entity assessment, action analysis, or consequence tallying. As such, moral intuition can result from integrating agent-based heuristics of virtues, deed-based heuristics of rules, outcome-based heuristics of consequences, or a combination of them (Dubljević & Racine 2014). All three main ethical theories have their specific heuristic. Thus, there is no rule-based, algorithmic system or utilitarian calculus for judging and deciding ethically in daily life. The valid application of rules or utilitarian decision-making reasoning requires (self-)reflexivity, as much as a virtuous approach, to result in sound and suited conclusions due to the richness of human contexts and experiences. Sound moral judgment in complex matters implies at least three types of reflexivity, all based on higher abilities for critical thinking: *hetero-reflexivity* associated with normative ethics, the

evaluation of the principles that justify moral judgments; *intro-reflexivity* evaluated by the research in the psychology of neural, cognitive, and affective processes involved in moral judgment; and *self-reflexivity* or metaethical analysis of the purpose of morality, the status, and nature of moral judgments. Therefore, to secure the moral reasoning for perverse twisting, reflexive management of all is required for moral competence, a concept that is highly polysemous in popular culture, scientific research, and philosophy (Lind 2008).

Fourth, because our moral psychology depends on consciousness, and since our own conscious intuitions shape how we understand consciousness, this enmeshes the scientific explanation (Sattin et al. 2021). As the latest trends in the psychology of consciousness suggest, the consciousness itself looks more like an underlying automated moral compass than a user-dependent control panel. The consciousness did not evolve primarily for individual survival but rather for the social purpose of enhancing communication among humans. Even subjective awareness may not have as much of a direct causal influence as it is essential for interactions in social contexts (Halligan & Oakley 2021). This perspective challenges naïve traditional perspectives on the autonomy of consciousness, arguing that it primarily fulfills a moral function. It basically sustains the species as a whole rather than individuals. Facilitating social interactions and the sharing of ideas and emotions among individuals primarily contributes to collective survival and well-being (Halligan & Oakley 2024). This view aligns with the conception of the self as a mental homeostasis sustained by soft-wired semantic encapsulation and auto-organization of informational cognitions. It emerges as an "unnatural" break with nature, which is possible only through "collaborative and cumulative effort by generations through time" (Floridi 2011, 560). The consciousness, "our personal user-illusions" "enabled by the installation of a virtual machine made of virtual machines made of virtual machines," developed evolutionarily and is molded through ongoing communication processes as we share information and seek reasons with others (Dennett 2017, 341). What defines us as human, or our human essence, results from our existence in communities. We are a "selves-created" community of intelligent beings. Morality always implies (mutual) furtherance, an abstract, presumed or lived "I-Thou" relation with an "Other" (Buber 1970). The highest and most complex states we can experience, such as love, self-actualization, or self-transcendence, are intrinsically moral and arise from the irreducible

authenticity of human consciousness. These states involve transcending Selfhood toward Otherness, whether that is in individual relationships, collective connections, transcendent relations or our symbiosis with the natural world. The moral dimension forms the genetic bricks of evolved consciousness. "Selfhood of oneself implies otherness to such an intimate degree that one cannot be thought of without the other" (Ricœur 1992, 3). Yet, living in an environment filled with artificial cognitions fosters instead a monological "I-It" relationships among isolated and self-contained individuals and threatens the dialogical moral "I-Thou" intersubjectivity.

As a result, ethical normativity is underivable from physicalism because it is the product of autonomous conscious agents, even if their comprehension and their "space of reasons" (Sellars 2007) are largely determined by their biology. The moral meaning is context-dependent because it results from the complex intricacies of our self-narratives, constructed in time on the collective world of shared ideas through communication. Cognitive processes of constructing meaning have an interpretive nature and not a causal determinative one (van den Berg & Corrias, 2023). The existential moral experience (*moralische Erlebnis*), rather than intellectual understanding, is what truly inspires, motivates, and guides our ethical reasoning (*moralische Erfahrung*) (see Heidegger 1972; Kim 2005). Our lived experiences and emotions shape our moral beliefs and decisions more profoundly than abstract concepts or theories alone. Morality is inextricably intertwined with the bodily sensations and emotions within cognition in an unmitigated experience (*Erlebnis*), This connection gives rise to distinctive features of moral reasoning related to non-neurotypical conditions such as autism or psychopathy. (Clarkson et al. 2023; Dempsey et al. 2020; Margoni & Surian 2016; Moran et al. 2011). The approaches in moral psychology should be qualitative and quantitative alike, both nomothetic and idiographic, and rely rather on explorative than confirmatory methodology.

The recessive relationship between moral psychology and moral philosophy

Moral psychology and moral philosophy are in a correlative opposition of recessive relation: independent, standalone views in a mutual relationship in which each contributes to the existence of the other (Florian 1983). They perceive each other as opposites due to moral philosophy's anxiety over evolutionary debunking, which is viewed as

undermining its uniqueness, and moral psychology's concern that normativity may threaten its objectivity. Nevertheless, they are founded upon and support one another, as they are genetic ones. Our psychological mechanisms, uncovered through empirical research, inform (meta)ethical theories that serve as the foundation for further moral psychological studies.

The *recessive dynamics* more effectively capture both the permanence of each theoretical construct and their alternating primacy, as observed in the evolution of psychological paradigms (Popoveniuc, 2023). Other alternative concepts miss the complexity of the mutual relationship of these two epistemological paradigms. They are not in a *dialectical* relationship because no higher synthesis can resolve their opposition. Also, they are not *parallel* because they imply a fundamental relation of mutual and reciprocal references. They are not just *complementary* because, in this case, both receive equal stands, and there will be no rationale for changing their primacy in time. The *correlation* implies a mutual dependency in which one thing affects or depends on another, while these two principles form standalone *weltanschauungs*. Lastly, a recessive relationship differs from *derivation*, where the first term produces the latter.

Ethical theories form the base of psychological theories on human morality. Psychologists often overlook that theory is a tool, and as Kurt Lewin said, "there is nothing more practical than a good theory." Empirical research in moral psychology is built on classical ethical theories and, not surprisingly, finds empirical support for any of these ethical theories: deontologism versus utilitarianism in *dual process theory* (Greene 2008), *dual-account theory* (Crockett 2013; Cushman 2013) or *dyadic morality theory* (Schein & Gray 2018), theory of *moral sentiments* in the representational approach event-characteristic-emotion (*cognitive and emotional integration theory*) (Moll et al. 2008) and *virtue ethics* in many other (see Anscombe 1958; Bright et al. 2014; Campodonico & Navarini 2020; Cohen & Morse 2014).

Psychological theories are inherently self-reflective, as they are products of the human mind attempting to understand itself. Psychological research hypothesis carries implications, creating a circular, or self-reflective, relationship between the theories and the subject matter. The scientific knowledge of moral mechanisms provides empirical support that forms the basis for further re-evaluation and refinement of ethical theories. Consequently, psychology is the most self-reflexive scientific social institution, and

because of this, it cannot be moral value-free. Research in moral psychology is grounded in ethical systems, which are supported or amended by empirical findings and hence subject to change based on new evidence, not solely philosophical abstract reasoning.

The most cherished moral values can either be enforced or fade their credibility and legitimacy. Unlike the subjects of physics, the subject of research in psychology cannot be treated as an object. It is nearly impossible to eliminate wishful thinking or motivated reasoning in psychological research practice without surrendering to a purely positivist understanding. Moral psychology can't hide after its purely epistemic scientific role and "plead ignorance" when tasked with providing a neutral explanation of moral phenomena because it cannot. Consequently, the distinction between "descriptive" and "normative" accounts of moral cognition is often artificial and misleading, as the primary research paradigm in psychology does not fully embrace evidence-based theories. Therefore, if research in moral psychology is conducted uncritically, it risks reinforcing existing theoretical assumptions since ethics is a product of human reasoning, and the theoretical foundation of research should relate to this reasoning rather than to the nature of the object it studies, the moral *per se*.

The vital ethical relevance of psychological research

Ethics without moral psychology is empty; moral psychology without ethics is blind. Moral phenomenon is an essential human reality embedded in its manifested image, and the behavioral scientific approach is only a guessing experiment. Equally, all ethical "rational" solutions have been contradicted by human history, highlighting that all rational social utopias eventually devolve into terrible dystopias. Human psychology evolves slowly and needs time to progress through learning and experiencing in human communities. Our moral conduct is evolutionary and habitual driven by moral intuitions or disposition (Annas 2011). Nonetheless, these that can be educated (Sauer 2022).

Human moral grammar, being innate, must be evolutionary, even though shaped by social norms and cultural conditioning. Although it is very slow, it can and must change over time. From here, the tragedy of the fast pace of technological advancement, which changes the social environment so rapidly that the evolutionary progress of moral cognitive architecture can't keep up with it. The hubris of human reason instantiated in objective scientific knowledge and juridical harness of human society poses an additional danger. The top-bottom

legally or politically imposed regulations or ideologies are vulnerable to twisting if they are too inconsistent with or do not consider the existing moral psychology (see, radical political correctness movement, utopian progressist one or communism versus extreme right conservatism, fundamentalist traditionalism or anarchism ideologies). The top-bottom rationalist perspective is directly or indirectly antibiological. The bottom-up biological perspective is anticultural, mitigating the importance of human reason and agency. The first paradigm is dangerous because it relies on abstract higher principles of the City of God that can lead to moral atrocities in the City of Man - immoral communism, national socialism, or religious fundamentalism, among others. The latter poses a danger because it reduces humans to mere organic beings unconsciously mastered by primitive impulses and views ethics as simply a by-product of evolution and the common living. So-called "objective" or "rationalist" perspectives impose unrealistic and unattainable expectations that people cannot meet in practice. Moral emotions are more powerful motivators for moral behavior than moral judgment (Cabezas 2011). Any rationally designed social system, either Law or advanced AI, is inadequate for sustaining a moral society because knowing right from wrong is insufficient; you must care (Cima et al. 2010). All past political regimes built solely on abstract ethical principles have resulted in the worst possible immoral nightmares whenever implemented. Therefore, the goal of ethical or "nanny" AI is a utopian lost cause from the beginning. Even so, the outdated praise for reason from the rationalist cognitive approach still aims to eliminate the affective component (see Curzer's 2014 model). However, both reason and emotion are equally needed for moral conduct, which involves moral sensitivity and motivation, and they are inevitably immersed in the "undesirable" reality of moral character (Yang & Raine 2009).

In the current paradigm of moral psychology, developing an integrative theory of human morality based on character integrity (Kaptein & Wempe 2011) is a challenging task. This difficulty arises from epistemic aversion to entities that resist operationalization and instrumentalization because they can't be modeled by computing thinking, which is prevalent in cognitivist research. As a result, the focus on quantifiable measures often overlooks the nuanced aspects of character and cognition that are essential for a comprehensive understanding of human morality. Nonetheless, moral character represents the sole object and the subject of moral psychology. The

paradox of moral psychology can be expressed as follows: it is not helpful to do moral philosophy until we have an adequate philosophy of psychology (Anscombe 1958, 1), but we can't make moral psychology without a deep understanding of moral philosophy. They are mutually reinforcing. Ethics and psychology are recessively co-generic. They can't be superficially reduced to the idiosyncratic perception of an epoch, as presumed by the ethical neutrality of scientific psychology. There is also another critical difference. In other fields, the gradual replacement of the manifested image by the scientific image is both appropriate and beneficial for advancing human knowledge. However, in psychology, this goal is self-defeating and, finally, self-destructively while it aims to replace the human manifest self-image with the "scientific image." The manifest image is "the framework in terms of which man came to be aware of himself as man-in-the-world (…) the scientific image cannot replace the manifest without rejecting its own foundation" (Sellars 2007, 374, 389). This process will endanger the fundamental nature of our individual and collective human identities. Being co-generic, the disjunction of scientific and manifested images in moral psychology is akin to an epistemic discordant psychosis. The scientific image, being self-reflexive, is eroding the lived moral experience. Intellectualization and virtualization of moral understanding dissolve social fabrics faster than individuals' moral progress. This would entail the end of human intelligence and the beginning of a new post-human species.

What is wrong with the present paradigm of psychological research?

The finality of the research is of a practical nature: to improve, to use, to change nature, including human nature, for people's benefit. The finality of psychological research cannot be simply the truth because psychological knowledge is in the above-mentioned recessive relation and changes its object, the human subject. There is no immutable truth about human morality but a recessively evolving one. Therefore, the finality of moral psychology is additionally ethical and pedagogical. The pervasive and elusive effects of motivating reasoning and wishful thinking are more prominent than in any other research domain and require more than simply formal compliance to methodological rules of research conduct. Researchers also have implicit theories on human psychology that unconsciously shape their judgment and must be mastered to ensure the success of scientific study. Those studying

morality must undergo personal development, much like psychotherapists, because the subject is closely tied to their most cherished and profound aspects of personality - specifically, their moral identity. Unfortunately, psychological education looks rather as an epistemic fabric line that produces mostly "generative pre-trained transformer" researchers, competent in transforming psychological phenomena into operationalizable and computing-ready variables, mostly incrementally and deducting objective relations between data. Competent, but with narrow comprehension. Researchers in psychology must be epistemologically self-aware, capable of deep critical thinking, cultured, and well-versed in related domains such as anthropology, sociology, or philosophy. Statistics is only a tool, not a methodology for psychology. Conventional statistical significance is often regarded as a deeply revered idol in research. The mesmerizing effects of *p*-value, statistical thresholds, and model fit overshadow more meaningful interpretations of data, leading to an overemphasis on numbers rather than the underlying concepts and complexities of the studied phenomena. The era of ethical ivory tower theorists is dawn, as it is the time of positivistic research conducted solely for its own sake. This can be more easily, accurately, and efficiently made by our latest wonderful creation of GenAI. Any psychological research must be based on a comprehensive ethical foundation because the resulting knowledge will be integrated into people's self-image. Likewise, this knowledge should be commonly shared and promoted, not withheld primarily for political, economic, or military purposes. A purely objective scientific image is not for humans, but for general intelligence; it is an instrument, not a purpose. In moral psychology a scientific "perspective from nowhere" – an image for a "pure intellectual faculty" – is not only impossible, but also undesirable.

Nonetheless, the pedagogical role of psychological research is to improve our self-understanding. It must assist people in overcoming, at the level of the manifest image, the fundamental illusion of reason as an independent, autonomous reality fully mastered by individual will. The reasons or thoughts we are aware of are only a tiny part of the myriads of sub- and unconscious reasons fighting for a place in the consciousness theater. Their success depends on the emotional and affective loads, character weaknesses or tendencies, and consistency with our self-narrative. Also, it must help people to abandon the illusion of immediate access to the reality of things, people, or events. A transcendental conceptual network constructs our access to reality.

The development of humans is simultaneously natural and cultural. It cannot be approached in hard sciences style. Their methods cannot grasp the "third nature" of consciousness, the very one that makes possible the scientific image that it is supposed to explain. The fundamental and genuine attributes of consciousness - free will and autonomy - exist solely within the space of reasons, protected by a cognitive membrane, and are supervenient, although feedback-driven, to its biology and environment. They cannot be accommodated within a fully deterministic and „objective" scientific perspective. Rational relations, such as justification and meaning, are part of human concrete experience irreducible to causal relations of the physical part of the Realm of Law (McDowell 1996). They would be epistemically suppressed by scientific image that will become increasingly unintelligible to human understanding. Consequently, human comprehension will depend entirely on AI alien language and "objective" perspective for translating, interpreting, and explaining the complexities of the scientific representation of its own reality.

The cognitivist perspective, heavily computer-based, constructs a wicked scientific image of a human psychic, which is fragmented, partial, and fractured, an assembly of cognitive cogwheels that erase the heterogeneity of affective and intellective. In Heidegger's (1953/1993) terms, cognitivist psychology, as a social institution for generating scientific knowledge, involves a technical approach to its subject matter. It is "enframing" the human psychic as a "standing reserve", a resource or object available for use. It "sets upon" or "challenges forth" the psychic. This positivist and functionalist perspective focuses not on the nature of the psyche itself but on its behaviors and how those behaviors can be predicted and controlled. It sacrifices the richness and authenticity of "who" for the accuracy and predictability of "what." The positivist methodology can only address to *idem*-identity (sameness) - the traits that remain "the same" over time - while neglects completely what defines the core of (personal) morality, the *ipse*-identity (pertaining to the subjective selfhood), "in the sense of the self-designation of a subject of discourse, action, narrative or ethical commitment" (Ricœur 1992, 335).

The pedagogical role of psychological research

Research in moral psychology should integrate the study of isolated aspects of moral conduct, behavior, and specific decision-making mechanisms within a holistic framework. By doing so, it can avoid the

pitfalls of fragmented knowledge, which is often used primarily for pragmatic purposes, such as marketing, political influence, propaganda, etc. The advantage of scientific knowledge is not fully utilized in education to promote a more accurate, meaningful, and sustainable representation of human reality, which is essential for countering the ingrained and occasionally harmful self-images of obsolete conceptions. Students graduate without common scientific knowledge about manipulation mechanisms, automatic moral intuitions and decision-making, cognitive biases, and the minimum cognitive endowment necessary for a reflexive citizen. They are vulnerable to errors, manipulation, deception, and control.

Psychology, particularly moral psychology, must also be ethical. Its approach should focus on providing valid knowledge that promotes self-awareness and personal development, both for researchers and beneficiaries. It may seem idealistic, but otherwise, it is questionable for misconduct. Technological progress is *epiphilogenetically* intertwined with the human species (Stiegler, 1998). The current rapid pace of technological advancement is disrupting evolutionary equilibrium, adversely affecting human psychological health, and threatening the future of humanity. Psychology must contribute to moral enhancement to help prevent humanity's self-annihilation, as technology grants so much destructive power at the hands of so many morally disabled individuals. This requires discarding the epistemological spells of "computational cognitivism." Computation ceased to be just a tool; it became an instrument of psychological knowledge and a part of the human environment. Hence, it not only assists but also builds the understanding paradigm. Cognition and, to a higher degree, consciousness are virtual structures "disengaged from the external environment in favor of an autonomously constructed world of meanings and interpretations" (Floridi 2011, 560). At this moment, the world is immersing in computationality. This shapes and directs our scientific image. Computational cognitivism creates and transforms human knowledge and cognition. Any tool, especially the informational ones, represents an extended cognition (Kiverstein 2018). To save human cognition from its self-defeating, in front of the overwhelming evolution of AI, the psychological paradigm must evolve into a "second generation" of cognitivism, e-cognitivism, where "e's stand for theories bringing to the fore the enactive, embedded, embodied, and extended [but also, "experiential" and "emotional"] qualities of the mind" (Kukkonen & Caracciolo 2014).

Psychology as Social Pedagogy

The implicit theories people have on human nature, moral character, needs, motivations, values, or social institutions deeply impact lawmaking and enforce social policies, human rights, and (judicial) responsibility (Dweck et al. 1995). These implicit theories usually operate outside of individual awareness. Yet, they can be informed, "educated," and changed using psychological paradigms. The ethical responsibility of psychological research is evaluated based on its significant impact on legal, political, and cultural areas, such as the implications of depathologizing sexual orientation and gender identity, or conversely, the pathologization of pedophilia or personality disorders.

Currently, scientific output is primarily used for enhancing economic and political management, often used for manipulation and control. While part of this knowledge is integrated into public policies, it is not widely accessible as a widespread asset for the general population, as a resource for defense against manipulation, or as a common tool for personal development or moral progress. Most people primarily access only derivative products of this knowledge through media, books, and television. These are often of questionable quality, promoted for marketing purposes and profit. A valid humanistic psychological understanding is vital for the moral enhancement necessary for society's survival and welfare. As the evolutionary adaptation is slow and cruel, some deceive themselves by thinking of moral bioenhancement as a working solution (Persson & Savulescu 2012). However, the peril of maleficent implementations and its questionable scientific base make it more hazardous than Floridi's (2014) technological gambit solution for the climate change problem. The current epistemic digitization of human cognition from psychological research poses more significant risks than the actual digitalization of our cognition and self (Chan 2022) fostered by the pervasiveness of digital technology. The scientific valid knowledge made possible tremendous technological progress and the sustainability of social institutions, but also changed man's self-image. Any science is naturalistic, and its paradigm is based on postulated natural entities. When the "natural" environment is largely digital and conceptual instruments are computer-based, the models of the psychic are regularly (structural equations) modeled, programmed (contrary to evolution), and algorithmized, then the brain-computer analogy

becomes a reality in the scientific image. Being self-reflexive, the scientific image damages lived moral experience when it is unsuitable. Intellectualization and virtualization of moral understanding weakens the social fabric faster than individuals' moral progress. The epistemic trend of the scientific image of man is toward the complete depletion of its image by all humanistic idiosyncratic elements, resistant to operationalization, measurement, prediction, and… control and to make humans "understandable" for computing processing and analyses. "If man had a radically different conception of himself, he would be a radically different kind of man" (Sellars 2007, 374). Instead of informing the manifest image of itself, the widening gap between the manifest image and scientific image makes the scientific valid knowledge about man increasingly incomprehensible for human cognition. Our "user competence" is growing but dependent on an incomprehensible paradigm suited for AI. The current paradigm in moral psychology, if not reevaluated for its ethical role, risks facilitating the self-extinction of organic intelligence, bringing us closer to the prophesied Technological Singularity (Kurzweil 2006).

Conclusions

Psychological knowledge should be more widely applied in education to help individuals consciously and reflexively analyze their own internal experiences. While the concept of metacognition - thinking about one's thinking - is a common trait among modern humans, it often lacks genuine self-reflection. This superficial level of metacognition can be seen as a form of pseudo-self-reflexivity. Paradoxically, this kind of self-understanding can also be a competence without comprehension: an automated constructed self-narrative supporting the feeling of comprehension without being genuinely understanding. Not all forms of metacognition can be considered self-reflexivity. Thinking about my own thinking at the same flow of naïve thinking is a quasi-self-reflexivity. It lacks the fundamental drive of "Why am I thinking this?" or "What makes me think what and how am I thinking?" Otherwise, people remain trapped in their own narrative, seeking consistency and finding (meta-)arguments to support their way of thinking instead of questioning whether their thoughts are justified, valid, or correct. This deeper exploration of one's psychological life is essential for developing moral-democratic competence, which is crucial for mitigating the risks posed to the sustainability of an over-technologized humanity. To

foster this genuine self-understanding, the scientific model should promote a mixed approach, such as heterophenomenology (Radner 1994), which genuinely helps people increase their self-awareness and mutual dependability on a valid interindividual base. The role of scientific image is decisive because it aims to be the most accurate, free from errors and illusions, although not perfect, but incrementally perfectible. Psychological science is vital in creating a valid image that seamlessly integrates lived experience with objective knowledge. It acts as an openly collective peer review of thoughts and actions, fostering constructive debate and questioning, while enabling us to fully experience and appreciate the evolutionary gift of shared conscious life.

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Structured agency among Protestant full-time church workers in the Northern Philippines: A phenomenological inquiry

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Abstract: The full-time workers of a Protestant church in the Northern Philippines have significantly altered people's lives in the locality. However, scant studies have unraveled their significant role in transforming their local church and community. The phenomenological method was used to unravel the lived experiences of the ten (10) church full-time workers. Moreover, the role of structure and agency that influenced them have been explored. An in-depth interview was conducted among the study participants. Their narratives were transcribed verbatim. Clark Moustakas' phenomenological analysis was employed to deduce the themes and to elicit the essence of their lived-experiences. This phenomenological study was anchored to descriptive phenomenology and Giddens' structuration theory. Results showed that their life of poverty, the church's doctrine, the spiritual guidance of the missionaries, and spiritual formation have both constraining and enabling power that shaped them to become effective church workers. They also experienced many challenges in serving their local church. However, they exercise their agency to go beyond constraints. Further, they passionately preached the gospel, serving their communities through relief giving and medical missions for spiritual and social transformation.

Keywords: lived experience, structuration theory, phenomenology, agency

Introduction

Social institutions emerge from the interplay of structure and agency, as articulated by Giddens (1984) and further explored by Lamsal (2012). These institutions are shaped by habitual interactions that embody this duality, particularly evident in religious institutions. The dynamics between structural frameworks and social actors contribute to the formation of norms and practices within these religious contexts. This ongoing interaction not only establishes a rich tradition and

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historicity but also embeds codes and values that are germane for social transformation (Kafid 2014; Erasmus 2015).

Love, joy, and hope are but a few of the needs of an individual that religion tends to fill up. These exact words best describe the essence and function of religion. Religion is a vital social institution. The Latin word "religare" is the origin of religion, which means to tie or to bind. Some notable anthropologists and sociologists have described it as having diverse potential functions and playing a vital role in our society. While using the structural functionalist view, Radcliffe Brown emphasized religion's cohesive function, which gives solidarity among people, especially during a crisis. It gives people a sense of shared identity and destiny (Eller 2009, 241). Durkheim (2001), in his study of *Elementary Forms of Religious Life*, pointed out that Religion is a social phenomenon with a social function as it gives social cohesion through a common belief. Affirming Emile Durkheim's position, Turner used the term "communitas". It refers to an intense community togetherness, integrated and bonded with a common spirit, a feeling of great social solidarity– to elaborate Durkheim's idea of "effervescence," which stressed the collective emotional intensity generated by worship. For Malinowski, it would give us the feeling of relief in times of fear and despair. Weber (2003) emphasized the role of religion in social mobility. Religion helps people to have a purposeful and meaningful life. However, the prevailing secularism in the contemporary period threatens the role of religion, which is brought about by newer structures in the post-modern period (Menhas et al. 2015, 27). These functions of religion are challenged because of the continuously evolving society.

According to Davies (1976), the social problems of social conflict, violence, and revolution became new themes or pressing concerns of Christians due to the political awakening of the masses that were once acquiescent to the power structure, which now demands an equal distribution of power and wealth, even to the point of violent revolution. This instance necessitates a theological reflection in looking at the church as a spiritual entity and an agent of social transformation and how it would address the burdens of the marginalized and the oppressed. Religion should be relevant in providing solutions to society's present problems. Although Marx (1976) deliberately disregarded the importance of religion. He considered religion as the opium of the masses; Weber, on the contrary, thought that it was an instrument for social mobility.

Interestingly, despite these religious issues, a religious institution has tremendously shaped people's lives in the community in Northern Philippines. Missionary Kim Ja Sun and Missionary Kang Jeong In spearheaded the integral evangelization of the Reformed Protestant churches in Cagayan. They significantly influenced the life course of the whole province in the Northern Philippines, specifically among the full-time church workers. The full-time church workers have been trained through a rigorous spiritual discipline that made them significant actors in the province's integral evangelization, which resulted in 36 established churches. The full-time church workers have been actively engaged in evangelizing missions, medical missions, and relief giving to disadvantaged people like prisoners and people with mental health conditions (Asuncion 2021, 48). However, there are few documented studies to unravel their lived experiences. There is also a dearth of studies integrating a theoretical analysis and phenomenological method in exploring the lived experiences of full-time workers of a Protestant church in Northern Philippines. Notably, there is a lack of study addressing how particular structures shaped the full-time workers and how they exercised their agency in becoming at the forefront of carrying and communicating the vision and mission of their local church.

Given the preceding gaps, the study was conceptualized. This research generally aimed to describe the role of structuration and agency in the lived experiences of Protestant full-time church workers in Northern Philippines and explore how different factors influenced them in becoming full-time church workers. Particularly, this study sought to determine the following:

a. Determine what different structures shaped the lived experiences of full-time church workers.

b. Describe how different structures shaped the lived experiences of full-time church workers.

c. Identify the different challenges and difficulties the full-time church workers encounter.

d. Ascertain the role of agency in overcoming the different challenges and constraints they encounter.

Methodology

This phenomenological study used Husserl's descriptive phenomenology as a methodology and a frame for understanding the life world of the protestant full-time church workers in the Northern

Philippines. The researcher has purposively selected ten study participants for in-depth interviews.

According to Husserl (1982), the phenomenological method has three steps. First is the *epoche* or bracketing or suspension of judgment. Detachment from one's "natural attitude" is significant in this step. The "natural attitude" comprises one's biases and prejudices to certain phenomenon. To elicit a thorough understanding of the lived experiences, one must bracket or suspend one's judgment. The second step for him is the eidetic reduction. The phenomenon must be reduced to its essence. It is, though, reflective means that one can unravel the essence of a phenomenon. The transcendental reduction, which culminates all steps of Husserl's phenomenological method, is the last step. In this step, the lived experiences are understood by both the actor and the one, and the experience is directed in a dialectical manner. A conscious perceiver also understands the intended experience in which the actor is conscious. The process completes the Husserlian phenomenological method. Welman and Kruger (1999) state that phenomenology emphasizes comprehending psycho-social phenomena from the perspectives of the people involved. It is concerned with the "lived experiences" of the individual. In phenomenology, the primary objective is to describe the phenomenon precisely and deduce its essence (Groenewald 2004; Greene 1997).

Data analysis

The researcher adapted Moustakas' (1994) phenomenological mode of analysis, which has the following steps:

Horizonalization: The first step in the phenomenological analysis, wherein every statement is recognized as having equal value (Ibid.). Only statements related to the lived experience of study participants were included. Overlapping and repetitive statements were deleted.

Textual Description (First Reflection): The researcher assigned a code for the meaning units. It could be a word, phrase, or sentence. Also, the researcher used open coding that resulted in the formulation of textual themes.

Structural Themes (second reflection): Based on the themes drawn from the first reflection, the researcher looked for patterns that have emerged from the themes. The researcher applied imaginative variation to identify how the different themes were influenced by context and setting. It resulted in the identification of structural themes or second reflection.

Eidetic Insight (third reflection) The researcher reflected profoundly on basic norms, concepts, and principles underlying the textual and structural themes of lived experiences of the church full-time workers to articulate essential insights/postulates. The synthesis of which will constitute the Eidetic Insight. Finally, this resulted in the *eidos* or essence of the lived experience of full-time church workers. Dr. Ramirez (2007) posits this as the perceived ”nucleus of truth” of the phenomenon unveiled in narratives.

Results and discussion

These are the structural descriptions that came from the textual description of the co-researchers. Structure and agency were the two main themes of the study being framed from Giddens' theoretical lens. Along with structure, five themes emerged. While for the agency, there were three themes, and four sub-themes were culled. The first five themes deal with the different contexts or settings that made them full-time workers. On the other hand, the succeeding themes would describe how their lives were transformed. Their narratives in overcoming the different challenges and difficulties in the mission field were also presented.

Structures

Hardship and poverty during childhood

The study participants or co-researchers experienced life of poverty, and being in troubled families. This is a common experience among them during childhood. Almost all of them belong to low-income families and come from remote areas. One of them would recall the hardship he encountered studying since his family had meager resources to support him. He would recount how hard studying was with insufficient finances. Another study participant also experienced the same circumstance. She would always use photocopies of textbooks since she could not buy new ones. She wrote promissory letters when she could not pay her tuition fee on time. She watched movies at her neighbor's house, for which she was ridiculed. She recalled, "I was always ridiculed in my school since I could not pay my tuition fee on time, and even my neighbors despised me since I wanted to visit their place in order to watch television." Another narrated that there were times when they did not have any money to buy food. So, they just eat what can be found in their kitchen and backyard. Usually, they eat camote (sweet potato) and rice mixed with

oil and salt. He said, "We barely have enough to eat. We often eat camote or oil mixed with rice to fill us up."

Aside from poverty, they also narrated the many troubles they encountered while growing up. One of them witnessed how her mother became a battered wife. In order to save their lives, she, her siblings, and her mother jumped from the second-floor window of their house without hesitation. She said, "When I heard my father shouting Save your lives, and holding his bolo, I, my mother, and siblings hastily jumped from the window of our house' second floor." One of the pastors narrated how he witnessed the constant violence in their home; his parents constantly fought. He recalled, "Almost every day, my father and mother are fighting together. It is part of my daily life."

Belief in predestination

All of the study participants believe in the doctrine of predestination as one of the teachings of Presbyterian. The doctrine states that God had already chosen those who would be saved before creating the world. The belief that they were chosen for God's purpose has been one of the fundamental factors they could do well in their studies and finish college degrees. As chosen by God, they need to do better compared to others. One mentioned, "Before I became a church member and a Christian, I was lazy in my studies. When I learned that God had chosen me and believed in Jesus, I studied well and did better in school. I want people to see that there is something different from me compared to non-believers."

Since almost all of them belonged to low-income families, they were motivated to study hard and finish their respective degrees to help their families in the future. They believe that it is through education that they can alleviate their lives of misery and poverty. Although they struggled financially, this did not impede them from studying, learning, and acquiring knowledge in school. Moreover, they have tried their best to work and study hard ever since becoming a church member and believe that God has chosen them. It must be noted that all of them are professionals in their secular careers. They graduated from good schools in the country, and two of the pastors even got remarkable results in their professional licensure exam.

Volunteering in their church for the mission work has been difficult for them. This means they need to give up their secular careers, and there is a possibility that they cannot be compensated well. However, they believe that God has called them for a greater purpose. This

probed them into letting go of their desires to get rich, to have a high monthly income, and to accumulate wealth and resources for themselves and their family. One mentioned, "If I did not become a pastor, I might enjoy material wealth, worldly pleasures. There were a lot of opportunities for me to go and look for a secular job. However, I believe God has called me his servant." God's calling for them is very essential in not giving up and staying in the mission field. Without God's call for them, it is impossible to withstand the challenges and hardships in the mission field. To work for the church manifests that God has called them and chosen them to give him glory. Their concept of God calling them is intertwined with God's election for them as his chosen people before the creation of the world.

Influenced by the missionaries

The study participants heard about the gospel through the evangelism of Missionary Kim Ja Sun and Kang Jeong In, who went even to the far-flung areas in Cagayan. They believe that only by sharing the gospel can the people in the Northern Philippines be freed from superstition, vices, and corruption. They influenced the lives of the study participants greatly. The two missionaries spread the Word of God from place to place and led bible studies almost every day. Depending on schedule, they preached the Word every Sunday in two to three churches. Through the fervent sharing of the Word with the study participants, they were able to believe in Jesus, and from then, the gospel captured their hearts. Through the preaching of both missionaries, they were given hope that their lives would be changed someday. God would change their lives and even alleviate their poverty. Moreover, the missionaries have shared love, kindness, and generosity; they taught them to pray and even give anything in kind to those in need to express God's mercy and grace through those compassionate acts.

Since the missionaries have evangelized them, their lives have been significantly transformed. The missionaries have always been a significant figure in their faith journey. Missionary Kim starts the day by leading the early or dawn prayer at five in the morning. After delivering the Word, she would pray for every church member individually. Her life can be described as life of prayer.

On the one hand, Missionary Kang is in charge of the church's administrative role, such as taking care of the church's finances aside from leading churches. She often prepares food for the church's

members and especially for the church's workers. It is also good to note that she knows what members like and dislike, just like their food preferences. They take care of the members spiritually and even their physical needs. Often, they treat them in restaurants for fellowship. This is time for them to talk to members and full-time workers. If somebody is sick or in trouble, the missionaries will visit them. They will pray for the sick and troubled and sometimes give financial aid. They never stop serving the church and its members, especially the church workers.

Essentially, the missionaries have devoted themselves to spiritual life. This encouraged them to live a pious and zealous life, sharing the gospel and teaching members the value of spiritual discipline. It was Missionary Kim's spiritual devotion to have monthly fasting. The congregation members also followed her lead to have monthly fasting in the church. Moreover, she preaches every dawn prayer diligently despite her busy schedule. Every Sunday, both missionaries lead worship services in the remote areas in Cagayan. Their lives of passion and dedication have inspired the full-time workers and every church member.

There were also some occasions when the missionaries would discipline congregation members. Rebukes are done publicly, like calling members' attention in the congregation or private conversations with them most often. This action is to ensure the order and discipline of the church. Because of this, sometimes they are mistakenly identified as strict. However, the corrections and rebukes are done with good intentions to train members to be genuine disciples of Jesus. Everyone in the church admits the love and sacrifice of both missionaries. All are grateful that it is through the missionaries that they heard the good news about Jesus. Through the prayers and sacrifices of the missionaries, they have been encouraged to journey with their spiritual lives.

Significance of spiritual discipline

Admittedly, through prayer and by constantly reading and meditating on the words of God, the co-researchers became full-time church workers and overcame the difficulties and challenges in the mission field. It is through being rooted in the words of God that they remain steadfast in their faith. It is through prayer that their inner being commune with God. Prayer and the Words of God have been a regular habit among the study participants. Every day, they need to wake at

five in the morning for the dawn prayer. Missionary Kim would often preach the Word. They will pray in one voice after the preaching. During the prayer, in one voice, roaring sounds and cries can be heard from them. The faithful full-time workers pour an intense emotional release in their prayer lives to commune with God. It will take an hour or more for them to pray. Aside from this, they have allotted personal time to read the bible.

One of the most challenging trainings mentioned by the study participants is fasting. They needed to abstain from eating for three or more days. The church fasting is done every first week of the month. This spiritual habit helps them to deny themselves and live spiritually. Although fasting is challenging for them, it has been an enlightening experience for them to humble themselves to Almighty God. This spiritual act has also been helpful for them to discern the will of God.

Challenges and difficulties in the mission field

The study participant mentioned and described the mission field as a narrow road filled with a lot of challenges. One of the difficulties is being persecuted by their family. One of them narrated that since he became an active church member and later decided to become a full-time worker, he was ignored by his family. His family expected him to earn a lot of money in the secular world. since he decided to become full-time, he can only have enough means. At the same time, other challenges are due to some constraints in the church and danger in the mission field.

Some of the study participants' active membership caused the displeasure of their parents. This situation did not become easy for them. They narrated, "Our parents beat some of us because they would not allow us to attend the church." One of them mentioned that all of his parents scolded him and asked him to leave their house and transfer to the church. Most of the co-researchers were persecuted by their families for being members of the church. This event tested their faith. Some of their families did not welcome their decision to be full-time workers because they did not have a high income in the church. However, they have always hoped and prayed that God would open the minds and hearts of their families. Indeed, God answered their prayers. Later, all of their family members became members and leaders of the church.

Having multiple roles is a common burden among full-time workers. Having 36 churches and still growing, the lack of workers in

the mission field is evident. This is the reason that all of them have multiple designations. Pastors are assigned to multiple churches and outreach Bible studies. This situation gives them limited time to do their role. Missionaries and Pastors each would have to lead three or more churches every Sunday. Some of them are also in charge of the administrative part of the mission. It makes them physically exhausted and vulnerable to diseases.

Being in the mission field is being accompanied by a lot of dangers. In terms of traveling to reach their respective serving church, the pastors and missionaries needed to walk for long miles, cross rivers, and hike to mountains. There were times when their boat almost sank, and they almost drowned. There were times that they fell from their horses. There were also moments when aggressive people attacked them. However, this did not hinder them from proclaiming the gospel and serving their local church.

Agency: Transformed life

Search for meaning and purpose

The study participants confessed that they felt lost and asked the question of the purpose of life. After graduation and being employed in secular careers, something was lacking in them. This situation made them contemplate and decide to stay in the church to work full-time. All of them confessed that they were not satisfied with their jobs. What has given them a sense of purpose is in the church, doing the will of God, which they believed. One stated, "Working full-time in God's vineyard has filled my emptiness." Working in the mission field has been tiring for them, but it has given them a reason to wake up early in the morning and find joy in it. It has given them a sense of direction and purpose in life. It has made life more meaningful. Serving God and glorifying Him by forming Christian communities through evangelizing missions and building churches have been the purpose and meaning of life for them. Another study participant mentioned, "Working in the church made my life more meaningful. There is inner joy and peace in my life."

Born again

One of the most common confessions among the co-researchers is how their hearts, minds, and actions were changed. Since they became church members and later full-time workers, their ways have changed. Before they think that material and worldly success is the most

important in life. Before, some of them lived with pleasure and vices. Eventually, they have given up their worldly minds and self-seeking pleasure to follow Jesus. One of them confessed, "I learned and realized that I am sinful. All my ways and thinking are corrupt. Therefore, I repented on my sins and asked Jesus to save me. Little by little, my heart, and my thinking have been changed. It seems that I am a new person. I have been living a new life. Since then, I have given up all my vices and started following Jesus."

Before, they also dreamt of acquiring a lot of wealth and becoming rich. However, this was changed. They realized the value of being contented and trusting the providence of God in their lives. They learned to depend and put their trust in God for their daily bread. A male pastor mentioned, "I have a lot of opportunities to become rich. I gave that up in order to follow Christ. I made it a point to serve my church with my all." Since they heard of the gospel, they started to follow Jesus, and they learned to give up their vices, they have given up their secular work, and they have devoted their lives to their ministry. Their lives mirror the power of the gospel to change the hearts and minds of people.

Overcoming Challenges

Despair to Hope

The study participants come from underprivileged families. Most of them are from the rural areas in the province. Their families are also problematic and troubled. Most of them grew up in an unhealthy troubled environment. Almost all of them did not have the means to study. They felt empty and hopeless at specific points in their lives, and they would like to give up in life. One thing that kept them going was the hope that they had received through the Lord Jesus. In John 14:6, Jesus said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life, and no one can come unto the Father except through me." All of them have heard this during their younger days. They heard this gospel message. Despite all the difficulties and pressing challenges, even failures they had encountered, they learned to move forward with hope. This hope allowed them to stay committed and dedicated to their church.

This hope is also the hope that ignites their passion for evangelizing, building churches, and giving hope to those weary and oppressed. This hope is the same hope that the missionaries have received to dedicate their lives to serving the mission field. Even though their bodies became weak and tired, even in sickness and to the point of death, they

continued and persisted in declaring the gospel. Indeed they became hopeful that through the grace of our Lord Jesus, their lives have been transformed, in hope and prayer that people in the community can receive the same hope. That the poor, marginalized, and disadvantaged people can also receive the hope that they have.

A vision

It is also apparent that the full-time workers have developed a more excellent vision for themselves and their community. One has stated, "I learned to dream that my life will become better. Someday I could also be of help to the poor and needy, to be a channel of blessing to them." This dream is one of the reasons the co-researchers became full-time workers. It is a dream that God has put in their hearts.

The co-researchers vision is first to be personally transformed in order to influence changes in the institutions. To be the light and salt of this world is an essential part of their dream. In a darkened generation, they need to be a light. In a world filled with deceitfulness, they need to be men and women of integrity. They need not conform to the patterns of this world. Moreover, they need to be men and women of vision - a vision that someday this world will bow unto the Lordship of Jesus. Through the evangelizing mission, be it in sharing the Word in the church, in the education ministry, or in medical mission, Christ would be known. As it is written, "The kingdom of this world has become the kingdom of our Lord and his Christ, and he will reign forever and ever" (Rev. 11:15). This verse contains their eternal vision and yearning.

Service to the community

The full-time workers were entirely devoted to carrying out the evangelizing mission in the whole province. Every Sunday, they lead three churches, and during the midweek, they lead prayer meetings in several churches. They serve their community spiritually in this way. They also take part in teaching little children through summer bible school every year. It has also been the tradition of their local church to give relief to mental hospital patients and prisoners. During Christmas, they give gifts to the widows, and senior citizens in their churches. Twice a year, they also take an active role in medical missions that their local church leaders. The medical missions cater to all people in the province. When there were disasters like floorings and disease outbreaks, the full-time workers were actively engaged in giving relief

goods to the church members and even non-members who were affected. Non-profit-oriented schools were built to assist Christian education, especially in the rural areas of the province. Hence, full-time workers serve their local church and community spiritually and socially, hoping for a spiritual and social revival.

Eidetic insight

The eidetic insight or the essence of the study can be summed up with this statement: The structuration process and agency paved the way to the important formation and transformation of the Protestant full-time church workers in the Northern Philippines which propelled them to be agents of change in their community and wider society.

Discussion

Giddens particularly emphasized the duality of structure - the structures forming the actors simultaneously, the actors making new structures or transforming the structures in the exercise of their agency. In the contemporary period, Gidden's (1984) theory became vital in analyzing the social system, emphasizing the dynamic role of structure and agency. Structuration refers to the "rules and resources that are drawn upon in the production and reproduction of social action, which are simultaneously the means of the system of reproduction." Giddens (1984; 1993) asserts that structures are constraining and enabling, which underscores the duality of structure, referring to the interplay of the structure and agency for the transformation of social systems (Bryant & Jary 2001). This statement means that structures are both medium and outcome. Knowledgeable agents enact them towards the perpetuation of social practices. Structures and agents are not contradictory but presuppose one another (Seawell 1992). Lamsal (2012) affirmed the duality of structure. Moreover, he specified the agency of individuals in creating their environment, just like engagement in volunteer work. At the same time, Giddens also reacted to this structuralism of Durkheim. From the Themes culled, a lucid analysis of the lived experiences of full-time church workers concerning the role of structuration and agency espoused by Giddens will be discussed.

The results revealed that structures like poverty, the doctrine of predestination, the leadership of the missionaries, and spiritual discipline formed the full-time workers of the church. The structures are at work in making them effective full-time workers of the church.

These structures shaped and significantly influenced the full-time workers and had either constraining or enabling effects on them. Life of poverty, havoc, and troubles in their family paved the way to look for a refuge and a Saviour. Desperate and hopeful experiences have shaped them.

The doctrine of predestination and their belief in the "chosen" enabled them to live differently. The study participants finished their studies despite the problematic circumstances they found themselves in, such as the situation of poverty. The same doctrine also propelled the full-time workers to be committed to the evangelizing mission. The rules, rituals, fasting, and dawn prayer served as the spiritual formation for the full-time church workers in the mission field and their ministry. They have also undergone a lot of difficulties and challenges. However, beating the odds, they do their tasks in the agency as free actors to improve the institution and become active participants in the evangelizing mission. Thus, they become agents of authentic transformation.

To be elucidated in the context of the lives of the full-time workers, the different challenges they experience while remaining committed in the mission field can be realized through Giddens' (1984) "duality of structure", making Durkheim's structuralism as an entry point. The structures act with external and constraining power which is socially motivated, affirming Hadden (1997) and Ritzer (1992). Emile Durkheim (2001), in his book, *Elementary Forms of Religious Life*, emphasized that religion binds people together through a common belief. Durkheim emphasizes his functionalist view on religion. It is related to his central concept of social facts that there is something outside and constraining the individual, which showcases his structuralist outlook. Hadden (1997) and Ritzer (1992) noted that for Durkheim, social facts are external and coercive to the individual. Therefore, they do not emanate from the individual but are from social forces external to the individual. A deeper understanding of social facts would be significant in understanding the role of structures in this study. Essentially, Durkheim's conviction is that the day-to-day lives and actions of people are not primarily individually motivated. Instead, there is something in society that triggers an individual to act. It may come in the form of norms, laws, traditions, and practices that are integral in constraining an individual.

Using Durkheim's structuralism, people act primarily because of the externality and compelling factors. A group forms a collective

consciousness to adhere to them. With this, the institution perpetuates itself and functions effectively through structured rules, policies, and sanctions. The workers of institutions are being trained and socialized, adhering to the external and constraining forces beyond the individual. On the one hand, Giddens' "duality of structure" presents a deeper analysis of how actors exercise freedom with their agency as actors to go beyond the structure and become possible agents of transforming the structure of their local church.

In this present study, in the lived experiences of full-time church workers, there is a social force that pushes them to act. These external and compelling forces have been part of the structure of the local church as an institution. Workers are compelled to abide by the prescribed rules of the church. However, in the study, structures are not just constraining the full-time workers but also enabling them to be effective church workers. Without those structures, the full-time workers should not have been as effective church workers as they are. Hence, the findings both affirmed Durkheim's structuralism. However, it negates it in terms of the agency of the full-time church workers.

Gidden explicitly reacted to this emphasizing the neglect of actors' agency and their intentionality for social action, which must be considered. Using the lens of Giddens, the exercise of their agency (free actors), which could be present within the structures, enables them to transform the institution. Giddens' structuration theory particularly noted the importance of actors as free agents perpetuating and perpetuating social life. Along with this line, it is necessary to note that a religious institution has institutionalized rules and policies in which the structuration process occurs. It yields the "production and reproduction of the system" (Giddens 1984). In a deliberate analysis, one could surmise that the full-time workers have been part of the social network as a whole. If not compelled, they function within the bounds of existing rules and resources. It is also within their capacity to consciously reflect and try to mediate and transform the rules in making a new production of social practices.

In this case, the full-time workers are actors. They are free to act; they can either refrain or intervene in the institution's production or reproduction of structures. Giddens suggests the importance of agency where the actions perpetrated by the full-time workers are not just mandated but could also be intentional. It is within the bounds of the discursive consciousness of the actors that they always know what they are doing. Although they experience difficulties imposed by the

structure, like physical exhaustion, and their lives being in danger because of the mission field, they choose to stay in the mission field as an exercise of their agency. Being a full-time worker and committing their lives to their local church is their conscious choice. Moreover, they overcame the constraints imposed by structure by being committed to having a higher degree of participation to contribute efficiently to the local church and the community. By doing so, they become primary agents in the continuation or transformation to which they willingly committed themselves. In the context of the present study, it affirmed Lamsal (2012) on the role of agency depicted how the full-time church workers overcame the difficulties and challenges and consciously engaged in the different community activities of their local church for spiritual and societal transformation. The changed life of the study participants and their engagement to the integral evangelization, and social and spiritual transformation of their church and the community has made a great impact in the Northern Philippines.

This is in consonant with the essential roles of religion and its undeniable function in the broader society. This is affirmed by several studies on the role of Religion in social transformation. Nur Kafid (2014), explicated how religion plays a vital role in changing individuals and society. Erasmus (2005) conducted a case study in South Africa. His study is consonant with the positive role of religion in social transformation. Both studies emphasized the impact of religion on individuals and society. The life of transformation among the study participants is parallel with the study, "'Anawim' Faith-Life Community toward Renewal and Transformation: A Phenomenological Study" (2017). The author immersed himself in the rituals and practices of his local church, the "Anawim." He mainly observed how the study participants translated faith into action. He described their lives as transformed life. The same conclusion was given by Esmeralda Sanchez in her study of El Shaddai. The study was an attempt to understand the Filipino Religious Movement by reflecting, describing, and analyzing the lived experiences of her six co-researchers. Results revealed the total dependence of the study participants on God. Each co-researcher and key informant also spoke of his/her struggle as an opportunity to be deeply related to God, an essential character of a spiritual journey. Reynaldo Romero's (2006) study concluded that the spiritual experiences of pastoral workers resulted in profound personal transformation, which led to social

change. Romero further discussed that social transformation manifested itself through the active participation of the pastoral workers in their respective communities. The studies show how religious beliefs and different religious structures, like their rituals and manner of worship, shape people. Fundamentally, it is the individual agency through the reflexivity of church workers in the context of this study that propelled actors to find meaning and purpose in their lives and be agents in giving hope to the people, especially those who are poor, disadvantaged, and marginalized.

Conclusion and practical implications

The study unraveled the role of structure and agency in the lives of full-time workers of a Protestant Church in the Northern part of the Philippines. The life journey of the full-time church workers revealed how their life of poverty, the doctrine of predestination, spiritual guidance of the missionaries, spiritual formation, and even the difficulties in the mission field have been significant to their lives of transformation. These structures are both constraining and enabling to them which molded them to become actively engaged, committed workers of their local church. Despite the difficulties and struggles they encountered in the mission field, they exercised their agency to overcome these struggles as full-time church workers. They become actively engaged in preaching the gospel and serving people, especially the poor and marginalized. Today, they become agents of transformation in their local church and community. Both structure and agency are significant factors in shaping the study participants and in carrying out the function of the church as a social institution. The findings of the study underscore that religion is germane to social transformation, particularly in addressing the burdens of the marginalized and the disadvantaged. Some salient points could be suggested to maintain the spirit of the Protestant full-time church workers in the Northern Philippines:

1. The problem of scarce workers should be addressed. More workers should be added in order to solve the problem of multiple designation, and overwork.

2. The physical well-being and health care should be taken into account. Hence, more health benefits should also be given, particularly to those workers who are in the future are retiring.

3. It must also be noted that the full-time workers have been trained through rigid immersion in the mission field. Thus, if more workers

would be hired, they must not come from the outside who have little knowledge and experience of the mission field.

4. Since the members' knowledge is advancing and developing along with their status in their local church, the full-time workers should undergo rigid advanced training in theology and ministry.

5. Spiritual disciplines like dawn prayer and fasting should always be highlighted as a primordial part of the formation of full-time workers.

6. The grassroots orientation of the local church should be despite the changes in members' status. The church should always prioritize the poor, needy, and disadvantaged in society. They must be the evangelizing mission priority.

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(Re)Collecting colonial ancient manuscripts to construct the national identity of Indonesia

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Abstract: The recollection of ancient manuscripts has been through long and challenging processes since Indonesia gained its independence. There have been different views about repatriating ancient manuscripts in Western countries and the countries of origin from which manuscripts were obtained, while these different views present difficulties when no good faith between the two parties is involved. This research aims to investigate the challenges faced by museums in the Netherlands, and the methods of coping with the issue of ancient manuscripts in Indonesia to allow for maximum access to help improve the national identity. This research shows that Indonesia and Netherlands had successful projects together, both physical cultural object's repatriation and digitalized manuscript's cooperation. However, the success of repatriating the manuscripts seems far-fetched. Following the outbreak of the Covid 19, the number of visitors to the museums in the Netherlands has shrunk, followed by financial problems and outcries over justice and moral violations expressed by the state of origin. Therefore, regulations aiming to cope with the problems are paramount by repatriating the ancient manuscripts of Indonesia housed in the Netherlands, improving collaborations in digitization and access to ancient manuscripts, education, and research, improving museum programs, and empowering visitors in accessing ancient manuscripts.

Keywords: repatriation, colonial, ancient manuscript, Dutch museums

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Introduction

On 14 June 2023, the Dutch Minister, Mark Rutte, officially issued the recognition of the independence of Indonesia gained on 17 August 1945 comprehensively and unconditionally (Editorial board of the Jakarta Post 2023). Some viewed this recognition as nothing meaningful, considering that it did not come with the recognition of law and tended to avert the responsibility of reparation over war crimes committed by the Dutch Government a long time ago (Yuniar 2023).

Cultural heritage was looted by the Dutch Government during colonialization, including thousands of ancient manuscripts in Indonesia, collected and displayed in museums and libraries in the Netherlands. These ancient manuscripts were stolen as seized properties during the war by archeologists or enthusiastic missionaries (Scott 2017). The manuscripts were sold under suppressing war conditions ("Naskah Batak Tertua? British Library Ms. 4726." 2022); they were smuggled or stolen by soldiers or were simply given as a gift to authorities (Karlzén 2010).

Indonesia, to date, has not elaborated data on the total number of ancient legal manuscripts of Indonesia housed in the Netherlands. When Professor Carel Stolker, a Rector of Leiden University, visited Sri Sultan Hamangkubuwono X, he once said: "*There is a large collection of ancient Indonesian documents stored in Leiden. If they are lined up, it is almost the same as 12 kilometers of books".* This collection covers 26,000 ancient manuscripts, music, and 1,500 Indonesian artifacts in the university, and these manuscripts were under the possession of the Dutch and British Kingdoms (UIN Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta 2016).

The existence of the museums in the western countries shows the presence of colonialism supremacy, indicated by some ethnographic collections in modern museums collected during the time of colonialism especially when it was considered vital to garner the objects of the past to help preserve cultural proof that seems to fade away (Ariese 2019).

In the 21st century, museums played a new role in supporting and making contributions to the process of cultural reform, involving serious considerations regarding why these objects needed to be preserved and for whom they were preserved. The request for the return of ancient manuscripts by the country of origin or *adat* people has often been viewed from diverging perspectives by museums. The countries of origin representing *adat* people have focused on the

preservation of ancient manuscripts related to spiritual bonds and the usefulness of the manuscripts for the knowledge development of *adat* communities, while these manuscripts should have been passed throughout generations. Museums in Western countries believe that they hold the scientific responsibility for the ancient manuscripts to help preserve, learn, interpret, and disseminate the manuscripts as knowledge to the present generations and the following generations (Kobyliński 2013).

Varying ways of seeing the preservation of ancient manuscripts in terms of their spiritual purposes compared to other uses and another aspect compared to scientific doctrine are perplexing, indicating that it needs to get museum experts involved to help see through the barriers that they have created and the local communities, to recognize the values and the needs of the communities of the countries of origin, and to comprehensively contribute to the communities. This approach should not only be restricted to the visitors of the museums and academicians, but it should also touch the *adat* people. What museums are currently facing is facilitating the preservation of objects within wider social and cultural scopes and developing strategies offering the protection and the best utilization of natural resources for the sake of the people as a whole (Simpson 2009).

Methods

The methods of data collection involved library research and interviews, where the former represents a series of activities related to garnering data from the library, the Internet, reading, and note-taking, and research data processing, while interviews involved raising questions to museum experts. The data were processed according to the descriptive analysis technique.

Repatriation and digitization of ancient manuscripts in colonial collections of Dutch museums: Early success

The repatriation of ancient manuscripts is an emotional topic among the communities in Indonesia. Repatriation holds political and legal interests that need to be understood as part of the history and the local/*adat* community members along with colonization and its consequences (UBC Museum of Anthropology 2008). Indonesia has always attempted to repatriate the objects of cultural heritage of Indonesia, especially the ancient manuscripts housed in the Netherlands.

Considering that these objects of cultural heritage are not taken as a national priority, their success is considered low. In terms of its portion in the legislation, the repatriation of cultural heritage objects housed abroad is only generally governed in Article 20 of Law Number 11 of 2010 concerning Cultural Heritage (henceforth referred to as Law 11/2020) and Article 26 paragraph (3) of Law Number 5 of 2017 concerning Cultural Development (henceforth referred to as Law 5/2017).

In addition to the incomplete regulation, other factors may also be caused by weakening diplomacy and negotiation of the government, while there is also no special attention that helps actively claim the cultural heritage of Indonesia in the museums and libraries in the Netherlands. The record of the success of the government in repatriating the ancient manuscripts from the Netherlands to Indonesia is presented in Table 1.

No.	Year	Institutions in the Netherlands	Cultural Heritage Objects	Description
1.	1973	National Museum of Ethnology, Leiden	Negarakertagama	This was given as a gift to the Indonesian Government to commemorate the 200th Anniversary of the National Museum as the output of the diplomacy with the Dutch Government (Adinugraha 2016).
2.	2016	Tropenmuseum Amsterdam	13.000 historical documents/ancient manuscripts	6,000 manuscripts were handed in Universitas Nasional Sebelas Maret (UNS) Surakarta and 7000 manuscripts were stored in the National Library (Ridarineni 2016)

Table 1. Successful repatriation of ancient manuscripts
from the museums in the Netherlands to Indonesia

Differently, lengthy negotiation over the repatriation of ancient manuscripts by the Dutch is also related to the future negotiation involving collaborations in cultures that not only set the cultural heritage as objects ‘in the diplomacy’ but also ‘as diplomacy’

(Gaudenzi dan Swenson 2017). The digitization of ancient manuscripts has become one of the strategic projects of cultural collaborations between Indonesia and the Netherlands to protect and utilize the manuscripts. Furthermore, digitization helps ensure that the collection of ancient manuscripts is also available for the coming generations, considering that physical documents are prone to damage. The digitization of ancient manuscripts has also been widely available for more users, allowing them to access the manuscripts anytime without having to take a long trip to access them (Kelly 2013). The success of the digitization of ancient manuscripts of Indonesia is elaborated in Table 2.

No.	Collections' Name	Websites	Copyright Holder of Digitalized Manuscripts	Number of Manuscripts	Status
1	Aceh Books (KITLV)	https://digitalcollections.universiteitleiden.nl/view/collection/acehbooks	Royal Institute of Southeast Asian and Caribbean Studies (KITLV) in Leiden University Library	More than 1200 publications on Aceh	Restricted Access
2	The DFG project "Orient-Digital"				
	Kraton Kacirebonan Colleections	https://www.qalamos.net/content/search/search-form-manuscript-flexible.xed	Bayerische Staatsbibliothek München, Forschungsbibliothek Gotha, Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin and Rechenzentrum der Universität Leipzig	39 manuscripts	Open Access
	Kraton Surakarta Colleections			340 manuscripts	
	Kraton Yogyakarta Collections			366 manuscripts	
	Museum Negeri, Banda Aceh Collections			1591 manuscripts	
	Museum Sonobudoyo			990 manuscripts	
3	Javanese, Old Javanese and Balinese manuscripts	https://blogs.bl.uk/asian-and-african/javanese.html	British Library	195 manuscripts	Open Access
4	Archival records from The digitisation of Minangkabau's manuscript collections in Suraus (EAP144)	https://eap.bl.uk/project/EAP144/search	British Library	258 manuscripts	Open Access
5	Archival records from Preservation and Digitisation of Endangered Sundanese Manuscripts (EAP1029)	https://eap.bl.uk/project/EAP1029/search	British Library	288 manuscripts	Open Access
6	Archival records from The MIPES Indonesia: digitising Islamic manuscript of Indonesian Pondok Pesantren (EAP061)	https://eap.bl.uk/project/EAP061/search	British Library	315 manuscripts	Open Access
7	Archival records from	https://eap.bl.uk/	British Library	17 manuscripts	Open

	Acehnese manuscripts in danger of extinction: identifying and preserving the private collections located in Pidie and Aceh Besar regencies (EAP229)	project/EAP229/search			Access
8	Archival records from Documentation and preservation of Ambon manuscripts (EAP276)	https://eap.bl.uk/project/EAP276/search	British Library	193 manuscripts	Open Access
9	Archival records from Endangered manuscripts of Western Sumatra. Collections of Sufi brotherhoods (EAP205)	https://eap.bl.uk/project/EAP205/search	British Library	11 manuscripts	Open Access
10	Digital access to Batak manuscripts	https://blogs.bl.uk/asian-and-african/batak.html	British Library	37 manuscripts	Open Access
11	Leiden University Library Digital Collections - Indonesia	https://eap.bl.uk/project/EAP205/search	Leiden University Libraries	340 manuscripts	Open Access

Table 2. The Successful Project of the Digitization of Indonesian Ancient Manuscripts in Netherlands, United Kingdom, and Germany. Source: University of Washington Libraries 2023

Unfortunately, the collaborations to digitalize the manuscripts are not as expected because the digitization copyright has shifted to the ownership of museums in Western countries and there are no available data linked to Indonesian websites. This certainly leaves consequences affecting the people of Indonesia who have no clues of how to access those data.

Challenges faced by the museums in the Netherlands

The 2020 data reported that there were 631 museums in the Netherlands. Of the total number, they are categorized according to five different themes of history, art, business, technology, natural history, and anthropology (Het Centraal Bureau voor de Statistiek 2022). The number and percentage of the museums in the Netherlands are presented in Table 3.

Theme	Number of Museums	Percentage
History	408	65%
Art	122	19%
Business and Technology	63	10%
Natural History	28	4%

Antropology	10	2%
Total	631	

Table 3. The Number of Museums in Netherlands.
Source: Het Centraal Bureau voor de Statistiek 2022

However, the existence of museums in the Netherlands has faced countless challenges especially following the COVID-19 outbreak (Network of European Museum Organisations 2021) and the Russia-Ukraine effects. This research maps four challenges encountered by the museums in the Netherlands amidst attempts to maintain their existence and collection.

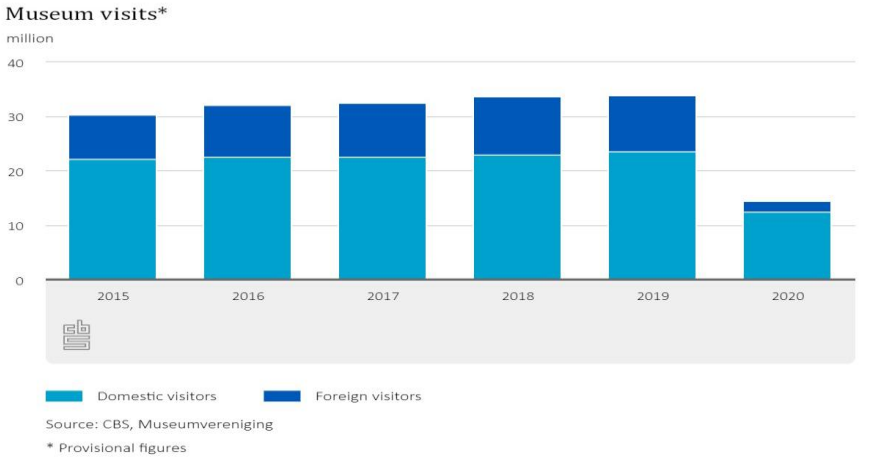
Regulation regarding the repatriation of cultural heritage objects
Issues of returning cultural heritage objects from European museums to the countries of origin have been debated for decades. In November 2017, a revolutionary speech by (Macron 2017), the President of France, redirected the political policies of Europe regarding the repatriation of cultural heritage objects (Jiménez 2023). Macron asserted "African heritage cannot be a prisoner of European museums". This speech marked the beginning of the change in repatriation policy in other European countries, including the Netherlands.

The Advisory Council of the Dutch Government issued a policy regarding the legal frameworks of the collections of colonial cultural objects, and some steps have been taken. Cited from the report of the Advisory Council of the Dutch Government, Lilian Gonçalves-Ho Kang You once said to the New Independent Committee regarding claims "If it doesn't belong to you then you must return it" (Boffey 2020). Furthermore, the Minister has the will to heed and act according to the recommendation of the Committee (Tünsmeyer 2022). In 2021, the Dutch Government released Guidance on the way forward for colonial collections, stating the policies and procedures for returning cultural heritage objects under the ownership of the Netherlands to their countries of origin. Their first project was to return some of the objects to Indonesia and Sri Lanka in mid-2023 (Government of the Netherlands 2023).

Depleting visitors
Since 2015, the number of domestic and foreign audiences of museums has been stagnant. In 2020, the number dropped due to the lockdown enforced by the Dutch Government on 12 March and 2 November

2020. In total, there were 14.4 million visitors to the museums in the Netherlands, a 58% decrease compared to the figure in 2019, where only 33.9 million people came to the museums. The number of foreign visitors also dropped to about 82% from 10.29 million in 2019 to 1.89 million visitors in the following year.

Diagram 1. The Number of Museum Audiences in the Netherlands 2015-2020 (CBS Statistics Netherlands 2022)



In 2021, the number of visitors further decreased to 11.8 million visitors. In early 2022, the Association of the Dutch Museums reported that there were 44% of museums taking considerable measures to revive the existence of museums (NL Times 2023). When museums were allowed to reopen after the lockdown, some were aware that the museums would not be the same as those before the outbreak, considering that it was mandatory for museums to restrict the numbers of visitors and visitors were required to reserve the visit before turning up at the museums. It presented a problem, especially for those coming from other countries (Tissen 2021).

Financial upheaval

Most museums in the Netherlands receive financial support from the government. The fund to enable the operation of the museums was earned from exhibitions called ‘blockbuster’, involving the fund coming from visitors or given voluntarily. The data from the Association of the Dutch Museums reported that there was at least one-fifth of the museums in the Netherlands failing to survive until 2020

(Tissen 2021). In 2022, about 25% of the Dutch museums were facing financial issues. Museums are highly prone to financial problems, considering that the fund mainly comes from the municipal government and private sectors without any subsidies.

The main issue is that the number of visitors is far lower than before the outbreak, forcing people to stay at home (NL Times 2022). Depleting sources from tourists or visitors, educational programs, and finance from the Dutch government have forced the museums to reconsider their policies and change their involvement with visitors (Tissen 2021).

Outcries over injustice and moral violations of the countries of origin where ancient manuscripts were obtained

The collections housed in the museums offer valuable educational resources from which people can gain knowledge of values, practices, beliefs, and cultural traditions of their own and others (Khafidlin 2021). The looting of cultural heritage objects during the colonial era has led further to injustice and moral injury affecting the people of the countries where the ancient manuscripts were taken. Furthermore, Fincham elaborated the taxonomy of how the ancient manuscripts were transferred in the following scopes:

1) Distributive justice

This aspect highlights the agreement regarding fair conservation that takes into account the involvement of the next generations and justice across generations. Excessive exploitation of cultural heritage objects may currently give benefits but certainly puts the next generations as aggrieved parties (Fincham 2012).

2) Procedural Justice

This aspect focuses on "the rights to equal treatment, not only equal distribution, meaning that this aspect also considers equal attention and respect in political decisions of how objects and opportunities of access to the objects may be distributed. Procedural justice is broken down into 2 considerations, namely *ex ante* and *ex post*. The aspect of *ex ante* (the use) sees whether the decision and procedure of public participation are fair enough for all parties or they only favor certain parties. On the other hand, *ex pont* (retrospect) focuses more on whether the decision-making process has treated all parties justly with equal attention and respect (Fincham 2012).

3) Corrective Justice

The law will face the complexity of fixing historical mistakes exceeding the restrictions of the law when cultural heritage objects are damaged and conflict arises between museums and the community/the country of origin. Corrective justice, in this case, embraces the concept of retributive justice implying that "the justice for the sacrificing countries for the sake of the obedience to the law demands violators to be punished instead of benefitting from ignoring the law (Fincham 2012).

4) Social Justice

Social justice is defined as a branch of a justice policy to embody a fairer social structure where public needs will be fully fulfilled. Robert Rodes understands social justice for aggrieved people who are not entitled to the privilege based on two perspectives: (a) the members of every class have sufficient resources and power with which they live their lives, and (b) special classes are responsible for wider social communities regarding how they use their benefit rights (Fincham 2012).

Removing barriers to accessing ancient manuscripts in colonial collections to construct community identity

Repatriating Indonesia's ancient manuscripts housed in the Netherlands

Returning the ancient manuscripts stored in the Netherlands is considered vital as an attempt to recover Indonesia and its people from "historical trauma" (Colwell 2019), while it also revitalizes culture. This view is based on the thought that colonialism has seized cultural values and practices from intimidated people. Therefore, the recovery following the colonial era should also take into account a redescription of what has gone, a healthy community, solid identity, guaranteed rights, and growing cultures. All this process is required to guarantee the cultural sustainability of Indonesia for all generations. That is, recovering the state from its historical trauma and revitalizing culture should involve the repatriation of ancient manuscripts to ensure that cultural information, spirituality, and religious practices can recuperate (Wilson 2009).

Museums must be ready to initiate a dialogue of returning the cultural objects to the countries of origin without any tendency to favor certain parties, and it must be done by adhering to scientific, professional, and humane principles and local, national, and international regulations with the priority that lies at government level.

Furthermore, when Indonesia or its communities demand the repatriation of ancient manuscripts, after the export or the transfer of the manuscripts as the cultural heritage of a state or its community and the violations of international and national conventions have been proven, the museums will need to take immediate actions to return them. Moreover, the museums should avoid selling them and heed all the rules of import, export, and transfer of cultural heritage objects, including ancient manuscripts (International Council of Museums 2017).

Overlooking or refusing the request from the countries of origin which the cultural heritage objects were taken from indicates that the museums are concerned with the conservation of the artifacts instead of supporting the communities to preserve varied cultures, beliefs, and practices that are more artifact creation-oriented. The return of cultural heritage objects helps the people of the countries of origin continue and reform the essential values and practices for the sake of their cultures and ceremonies. This measure is expected to contribute to the development of the people in this contemporary purview. That is, the repatriation seems to be the culmination to preserve the culture (Simpson 2009).

Enhancing the collaboration in digitization and access to ancient manuscripts as part of the collections of museums in the Netherlands

The preservation of ancient manuscripts takes into account digitization as an attempt to maintain access to ancient manuscripts in the time to come. However, of thousands of ancient manuscripts stored as the collections of museums in the Netherlands, not all can go digital simply because digitization needs cost to cover, among others, manuscript identification, assessment of the physical manuscripts, qualified human resources and experts (Milligan 2022). In other words, enhancing the collaborations in the digitization of ancient manuscripts between the Indonesian Government, the Dutch Government, and related *adat* communities, historians, technology experts, visual designers, and universities is considered vital. Such collaborations will allow for a new way of presenting ancient manuscripts, ranging from transcribing, translating, and commenting on the manuscripts to be further distributed across social media (Lied 2019).

Finally, the digitization is about contemporary access that also works for the future. The collection and preservation of ancient manuscripts are intended to garner value and usefulness for the sake of

related parties. So far, digitization is only accessible on the websites of the museums of Western countries such as the British Museum and Leiden Library. This limited access demands extension across other museum websites or libraries in Indonesia. This further access should also be congruous with the attempt of the government to gain, regulate, and provide access to the contents of ancient manuscripts that are useful and understood by Indonesian communities (Owens 2018). This should mark the initial steppingstone to introducing ancient manuscripts of Indonesia to society, while methods and approaches to access keep improving.

Collaborations in education and research

The collaborations in education and research between the Indonesian Government and the Dutch Government represented by the National Museums, libraries, and Archive Bank have taken place repeatedly. From 2007-2010, the Netherlands Culture Fund (HGIS), the National Museum of Ethnology in Leiden, the Indonesian Ministry of Culture and Tourism, and KLM Cargo initiated a project called 'Shared Cultural Heritage', consisting of some activities, primarily information exchange and consultation on Indonesian collections. It also involved several visits of staff from the curatorial and conservational departments (Ter Keurs 2009). On 10 July 2023, the Indonesian and Dutch Governments signed a technical arrangement for the repatriation of 472 Indonesia's cultural heritage objects. This agreement sets forth the clause concerning sharing knowledge production, including joint research, museum management, and others (Allamanda 2023).

Furthermore, western museums are obliged to promote knowledge, documentation, and collections of museums and cultural organizations in the countries and communities of origin. The potential of growing partnerships with the museums of the countries or regions that have lost the majority of their cultural heritage must be explored further (International Council of Museums 2017).

Improving museum programs

Museums carry three main functions: collection, research, and communication, all of which should be brought in unity through varying programs that rely on cutting-edge technology (Sola 2004). Museum programs have failed to attract audiences for the last two decades and after the outbreak; museums have also encountered countless obstacles, where the number of visitors has depleted, cultural

experiences have changed due to social distancing and information has shifted to a technological basis (Tallant 2020).

Museums in the future have to focus more on programs that have the potential to attract more visitors, are not restricted, and can sense the differences and changes as something attractive and productive (Grinell 2013). For instance, museums can come up with programs intended to (OECD dan ICOM 2018):

a. Identify socio-economic conditions in the museums and among their audiences to ensure that exhibitions, education, research, and training can be addressed appropriately.
b. Increase staff training and understand strategic approaches intended for the museums and partners in all sectors.
c. Establish continuous dialogues or develop long-term partnerships with the countries of origin where ancient manuscripts were obtained or with *adat* communities and other strategies appropriately and identify the cost that can be shared.
d. Arrange interdisciplinary research collaborations in museums and promote shared facilities in all departments.
e. Mobilize new financial resources for social well-being through charity foundations and sponsors from the private sector.
f. Identify the cost of the museums that can be shared with other institutions.

Museums are also expected to provide programs to help develop new information technology as a measure to reach new segments of the museums and position the museums as the agents of social change (Marty dan Buchanan 2022). To ensure that the digital ecosystems of the museums are created, the development of Augmented Reality, Virtual Reality, Digital Twins, Holographic Displays, app guides, and visitor flow technology are considered important in offering social experiences that attract visitors (Shehade dan Stylianou-Lambert 2020). Inclusive and integrative models between the physical and digital reality should properly exist (Giannini dan Bowen 2022).

Empowering visitors for accessing ancient manuscripts

Museums serve as a catalyst of culture and economy in European countries with their varied objects seized during the colonial era, received as donations, legacy, and purchase. Museums increase the added value of the collections of cultural heritage objects through exhibitions and publication of catalogs, education, workshops, research, and tours to former colonial countries, and this condition

leaves the consequences, either intentionally or unintentionally, to the information and narration of cultural identity of a state from a global perspective.

The research conducted by Dodd et al. reported that domestic visitors from Europe see the lack of their museums according to the minimum events held, or limited collections of particular objects, the chunks of narrated history that are misinterpreted or incomplete. European visitors use their knowledge and understanding only to share recommendations and improvements to the museums. This is acceptable, but museums still have to see and consider the existence of audiences from the countries of origin where manuscripts were obtained, while these audiences are seen by European countries as the minority (Dodd et al. 2012).

The revival of the culture of the countries of origin in this context has set the *adat* communities or the countries of origin as the primary subjects to create the narration and identity of their cultures, which are mostly performed by museums in Europe. As a consequence, the empowerment of central audiences, especially the *adat* communities as the owners of the ancient manuscripts, through educational and training programs and exhibitions should be initiated. Museums are also expected to establish consultations, collaborations, and partnerships, welcome curators and program interpreters, set a protocol, raise involvement in several agendas, and recognize the priority of the countries of origin where ancient manuscripts were produced in launching programs, exhibition opening, scientists' contributions, and many more (Maranda 2021).

Conclusion

Looting ancient manuscripts of Indonesia to be further taken to the Netherlands during the colonial time is unethical and contravenes international law. Therefore, since the independence, the Indonesian Government has attempted to take back the cultural heritage objects, including the ancient manuscripts from the Netherlands, but this attempt to repatriate the objects is too low. Museums in the Netherlands are currently facing challenging issues such as the legal politics of repatriation of cultural heritage objects, depleting visitors to the museums, financial problems, and outcries over justice and moral violations from the countries of origin where ancient manuscripts were taken. With all these challenges, the museums can return the ancient manuscripts to Indonesia and make contributions to help *adat* people

improve their cultural practices. Moreover, increasing partnerships in digitization and access to ancient manuscripts, education, research, enhancement of museum programs, and empowerment of visitors to access ancient manuscripts are essential. Thus, museums are expected to be actively involved in the preservation and development of living legacy and contemporary cultural practices.

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LITERATURE AND ART STUDIES

Nihal Yeğinobalı as an accidental feminist: The case of Turkish translation of Erica Jong's *Fear of Fifty*

Ilgın Aktener[*]

Abstract: Focusing on the prolific Turkish translator Nihal Yeğinobalı, this study seeks to establish whether she can be considered a feminist translator. In doing so, her Turkish translation of the feminist author Erica Jong's *Fear of Fifty* is elaborated on as a case study. Drawing on von Flotow's and Massardier-Kenney's feminist translation strategies and Allan and Burridge's (2007) work on sexual taboo, the study homes in on (1) translator's notes to explore Yeğinobalı's visibility as a feminist translator, and the translation of (2) sexual language/swearing and (3) neologisms, which are both used as feminist strategies by Jong in the aforementioned book. The study reveals that Yeğinobalı's translator's notes are merely of explanatory nature and she is not consistent in her use of neologistic translation. Furthermore, she seems to have toned down the explicitness and offensiveness of sexual language used by Jong in the target text she produces. These all imply that Yeğinobalı's translation strategies derive from a neutral stance rather than a feminist one. Nevertheless, Yeğinobalı–intentionally or unintentionally–uses the recovery strategy by translating and enabling the publication of a feminist author's personal recount of her own experiences. In this way, she widens the canon of the women's literature through translation. In this sense, the study argues that Yeğinobalı can be accepted as an accidental feminist translator who ends up serving for the feminist agenda.

Keywords: Erica Jong, *Elli Yaş Korkusu, Fear of Fifty,* feminist translation studies, Nihal Yeğinobalı

Introduction

One of the most prolific Turkish woman translators, Nihal Yeğinobalı has been the subject of several translation/literary studies (e.g. Erkul Yağcı 2019; Yanık 2013; Tahir Gürçağlar 2010; Alt 2008). Despite a number of studies on Yeğinobalı, there has been no studies focusing on

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her purely from the perspective of feminist translation studies, to the best of the author's knowledge. In the light of this, and the contention that translators' agency has been highlighted as an important research theme within the framework of the studies on the history of translation, especially within microhistorical studies (Adamo 2006; Pym 2014; Tahir-Gürçağlar 2009), this study seeks to establish whether Yeğinobalı's translation activities, strategies and decisions can be considered as tools serving for the feminist agenda, and hence, whether Yeğinobalı can be positioned as a feminist translator within the history of translation. While doing so, the study concentrates on the case of Yeğinobalı's *Elli Yaş Korkusu* (1995), the Turkish translation of the feminist author Erica Jong's memoir entitled *Fear of Fifty* (1994), published by Remzi Kitabevi. Reasoning behind the decision to focus on Yeğinobalı is explored in the following paragraphs.

To start with, it appears that Yeğinobalı grew up with highly open-minded parents, who were appreciative of women's rights (Yanık 2013). For instance, her father was supportive of women's liberation in that he spoke positively of the time when Turkish women stopped wearing headscarves (Yeğinobalı 2010, cited in Yanık 2013). Similarly, her mother seems to have been an advocate of women's right to literacy and to have appreciated that the establishment of Turkish Republic gave women this opportunity (ibid). Furthermore, she wanted to receive education and become a teacher instead of getting married at an early age (Erkul Yağcı 2019). Apple did not fall far from the tree and just like her mother, Yeğinobalı herself valued literacy from her childhood onwards. When she was just 5 years old, she insisted that she went to school (Yanık 2013). These attest to the fact that Yeğinobalı was brought up in an environment responsive to women's free will.

It is also important to note that Yeğinobalı is a significant name for women's literature. Her access to literary world as an author was through her book *Genç Kızlar* ('Young Girls'), which she had published at first as a book written by Vincent Ewing and translated by herself as it was initially turned down by publishing houses for being an obscene book written by a woman (Bozkurt 2014). Leaving aside her book, she is seen as a crucial literary agent for (young) women since she has translated many books for women on marriage and sexuality. However, Yeğinobalı herself has stated that her translations on sexuality were a result of her commercial concerns (Erkul Yağcı 2019). Nevertheless, thanks to her strategy of pseudotranslation in the

case of her *Genç Kızlar*, Yeğinobalı is also considered a norm-breaker in Turkish society, which is patriarchal and "would not have tolerated the novel's explicit sexual references in an original work written by a young unmarried woman" (Tahir Gürçağlar 2010, 176). Contradictorily, Yeğinobalı does not see herself as a feminist as evinced by Alt's (2008) interview with Yeğinobalı in her study on *Genç Kızlar*. On the other hand, Tahir Gürçağlar (2010, 176) argues that Yeğinobalı's text "fulfilled a series of socio-political functions" even though it was motivated by commercial concerns. Furthermore, according to Erkul Yağcı (2019, 231; translation by the author of the study), Yeğinobalı is valued by the women readers, "especially […] young women readers in Türkiye, despite the fact that she does not have a feminist or ideological purpose." Considering these, and that Yeğinobalı has translated *Fear of Fifty* by Erica Jong, a highly controversial feminist, woman author, it would not be unreasonable to argue that, although she does not consider herself a feminist, Yeğinobalı does act as a feminist translator, who–albeit in a volitionless manner–fulfills a feminist purpose. In line with this, as mentioned above, this study aims to uncover whether Yeğinobalı indeed serves for the feminist agenda or not. Before doing so, for the purposes of this study, it is important to delve further into Erica Jong as a feminist author, who tends to use explicit language in dealing with sexuality as a feminist strategy.

Born in 1942 and into a upper-middle-class Jewish family, Erica Jong received her BA degree in English from Barnard College and her MA in the 18th century literature from Colombia University. Although she sees herself mainly as a poet, Jong has produced novels, memoirs and essay books (Kort 2007; Cox 2000). Her *Fear of Flying*–on which *Fear of Fifty* is a wordplay–is considered a groundbreaking novel in that not only was it "one of the first contemporary American novels to introduce readers to a provocative female author who was willing to explore female sexuality unashamedly and humorously" (Kort 2007, 158) but also it was "about a woman's discovery of her selfhood, through discarding cultural stereotypes" (Cox 2000, 287). Through *Fear of Flying*, Jong has also had an impact on sexual revolution and feminism, even though the novel's explicit approach to sexuality has also been the target of criticism. In any case, Jong's fiction, non-fiction and poetry shed light on womanhood (Cox 1999; Kort 2007). To corroborate this, Cox (1999, 288) suggests that *Fear of Fifty* provides "insight into the world of women". Nevertheless, it was her use of

explicit sexual language which attributes Jong a revolutionary role because when *Fear of Flying* was published, "'talking dirty' in print was […] still very much a male prerogative" (Gavera 2004, 52). In fact, it is argued that sexuality is an important part of Jong's media persona and the way she creates female protagonists, who embraced "free-love ideal" was not only personal but also political for her (ibid, 46). In line with this, her novels treat female sexuality and body, and by doing so, they seem to have served for the feminist agenda: Gavera (2004) explains that *Fear of Flying* "became an important document of at least the early women's movement and played a vital role in awakening the sexual consciousness of women" (50). Yet, as mentioned, Jong's treatment of sexuality is rather explicit, which has been a target of constant criticism. For Suleiman (1985), however, this seems to be an ideological act. She argues:

> […] Jong's use of obscene language – which was generally recognized as a "first" in American fiction by a woman – was a self-conscious reversal of stereotypes, and in some sense a parody of the language of the tough-guy narrator/heroes of Henry Miller or Norman Mailer. […] What is involved here is a reversal of roles and of language, in which the docile and/or bestial but always silent, objectified woman of male pornographic fiction suddenly usurps both the pornographer's language and his way of looking at the opposite sex. (Suleiman 1985, 9)

This highlights the importance of Jong's deliberate use of explicit language in treating sexuality. Through this, not only does she claim a typically male writer technique and thus, empowers herself and her characters, but also assumes a pioneering role in American fiction. Furthermore, Diot (1986) claims that Jong's use of explicit sexual language serves a certain purpose, which is "defying taboos and propriety, an attitude which is traditionally forbidden to women" (495), and thus, Jong "rids language of its potential malignancy and hostility, its destructive quality by using it against herself, and her sisters, exactly as in the case of anti-semitic jokes told by Jews" (496). In consideration of these, it would be reasonable to maintain that explicit use of sexual language is crucial in terms of Jong's style as a strong woman writer and to serve for feminist agenda. Therefore, it is also rational to argue that including explicit use of sexual language in the translation of Jong's works is important to replicate her style at the service of feminist agenda.

A close reading of *Fear of Fifty* proved that Jong indeed explicitly uses sexual language. In addition to this, she also includes neologisms that appear to serve for the feminist agenda (see Neologism/Neologistic Translation). Similar to Quebec writers in the 1970s and 1980s, who used experimental language and other means to deconstruct patriarchal and misogynist language (von Flotow 1991, 72), Jong seems to incorporate certain neologisms that highlight the feminine in language and praise motherhood. Mindful of these two elements, one of the aims of this study is to determine how they manifest themselves in Turkish translation. Additionally, the study seeks to explore if and how, as a prolific woman translator, Yeğinobalı claims visibility as a translator, which can also be considered a feminist strategy. By using von Flotow's (2019; 2020) and Massardier-Kenney's (1997) set of feminist translation strategies as a reference point for the methodological framework, and Allan and Burridge's (2007) work on sexual taboo as the theoretical background, the study analyses (1) Yeğinobalı's translator's notes, and (2) the use of sexual language and neologisms in source and target texts. The next section deals with the aforementioned methodological and theoretical framework that underpins this analysis.

Methodological/Theoretical Framework

When it comes to feminist translation strategies, von Flotow's (2019; 2020) and Massardier-Kenney's (1997) names are generally at the forefront. Von Flotow (2019; 2020) categorizes feminist translation strategies under macro- and micro-translation strategies. Below is a brief account of these two categories and strategies listed under them:

Macro-translation strategies are (1) prefaces written by translators, which explain political and literary theory, as well as feminist ideas and principles, and enable translator's visibility; (2) footnotes by translators, which explain translation strategies, highlight feminist facets of the translation, and enable translator's visibility; (3) non-translation of certain texts, e.g. poetry by male authors; (4) strategic selection of texts that serve for the feminist agenda; (5) selective retranslation of certain texts to rid them of patriarchal interpretations; (6) feminist publishing, reviewing, critiquing through the establishment of feminist publishing houses; and (7) gratis translation of selective texts that are worthy of disseminating in terms of feminist agenda.

Micro-translation strategies are (1) making the feminine visible in languages through the use of feminine forms and innovative language; and (2) use of neologisms in translating neologisms used by feminist authors to deconstruct patriarchal language.

Massardier-Kenney (1997), on the other hand, groups feminist translation strategies under author-centred and translation-centred strategies, which are discussed below:

Author-centred strategies are (1) recovery referring to widening of the canon through the translation of the female experience; (2) commentary (similar to prefaces and footnotes) referring to texts that come with the translation and highlight the importance of the women in the translated text; and (3) resistancy referring to linguistic strategies that distort fluency and create a defamiliarizing effect to make translation visible.

Translator-centred strategies are (1) commentary referring to the texts that come with the translation and highlight factors related to translation such as the translator's motivation, elements that affected the translator's performance, etc; (2) use of parallel texts "in the target language that were produced in a similar situation or that belong to the same genre as that of the source text" (Massardier-Kenney 1997, 64); and (3) collaboration referring to the translator's joint work with other translators or the author.

Among these translation strategies, (1) prefaces, footnotes and commentary, (2) recovery, and (3) neologisms are deemed important for the purposes of this study. Firstly, questioning whether the translator used a strategy from the first group would have implications in terms of translator's visibility, on which, as mentioned in the Introduction, this study focuses. Secondly, the text in question in this study can be scrutinized from the perspective of recovery since, being a memoir by a feminist author, it definitely is a work of the female experience. Lastly, considering that Jong herself uses neologisms, it would be fruitful to home in on these to see if and how Yeğinobalı attempts to replicate them.

The introductory section also elaborated on Jong's use of explicit language. Although the above-given sets of feminist translations strategies do not directly address the use of sexual language or obscenity by female authors/translators, it is crucial to focus on this aspect of Jong's style and how it was translated since, as discussed in the Introduction, it plays (or at least, has played) a key role in serving for feminist agenda, i.e., Jong's use of sexual language in *Fear of*

Flying placed the very text as a feminist document in the early women's movement. In addition, it helped Jong assume the role of 'male' author, which was revolutionary at the time. Let alone female sexuality, "all sex is subject to taboos and censoring" (Allan and Burridge 2007, 145); therefore, Jong's explicit treatment of her sexuality in *Fear of Fifty* can also be considered as a means of deconstructing the male role in literature by assuming the very role herself. In talking about the sex taboo, Allan and Burridge mention three terms, which are orthophemism, euphemism and dysphemism. They suggest that since sex is a tabooed topic, the language related to it "gives rise to a great deal of verbal play and figurative language" (ibid, 144). At this point, it is essential to mention that Jong uses not only euphemistic sexual language in the form of wordplays and figurative language, and orhophemisms that do not cause offense but also dysphemisms that are found offensive, rude and informal. To exemplify it clearly, the reader can see offensive words like 'fuck' and 'cock' in Jong's writing, as well as orthophemisms like 'oral sex' or figures of speech/euphemisms like 'eat it like gelato' (see Sexual Language/Swearing). Keeping in mind that Jong does so to serve for feminist agenda by telling it as it is, resisting taboos and assuming the role of the male author, it is argued here that Jong's (explicit) use of sexual language is a challenge for the translator. This is because as an imperative part of Jong's style but at the same time as a source of taboo, explicit sexual language is an element that needs careful deliberation in the translation process. Considering what is discussed in this section, as well as elements determined after a close reading of *Fear of Fifty* and its translation into Turkish by Yeğinobalı, the units of analysis in this study are determined as (1) translator's notes, (2) sexual language/swearing and (3) neologisms, which will be discussed in the analysis section separately.

Analysis

Translator's Notes

A close reading of the Turkish translation of *Fear of Fifty* showed that there are four translator's notes in total. All these translator's notes are of explanatory nature and merely define and describe certain terms. Yeğinobalı's translator's notes (referred to as 'T.N.') are listed below:

> T.N. 1: Mama ve Papa aslında anne ve babaya hitap ederken kullanılan kelimeler olmakla birlikte, yazar çocukluğunda ninesi ve dedesine daha yakın olduğu için onlara böyle hitap etmektedir. (38)

> [Although mama and papa are words used in addressing mothers and father, the author addresses her grandmother and grandfather through these terms as she was closer to them during her childhood.]
> T.N. 2: Eskiden Doğu Avrupa'da bulunan küçük Yahudi köyleri. (47; in reference to 'ştetel')
> [Small Jewish villages that used to exist in Eastern Europe.]
> T.N. 3: Kuzey Amerika Kızılderilileri tarafından hastalıkların iyileştirilmesi ve savaşta başarı için yapılan danslı şölen. (76; in reference to 'pow-wow')
> [A celebration with dancing held by North American Indians to cure diseases and for triumphs in wars.]
> T.N. 4: Fun-eğlence, sözcüğüne gönderme. (393)
> [Fun-a reference to the word eğlence (fun).] (translations by the author of the study)

As can be seen above, footnotes are included only when Yeğinobalı seeks to clarify what is meant by a term. Only in the case of the translator's note 1, does Yeğinobalı gives information about the author's life by explaining that Jong used to be closer with her grandparents than she was with her parents. Even though in this footnote, information about the author is offered in the form of commentary, it cannot be argued that the importance of the woman is highlighted through it. Despite the fact that translator's notes do hint at the presence of the translator in general, Yeğinobalı's notes do not aim to clarify her translation strategies and decisions, or the feminist facets of the text in question. Considering this, it seems that Yeğinobalı's footnotes cannot be construed from the perspective of von Flotow's (2019; 2020) and Massardier-Kenney's (1997) strategies of footnotes and commentary, and that Yeğinobalı did not add these footnotes for the sake of making herself visible or to serve for the feminist agenda by focusing on her own agency, or on Jong as a feminist author. Then again, this can be a manifestation of Remzi Kitabevi's (the publishing house of *Elli Yaş Korkusu*) publishing policy that implies the anonymity of the translator. An analysis of the peritexts–types of texts that accompany the book such as titles, prefaces, notes, titles, etc. (Genette 1997, 5)-shows that there are no other forms of commentary (e.g. afterword, preface, etc.) and the translator's name is given only in the inner cover, which seem to suggest that the translator is not visible in general in *Elli Yaş Korkusu*. In fact, the publishing house seems to emphasize Erica Jong as an important figure in that her name is given in red and a big font on the cover along with a picture of her. In this sense, Yeğinobalı's invisibility might not have been a conscious choice

by the translator, but rather a by-product of the publishing house's choices.

Sexual Language/Swearing

Among all the categories of unit of analysis, sexual language/swearing is the most striking one as Jong uses them throughout her memoir. As mentioned, in doing so, she uses both euphemisms/orthophemisms and dysphemisms. Since there are many occurrences of such euphemisms, orthophemisms and dysphemisms in the source text, representative samples are chosen and analyzed in this section.

In *Fear of Fifty*, perhaps one of the most frequently used word denoting copulation that can also be considered vulgar is the word 'fuck'. Several examples of Jong's use of the word 'fuck' are listed below:

> They [men] wonder why women are so tough on them–so they go out and *fuck* a woman half their age. (79)
> He flirted madly with me, but did not *fuck* me. (84)
> I do not *fuck* him… (114)
> Say it, ladies: You want to *fuck* them, then kill them, having had your way. (117)
> When it became clear that he wanted to split to see an old girlfriend in London, I took off for Italy, land of my dreams, where I vengefully *fucked* a married Italian (the first in a long line of those). (94) (emphasis by the author of the study)

Although in these instances Jong opts for dysphemisms, Yeğinobalı renders most of them as euphemisms: second, third and fifth occurrences are translated as '*yatmak'* ('to sleep with') and the fourth occurrence is translated as '*sevişmek'* ('to make love'). Only in the translation of the first occurrence, Yeğinobalı uses a vulgar term '*düzmek'*, which is labelled as 'offensive language' in Turkish Language Association's (Türk Dil Kurumu) online dictionary. Nevertheless, '*düzmek'* is not as offensive as the word '*sikmek*', which is a more direct equivalence for the word 'fuck'. Taking into account that in the first occurrence, Jong wittily and humorously criticizes a male behavior that, in a way, belittles women, Yeğinobalı might have opted for a more offensive alternative than she usually uses to convey a similar level of derogation.

When it comes to vulgar words that denote genitalia, an analysis of Yeğinobalı's treatment of them yields interesting results. Several examples along with their translations by Yeğinobalı are given below:

> So Jewish boys are horny, but also full of fear about whether their *cocks* will survive their horniness. (60)
> Bu yüzden Yahudi gençleri şehvetlidir ama bir yandan da, 'acaba *kamışım* bu işten sağlam çıkacak mı?' diye korku içindedirler. (96)
> Look to the right of you, look to the left of you, one of you will not get tenure: the one without a *cock*. (78)
> Taş çatlasa içinizden bir tanesi professor olmayacak, acaba kim? Kimin *çükü* yoksa o! (117)
> "My heart and my *cunt* pounded that old tattoo: Take me, take me, take me or I'll die. (151)
> Yüreğimle birlikte *dişilik organım* da o bilinen tempoyu tutmaya başlamıştı: Al beni, al beni, al beni, al yoksa öleceğim. (204) (emphasis by the author of the study)

For the word 'cock', Yeğinobalı uses the words '*kamış*' ('reed') and '*çük*' (an offensive reference to male genitalia), which are both labelled as 'offensive language' in Turkish Language Association's online dictionary–albeit the latter can be considered more offensive than the former. On the other hand, for the word 'cunt', Yeğinobalı uses the orthophemistic phrase '*dişilik organı*' ('female sexual organ'). In the case that using more explicit terms in translating male genitalia, while using orhophemisms for female genitalia is a deliberate strategy on the part of Yeğinobalı, it would be fair to suggest that it is contradictory with Jong's unrestrained use of obscenities similar to male authors since, just like them, Jong is clearly not apprehensive about using explicit references to female genitalia.

In the cases in which the author herself uses euphemistic ways in talking about sex, Yeğinobalı retains a similar level of explicitness in that she also opts for euphemistic uses. To illustrate this, an example is given below:

> "Eat it like *gelato*, baby!" Paolo or Gino or Franco or Sandro raved in bed. I laughed so hard, I thought I'd swallow his *pisello*. (94)
> "*Gelato – dondurma* niyetine yala, yavrum!" diye yatakta sayıklardı, Paolo, Gino ya da Franco ve ben öyle gülerdim ki onun *pisello*'sunu yutacak gibi olurdum. (136) ["Lick it as if it's *gelato – ice-cream*, baby!" Paolo, Gino or Franco begged in bed and I would laugh so hard that I would almost swallow his *pisello*.] (emphasis and translation by the author of the study)

It is clear in the example above that the Italian word '*gelato*' ('ice-cream') is euphemistically used for 'penis'. As '*gelato*' is a commonly used word for ice-cream for English speakers, this euphemistic use is rather obvious in terms of meaning for them. On the other hand,

'gelato' is not commonly used for ice-cream in Turkish. This being the case, it appears that Yeğinobalı chose to explicitate the word by adding '*dondurma*' (Turkish word for 'ice-cream'). '*Pisello*', another Italian word, means 'pea' and 'penis'. Since it is a foreign word for both English speakers and Turkish speakers, it can be considered euphemistic for both of them, despite the fact that the word refers to male genitalia.

Another example for the use of euphemisms in talking about sex in *Fear of Fifty* is given below:

> *He […] entered me* on the bed, *holding firm inside me* for what seemed like forever, while *I filled with juice like the pears on the pear tree* and *began to throb as if a storm were shaking them onto the ground.* (106)
> […] yatağın üzerinde *içime girdi* ve *içimde*, bana sonsuz gibi gelen bir zaman boyunca *sımsıkı kaldı; ben de armut ağacının üstündeki meyveler gibi balla doldum* ve *dalları sallayıp meyveleri yere döken bir fırtınaya tutulmuşçasına sarsılmaya başladım*. (148) [He *entered me* on the bed and *stayed firm in me* for some time, which felt endless; and *I filled with honey like the fruits on a pear tree* and *began to shake as if caught by a storm which shook the branches dropping fruits onto ground*.] (emphasis and translation by the author of the study)

As can be seen here, Jong uses the simile of a pear tree during a storm in talking about her orgasm. Although Yeğinobalı does not use the exact same wording, she does use the same pear tree simile. That is to say, although Yeğinobalı tends to tone down explicit references to sex in Turkish at times (as in the case of 'fuck' and 'cunt'), she uses similarly euphemistic words and expressions when Jong uses euphemistic references to sexuality.

As mentioned, Jong euphemistically uses Italian words with direct or indirect links to sexuality in treating sex in *Fear of Fifty*. In the below example, she similarly uses a French phrase:

> She had two children of her own and was involved in a very civilized *ménage a trois* with my other French translator, Georges Belmont. (172)
> İki çocuğu vardı ve bir yandan da öbür Fransızca çevirmenim Georges Belmont'la pek uygar bir *menage a Trois – sacayağı ilişki* yürütmekteydi. (227) [She had two children and at the same time, was in a very civilized *menage a Trois – a trivet like relationship* with Georges Belmont, my other French translator.] (emphasis and translation by the author of the study)

As in the Italian case, Yeğinobalı retains the French word as it is but like the 'gelato' example, she explicitates the word by adding the Turkish word '*sacayağı*' (refers to 'trivet [with three-legs]' or figuratively to 'people who are always in solidarity'). Although '*sacayağı ilişki*' ('a trivet like relationship') is not phrase which directly means (sexual) relationship involving three people, i.e., *menage a trois*, it clarifies–albeit somehow implicitly and figuratively–the French word for the Turkish readers who are not familiar with French. Consistent with the '*gelato*' example, Yeğinobalı seems to opt for adding explanations in the case of foreign words used in reference to sex.

In the following example, Yeğinobalı uses another foreign word; but, this time in the case of an English word deriving from Latin:

> She graded them from A to E for bed skills, coded the skills according to the first letter of her term for them–C, F, H, B, which turned out to mean *cunnilingus, fucking, hugging, and backrub*. (186)
> Bu erkeklere, yataktaki becerilerine göre A'dan E'ye kadar not veriyor, bu becerileri de, tanımlamak için kullandığı ilk sözcüklerin ilk harfleriyle şifreliyordu: C, F, H, B harfleri, *cunnilingus, fucking, hugging, backrub – cunnilingus, düzüşmek, sarmaşmak ve sırt masajı* kategorilerini simgeliyordu. (243) [She graded these men for their skills in bed from A to E and coded these skills with the initial letters of the word she used to define the skills: The letters C, F, H, B symbolized *cunnilingus, fucking, hugging, backrub* – (translators lists the exact same English words that Jong uses and then, Turkish terms for these except for the word cunnilingus, which is retained as it is).] (emphasis and translation by the author of the study)

As can be seen in the above excerpt, Yeğinobalı directly uses the English terms in her translation, possibly in order to retain the exact same letters that Jong uses. However, she also adds Turkish terms for the words listed with one exception: '*cunnilingus*,' an English word deriving from Latin. There is no such word as '*cunnilingus*' in Turkish; therefore, unless the Turkish reader is competent in English, she would not understand this word in that Yeğinobalı does not provide an explanation for the word. Considering this, it can be argued that in this instance, Yeğinobalı's translation choice is not consistent with the previous examples (i.e., '*gelato*' and '*menage a Trois*'), with which Yeğinobalı provides with an explanation in Turkish.

Contradicting with herself in this particular example somehow hints at a possible reflex to cast a veil over oral sex performed on women.[1] Another striking example is given below:

> I have *come* on trains without touching myself. (143)
> Trenlerde, kendime elimi bile sürmeden *belimin geldiği* olmuştur. (193) [On trains, *my sperm has come* [as in 'ejaculate'] without even touching myself.] (emphasis and translation by the author of the study)

In this example, Jong chooses the verb 'to come', which can be used both for male and female orgasm. However, the word '*bel*' literally means 'sperm'. In this respect, it appears that Yeğinobalı talks about the male orgasm in this example, although it is known that the narrator (Jong) is a woman. This example is striking in that, as seen in the previous examples (i.e., 'cunt' and '*cunnilingus*'), female sexuality is slightly more implicit in the target text than it is in the source text. In the light of these examples, such a translation choice urges one to think that Yeğinobalı might have opted for masculinizing her translation in order to avoid talking about female orgasm. Then again, this could merely be a translation mistake.

Lastly, a couple of examples of swearing will be discussed. In the below example, we see the use of the word 'bitch', which is most often directed at women:

> "Everyone thinks you're so sweet because you're blonde," my sister Nana used to say. "But I know what a *bitch* you are." (74)
> "Herkes sana, çok şeker, diyor çünkü sarışınsın," derdi ablam Nana. "Ama senine ne *yılan* olduğunu ben biliyorum." (112) ["Everyone calls you very sweet because you are blonde," my big sister Nana used to say. "But I know what a *snake* you are."] (emphasis and translation by the author of the study)

In this instance, one can argue that Jong opts for a metaphorical use ('bitch') which literally means a female dog but can offensively be used in referring to a woman or specifically to an unpleasant, malicious, spiteful woman. Yeğinobalı similarly chooses a metaphorical use ('*yılan*') which literally means a snake but can be used in referring to a sneaky, malicious and deceitful person. Both these terms are similar in the sense that they are metaphors underlining

[1] Another point that can be made in relation to this example is the fact that Yeğinobalı opts for the word '*düzüşmek*' for 'fuck', both of which are offensive but the former is not as offensive in Turkish as the latter is in English.

that the person in question (which is Jong herself) is malicious. However, the word 'bitch' is more offensive than 'snake.' One interesting thing to revisit here is the fact that the word 'bitch' is generally used in insulting women, which gives the word a patriarchal undertone. By discarding 'bitch' and compensating it with a more neutral word ('snake'), Yeğinobalı uses omission and thus,–whether deliberately or unwittingly–eliminates an element that pertains to patriarchal language (von Flotow 2019). In this sense, leaving her intention aside, it can be argued that Yeğinobalı's stance was a feminist one in this instance. However, the fact that Jong uses the word 'bitch', someone else's insult directed at herself, without any reservation or shame can be in line with Diot's (1986) aforementioned argument that Jong eradicates the hostility of language by using it against herself and other women. Therefore, it may also be argued that the use of a patriarchal swear word can in fact be a feminist strategy.
Another example of swearing can be seen below:

> I knew that women had to *eat a lot of shit*. (75)
> Kadınların *bir sürü aşağılamayı yutmak* zorunda olduklarını biliyordum. (114) [I knew women had to *swallow a lot of belittlement*.] (emphasis and translation by the author of the study)

In this example, Jong uses the phrase 'eat a lot of shit' in talking about how women have to bear things, including belittlement, just for being a woman. As can be seen, this phrase is literally translated as 'swallow a lot of belittlement' into Turkish. Although meaning wise this translation does work, offensiveness of the swear word 'shit' is eliminated. In this regard, it can be suggested that Yeğinobalı does not replicate Jong's offensive style but instead she uses explicitation and makes the meaning clearer. Considering the above example as well, we can argue that Yeğinobalı chooses to tone down the offensiveness of swear words. But, it appears that while doing so, she embraces her agency and omits a swear word ('bitch') pertaining to patriarchal language and explicitates her translation for the Turkish reader.

Neologism/Neologistic Translation

In Jong's writing, the reader can find typical examples of neologistic use, which seek to deconstruct patriarchal language. In the example given below, we see one such use:

> At nineteen, at twenty-nine, at thirty-nine, even–*goddess* help me–at forty-nine, I believed that a new man, a new love, a move, a change to

> another city, another country, would somehow change my inner life. (XXVI) (emphasis by the author of the study)

Although 'goddess' is not a newly coined word, its use within context have an innovative aspect in that phrases similar to what Jong uses are generally used in conjunction with the word 'god' rather than 'goddess' (e.g. 'god help me', 'god save me', 'god pity me', 'god knows', etc.). Nevertheless, Jong uses the word 'goddess' in such phrases throughout the text and thus, deconstructs the tendency in languages to identify god as male. In translating this phrase, Yeğinobalı similarly uses the word '*Tanrıça*' ('Goddess') in the following phrase: "Tanrıça acısın bana" (22; 'may Goddess pity me'). This is equally (if not, more) innovative as in Turkish the natural word to use in such phrases is '*Allah*' (e.g. 'Allah yardımcın olsun' ['may Allah help you']).

In addition, Jong uses neologisms in the form of compound words, i.e., 'motherknot' and 'motherpower', through which she seems to highlight the importance of motherhood that, for her, feminists should also acknowledge:

> Is this really so strange? The past may have been bondage, yet it was familiar bondage. The equation of woman with her maternity at least gave women an unambivalent identity. As feminists we ought to understand those feelings of loss instead of mocking them. We ought to acknowledge the huge power of *motherknot* and the great importance it once conferred on women. Having honored that feeling of loss, we might then insist on everybody's right to embrace *motherpower* or else let it go unused. Renunciation, after all, is also a form of power. (37) (emphasis by the author of the study)

Interestingly, the non-compound versions of these are titles of various feminist writings that were published after *Fear of Fifty* (i.e., Jane Lazarre's *The Mother Knot* [1997], Poppy O'Neill's *Mother Power: A Feminist's Guide to Motherhood* [2023]). Although it is not clear whether Erica Jong was a direct inspiration for these books, the fact that the very books exist hints at the importance of motherhood from a feminist perspective. In the same line, by turning these phrases into compound words, Jong seems to render them into concepts that are essential enough to require their own names. In the Turkish translation, on the other hand, Yeğinobalı seems to ignore the fact that Jong innovatively uses compound words and translates them as '*analık bağı*' ('mother[hood] knot) and '*analık gücü*' ('mother[hood] power') (68). In this sense, it can be argued that Yeğinobalı does not opt for a

neologistic translation strategy in this case. Considering that in the case of few examples of neologisms Yeğinobalı uses opposite strategies, it can be assumed that she did not adopt a deliberate and consistent strategy in translating neologisms.

Conclusion

As mentioned earlier, despite the fact that Yeğinobalı has an important role in women's literature, she does not consider herself a feminist. When the analysis of this study is considered, it can be argued that Yeğinobalı opts for a variety of strategies, of which feminist nature can be contested. In the case of translator's notes, for instance, one can suggest that Yeğinobalı claims visibility to some extend merely by using them. However, the fact that they are explanatory notes, which do not convey any information on the translator's choices and strategies or the author's feminist stance, hints that Yeğinobalı's stance in using translator's notes was a neutral one rather than a feminist one. Yeğinobalı's use of neologisms similarly suggests a neutral stance in that 1) she does not use them consistently in translating every neologistic occurrence in the source text and 2) in the instances where she actually uses neologisms, she might be simply replicating what the author does, which may be a result of her self-declared tendency to be loyal to the content and style (Erkul Yağcı 2019). When it comes to sexual language and swearing, the results are highly interesting. To start with, it appears that Yeğinobalı does not shy away from toning down sexual language, despite her claim that she tends to be loyal to the style. For instance, she generally tones down the offensiveness of the word 'fuck' by using non-offensive counterparts like '*yatmak*' and '*sevişmek*' in Turkish. On the other hand, this does not apply to sexual language altogether since in the case of the translation of the word 'cock' she opts for offensive counterparts in Turkish and seems to explicitate foreign words ('*gelato*', '*ménage a trois*') used in talking about sex by adding explanations for them in Turkish. Interestingly, when it comes to female sexuality, Yeğinobalı is much more implicit. For instance, unlike the word 'cock', when the word 'cunt' is used Yeğinobalı chooses the word '*dişilik organı*', which is a non-offensive word. Moreover, she does not add a Turkish explanation for the word '*cunnilingus*' as she does with the words '*gelato*' and '*ménage a trois*' and translates the word 'to come', a reference to female orgasm, as a phrase referring to male orgasm. Overall, one can argue that, although Yeğinobalı does not censor sexual language altogether, she does tone

down its offensiveness, especially in the case of female sexuality. However, by eliminating offensiveness of the swear words that are used towards women, Yeğinobalı (perhaps in a designless manner) dismantles patriarchal language. In this respect, one can argue that Yeğinobalı's strategies are contradictory in terms of her feminist stance. Then again, Yeğinobalı clearly uses the recovery strategy (intentionality of which can also be debated) in that by translating a feminist author's personal recount of her own experiences, she contributes to the women's literature and thus, widens the canon through translation. At this point, it is important to revisit the fact that Yeğinobalı censors sexuality to some extend by toning down the explicitness of certain sexual elements (e.g. female sexuality). This is interesting in that, as mentioned above, Yeğinobalı herself claims that she is loyal to author's style; yet, by toning down the explicitness of sexuality, she does not remain loyal to Jong's style. But, at the same time, considering that publishers and translators are occasionally taken to court on the grounds of obscenity in Turkey (see Aktener 2019), Yeğinobalı's tendency to tone down sexuality might have allowed the publication of the book without any official censorship. In this sense, Yeğinobalı's approach of toning down can be considered as a strategy that enabled the widening of the canon of women's literature. Considering that, whether intentionally or unintentionally, Yeğinobalı contributes to the women's literature, one can classify her as an accidental feminist translator. Despite the fact that Yeğinobalı herself says that she is not a feminist nor does she pursue a feminist goal, she ends up serving the feminist agenda by translating and perhaps unintentionally ensuring the publication of *The Fear of Fifty*, a book by a feminist author on her own female experience, through her toning down approach.

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Imagined utopias and lived dystopias: Literary imagination of the urban future in *The Black Dwarves of the Good Little Bay*

Dhanesh Mankulam[*]

Abstract: This paper studies the select literary narrative to underscore the idea that urbanisation is not a neutral process, rather, it has a constitutive political function as well. Analysing the fictional urban space based on Simon Parker's four Cs—culture, consumption, conflict, and community—the article studies the theme of the interplay between the city and other factors such as memory, history, and identity. This paper sheds light on how cities are political spaces that constitute the mode and meaning of human life itself. Memory and forgetting became two important political factors here. While underlining that any political space is designed, controlled, and utilised to advance certain political objectives, this paper attempts to explore through the literature of the city, how the urban space can be conceptualised as such a political arena where urbanisation itself is a political process and goal. Urbanization is the evolution of an ecosystem of life where things and beings acquire totally different meanings and functions. The study asks questions such as: how is urbanization [re]constitutive of various values and meanings? How should urbanization be looked at first from within the narratives of the urban life (inside) and then from the narratives on urban life (from outside)? and how does certain narratives play a role in legitimising or contesting dominant spatial paradigms? The article will analyse the novel's concern over the 'the urban future' if left to sway between memory/forgetfulness, tradition/modenity and human/machine. The paper also names the self-writing characteristic of the 'anti-tradition' urban space 'ecriture-city. The paper also claims that the city, mediating through it population entropy and dynamic necessities, often rejects given traditions, and writes itself through its narratives of the present.

Keywords: urban utopias, urban dystopias, urbanization, literary urban narratives, 'ecriture-city'

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Introduction: Defining urbanization

Urbanization, a longstanding feature of human civilization, profoundly influences landscapes, societies, and cultures. Ilppo Soininvaara's characterization of the politics of urbanization, in *The Politics of Urbanization: From a Global Imperative to National Struggles*, encompassing economic, spatial, and socio-political struggles within a state, can lay the groundwork for understanding its multifaceted nature. Literary Urban Studies presents yet another set of aspects to look at the politics of the urban space. These narratives surrounding urbanity while playing a crucial role in shaping the process of urbanization also demonstrate the often-underestimated impact of urban life on various other factors of social life such as meaning, memory, hierarchies, belongingness, shared practices, sense of history or tradition etc. This paper explores the theme of the interplay between the idea of urbanity and different factors such as memory, history, and identity, with reference to the select novel. This paper sheds light on how cities are not simply neutral physical entities but also products of ideologies, power struggles, and socio-economic forces, shaping human life. The paper discusses how the select novel weaves a critical thread into the fabric of literary urban studies by presenting the dystopic landscape of a fictional urban context.

Urbanization, a phenomenon for centuries, is linked to factors like migration, governance, social structures, and changing economic scenarios. The process involves the concentration of large populations in small areas, forming cities (Encyclo). The Industrial Revolution and the advent of Capitalism in the eighteenth century marked urbanization as a defining term for the socio-political context. “Around the middle of the eighteenth century, Nature, as an image and concept, nostalgia and hope, came into view, in opposition to the city” (Lefebvre 1968). In the 19th century, efforts to regulate urbanization arose. Engels' 1845 book *Condition of the Working Class in England* identifies living conditions and structures across English cities, highlighting how these structures create differential experiences based on social class. Robert Park observes, “If the city is the world which man created, it is the world in which he is henceforth condemned to live” (Robert Park 1967).

Urbanization, a phenomenon spanning centuries, results from factors like migration, governance, social structures, and economic shifts, concentrating people in cities (Encyclo). Its significance heightened during the Industrial Revolution and the advent of

Capitalism, as reflected in the opposition between nature and the city (Lefebvre 1968). Attempts to regulate urbanization date back to the 19th century, evident in Engels' observations on class-based living conditions in emerging English cities (Engels 1845). Early works, like E. Howard's *To-morrow: A Peaceful Path to Social Reform* stressed the need for peaceful social reformation through urban planning (Howard). Park's assertion that "if the city is the world which man created, it is the world in which he is henceforth condemned to live" underlines the inescapability of urban life in the trajectory of human progress (Park 1967). This is what is necessitating the contextualisation of the human individual within the dynamic coordinates of the urban space.

Along with the developing discourse on urbanisation, other terms and concepts also found their movement to the centre of socio-political discourses, such as development, progress in both qualitative and quantitative terms, modernisation, automation of life, unconventional and anticonventional lifestyles, mobility and accessibility, relatively local diasporas, cultural and linguistic confrontations and sense of newness. A multitude of knowledge production has become necessary to understand these movements. "Geographical knowledges cannot be confined to any one discipline. They are produced in multiple locations, inside and outside the academy, and they shape multiple publics, for good and ill" (Gregory 2006). The urban is such a 'multiplicity of public'.

All these terms aforementioned have been looked at within positive semantics for a long time. Early writings on the urban life were cantering on the city as a site of human perfectibility (Rob Lathamand Jeff Hicks 2014). Now with the urban turn, marked with the noun 'the urban', we have started looking at the urban as a unique dimension of social life. Jane Jacobs, for example, in *The Economy of Cities* elaborates on how the intersection of diversity and density made the city a site for innovation and creative survival, hinting at the new emergences in the socio-political and cultural domains of city life (Jacobs 1969). The urban now denotes a condition of being where a number of factors and forces determine the physical as well as virtual aspects of the city's lived experiences. As Henri Lefebvre states, "the right to the city manifests itself as a superior form of rights: right to freedom, to individualization in socialization, to habitat and to inhabit" (Lefebvre 1968, 173). David Harvey's question is important here:

"how is it that different human practices create and make use of distinctive conceptualizations of space? (Harvy 1973).

It is clear that urbanization then is also a subject position from which a specific and unique engagement with the world is made possible in a new and unconventional manner. The literary narratives in/of the urban space intersect here with the subject and the subject positions contributing to the experiences of the urban. Then the urban subject position – both as an individual and as a perspective of the space—becomes a formative narrative. The different coordinates of life as presented in these narratives, such as temporality, spatiality, visuality, and the everyday, then becomes the coordinates intersecting at the urban subject.

Review of literature

The concept of the urban

The emergence of urban studies intersects with many other vectors in critical cultural studies, such as literary studies, spatiality studies, memory studies, ethno-historiography and migration studies. Urban environments are studied at all these intersections as being constitutive of one's lived reality. Urban environments are thus defined by being more diverse and more dense, with built environments and social structures that have larger dimensions in terms of size and scale than provincial or rural environments (Lieven Ameel 2). All studies of the city – including the study of the city in literature – are concerned with the "citiness" of its source material (Ameel 2023, 2). One noteworthy aspect of literary urban studies is its exploration of urban spaces as narratives in their own right. Walter Benjamin's notion of the flaneur may be one of the most widely used point of narration in both general urban studies and literary urban studies. Benjamin, drawing from Baudelaire, describes the flâneur as a walker in the city who is able to read the 'text' written on its surfaces and one who becomes their accomplice even as he dissociates himself from them (Benjamin 1982, 417). The figure of the flâneur works almost like an archetype in narrativising the urban space in literature. It also often works like the narrative point of view in depicting urban spaces as utopias or dystopias. In this depiction, we not only enter fully into the enduring significance of the city as a charged symbol of human consciousness but also experience the city anew as it speaks to us in the form of unfolding discourses marked by debate, disagreement, and intervention (Harding 2003, x). So the question is: "if the City is a text, how shall

we read it?" (Oates 1981, 11-34) Literary urban studies, whether fictional or non-fictional, are precisely doing that: they read and depict the city space within a form of textuality. In this textualizing process, these narratives play a pivotal role not only in writing the city with its unique historicization but also in shaping public perception and discourse in and about cities. As Susan Sontag notes, urbanity itself can be regarded as a form of camp— a sensibility that revels in the artificial and exaggerated aspects of city life, "a vision of the world in terms of style, but a particular kind of style" (Sontag 1964, 3).

The space

The concept of spatiality, as it pertains to human existence and societal structures, has evolved significantly over time. Space is not a homogeneous expanse but a social product (Lefebvre 1991). Lefebvre postulates that urban spaces are not merely physical locations, but dynamic arenas of human interactions and experiences shaped by society. The spatial turn is important in propelling the examination of space into the forefront of intellectual inquiry, affecting disciplines from geography to philosophy (Soja 1989). Edward Soja also proposed reworking the Marxist theoretical paradigm from a spatial understanding of society. The urban is a social phenomenon par excellence (Lefebvre 1968). This phenomenon has no subject, or no primary definitive subject. Janusz Ziółkowski finds this as the motif within urban enquiries for the "intermittent efforts to find a subject with a distinct identity of its own" (Ziółkowski 1986, 6). Traditional historicism often overlooked this factor of spatial imagination (Soja 1989). Hence, spaces are produced (Lefebvre 1991). The 'raw material' from which they are produced is nature. They are products of an activity which involves the economic and technical realms, but which extends well beyond them for these are also political products, and strategic spaces (Ibid.). It is within this transformed intellectual landscape that urban narratives find their statements about how urban spaces are active agents in the production of social and cultural realities. In the space and fleeting moment of the urban encounter, passing glances and close proximity bring the narrators back to a shared past as an attempt to weave a fabric of familiarity over the projected strangeness of the urban context (Nesci 2014). Hence while the urban is a dynamic and central force in shaping contemporary life (Gandy 2013) the narratives pertaining to the urban is also constitutive of the urban space in its virtual and actual dimensions.

Utopia and dystopia

Within these narratives an urban space is often imagined as either a utopia which is a city that is both idealized and imagined (Crommelin), or a dystopia where the city is critiqued for what it is in its underlying experiential side. Urban mythology being one popular aspect of current studies, we must underline that the idea of utopia is quite different from that of myths or legends. Myth in is just a narrative or a story which are the instruments of expressions, and which is a stage on which anything can happen (Marnin 1984). Utopia on the other hand is a discourse, which essentially bears a certain fictionality within it. (Ibid.). These utopias of urban experience are hence more than just stories or narratives. These utopic imaginations often seep into the making of the urban also. Utopian thinking has always played a central role in the literature of urban design, with utopians being the first urban designers. (Ganjavie) These utopic imaginations often drive the urban developments and even determine the urban experience. People often make sense of their life in terms of the fictions of utopias they subscribe to. These are constitutive discourses that create and validate the urban everyday. Historically, utopia functions as a twofold discursive practice-poetic and projective. (Marnin 1984) The poetic is what adds meaning to the urban experience, and the projective is what leads the urban everyday through certain set transformations and trajectories. In this sense, these utopias even virtually bypass the urban predicaments and problems by adding poetic and projective veils over the everyday realities of the urban life. The discourse of utopia sets in full view an imaginary or fictional solution to the issues of urbanization (Marnin 1984, xiii).

The dystopic realities of lived urban experiences pose a counterpart to these imaginations of urban utopias. Dystopian narratives present contrary poetics and projections of urbanity by emphasising and exposing the predicaments and problems of the urban context. This is where the critical dimension of urban narratives emerges to relevance. Here the urban life is portrayed with its real or anticipated problems in terms of accessibility, mobility, marginality, and similar positions. This is the unattractive face of the city which is often hidden, forgotten, or even abandoned in the onrush of urban changes. City narratives, both literary and discursive, often concerns with these two aspects: the charming and attractive utopias and the harsh and terrifying dystopias. Urban narratives not only reflect the underlying

social structures but also shape them in unpredictable ways, "presenting a way of life that emphasizes hazard, strangeness and free choice: a mental paradigm that seduces as well as abandons" (Zukin 2006, 105). There are two potential narrative directions then: the threads of seduction and of abandonment. These are the two vectors of imaginations that literary urban narratives often consider. In the presentation of these threads the literary urban narratives often bring in the intersection of memory and forgetfulness, mobility and stagnation, marginal and mainstream, past and future, modern and conventional, and so on. Moreover, as bell hooks posits about marginality (hooks 1990), the urban also is a radically open space where conventions and novelty clash between each other and among themselves. Hence, literary urban narratives often open up sites clashes where these binaries come to evaluate the urban scenario.

Literary urban studies

Literary urban studies identify urban literature as literary spaces which are narrative- discursive spaces that play a constitutive role in the making the urban. Urban studies across various academic disciplines have been reinvigorated by this deeper engagement of the literary urban studies with urban life, its complexities, representations, violences, and oppressions. Literary urban studies fuse the creative and imaginative potential of literature to critically study the urban spaces and experiences. Appropriating Foucault's statement that the present epoch will perhaps be above all the epoch of space (Foucault 1967) one can also see that this epoch is that of literary spaces as well in the urban studies context. Urban narratives will be the new literary emergence in that sense. Sharon Zukin aptly characterizes this interdisciplinary endeavour when she states, "literary urban studies merge the imaginative worlds created by authors with the physical and social landscapes of cities, inviting us to rethink our understanding of urban spaces" (Zukin 2006). Here it also intersects with cultural urban studies of various kinds.

Literary and cultural approaches to the representations of urban change often focus on describing the simultaneity of social, political, infrastructural, economic and affective dimensions of cities and their transformation (Henryson 2023, 17). This transformative intellectual terrain has not only redefined how we perceive space but has also led to a revaluation of urban spaces both physical and discursive. Lefebvre recognizes that a kind of overall colonization of space by "decision

making centres" seems to be taking shape, and these were centres of wealth and information, of knowledge and power, and various dependencies (Lefebvre 1968). Expanding from this point of view, literary urban studies, then, attempt to identify and trace the passions of the city, for "cities, like dreams, are made of desires and fears" (Calvino 1974, 44). As Certeau (1984, 115) observes, "narrative structures have the status of special syntaxes. And every story is a travel story—a spatial practice". Literary urban studies look at literary narratives not only as a simulation of the urban spatial practices but also as a spatial practice in itself. This perspective underscores the idea that the act of moving through the city is akin to reading or writing a narrative. But with each individual leaving their marks and traces on the urban landscape it also becomes a 'writing' of the city— 'ecriture city'. This is similar to Roland Barthes' proclamation in the *Death of the Author*: "the modern scripter is born simultaneously with the text, is in no way equipped with a being preceding or exceeding the writing, is not the subject with the book as predicated; there is no other time than that of the enunciation and every text is eternally written here and now" (Barthes 1977, 145). Hence, the urban, which is always in its own making, is simultaneously woven through its literary urban narratives and imaginations also. It is against this self-making of the city—this paper calls this characteristic process 'ecriture city'— that we shall read Simon Parker's four Cs—culture, consumption, conflict, and community— of the urban experience. Motifs of utopia and dystopia also shall be traced through these Cs.

Analysis of the literary text

Culture and consumption

The Black Dwarves of the Good Little Bay is a novel written by Varun Thomas Mathew, and published in 2019. The whole narrative is presented through the narrator's eye of one Mr. Convent Godse. The novel presents a dystopian image of a fictional condition of the city of Bombay, where the ocean has swallowed parts of the city and there is no more rain. The land is left totally barren and abandoned. The people of the city are now leading a technologically driven artificially-modulated life in what they call the Bombradrome—an artificial city contained within a big bubble-like towering structure. Quite fascinatingly, the people of Bombadrome have no memory of their own past. They don't recognise that they have a past, or that the place where they live was once called Mumbai, nor do they have any

memory of any of the cultural or socio-political context of the place. None of them remembers anything beyond their present life in the Bombadrome, except one person –Convent Godse. Godse is the only living memory of the people who live in an 'absolute present'. As he states, "I remember a part of our history that no one else does. …I will perform the primary function for which I was chosen: to remind you of what … the city was once like, and how our people used to be, and what we have lost, and how low we have fallen (Mathew 2019, 147).

The residents of the city have no access, even in their distant memories, to the actual history of the place. The residents are, first of all, made to breathe air treated with some dispersants that triggered an unusual forgetfulness in people while not affecting any of their other body functions: "one that left its victims' normal faculties untouched but weakened their hold on the perception of history" (Mathew 2019, 418). Then, they are all fed with various glorified versions of history via what they call the History Casts media (Ibid, 496). The novel is critiquing the urban context of its over-emphasis on the present at the cost of all historicising narratives. Fredric Jameson stated that "the first and most evident is the emergence of a new kind of flatness or depthlessness, a new kind of superficiality in the most literal sense—perhaps the supreme formal feature of all the postmodernisms… (Jameson, 1991, 9). What the novel tries to bring to the front of its critique is very much the same: a city characterised by a 'depthlessness' exhibiting a lack of historical or cultural depth and complexity. In that sense, we one can also look at the city as a postmodern spatial form.

A profound sense of depthlessness unmistakably characterises the modern urban space. Its dynamic and ever-changing population is an important factor in this. There are 3 aspects to the city population: 1. They are either finding themselves 'on the move' at any given point of time in the city's temporality. In that case, they remain outside of the city's discursive or narrative fabric. They identify themselves as the outsiders who are destined to leave at some point. 2. Some of them who settle in the city often find themselves not as insiders but as 'outsider-insiders'—one who, like a diasporic split-subject, is inside and outside at the same time. Such groups also often fail to contribute to the city's discursive/narrative fabric as they register themselves not in terms of continuity but in terms of discontinuity. 3. As a result of these and of other constitutive discourses surrounding 'urbanity', there

is a perceived depoliticisation that is affecting the city context. As Erik Swyngedouw states,

> While the city is alive and thriving (at least in some of its spaces), the polis, conceived in the idealised Greek sense as the site for public political encounter and democratic negotiation, the spacing of (often radical) dissent, and disagreement, and the place where political subjectivation literally takes place, seems moribund (Swyngedouw 2007, 1).

Fredric Jameson also expresses a similar idea in terms of 'lack of agency' and 'pluralism as a value' in his critique of postmodernism. The result of all these is a sense of 'disconnectedness' that characterises a majority of the city population, causing the aforementioned depthlessness. It is within this culture that the people engage in their cultural consumption. Bombadrome is an extreme of this kind of an urban space. The people of Bombadrome consume the narratives about their life, happiness, history and more within a culture of disconnectedness and forgetfulness.

Conflict and community

Explaining the four-Cs of Urban Studies, Simon Parker (2015, 4) states that conflict

> …relates not just to visible, physical violence, such as riots or civil disorder, but to less visible struggles over resources…" [and Community] as a …'value-term' for contiguous association that bears with it a series of assumptions about how we, as humans, should live in close confine with one another.

As mentioned earlier, the novel is presenting a very dystopic image of an imaginary city, implying an extreme situation of urbanisation. Hence, the novel deals with the idea of conflict and community peculiarly: in Bombadrome, happiness is the theme, while conflict has no space in it. Life is programmed to be 'always happy', and the city's community is defined in such terms. Referring to Henri Lefebvre, Parker writes that …a better alternative to the class-divided city is possible if only we can think beyond the realm of commodified space" (Parker 2015, 5). The novel, on the other hand, presents an imaginary city where class, caste and all such divisions are erased by a 'techno-programmed life'. The city has a recycling mechanism that recycles every drop of water, including bodily fluids. The novel asks, "…how can the Brahmin claim that he is different from the Dalit when each

consumes the recycled fluids of the other? Remember…it was through the recycling of our water that caste was finally annihilated" (Mathew 2019, 457). This is how the novel ensures "iron-clad unity" of the community of Bombadrome.

In the imagined city, every aspect of one's life, such as community, identity, memory, history, happiness, etc. are unified with one techno-programmed mode of life. The classical question of 'who governs' is answered with a new dimension of technology here. In the contemporary context of rapid advancements in Artificial Intelligence (AI), Machine Learning, Big Data, brain augmentation and neuroscience technologies, the distant dystopian image that the novel presents seems closer than ever. Bombadrome is the totality of all comforts and contentment the people of the city would want in their technology-controlled lives. Conflict is deliberately avoided not at the personal or ethical level but at the technological level using a software-assisted Virtual Reality system called the Bhaashafish. The Bhaashafish system is connected to a virtual network called AREBO (Alteration of Reality within the Bombadome project). The people communicate using this system exclusively, and with the system in place,

> if people swear, their words are censored. Rudeness is redefined, nastiness is nullified, and any conversation that could be even slightly upsetting to the listener is rewritten by the Bhaashafish software into the most cheerful, civilized and convivial exchange ever. And so the residents of the Bombadrome get along, even in the most trying of circumstances, for each is won over by the (digitally altered) charm of conversation of the other, and peace is easily maintained (Mathew 2019, 397).

Hence everyone is totally understandable and pleasing to each other and "the very concept of 'alien' became alien to all" (Mathew 2019, 397). The motto of this totally artificial city is to keep everyone happy. Godse's narrative gives an outsider perspective of the Bombadrome life. He exposes the city as an example of an urban dystopia. Edward Soja's work on "Thirdspace" posits that space is not just physical but also a conceptual realm where alternative realities and social imaginaries can emerge. It is "a particular way of thinking about and interpreting specially produced space" (Soja 2002). The novel in that sense is giving a 'third perspective', quite different from the conventional ways of looking at the question of urbanity in terms of an 'urban - non-urban' binary.

Conclusion

Varun Thomas Mathew's bold fiction debut 'The Black Dwarves of The Good Little Bay' interrogates politics and memory in a dystopic and uninhabitable Mumbai (Bharucha 2019). Bombadrome is an example of an extremity of urbanisation that is insensitive, mechanical, and overly technology-driven. These are similar to the concerns that AI and robotics raise in the contemporary time. The author makes a strong political statement and a serious critique of a kind of 'urbanization logic' throughout the book by highlighting an extreme form of urbanisation that not only strips human beings of their memory, meaning, and culture but also institutionalises extreme modes of uniformity, rootlessness and artificial contexts of existence. Citiness, as it appears in city literature, pertains to the city's particular presence (Ameel 2023, 2). It is "a presence and not simply a setting" (Pike 1981, 8). Bombadrome represents a kind of 'citiness' that the author must be foreseeing from the present. Extending from this reading of the novel, one can also see that the urban spaces can be read as a practical and existential manifestation of postmodernity at large. The logic of postmodernity largely constitutes the logic of the modern city as well.

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Love as reflected in the poetry of Jalaluddin Rumi and Yunus Emre

Alpaslan Toker[*]

Abstract: This paper sought to explore and examine love - one of the most affirmative and pleasant encounters that an individual may endure in his/her lifespan. This unique emotion is regarded as a unique form of human relationship laden with the most genuine, profound, and passionate emotions. The article aimed to discover how Jalaluddin Rumi and Yunus Emre reflected and addressed love in their respective works of poetry. These two prominent figures of Turkish literature were deeply affected by mysticism and considered eminent and celebrated Sufi religious Turkish poets. Rumi and Emre fostered a profound and deep-seated love for human beings as they embodied overt manifestations and strong reflections of divine power. They both maintained an all-embracing, welcoming, and inclusive attitude toward people from diverse spiritual denominations, nations, ethnicities, and cultures. Their mystical poems provided a great deal of evidence and manifestation on the issue of love for humans and that of God.

Keywords: love, human, divine, humanism, Sufi, mysticism

Introduction

Jalaluddin Rumi and Yunus Emre are two of the most prominent poets and Sufi mystic figures as well as distinguished public figures who obtained international fame, acclamation, and recognition. Jalaluddin Rumi (1207-1273), commonly addressed as Rumi, was one of the most acclaimed and reputable Sufi poets and mystics. Numerous notable and distinguished figures were captivated by his mystic thoughts and spiritual guidance and lavishly praised him as a result of his lasting moral authority in the Islamic world and his intellectual power in Western societies. Rumi secured a prominent place in the English-speaking world and Reymond Nicholson (1995), a prominent translator

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of Rumi's poems, celebrated him as the leading mystical poet of any era. His poetry transmits the reciter to an eternal foundation of joy, tenderness, creativity, and conundrum by conveying love's deepest, universal, and comprehensive aspects. Nicholson applauded Rumi's artistic creativity further as such:

> In sublimity of thought and grandeur of expression, he challenges the greatest masters of song; time after time he strikes a lofty note without effort; the clearness of his vision gives a wonderful exaltation to his verse, which beats against the sky; his odes throb with passion and rapture-enkindling power; his diction is choice and unartificial (*Divani Shamsi Tabriz*, xlvi)

Rumi's lyric poetry conveys a message to all people. Everyone may relate to the message, which appeals to humanity's fundamental ideals and aspirations for a fulfilling life. Although Rumi's poems are artistic creations of a Muslim mystic that were composed in Persian, they rightfully transcended the obstacles of language, religion, and national boundaries to reach poetry lovers from diverse civilizations and cultures. Manifesting his profound admiration for Rumi, Coleman Barks (2005, xvii) proclaimed: "His poetry is a record of his enduring experience of living at the core. In each human being, there is a meeting with the divine. That intersection is the heart".

Rumi's intriguing personality and lyrical poetry attracted the interest and curiosity of diplomats and travelers who frequented the Ottoman Empire in the 18th century and familiarized themselves with the Mawlawiyya Order and its well-known symbol of the Sema show. Western Orientalists were quite instrumental in introducing Rumi to Western cultures. Reynold Alleyne Nicholson was one of the leading figures to translate Rumi's works into the English language. Nicholson also published a translation of *Masnavi* over a period of 15 years and made a memorable contribution to publicizing Rumi's poems in English culture. He made a notable remark on Rumi and his seminal work, "The *Masnavi* is a majestic river, calm, and deep, meandering though many a rich and varied landscape to the immeasurable ocean; the divan is a foaming torrent that leaps and plunges in the ethereal solitude of the hills" (Rumi 2015, 704). Another critical appreciation was voiced by A. J. Arberry (2009, 33), "In Rumi, we encounter one of the world's greatest poets. In profundity of thought, inventiveness of image, and triumphant mastery of language, Rumi stands out as the supreme genius of Islamic Mysticism". UNESCO has honored Rumi

by designating 2007 as the "Year of Rumi" to commemorate his 800th anniversary of birth.

Yunus Emre, who was believed to have lived in the late thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries, was considered one of the most remarkable Sufi poets of Turkish Anatolia to disseminate the doctrines of Islam and successfully forged a fusion of Islam's fundamental values and spiritual folk poetry. He was a prominent Turkish mystic thinker and poet who has been illuminating humanity for several centuries through his advice to embrace the positive values of endurance, contentment, tolerance, benevolence, righteousness, and virtue in conformity with the essential doctrines of Islam. Yunus is especially well-recognized and famous for his poems. In the words of Kabir Helminski and Refik Algan (1989, 7), his poems "express the deepest aspirations of the Turkish people, an independent, undogmatic, humanistic, and mystical race". Similarly, Talat S. Halman (2011, 16) deftly highlighted Yunus Emre's contribution not only to Turkish society but also the entire humanity and regarded him as "the first great Turkish humanist, stood squarely against Muslim dogmatists in expressing the primary importance of human existence". He composed over 416 poems including his lengthy didactic poem, *Risalat an Nushiyya* (*The Book of Advice*), written between 1307 and 1308. His poems are extremely mesmerizing and exceptional in subject as well as in style. The recurring themes in his poetry range from love, death, and worldly life, to perfected human beings, the unity of being, nature, the Prophet, and so on. To corroborate his place in Turkish civilization and literature and appreciate the outstanding literary nature of his poetry, Helminski, and Algan (1989, 8) observed,

> If I were to suggest the importance of Yunus Emre within Turkish civilization, I would invoke Francis of Assisi, Blake, and Yeats. Like Francis, he was simple and saintly. He loved the natural world and sang songs. Like Blake, his songs are full of symbols. And as Blake stood squarely within his own truth and voiced a cry against much that was mechanical and insensitive in his times, Yunus, with gentleness and charm, attacked the spiritless orthodoxy of his day. Finally, like Yeats, his lyrics master stanzas and line and can appeal to ordinary people, as well as those with literary interests.

In the poetry of Yunus Emre, there were two literary figures who exercised a profound influence, namely Ahmed Yasawi, a Sufi poet who played a crucial role in the establishment of the Sufi order, and Hadji Bektash, a great mystic and philosopher who was commonly

accepted as one of the greatest Sufi leaders to have lived in Anatolia. Yunus effectually mastered and perfected the poetic tradition introduced by these two influential personalities as his poetry has captivated the hearts of everyone who recited his poems and has been a source of inspiration for his successors as he made a great contribution to their works. Kamil Sarıtaş appreciated the lasting and enduring nature of Yunus's poetry as he aptly pointed out: "Yunus Emre offers us the key to true happiness on the path of truth. We still need Yunus Emre's language and heart as we needed them yesterday" (Sarıtaş, 2020).

Love is one of the most affirmative and pleasant encounters that an individual may endure in his/her lifespan. It is regarded as a unique form of human relationship laden with the most genuine, profound, and passionate emotions. Perhaps, it is unquestionably the most intense emotional experience a person will ever go through in life. The love that is under discussion is a vital aspect of what makes a person in the world. Oscar Wilde offered a unique definition of love when he stated, "Keep love in your heart. A life without it is like a sunless garden when the flowers are dead. The consciousness of loving and being loved brings warmth and richness to life that nothing else can bring" (Wilde, as cited in Weis 2010, 184). Love occupies a prominent place in the poetry of Jalaladdin Rumi and Yunus Emre. Love is a prevalent theme in plenty of Rumi's poems. In "Love Is the Water of Life," for instance, Rumi observed that a life devoid of love is no life by any chance. He used his poems as an ideal platform to communicate the prominence of love. On the other hand, Yunus mainly addressed his profound love for God in most of his poems. He felt the mysterious and indefinable excitement emanating from the love of God and invited his readers and other people to experience it. He revealed the transformation that he went through with love he began to feel,

> a spark of Love's fire
> can make the seas boil.
> I fell in, caught fire, and burned.
> A soul in love is free of worries.
> With love all problems left me.
> With love I became happy (Helminski & Algan 1989, 40)

This article attempted to discover how Jalaluddin Rumi and Yunus Emre reflected and addressed love in their respective works of poetry. These two prominent figures of Turkish literature were deeply affected

by mysticism and considered eminent and celebrated Sufi religious Turkish poets. Being a man of peace, a champion of humanism, and a proponent of love, Rumi candidly advocated the integrity and purity of tranquility in a person's heart and throughout the world. He was both an eminent poet of love and a fervent advocate of the religion of love. On the other hand, Yunus, a contemporary of Rumi, contended that love was the purpose and nature of everything. He articulated deep personal mysticism, humanity, and love for God in his poetry. The study sought to find answers to these two research questions: How is love for human beings and God treated in the poetry of Rumi? How does Yunus Emre portray love for human beings and divine power in his poetry? The paper will illustrate with examples how these two eminent Sufi mystics dealt with this overly sensitive topic.

Literature review

Love has generally been a prominent and recurring theme in literature throughout history. It regained its popularity and began to occupy a conspicuous place in literature in the sixteenth century onwards despite an exponential decrease it experienced with the adoption of more intriguing themes that caught the attention of potential readers. It has been a familiar and popular subject in the works of Shakespeare, Jane Austen, Charlotte Bronte, etc. However, the term resourcefully avoids proper definition as the world as a whole has ignored or neglected its real meaning. Love exists in the essence of everything and warmly penetrates every fiber and tissue of creation just as oil can be traced in every part of the olive. Since the words might fail to describe the taste of an apple, one has to sample the fruit to experience its flavor. It is the same with the word love. Generally, there are two major kinds of love: human love and divine love. Herein, these two types of love will be addressed and defined below. In the poetry of Jalaluddin Rumi, love is one of the dominant themes. On this issue, Barks (2005, xix) observed "All of Rumi's poems may be heard as love poems. They attend the soul's flowering from grief, and from every emotion that streams through the guest house of consciousness".

Human love

Human love is a complex emotional experience that is generally portrayed as a feeling of passionate affection, connection, and caring toward another individual. It can manifest itself in many forms, such as romantic love, spiritual affection, familial romance, and self-love. In

his play, *A Midsummer Night's Dream,* William Shakespeare highlighted love's incredible power of transformation and warned the lovers not to assess one another based on their physical looks but, on the contrary, on a distinct perception of the beloved. He observed,

> Things base and vile, holding no quantity,
> Love can transpose to form and dignity
> Love looks not with the eyes but with the mind.
> And therefore, is winged Cupid painted blind
> (Shakespeare, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, I, I, 235-41)

Similarly, Paul Kottman (2017, 11) noted, "Love is itself an enacted attempt at understanding, a practical form of self-education—one that is communally shared, undertaken with others in ways that change deeply over time". The experience of human love is often characterized by a wide variety of emotions, including happiness, joy, warmth, and a sense of safety and security. However, love can also be followed by sentiments of vulnerability, worry, and anxiety, particularly if there was a risk of rejection or loss.

Human love is entwined with acts that can be observed, heard, and perceived. It is considered both spontaneous and reasonable, creative, and predicting the expectations of the other person. Several research has indicated that human love does not only refer to an emotional experience but also relates to its physiological and neurological influences on the body and brain (Hatfield and Rapson, 2002; Bartels and Zeki, 2003; Zeki, 2007; Diamond, 2016; Burunat, 2016). The human body releases oxytocin during physical intimacy such as hugging, snuggling, kissing, holding hands, etc. As David Schmitt (2006, 250) observed, "Love as romance or attraction involves dopamine and serotonin and leads to people falling in love with one particular person. Love as attachment involves oxytocin and leads to the type of long-term commitment". All in all, human love is a significant facet of human experience that can bestow meaning, goals, and relationships in our individual lives.

Divine love

Divine love is often described as a transcendent, unconditional, and all-encompassing love that comes from a higher power or spiritual source. It is believed to be a fundamental aspect of many religious and spiritual traditions and is often described as the ultimate source of peace, happiness, and fulfillment. It is frequently considered a force that unites all animate creatures despite their observed differences or

genuine beliefs. It is believed to be a sort of love that circumvents human comprehension, and that can solely be felt through spiritual worship such as prayer, self-reflection, or meditation. For John Peckham (2015, 76), divine love is "a purely creative, willed love of beneficence".

The concept of divine love manifests a striking difference in traditional religious practices. The love of God is "essentially the same as the belief in God, in God's existence, God's justice, God's love. The love of God is essentially a thought experience." However, in the Eastern belief systems and mysticism, it indicates "an intense feeling experience of oneness, inseparably linked with the expression of this love in every act of living" (Fromm 1956, 80). It is thought to be a love that remains firm even amid distress and misery, and that can conveniently offer patience and perseverance during hard times.

Sufism, also called *Tasawwuf*, refers to a spiritual body of religious tradition found within Islam through which Muslims strive to discover the essence of divine love and knowledge through exclusively unique experiences with God. In the conviction of Sufi mystics, love cannot be acquired, it is the blessing of divine grace, and the initiative originates from God (Kelly 2012). In the world's religious belief systems, the ultimate purpose is to love and be loved by God, to live in close spiritual connection with God, and, thereby, to attain unity with the Beloved (Levin 2010). Sufi mystics also drew from this doctrine and installed it at the heart of their faiths. Jalaluddin Rumi and Yunus Emre both fell under the influence of this religious order and made it their lives mission to seek and attain this unity with the Beloved. Being captivated and inspired by this truth, Rumi (*The Masnavi*, 3, 235) exerted: "No lover ever seeks union with his beloved /But his beloved is also seeking union with him". In his poems, Yunus expresses profound spiritual mysticism, altruistic humanism, and pure and holy love for God. He observed,

> The heart that falls into Your love, burns and burns.
> The one who gives himself to You
> gives up everything else ((Helminski & Algan, 1989, 20)

As a whole, divine love retains a central prominence in several spiritual belief systems and is viewed as a vigorous and effective force that can provide individuals the chance to establish connections with their religious selves, and, eventually with the divine power.

Love in the poetry of Jalaluddin Rumi

Love is one of the foremost themes in the poetry of Rumi who acquired fame and popularity as a Sufi mystic and enlightened poet in the thirteen century. In his poems, love is mainly portrayed as a spiritual route and passage toward a glorious union with the divine. His poems applauded various kinds of love, such as romantic affection, companionship, and the love for divine power. Brad Gooch (2019) confirms the literary significance of Rumi and observes that "Rumi was the soaring poet of love, the impassioned preacher of a religion of love, as well as the suffering martyr of love, writing of a felt experience of separation that might best be compared to torture". Rumi views himself as captivated by the vastness of God's love and compassion. He feels encompassed by the love of God and observes nothing but benevolence and love in Him. He nurtures a strong and steadfast belief in the strength and efficacy of love in opposition to reason and rationale in searching for God and significance in life. Manijeh Mannani celebrated Rumi's prominence and his recurring treatment of the theme of love and asserted that "to him, love is everything; it shapes everything, it gives birth to everything, and it is the ultimate killer" (Mannani 2010, 165).

Rumi's best-known work is undoubtedly his *The Masnavi*, divided into six volumes and consisting of approximately 26,000 verses. This unique poetry collection occupies a well-deserved notable place in Sufi literature and has often been praised as "the Quran in Persian" (Mannani 2007, 116). Sir James Redhouse (1898) held a view that *The Masnavi* focused on those who depart from this world, seek to discover God and unite with Him, keep out of sight, and solely commit themselves to spiritual soul-searching. One of the prevalent themes in the work is the notion of the lover and the beloved. The lover is generally observed as an aspirant looking for the beloved to enjoy love's profound, magical power. This spiritual quest toward the beloved is generally seen as a noble and sacred pursuit in the direction of illumination and intimate union with the beloved. Rumi's love and compassion for fellow humans were so profound and were adeptly manifested in his universal call as he declared,

> Come, come, whomever you are.
> Wanderer, worshipper, lover of living, it doesn't matter
> Ours is not a caravan of despair.
> Come even if you have broken your vow a thousand times,
> Come, yet again, come, come (as cited in Citlak & Bingul 2007, 81)

This is a perfectly all-embracing, comprehensive, and inclusive invitation that encourages people from different religions, races, and ethnicities, languages, walks of life to come and join hands and learn to live in harmony, tolerance, and compassion. Rumi does not exclude anyone due to his/her any form of difference and is willing to embrace fellow human beings with open arms displaying nothing but genuine sympathy, affection, and benevolence.

Rumi identified the intricate nature of love, a nature that might enable a thorough transformation in the essence of the human, by declaring that love is a characteristic of God, and using it, man is released from the shackles which determine his position in the world (Chittick 2005). The Sufis favored the words, 'ishq', and 'mahabbah', to describe the passionate love in poetry indicating that the love of God was considered an imperative attribute satisfying the heart of the mystic and its expression was no more an appreciation of the divine grace of God. In Rumi's poetry as in Sufi poetry, there is an established tradition of the devout supplicant, on the one hand, being labeled as the lover of God, and, on the other, God is designated as the Beloved. Rumi's poetry abounds with numerous verses that expand ideas on the affinity between the lover and the Beloved. A striking example of this can be seen in the following lines from Rumi's poetry:

> Lovers share a sacred decree
> to seek the Beloved.
> they roll head over heels
> rushing toward the Beautiful One
> like a torrent of water (Rumi 1992, 100)

In these lines, Rumi addressed God with two titles, the Beloved and the Beautiful One. He introduced the conviction that the driving force to love originates from God, as it is a divine injunction, and, therefore, it is insuppressible as the gush of water.

Rumi was an eminent saint and mystic highly influenced by his father from whom he inherited wisdom, conduct, and character and who played a unique role while Rumi was burnt and dissolved in the pool of Divine Love. He was a man of ideals and distinction as well as a man of genuine love and intuition. He was relieved of all conflicting and negative ideas when he immersed himself deeply into the ocean of love. He was completely separated from good and evil. His conduct and attitude toward everybody and everything were based on this perspective. He observed everybody with the same outlook. In his

eyes, Muslims, Christians, Jews, and Zoroastrians were equally the same. Rumi observed,

> Not Christian or Jew or Muslim, not Hindu,
> Buddhist, Sufi, or Zen. Not any religion
> or cultural system. I am not from the East
> or the West, not out of the ocean or up
> from the ground, …
> I belong to the beloved, have seen the two
> worlds as one and that one call to and know,
> first, last, outer, inner, only that
> breath breathing human being (Barks & Moyne 1997, 32)

Here, Rumi's remarkable tolerance and all-embracing attitude became clearly evident. Therefore, he advised people not to despise or sneer at non-Muslims and to show respect for people's religious faith and practices.

Rumi went through a unique transformation from a traditional and mainstream religious mentor into an exultant and enthusiastic lover of God. This conversion was materialized by his opportune meeting with a traveling and nomadic dervish by the name of Shams of Tabriz. His encounter with Shams must have stimulated and kindled in him the vigorous and intense energies of the soul. As the case with countless others before him, Rumi began to experience the force and urge of these powerful energies which Sufis viewed as a fervent and insatiable longing in the heart and soul for communion with whatever or whomever they feel so painfully away and disconnected from which could only be discharged through yielding to the rhythmic movements of the dance. The prominent eminence and distinction that he attributed to Shams could evidently be noticed in "I was raw, then I was cooked, then I was ash." Elsewhere, Rumi expressed his adoration of Shams:

> I have seen the king with a face of Glory,
> He who is the eye and the sun of heaven,
> He who is the companion and healer of all beings,
> He who is the soul and the universe that births souls
> (Helminski 2005, 11)

The chance meeting with Shams acted as a stimulant that served to kindle potential emotions, vitalities, and excitement in Rumi, and an innate response to this fort of kindling was to begin whirling. Thus, for Rumi, whirling evolved into a type of mystical prayer that serves to

free the firm grip of the self and to undergo forces of elation and euphoria.

Rumi dealt broadly with the subject of divine love which he regarded as the utmost type of supreme love. In his lyrical odes, he made frequent uses of imagery and metaphors to portray the powerful affinity between the lover and the divine like the image of a moth attracted to the fire or a river gushing towards the ocean.

> No one looks for stars when the sun's out.
> A person blended into God does not disappear.
> He or she is just completely soaked
> in God's qualities (Barks 2005, 95)

These lines clearly indicate Rumi's view of divine love. His literary language gracefully provides a spiritual vision of the beauty and glamour of God that surpasses any metaphors that can be used to portray and describe this alluring beauty. Sefik Can highlighted this spiritual transformation that Rumi underwent and revealed the reformed Rumi: "He was a superior being who was cleansed of grudge, hatred, evil, selfishness, and ostentation and all human weaknesses through the experience of Divine Love (Can 2009, 93).

Rumi paid particular attention to the Names and Attributes of God every moment of his personal life. He was quite conscious that his temperament was a true outcome of the kindness and blessings granted to him by Almighty God. It is unlikely for those whose peripheral vision is ignored to reach this optimal level. Rumi made use of brilliant literary language to offer a perception and understanding of the beauty of God that surpasses any metaphor that may be available in a language to portray or describe this divine beauty. He made specific emphasis on the mercy of the Beloved: "His Mercy's prior to His wrath. If you want spiritual priority, go, seek the prior Attribute! (Rumi 2017, 340). These indicated that God's mercy is available to anyone who appeals to Him.

> Man is the astrolabe of those exalted attributes,
> The attribute of man is to manifest God's signs.
> Whatever is seen in man is the reflection of God,
> Even as the reflection of the moon in water (*Masnavi*, 6, 459)

Rumi considered every human as a true representation of God and humanity as the impeccable manifestation of God. Therefore, Rumi

valued and nourished love toward everyone as God's love led Rumi to love humanity.

Love in the poetry of Yunus Emre

A contemporary of Rumi and a prominent epitome of mysticism, Yunus Emre also made extensive use of the theme of love in his folk poetry. For Yunus, love did not only indicate a human passion but also a journey toward religious refinement and sacred union with the divine. One of the major themes in Emre's poetry was the notion of a profound and all-comprehensive love that went beyond human restrictions and brought all individuals together. This type of love was frequently portrayed as an immense power that joined the lover with the beloved, and that may assist people in suppressing their worries and despairs to reach religious refinement. Talat Halman argued that Yunus was the best spokesperson for the convention of Turkish humanism and fairly observed: "His poetry embodied the quintessence of Turkish-Anatolian- Islamic humanism and served as a fountainhead of the humanistic concepts which were also at work, overtly or implicitly, in the intellectual life of the Turks in later centuries" (Halman 2011, 16). Several of Emre's core ideas are deeply rooted in the Sufi convention, especially as articulated by Rumi, who made use of Persia's cultural and linguistic heritage. Rumi preferred to use the Persian language as his medium of expression following the example of medieval writers and intellectuals in Europe who abandoned their local languages in favor of Latin. However, like Dante, selected the native language of his own people.

His firm and steadfast faith was humanism, which elevates man with respect to God, nature, and the local community. A cultivated humanist acknowledges man as the paragon of creation. However, the doctrine of several chief religions, inclusive of Islam, vigorously contented that man's mortal existence in the natural world was deprived of importance and meaning. Yunus Emre, who was celebrated for his profound humanism and whose mystic folk poetry was appreciated for its "universalist humanism," glorified the fundamental importance of human existence (Halman 2011, 7) :

> I see my moon right here on earth
> What would I do with all the skies?
> My eyes are on the ground from where
> The rains of mercy come down on me (Sari 2016, 72)

This should not be seen as a renunciation of a supreme and magnificent God. On the contrary, it can be considered internalizing or humanizing the divine power. Unlike the prevalent religious institutions of his period, Yunus openly defied this widespread practice and embraced an unprecedentedly moderate attitude toward humanity. He presented a notion of man not as a vagabond, but as an adjunct of God's existence and love:

> We love the created
> For the Creator's sake (Sari 2016, 12)

Yunus's idea of love or 'ashk' in the local vernacular, which denoted a profound, passionate love that was anchored in the heart, was one of the central ideas of his poetry. This form of love was regarded as a powerful force that could assist people in restraining their egoism and initiating a relationship with the divine. Yunus inherently cultivated and experienced it and widely portrayed it in his poems particularly the affection between friends and companions. He frequently highlighted the vitality and significance of kindness, mercy, and sympathy in fostering tender and caring relationships with fellow humans. He explicitly declared,

> Come let us all be friends for once,
> Let us make life easy on us
> Let us be lovers and loved ones
> The earth shall be left to no one (Sari 2016, 6)

In these lines, Yunus possesses a universal human spirit that encircles personal and public lives. He maintained an all-embracing attitude and aspired to win the hearts of fellow humans as well as to make friends across countries and boundaries. In a similar vein, Yunus further emphasized his view of superior humanity:

> Come, let's get to know each other
> and make our work easier.
> Let's love, let's be loved.
> No one inherits this world (Helminski & Algan 1989, 79)

Yunus carried on to express his all-encompassing view of love for humanity and encouraged human beings to come together and learn to love one another.

For Sufi mystics, the attainment of divine love or love for God was the ultimate target in their worldly lives. To them, everything in the

world carried a striking indication of God, and the divine will could not be perceived by temporal logic, insight, or instinct, but only by true love. Divine love is the element and the objective of mortal existence. The mystical poetry of Yunus is overflowed with these notions and images of Sufism built on an essential dedication to cultivating a crucial awareness of God by the prudent reflection of the universe and the self.

> Your love has wrested me away from me,
> You're the one I need, you're the one I crave.
> Day and night I burn, gripped by agony,
> You're the one I need, you're the one I crave (Halman 2005, 23)

These lines demonstrate Yunus's burning desire and supernatural longing for the achievement of divine love. He frequently articulated the love of God sought by every true and devout believer.

Emre was able to articulate an all-encompassing love of humans and notions of universal fellowship that surpassed all conflicts and religious denominations in a period when atrocities, fights, and destructions were commonplace. His humanism aimed to elevate human existence by releasing man from religious tenets and putting him in a relationship that ensures affinity with God.

> For those who truly love God and His ways
> All the people of the world are brothers and sisters (Sari 2016, 30)

Humanism advocated the model of a collective society that harbored people regardless of their religion, nationality, culture, and race. Emre's humanist philosophy and tenet also echoed this universal perception that removes all racial, political, and factional divisions. He firmly declared,

> The man who doesn't see the nations of the world as one
> Is a rebel even if the pious claim he's holy (Sari 2016, 31)

In his far-reaching view, love possessed the power to unify the world and dismissed all conflicts and dichotomies. He further vocalized his firm conviction in integrity and unitarianism as such:

> Mystic is what they call me,
> Hate is my only enemy;
> I harbor a grudge against none.
> To me, the whole wide world is one (Sari 2016, 31)

On the whole, in a period full of atrocities and religious oppressions, he proved to be a true humanist whose love of God constituted a vital part of his love for humanity. His abomination for disputes and clashes and his disapproving position toward wealth and worldly possessions have been reflected over time.

Yunus acquired a pantheistic view that maintained a firm belief that God is ubiquitously present in the universe. He was considered neither separately, isolated nor distant from the universe, but, rather, in tandem and conjunction with it. For Emre, every matter possessed a spirit or cognizance and could only attain grand morals and principles through true love. His system of religious beliefs was fundamentally based on naturalistic and ecumenical perspectives. He observed,

> With the mountains and rocks
> I call you out, my God;
> With the birds as day breaks
> I call you out, my God.
>
> With Jesus is the sky,
> Moses on Mount Sinai,
> Raising my scepter high,
> I call you out, my (Sari 2016, 14)

By his passionate love for God, Yunus cultivated a sentimental fondness toward nature, humans, and trivial things that most people would not find appealing. He encouraged people to foster a love for people irrespective of their identity, ethnicity, or religious denomination and acknowledged this fact as a prerequisite of his spiritual conviction.

Conclusion

Jalaluddin Rumi and, his contemporary, Yunus Emre, left their indelible marks in Turkish literature as well as in the hearts of the Anatolian people. Although Rumi conveniently selected the Persian language and Yunus wrote his poems in vernacular language, they were both highly influenced by Sufi mysticism and its religious doctrines and efficiently expressed these conservative views in their respective poetry. They skillfully demonstrated their love for human beings and divine love in the extracts presented above. Rumi and Emre fostered a profound and deep-seated love for human beings as they embodied overt manifestations and strong reflections of divine power. They both maintained an all-embracing, welcoming, and inclusive

attitude toward people from diverse spiritual denominations, nations, ethnicities, and cultures. Their mystical poems provided a great deal of evidence and manifestation on the issue of love for humans and that of God.

Rumi and Yunus articulated intense personal mysticism and humanism in their poems. Rumi's love and compassion for human beings were so intense that he extended a universal call and invited people to come together regardless of their religion, race, culture, and language. In a similar vein, having been highly regarded for his sincere humanism and received favorable appreciation for his mystic poetry due to its prevalent note of universal humanism, Yunus celebrated the vital importance of human existence and strove to conquer the hearts of fellow humans and encouraged to make friends across continents, countries, and boundaries.

Divine love occupied a notable place in the poetry of both Rumi and Yunus Emre. Rumi was a man of unwavering commitment and sincerity. He did not fail to follow his heart's desires as long as they did not contradict his firm belief and unflinching devotion. His heart was burning with spiritual love and passionate longing as he placed his unwavering faith at the center of his life and showed the noble path for others to follow. On the other hand, Yunus was overwhelmed with a burning craving and irrepressible yearning to attain divine love. He regularly expressed the love of God sought by ardent and zealous believers. His profound love of God greatly influenced his love for humanity and guided him to maintain an all-encompassing and inclusive attitude toward people of distinct spiritual faiths, nations, ethnicities, and linguistic variations.

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Poética del delirio.
Los límites del yo escritural en Daniela Tarazona
(Poetics of delirium: The limits of the scriptural self in Daniela Tarazona)

Gloria Vergara[*]

Abstract: In this article we address the undulations of self in the face of pendular delirium represented in *Isla partida* by Daniela Tarazona. Between the neurological disorder and the idea of suicide, delirium is the center and starting point for the body and memory to be recognized in the narrative. The self overflows in the looks of a woman who multiplies. Writing becomes evidence, bastion and container for delirium.

Keywords: autobiographical acts, testimony, delirium, body, memory

Introducción

Los límites del yo en la obra de arte literaria entran en juego desde el momento en que quien escribe se pone frente a la hoja en blanco, pues el juego artístico impone sus reglas desde el sentido de verdad de lo representado hasta las estrategias escriturales que impactan el texto. En este caso, vemos cómo en *Isla partida* de Daniela Tarazona[1], el delirio se convierte en el punto pendular que va del trastorno neurológico a la idea de suicidio, provocando que la voz narrativa se vuelva poliédrica y porosa en un yo que desde la segunda persona se multiplica. El

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delirio es, entonces, centro y punto de partida para que cuerpo y memoria se reconozcan a partir de una búsqueda incesante de la auto-comprensión. El yo se desborda, las miradas hacia la mujer que es, que fue, que quiere ser y no, se multiplican y anulan unas a otras en el texto narrado. Así la escritura evidencia, testimonia, confiesa; se convierte en baluarte y contenedora del delirio.

A su vez, el delirio visto como alteración o "confusión mental caracterizada por alucinaciones, [tanto como la] reiteración de pensamientos absurdos" (RAE, 2023) que generan ansiedad y excitación, se muestra aquí como la puerta de entrada al discurso confesional. Anna Caballé señala, en *Narcisos de tinta*, que en este tipo de textos se dice "lo que socialmente no puede o no debe contarse e impone un acto psíquico de gran envergadura" (Caballé 1995, 24), pues al confesarse, el que escribe también juzga la intimidad de otros.

Contar, narrar, nos pone evidencia como diría Hans-Georg Gadamer en *Verdad y método.* Por ello, el autor confesional "queda expuesto al lector, aceptando la legítima resolución que este último dé a su discurso." (Ugalde 2021, 59) En este sentido, Caballé enfatiza que confesar "es un acto de valentía que supone cierta seguridad en el valor de uno mismo y del alcance universal de la experiencia individual" (Caballé 1995, 24). Y es que al exponernos en la confesión revelamos, o no, la sinceridad y el auto-conocimiento, dos aspectos que pueden convertirse en sendas dificultades frente al sentido de verdad del texto. Caballé se pregunta si es posible conocernos y transmitir a otros nuestra experiencia de ese auto-conocimiento, pues en el momento de la escritura el autor está "encerrado en los estrechos límites de la subjetividad, no puede salir de sí mismo para juzgarse: es juez y parte interesada, objeto y al mismo tiempo sujeto" (Ibid, 27). Así, tanto la sinceridad como el conocimiento de sí mismo juegan un papel ambivalente; se ponen en duda tanto por su aparente imposibilidad como por la naturaleza del texto ficcional.

Pero en el plano de la autobiografía, en el acto confesional, explícito y reiterativo, un condimento importante es la sinceridad como "un efecto de transcripción del discurso íntimo al plano público" (Puertas Moya 2003, 160). Responde al contexto y el momento en que se produce. Por más cuestionado que sea, ese hálito de la sinceridad representada cautiva en principio al lector y determina la identificación de éste con los personajes, en el momento de la experiencia estética. La sinceridad es, incluso, una estrategia para liberar las emociones tanto del autor como del lector, a la vez que otorga verosimilitud al

texto. En este sentido, la novela de Tarazona representa una búsqueda para entender lo ocurrido a nivel cerebral, en la escritura y en el mundo; es una apuesta por la sinceridad y el auto-conocimiento. La autora afirma:

> *Isla partida*... es un trabajo en el que yo estaba tratando de entender cómo podía representar el cerebro y la crisis del pensamiento en un momento de vida, cómo es un pensamiento que está en crisis, cómo se elaboran los recuerdos, cómo se echa mano de lo que uno observa del mundo cuando el mundo es muy amenazante. (Puig 2022)

De hecho, Tarazona relata cómo fue dando forma, en el discurso, a su búsqueda: "La imaginé de muchas maneras, hice muchos manuscritos hasta encontrar la forma final, hice como cinco tratamientos diferentes de distintos acomodos de los fragmentos" (Ibid.). Y es que en la escritura confesional el autor requiere de habilidades creativas para alcanzar las cualidades estéticas que enganchen al lector con el mundo íntimo que se revela. Entonces, la "conexión del lector con la obra se dará mediante la verosimilitud , es decir, desde la apariencia de la verdad y no desde la veracidad" (Ugalde 2021, 60). De este modo, el sentido de verdad en el texto confesional, como ocurre en *Isla partida*, da lugar a la opalescencia. Por un lado, tenemos elementos que vienen del entorno "real", como las imágenes correspondientes a los estudios neurológicos que se realizó la autora y, por otro, esa verdad queda al margen de lo que ocurre en el relato con los personajes.

Caballé menciona que en principio: "todo texto autobiográfico permite la prueba de la verificación : el lector está invitado a contrastar lo expresado en el texto con otros testimonios, otros documentos que describan los mismos acontecimientos que se relatan [...] a fin de determinar su autenticidad" (Caballé 1995, 33). Pero al mismo tiempo el proceso escritural busca la auto-comprensión, más allá de la verificación de datos y hechos. Porque el texto es una mediación no sólo entre el autor y su lector, sino, entre el mundo y el sujeto que narra desde la visión de un personaje autoficcional. Diríamos con Paul Ricoeur, que el texto es una mediación para comprendernos como siendo otros. El autor-narrador busca la auto-comprensión a través del lenguaje que, según Hans-Georg Gadamer es lo que nos permite el acceso al mundo. Y esto, en las escrituras del yo puede probarse, más allá de las distintas funciones que reconoce Elena Cuasante en este camino, cuando habla de los móviles racionales, afectivos e híbridos que enfatizan funciones existenciales, gnoseológicas y de evasión en

los primeros; o las funcoines psicoterapéutica y de evasión en los segundos y la función lúdico-estética en los terceros (Cuasante 2018, 27).

Lo siniestro en la poética del delirio

En las novelas anteriores a *Isla partida*, encontramos ya aspectos relacionados con ese ambiente ominoso de lo siniestro que forma parte de lo que podríamos llamar "una poética del delirio" en la narrativa de Daniela Tarazona.

En *El animal sobre la piedra,* la novelista mexicana nos deja ver el pacto con lo siniestro desde el inicio de la obra, cuando la protagonista enuncia: "Mi casa fue el territorio de un suceso extraordinario. Después de la muerte de mi madre un gato de color gris entró en mi cuarto y orinó bajo mi cama" (Tarazona 2008, 11). A partir de este suceso, aparentemente simple, lo que sigue nos muestra a Irma, la protagonista, como un ser huidizo, invadida por miedos y sueños irracionales. Así el delirio inicia con lo extraño que vuelve abominable al yo de Irma, al verse y ver su cuerpo transformado en animal:

> Después de mudar de piel debí acudir al médico. No lo hice porque ese hecho y todos los siguientes, que me definían como un ser mutado, han sido saludables. No cabe en mi mente la duda. Los delirios, sin embargo, siguen su propia lógica, tal vez por eso hay días que no entiendo cómo he perdido mi identidad. ¿Ya no soy una persona? (Ibid, 131)

En *El beso de la liebre*, Hipólita es abandonada por su madre, quien la percibe como un ser extraño desde su nacimiento. Este personaje toca los bordes de lo divino y lo monstruoso. Tiene la lengua bífida como una serpiente y "Dios se escandaliza pues la apariencia de su elegida lo remite al mal" (Guillén 2013, 107). Por un lado, Hipólita tiene dones y poderes especiales que la hacen inmortal y, por otro, en su lucha por impartir justicia se encuentra con diversas muertes que la enfrentan a los designios de su Dios.

Los personajes de Tarazona habitan lo extraño a través de mutaciones, transformaciones y "deformaciones que exponen por un lado crisis internas, ya sea de personalidad o psicológicas, y por otro crisis externas o sociales que de manera simbólica señalan la realidad de la mujer en las sociedades posmodernas" (Serratos 2017, 96). Tanto en estas novelas, como en *Isla partida,* las atmósferas ominosas marcan el desdoblamiento de sus protagonistas, dando lugar al delirio; pues la tarea de la comprensión de sí y del mundo se vuelve casi

imposible. En lo borroso de sus realidades ocurre eso que nombra Freud como la invasión de la propia imagen ante el espejo, cuando éste narra su experiencia en un vagón de tren:

> Una vez estaba sentado, solo, en un compartimiento del coche dormitorio, cuando, al abrirse por una sacudida del tren la puerta del lavabo contiguo, vi entrar a un señor de cierta edad, envuelto con bata y cubierto con su gorra de viaje. Supuse que se había equivocado de puerta al abandonar el lavabo que daba a dos compartimientos, de modo que me levanté para informarlo de su error, pero me quedé atónito al reconocer que el invasor no era sino mi propia imagen reflejada en el espejo que llevaba la puerta de comunicación. Aún recuerdo que el personaje me había sido profundamente antipático. (Freud 1978, 57)

Como vemos, el disgusto, incluso la duda y la curiosidad —cuando caemos en la cuenta de que aquello que vemos en realidad somos nosotros—, forman también parte de lo siniestro en la búsqueda existencial del ser. Cuando lo abominable nos revela ajenos a nosotros mismos en los límites de la realidad y la fantasía, surge lo ambivalente: lo que soy y no soy o no quiero ser; el sí mismo como otro, diría Paul Ricoeur, dando lugar al conflicto de la auto-comprensión en las múltiples interpretaciones que se cruzan en nuestra realidad. Esto ocurre en *Isla partida,* en el plano autoral como en la voz narrativa, en tanto se habla desde la alteridad de la segunda persona.

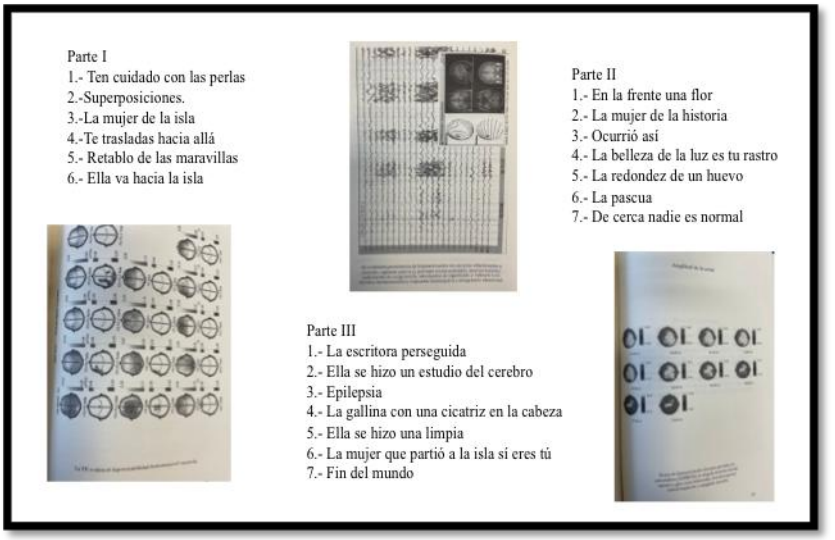
Tarazona ha manifestado esa necesidad de romper con las visiones establecidas de lo que somos, y lo logra con este juego opalescente de las miradas auto-reflexivas pues, como dice en entrevista con Montserrat Chávez: "la riqueza de la existencia está en que es diversa, no en la copia, ni en la visión hegemónica de la identidad" (Chávez 2023, 263). La novelista mexicana asegura que el desdoblamiento de la protagonista en *Isla partida* consiste en "estar pensando que tenemos la misma vida y de repente llegamos a nuestra casa y ya no estamos ahí, ya nos fuimos de ese lugar [...]. El desdoblamiento de *Isla partida* es el anuncio de una nueva vida, de una pérdida de quien hemos sido y quien va a ser ese personaje o lo que vamos a mostrar y hacia dónde va" (Ibid, 262).

El desorden neurológico en el pendular delirio

Estructurada en tres partes y una nota de la autora que explica cómo las imágenes contenidas en el libro son parte de un estudio médico, *Isla partida* se convierte en un campo fértil para hablar de las

complejidades del yo, tanto en el plano escritural, como en el de la voz narrativa y los lectores que nos parapetamos en los huecos de una memoria delirante. Vemos en la siguiente imagen, cómo cada una de las partes de la novela cierra con la evidencia del desorden neurológico en donde podríamos ubicar la primera ondulación del péndulo delirante que llevará a la protagonista a la idea del suicidio, para refractar el otro extremo del delirio.

Imagen 1. Estructura de *Isla partida*



La nota de la autora, quien puede ser vista como parte de la ficción, pero que revela ese pacto autobiográfico, señala: "Las imágenes reproducidas a lo largo del libro son parte del «Análisis espectral del electroencefalograma y potenciales relacionados a evento» que me realicé en mayo de 2014. Los fragmentos de texto que las acompañan han sido tomadas de los hallazgos e interpretaciones médicas de este análisis" (Tarazona 2022, 129).

Aunque la nota aparece al final del texto, los guiños de las imágenes inician desde la portada y la portadilla; nos obligan a realizar una lectura alterna para dialogar con lo representado desde esta advertencia que, junto con la dedicatoria, nos alerta sobre un posible sentido de verdad que entra en el juego de la ficción: "Agradezco a Blanca Gaxiola, médica psiquiatra, y a Montserrat Gerez, médica neuróloga y psiquiatra, por haberme ayudado a comprender las descargas eléctricas

exageradas de mi cerebro. Y a Guy Pierre Tur por ayudarme a equilibrar el sol" (Ibid.).

La dedicatoria abre un nexo con la realidad y nos hace percibir al yo autoral en el camino de la sinceridad autobiográfica que mencionamos arriba. Los nombres pertenecen a personas reales, como la autora. Eso nos pone en un camino "seguro" de identificación simpatética; es decir, nos condolemos, nos unimos a ella, que decide ser su propio personaje, intencionada desde esa otra "tú" a la que se dirige en la narración. Aunque, por otro lado, no debemos olvidar que la ironía también juega un papel importante y no todo lo del pacto autobiográfico se cumple a la hora de hablar de la sinceridad. Es decir, el sentido de verdad está cuestionado en la literatura desde su naturaleza. Tarazona afirma en entrevista que le interesa cuestionar el diagnóstico puesto en la novela como un elemento de verosimilitud o de sinceridad autobiográfica:

> En la novela, la que respira es la máquina, el doctor está siendo un mero instrumento. Estamos más a merced de los cables de esa máquina que le hacen el estudio a la protagonista y que aparecen como serpientes que están más vivas que el médico que está ahí. Quizás tiene que ver con eso, con la intención de poner en duda un diagnóstico. Me gusta escribir en el territorio de las cosas que no sabemos, que desconocemos, más que estar del lado de las respuestas, estoy del lado de los cuestionamientos y de los misterios. (Chávez 2023, 261)

Los rasgos testimoniales de la nota puesta en la novela se unen a las imágenes, e incluso a estos cuestionamientos que nos dejan contemplar un abanico más amplio de la coloración autobiográfica, al involucrarnos con la experiencia autoral. De esta forma, lo autobiográfico, en sus funciones existencial y gnoseológica, indica que "la revisión del pasado es aquí fundamentalmente una hermenéutica, una búsqueda del sentido de la propia esencia y existencia" (Cuasante 2018, 36). Pero lo autobiográfico en Tarazona se colorea también de la genealogía: la abuela, la madre, las tías, del "reconocimiento de un origen y de una historia anterior y esa historia anterior presenta situaciones y significados y simbologías y secretos, herencias, aprendizajes que la protagonista ha vivido" (Chávez 2023, 255).

Con lo anterior, damos paso al reconocimiento del delirio como testimonio de la realidad vivida, más allá de la autora hipotética ficcional; la nota nos dirige directamente a enjuiciar la realidad contextual de Daniela Tarazona, quien nos confiesa su padecimiento.

Este delirio se evidencia en "Ella", la narradora, que no tiene nombre y que se desdobla en la otra y las otras mujeres percibidas. Desde las primeras páginas nos encontramos con una huida difusa de la mujer que se va de casa sin previo aviso, manifestando una actitud delirante. La narradora sigue sus huellas: "la llave del lavabo aún goteando, el cepillo de dientes mojado" (Tarazona 2022, 11). Pero "en un pequeño librero, [están] sus anillos. Se fue con las manos desnudas para siempre" (Ibid.). Desapareció "sin ser vista... fue su anhelo desde hace tiempo, lo sabes" (Ibid, 12).

En una especie de paralelismo sinónimo, el discurso va diciendo de otra manera lo ocurrido, pues como afirma Javier Hernández en *Y ese hombre seré yo*, "en la escritura íntima los móviles del acto literario están pesando con toda su fuerza en la génesis de dicho acto [y se integran] de forma explícita y reiterativa" (en Cuasante 2018, 26).

En *Isla partida* la narradora dice en una estrategia auto-reflexiva:

> Narrar demasiadas veces la misma secuencia de hechos cuando la imaginación es desordenada resulta necesario. Esperas que alguien lo entienda. Desde una perspectiva psicoanalítica, es probable que estés colocando límites y recogiendo el agua derramada con baldes para que el suelo no se pudra. Evitar a toda costa la putrefacción, aunque sea. El psicoanálisis es un modo pobre de ver la existencia. Las palabras dichas regresan a la cabeza como pájaros lastimados por tu propia mano. (Tarazona 2022, 65)

Es como si la palabra construyera un espejo para mostrar la alteridad de lo que es y no, la mujer de la voz en segunda persona: "Debió salir sin que nadie la viera. Tal vez se asomó a la ventana que daba al pasillo común y se cercioró de que no hubiera ni un alma. Incluso pudo haber girado la llave dentro de la cerradura despacio, con tanto cuidado que nadie escuchó la puerta abrirse" (Ibid, 12). Este hecho se vuelve importante más adelante, cuando la narradora se ve a sí misma abriendo la puerta. Es como si se olvidara de sí y buscara a la otra que ya no está en el reflejo. Así vamos con ella recorriendo el interior de la casa, la cocina. Escuchamos los sonidos más ordinarios como el del refrigerador. En ese recorrido ella encuentra su computadora sobre el escritorio. "Es un hallazgo. Habías soñado la misma escena. El interior de la máquina te hace pensar en un cuerpo. Es una obviedad, pero las piezas de metal dentro de ella, los cables delgadísimos señalan que el sueño fue cierto. Y a esta máquina, te dices, le extrajeron el cerebro" (Ibid, 14).

Esa otra que se corresponde con la narradora autora, escribe la nota sobre el estudio del cerebro y, a su vez, se identifica con la autora "real", quien confiesa en entrevista: "Todo está motivado por una situación difícil que pasé, la sintomatología de una situación neurológica, parecida a la epilepsia, arritmia cerebral, descargas eléctricas" (Ferrer 2023). En la obra, el sufrimiento, los pensamientos se configuran alrededor de este pasado: "La doctora dijo que podría tratarse de una cicatriz en la suave materia gris del cerebro. Luego pidió que se hiciera el estudio, terminaron dándose cuenta de que la electricidad se desordena en disritmias de origen desconocido (Tarazona 2022, 55).

En *Isla partida* los hechos y los cuerpos se desdoblan, se atraviesan en el tiempo y en el sueño, en lo nebuloso de la vida confusa. El espejo no aclara, enturbia la visión del yo; es la ocasión para que las otras mujeres, en la configuración de ella, aparezcan. Es decir, las estrategias de liberación, tanto el sueño como la palabra, terminan cifradas en el misterio del lenguaje, que según Gadamer es lo único que nos da acceso al mundo, sólo que en este caso no nos alcanza para entendernos, más bien nos pone en evidencia. De esta manera, nos queda únicamente la posibilidad de darnos un abrazo en los límites del desbordamiento. De hecho, dice Tarazona: "Isla partida en una isla interna que todos tenemos... Pasamos por experiencias muy difíciles y es complicado encontrar un abrazo, una palabra de comprensión" (Ferrer 2023).

En este sentido, el cuerpo es lo único que tenemos para contenernos, para contener nuestra memoria. Según Tarazona, esa limitante que llega también al pensamiento, se nota más en *Isla partida* que en sus otras novelas: "La imposibilidad del cuerpo se nota más en *Isla partida* que en *El animal sobre la piedra.* Es decir, lo limitante que puede ser nuestro cuerpo, nuestro pensamiento, esa manera a veces tan personal del cuerpo humano que se pierde de muchos otros significados a su alrededor porque su visión es muy limitada" (Chávez 263).

La idea del suicidio

El suicidio en *Isla partida* se convierte en algo ominoso, no solo por implicar la muerte, sino por su indefinición. Hay una mujer que se va, que intenta morir, que muere pero no; es decir, el suicidio puede ser una mera metáfora del delirio. En la obra, la mujer de la isla no puede vivir más. "Lleva la bolsa de pastillas. Lleva el retrato de su madre y las palabras de su padre enroscadas en las orejas" (Tarazona 2022, 27).

Ella es varias mujeres…representa multitudes. "Encarna la vida dolorosa de las escapistas que se rebelaron desde el origen" (Ibid, 32). Así la muerte es a la vez el dolor existencial primero y primario.

La idea del suicidio está en el otro extremo del péndulo delirante que regresa al punto de lo extraño cuando leemos que la mujer en la isla sí murió, que la mujer era ella, la narradora. En ese momento, lo abominable de sí ha pasado por estadios que le confirman una realidad paranormal: Vio una ráfaga de luz, un ovni. "Sucedían cosas extrañas en tu casa. Tu madre decía que desaparecían sus pertenencias, que alguien venía por ellas y las cambiaba de sitio" (Ibid, 32). Otros hechos extraordinarios que se muestran como parte de un pasado delirante en la mujer son la imagen de Cristo, que aparece en un muro exterior de la iglesia, así como la mamá que está parada de cabeza.

En ese ámbito nebuloso todo confirma que el mundo es la isla: "Sucede que estás rodeada, eres una isla circundada por el agua: los paquetes de papeles junto al escritorio, los libros, la maleta con las joyas. Cosas de tu madre. Notas. Cartas. Los manuscritos de la abuela" (Ibid, 40). Todo es isla: la mente, la habitación. "Estar rodeada significa hundirse en la arena. Tu cuerpo se pierde entre los objetos, apenas puedes abrir los ojos" (Ibid.). La idea del suicidio corona la imagen de la isla; ella es como isla, el cuerpo aislado es una isla; isla de la mente, rompiendo las ataduras de una realidad incomprensible.

El suicidio no es fácil; pensar en que ya no queremos vivir nos enfrenta al miedo. La protagonista difusa de *Isla partida* vive ese pánico ante su propia decisión del suicidio. Ella viaja en un asiento vencido del avión. Tiene miedo.

> Ha estudiado con fruición los efectos de las pastillas, ha indagado si le producirán demasiado dolor y ha concluido que será así. Se arma de valor. El dolor físico, a la par de la pena que carga desde que tiene memoria, será menor que el de su alma, podrá resistir con lágrimas las penurias de su cuerpo durante la agonía. (Ibid, 45)

La idea del suicidio está ligada a la hiperexcitabilidad del cerebro. En las referencias contextuales, encontramos que Tarazona dice a Javier Ferrer cómo llevó a la novela las notas delirantes de su condición orgánica y mental: "Encontré cosas verdaderas que me producían mucha angustia. Todo está atravesado por ese prisma que proyecta la manera cruda en que vivimos". (Ferrer 2023)

La isla es el pasado que duele, el hueco en la memoria. Ante esto, el suicidio representa una puerta de emergencia: "Ella alzó la vista para

encontrar la salida. ¿En dónde estaba la puerta del desierto? ¿En la isla partida?" (Tarazona 2022, 55). Entonces surge lo imprevisto, ante la situación límite aflora la conciencia: "La mujer que partió a la isla es ella y también tú" (Ibid, 56). El pasado brilla, llena un pequeño hueco. Sólo que con la evidencia del pasado llega la inmanencia de la muerte. Y con la idea de la muerte, la historia de la mujer parece aclararse: son muchas ellas, un tú que se desborda en la alteridad de la madre, su yo de niña, la abuela, las tías y hasta la imagen de la poeta Eunice Odio. La mujer que se va a la isla, la que dijo al lanchero que no regresara por ella, puede ser en realidad cualquiera de esas mujeres que se refractan en un tú. En ellas, la muerte ronda, ronda en el coche, en las calcomanías, en los letreros.

En la idea del suicidio se confunden los planos de la realidad y el sueño, dando lugar a lo fantasmagórico. La mujer aparece como un fantasma. "Tu mano atraviesa su cuerpo. Y así como apareció dibujada en el aire, su imagen se disuelve". (Ibid, 70) Pero en esta isla partida nadie es normal, nadie confía, nadie cree en nada. "No puedo decirte lo que pienso, en realidad, por eso escribo sobre el papel algo que se parezca a lo que quiero decirte" (Ibid, 88). Incluso la escritora personaje pierde la brújula, es rebasada por su escritura, se siente perseguida. "Nadie sabe qué límites cruza cuando escribe" (Ibid, 97). Luego del delirio de persecución llega la calma, pero aparece la evidencia de su actividad eléctrica en el cerebro. Ella narra el tiempo del estudio. Su cerebro le envía órdenes como pasa con *El camino de Santiago* de Patricia Laurent Kullick:

> Dentro de su cerebro hay pequeñas pulsaciones que los cables llevan hacia la máquina que respira a su lado. Ella sabe que registra cada una de las ondas que emite su materia gris, vencida pero que, por fortuna, permanece rebelándose. Su cerebro dice: no me dominarán. (Ibid, 102)

Los médicos evalúan su "sistema de atención, los problemas afectivos, los impulsos, las ideas de persecución y la percepción de realidades que los demás no conciben" (Ibid, 104). Mientras, ella narra los efectos de la epilepsia: "Una mujer estaba volando sobre las cabezas de todas nosotras. se había quedado en la posición de loto, pero iba y venía rozando el techo con la coronilla" (Ibid, 105). Con esto, los recuerdos de la infancia llegan, llega la presencia de la madre. Narra una visita a la doctora, al parecer en un hospital psiquiátrico. Con esto la narradora toca lo límites de su revelación: "Lo que sucedió mientras

hablabas con ella es tan sagrado que no lo narrarás." (Ibid, 109) Aunque sabe que no es normal, también se da cuenta de su transformación. El plano mágico aparece en este escenario confesional: Ve animales que parecen robots. Una perra que odia, una gallina siniestra. Incluso es testigo de prácticas de sanación, limpias, exorcismos, todo es posible. A la narradora se le aparece la mujer casi de forma mágica, como un hada, dejando polvo en los muebles. Ve su cabeza y se figura como si fuera una enferma de cáncer.

Ella, la mujer que no tiene nombre, pero tiene voz y se narra desde un "tú", se imagina que morirá en la isla. Dará la última bocanada. "Será por los ácidos de tu estómago y las pastillas" (Ibid, 118). Piensa en su madre unos días antes de que muriera. Se siente en un torbellino. "El viento sopla con tal fuerza afuera que es del todo posible ver la cabaña en la que estás arrancada del suelo y volando dentro de un torbellino" (Ibid.).

Como punto clave del péndulo que oscila entre el delirio y la muerte, aparece la muerte de la madre. Ella terminó sus días en una isla, fundiendo su yo al yo de la madre: "Vas a quedarte dormida y tu madre aparece dentro de tus ojos y luego, en el mundo, en la realidad. Habla, gesticula, está viva. Va contigo. ¿Qué dice? No sabes, pero sus gestos son característicos. Su cuerpo ocupa el espacio" (Ibid, 125). ¿La mujer de la isla ingirió pastillas, se suicidó? ¿Es la madre? ¿Es la mujer que se funde con la imagen de la madre? Está en una isla de plástico donde se supone que muere: "Este mundo ha alcanzado su final. // Silencio. Aquí está ella, detrás de una puerta cerrada que la luz del interior enmarca" (Ibid, 126). Luego aparece una página con imágenes que muestran las "zonas de hiperactivación" (Ibid, 127). Ella es la autora, narradora, personaje en segunda persona, la mujer que se va a la isla, ¿su madre? Entre las alucinaciones, el sueño, lo poroso de lo que ve, presiente e interpreta, el estudio neurológico amplía la señal de la auto-comprensión.

Tarazona asienta, da testimonio de lo que pasó para compartir con los demás. Es una situación del yo, pero también una situación colectiva: "Yo quería dar cuenta no solo de una situación emocional y mental, sino también de una época; un mundo en donde encontrar un sentido de la realidad resulta frustrante" (Ferrer 2023). Tarazona da testimonio desde un tú que es muchos yoes. *Isla partida* es solamente la parte visible de un mundo interior que se fragmenta como reflejo de lo que afuera también estalla. En ese mundo ominoso no hay asidero, lo que queda es el delirio y la muerte.

Palabras finales

A partir de esta visión pendular del delirio en la obra de Daniela Tarazona podemos constatar que hay una conciencia estética que nos guía como lectores a través de espejos narrativos en donde la escritura misma se delinea como estrategia para mostrar lo temático del delirio. Es decir, las cosas se desdoblan para enunciarse una y otra vez de diferente manera. Hay una obsesión por el énfasis como si además del delirio y la epilepsia, completara el cuadro una especie de alzhéimer en donde la desmemoria se luce para poner en evidencia lo que ya se dijo o incluso para contradecir los hechos y dichos. Frente al espejo narrativo aparecen fragmentos, pistas, imágenes que vuelven ominosa la información de lo que ocurre.

En cuanto a los sub-géneros narrativos con los que dialoga *Isla partida* encontramos huellas del realismo fantástico y del sentido más llano y tradicional del misterio que deviene incluso de la tradición oral. En este sentido, Tarazona acude lo mismo a relatos y expresiones populares como a estrategias que acercan su discurso a autores latinoamericanos clásicos como Jorge Luis Borges, Adolfo Bioy Casares, Julio Cortázar o Clarice Lispector; a novelistas mexicanas contemporáneas: Cristina Rivera Garza, Guadalupe Nettel y Patricia Lourent Kullick. Con esto, la narrativa de Daniela Tarazona abre múltiples posibilidades de interpretar realidades autofictivas desde lo siniestro o la alteridad, apuntando no un yo, sino un tú poliédrico que se devana el cerebro entre ser y no, entre afianzarse en el delirio u olvidarse de sí, ser el hueco mismo de su memoria. Sólo en el desorden central de sí, se diluye el horror de ser para la muerte.

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Paradoxical metaphors and religiotherapy in Maryam Awaisu's *Burning Bright*

Joy Eyisi Jr., Emmanuel Omobowale & Joy Eyisi[*]

Abstract: The portrayal of ailing characters in literature demonstrates that as these characters articulate their experiences of the disease, they employ cognitive mechanisms facilitated by paradoxical metaphors. This paper aims to examine the existence of paradoxical metaphors in the selected illness novel, Maryam Awaisu's *Burning Bright*. Furthermore, it investigates how the ailing character in the illness novel, employs these paradoxical metaphors as a form of religiotherapy to support and bolster her mental wellbeing. Jacques Derrida's Deconstruction and Sigmund Freud's Psychoanalytic theories are used for the critical analysis of the selected illness novel. Recognising and valuing the expressions of ailing individuals holds the potential of enhancing effective communication within medical situations.

Keywords: paradoxical metaphors, religiotherapy, sickle-cell anaemia, ailing characters in fiction, Maryam Awaisu's *Burning Bright*, illness narratives, mental process, medical communication

Introduction

The intricate interplay between literature and medicine has long been recognised as a significant avenue for exploring the multidimensional aspects of human health experiences. Within this context, the portrayal of ailing characters stands as a crucial intersection where the illness novels converge with the richness of literary expression. Hence, the emergence of religiotherapy signifies a holistic approach to well-being, incorporating spiritual or religious aspects into the therapeutic process

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to foster physical, emotional and psychological healing. The composite term, religiotherapy is formed by combining "religio" and "therapy." "Religio" originates from the Latin word, "religiǒ," which signifies a sense of reverence for God and connection to the divine, Friedrich Max Muller (1889). "Therapy," on the other hand, stems from the Greek word, "therapeia," denoting treatment or care, Douglas Harper (2010). Chiedu Eseadi et al. (2015, 67) notes that "Religiotherapy integrates patient's faith and psychology to assist the genuinely motivated patient(s), willing and ready to resolve their worries." Thus, it encompasses a systematic psychosocial and culturally attuned method that instigates a gradual shift in the patient's perception of the world, leading to a fundamental transformation in their overall existence. Paradoxical metaphors, a staple of literary expression, further enrich the synergy amongst literature, medicine and religiotherapy, by unveiling deeper layers of meaning in both medical and spiritual narratives. A paradoxical metaphor is a metaphor that is contradictory in itself, "hence, having a paradoxical attribute." (Joy Eyisi Jr. 2023, 63; Joy Eyisi Jr., & Emmauel Omobowale, 2021, 252). As literature and medicine converge, religiotherapy harnesses the power of storytelling and symbolism to address the intricacies of health and spiritual harmony, while paradoxical metaphors provide a distinct lens through which the complexities of human experience are explored, bridging the realms of physical and spiritual healing.

Karen Kersting (2003, 2) in her exploration of the beliefs of psychologists regarding the integration of spirituality into therapeutic settings notes that, in Christian psychologist William Hathaway's position, "being able to help a person connect with the variable of spirituality in their lives can be a beneficial and important therapeutic accommodation". Consequently, the integration of spirituality in therapeutic settings could introduce novel avenues for treatment considerations. Carrie Doehring, another psychologist in Kersting's exploration, points out that the willingness and sensitivity of the therapist to interact with the patient in a religious way aids in building the trust the patient has for the therapist, resulting in a new aspect of therapeutic human experience. She also observes that certain people comprehend spiritually guided therapy as encountering a third presence (God presence or spiritual presence) in the consulting room. Within that presence, a concealed mystery unfolds for the patient, which is akin to an enlightening realisation that holds substantial therapeutic utility. However, Doehring asserts that despite the benefits

of religiously guided treatments, therapists need to be properly trained towards guiding their patients in healthy views of religion without letting religious ideas hinder any aspect of their treatment and improvement. Robert Gordon, Lowell Hoffman and Alan Tjeltveit (2010) and Shaista Meer and Ghazala Mir (2014) attest to this. Doehring also insists that anecdotal treatment strategies should be utilised rather than evidence-based strategies. In discussing the field in its budding stage, Edward Shafranske, another psychologist in Kirsting's exploration, notes that, "until we have good, solid empirical evidence and studies about how to integrate religion into practice, it may be premature to encourage widespread use" (Kersting 2003, 3). Thus, psychologists should formulate comprehensive research endeavours and theoretical frameworks to appreciate religiotherapy in practical situations.

Eseadi et al. (2015) in discussing the utilisation of religiotherapy, identifies three perspectives that aid the use of religiotherapy: the psychoanalytic therapists' perspective, the existentialist-humanistic therapists' perspective and the cognitive-behavioural therapists' perspective. The psychoanalytic therapists' perspective proposes that, to treat a patient with a religious orientation effectively, there should be some sort of reflections of religion and belief in God in the therapeutic process. The existentialist-humanistic therapists' perspective suggests that the discovery of meaning holds substantial significance for one's personality and wellbeing. Hence, as meaning is found in the ailing situation, the patient could be positively transformed. The cognitive-behavioural therapists' (CBT) perspective demonstrates the use of religious imagery, self-examination and thought monitoring to effectively treat patients. Notably, Rebecca Propst (1996) points out that CBT deals with the type of thinking the patient expresses (catastrophising, mind-reading, personalising or over generalising) and not the content of the thought. However, this research focuses on the content of thought.

Critical studies on the selected text for this research, Maryam Awaisu's *Burning Bright,* comprise reviews that do not delve into the metaphors in the novel, much less explore the paradoxical metaphors the ailing character constructs in relation to the ailing experience. Abubakar Evuti (2016, 1) notes that Awaisu's writing style, though "clean and to the point" could be better if she incorporates the effect of all other special senses in addition to the sense of sight which she utilised extensively. Barnes & Noble (n.d) adds that the story is set

within the intricacies of the Nigerian society, embodying pain, relief, love, conflicts and the development of faith.

Consequently, at its core, this research centres on the content of thought, which is laden with literary expressions, especially paradoxical metaphors. This paper is patient centred as it delves into the representation of the ailing character grappling with the ailment, sickle cell disease. The paper delves into the ailing character's articulation of the disease experience through the utilisation of cognitive mechanisms facilitated by literary tropes. Specifically, it focuses on the presence of paradoxical metaphors as a distinct literary device employed by ailing characters to verbalise the experience of the ailing situation. To explore this dynamic, the study centres on the selected illness novel, Maryam Awaisu's *Burning Bright*, delving into the intricate interplay between literary expression and mental well-being. Grounding its critical analysis, the paper draws from Jacques Derrida's Deconstruction and Sigmund Freud's Psychoanalytic theories, offering unique perspectives for dissecting the intricate layers of narrative representation, both to identify and analyse the impact of the paradoxical metaphors respectively. Furthermore, this exploration emphasises the significance of recognising and valuing the expressions of ailing characters in achieving effective communication within medical contexts. Engaging with the intersections of literature, medicine, and religion, this paper aims to shed light on the profound implications of the literary depiction of ailing characters and its potential impact in understanding the human experience of illness.

Synopsis of the novel

The novel, *Burning Bright* encapsulates the life of Nadia and her struggles with sickle cell disease (SCD). SCD is a "genetically determined disease," Emechebe, GO, Nnamdi Benson Onyire, Orji ML and Kingsley Achigbu (2017, 2). "An autosomal recessive disorder caused by the inheritance of abnormal sickle haemoglobin (Hb) S or C from both parents," Agatha Nkiruka David et al (2018, 2). It follows that it is inherited, and it affects red blood cells causing severe painful episodes and other symptoms that are episodic. It could be triggered by cold, infection, dehydration or low oxygen levels. The symptoms could be: acute chest syndrome, episodes of pain, anaemia and infections. Asides the stem-cell transplant which factors in availability of appropriate donors and procedural side effects, "SCD cannot be cured, so lifelong treatment and monitoring are needed. There are a number

of different treatments which help to prevent sickling episodes or prevent related problems such as infection" (Colin Tidy 2020, 4).

Nadia is the second and only child with the gene, out of the five children of her mother and father, Mr. and Mrs. Abubakar Habeeb. Her mother is shocked when the doctors diagnose Nadia as having sickle cells. Almost throughout the novel, she keeps fighting thoughts of blaming her husband for the situation. It is noted that her husband at the time of their marriage deceived her into believing that his genotype is AA, because he did not want to lose her. He had hoped that God will take care of their children no matter what type of genotype they have.

Identified paradoxical metaphors in Maryam Awaisu's *Burning Bright*

In *Burning Bright*, as Nadia tries to understand the reason behind her painful experiences, she believes in the same way, Samira does in *S is for Survivor* (2014), that God put the disease in her for a purpose. If not, He should have put it in the body of her other siblings. Thus, the narrator notes,

> In Islam, any sort of ailment – even if it were the prick of a thorn – is accompanied by the obliteration of sins. So, except for the days where she had been completely free from any form of ailment or pain, her sins were continuously erased during the rest of her days of suffering. This was the sole thought that she usually held on to during dark and painful moments when she was tempted to lose her faith. How merciful is God! Her pain, although highly unwelcome, was not in vain. Until such a day as she would be able to walk again without pain, her sins would be erased every single day. She was not perfect, and so it was great knowing that the Lord always compensated her in such a reassuring way. (Awaisu 2014, 10)

From the indented excerpt, "any sort of ailment…," (Ibid.), connotes that the creator puts ailments in the body of humans for the purpose of cleansing the sins of humans. One begins to wonder, if the creator of Hyundai motors intentionally installed an item in the vehicles that would accelerate wear and tear, so that wherever the vehicles are, they could be purified of the flaws they bring to their drivers when they fail to start or when they dissatisfy the driver. Note, humans are not cars. But in this sphere, there is a creator and a creation. It is rare to find a creator that derives joy in seeing to the impairment of his or her creation. The creator produces a wholesome creation and works towards fixing any impairment in the existing creation, because he or

she is aware that the impairment may have a negative impact on the creation's durability, life expectancy, or life cycle.

The excerpt, "So, except for the days where she had been completely free from any form of ailment or pain, her sins were continuously erased…" (Awaisu 2014, 10) within the indented selection metaphorically suggests that the presence of the ailment makes her pure, clean, probably, a saint or an angel, as white as snow (in the religious parlance). Paradoxically, it implies that on the days she is free from any form of pain or ailment, she is dirty, impure, probably a demon, as black as charcoal or as red as a scarlet (in the religious parlance). And how about all those who seemingly do not experience any ailment, like her siblings, father and mother, her best friend, Ayman, now turned sister? It means they are all filled with sin and dirt, perhaps they are disgusting, freakily smelling and no one should want to be around them.

From the same excerpt the narrator states that, "Until such a day as she would be able to walk again without pain, her sins would be erased every single day. She was not perfect, and so it was great knowing that the Lord always compensated her in such a reassuring way" (Ibid.). Paradoxically, one begins to wonder why Nadia still expects to be free or walk without pain, since being free from pain is akin to impurity. Why does she fight? Why does she fight, (not just fighting to live) specifically to win over sickle cell anaemia, the disease she believes her creator uses to keep her sin free? Arguably, the evocation of the essence of a sin-free life in the novel, creates an unstable opposition between the sin-free life and the sinful life, because the novel undermines its own awareness that a sinful life appears to be preferred (so the sinful can be continuously cleaned by diseases). So, if there is no ailment, what then will cleanse a sinful soul? Disease, in this novel, is metaphorically described as a sanitiser, a cleanser, that blots away any form of sin from a sinful life.

After Nadia's hip replacement surgery and her recovery from septicaemia, she begins to wonder why she lost consciousness for about four days:

> Funny how she had been depressed about the notion of using crutches before. Now she could not wait to be able to do that again. Maybe if she had not been ungrateful, none of these would have happened to her. Maybe it all happened to teach her a lesson (Awaisu 2014, 88).

This is another paradoxical metaphor of punishment. She believes she committed a sin of ingratitude, and she is being taught a lesson. The narrator of the novel states that, "Maybe if she had not been ungrateful, none of these would have happened to her" (Awaisu 2014, 88). The implied metaphor here is that she is ungrateful, and her ungratefulness yielded the ailment she suffers from. Paradoxically, when a sperm fertilises an egg, how will the resulting zygote know what gratefulness is to become grateful, so that it can reject the unwanted genetic materials it has received? Better still, how will the sperm know to be grateful so that it will either transmit only healthy genetic materials, or how will the egg know to be grateful so that it can selectively receive only healthy genetic materials? How would she have been ungrateful in her mother's womb when her being was in the process of formation? How grateful enough could she have been to stop the S genotype of her parents from coming together to create her own genotype? Or how grateful enough could she have been to hinder one of the S and attract an A which would make her free form the disease? Furthermore, a child's mind is tabula rasa, at birth. How would she have known what gratefulness means for her to, at the time, become grateful so that she would outgrow all the unhealthy genetic materials from her parents, so that "none of these would have happened to her"? (Ibid.). Nadia's mentality thus, presents a situation that appears self-contradictory and counterintuitive, resulting in the paradoxical metaphors she constructs in relation to her ailing experience.

Classification of identified paradoxical metaphors in Maryam Awaisu's *Burning Bright*

The classification of the identified paradoxical metaphor is based on the researcher's interpretation of the selected paradoxical metaphors. The interpretation is dependent on the statements' impact on the speaker, and metaphorical implication. Notably, some of the statements could overlap, representing multiple classes of paradoxical metaphors.

Paradoxical metaphors of identity:

- "So, except for the days when she had been completely free from any form of ailment or pain, her sins were continuously erased" (Awaisu 2014, 10). This implies that she is sinless.

Paradoxical metaphors of pain:

- "So, except for the days when she had been completely free from any form of ailment or pain, her sins were continuously erased" (Ibid.).
- "Until such a day as she would be able to walk again, without pain, her sins would be erased every single day. She was not perfect, and so it was a great knowing that the Lord always compensated her in such a reassuring way" (Ibid.).

Paradoxical metaphors of survival:
- "... any sort of ailment … is accompanied by the obliteration of sins" (Ibid.).
- "Maybe if she had not been ungrateful, none of these would have happened to her" (Ibid, 88).

Psychological effects of paradoxical metaphors on the ailing character in Maryam Awaisu's *Burning Bright*

In *Burning Bright,* statements that weigh Nadia down are facts from her doctors as she seemed optimistic giving no room to negative mental processes all through the novel. An illustration is when her doctor in New York, where she worked and studied for four years, tells her, "I am afraid you have non-traumatic, avascular necrosis" (Awaisu 2014, xii). This disease is a complication caused by the sickle cell anaemia she is born with. The narrator notes that,

> Nadia's heart skipped a couple of beats whenever those words replayed in her mind. The scene of her doctors in New York telling her that, kept playing in her head, every day (Awaisu 2014, xii).

From the above excerpt, the words from the doctors remain in Nadia's subconscious, expressing themselves via dreams. Thus, when her parents insist that she comes back to Nigeria where her family will be with her during the surgery, she gets tormented by dreams – seeing herself rather in the surgical room for amputation and not hip replacement. Notable is the fact that the torment from dreams is not caused by paradoxical metaphors but by the constant replay of "the scene of her doctors in New York telling her" (Awaisu 2014, xii) about the results of her tests. This wearies her but she keeps fighting to stay positive.

In her struggle for survival, she draws strength from the paradoxical religious metaphors discussed in the previous section. While she feels she is being taught a lesson because of her ungratefulness, her optimistic mind-set prevents her from sinking deep into depression.

She pushes negative mental processes away, "she would think about that later and scold herself later. Now, it was time to rejoice and tell her mother she could go home and rest" (Awaisu 2014, 88). Rather than dwelling on derailing mental processes, she moves on from one activity in finding purpose, to another: helping sacrificially in a Sickle Cell Foundation close to her home and getting a well-paying job in Lagos.

How Nadia in Maryam Awaisu's *Burning Bright* struggled to survive in an existential context

Positive mind-set and gratitude

Nadia's story reflects one who has sworn to never allow any room for mental disorientation in her life. She stays positive all through the novel, a trait she imbibes from her mother (Awaisu 2014, 62). It seems as if there are no "ifs" in Nadia's mother's language. It is most of the time, "when," not "if." "If," is a conditional statement, there is a probability that the inference might or might not happen. With "when," there is no such probability. The speaker is certain that whatever is said will happen though he or she is unsure of the exact time.

"If? If she moves? I will send for you when she moves and opens her eyes. You should definitely get out of here with all of your negativity" (Ibid, 74). This is Nadia's mother's response to one of the doctors who examines Nadia in her unconscious state. At the time, Nadia loses consciousness in the hospital after her surgery due to "extreme pain from pneumonia coupled with low blood pressure from septicaemia (Ibid, 60). Nadia's mother sees Nadia's finger move and immediately sends for the doctor who after examining Nadia says, "please calm down madam, you can always send for me if she moves again" (Ibid, 74). But Nadia's mother does not agree with the word, "if". She insists on, "when".

Nadia's resolve, to stay positive and maintain a positive mental process, is so intense and contagious that it rubs off on her elder sister, Hafsah. When the doctors declare Nadia unconscious, her father, mother and sister become distraught, But Hafsah cautions herself with the statement, "No, I'm going to think positive thoughts only. – that is exactly what Nadia would do, she decided" (Ibid, 51). Exactly what Nadia will do, think only positive thoughts. Buttressing this, the narrator notes,

> if there was one thing Nadia prided herself on, it was her ability to take things in stride and be hopeful. She might have a good cry before

> that, but she usually accepted reality and was able to move on with optimism (Awaisu 2014, 6).

Nadia's belief in her God becomes impregnable as she struggles with the impact of sickle cell anaemia on her life. She believes that the ailment she suffers from has spiritually strengthened her relationship with her God. Since the age of seven,

> She had made a resolve since then to make God the priority in everything she did, because He alone could save her from the anguish of sickle cell anaemia. She had tried drugs and injections, but they provided temporary relief only. The hospital stays still continued, and she was tired of asking, *why me?* She started feeling ungrateful for asking that. She needed a more powerful sense of hope, and so she had turned to God (Awaisu 2014, 7).

The narrator asserts that since Nadia's turning to God, Nadia has been experiencing changes in her life. The painful experiences become more bearable. She develops a new mind-set that God has a reason for letting her pass through such situation and the reason is part of His master plan for her. She stops sulking as much, figuring out that she has seen enough pain in life, and it will be stupid of her to indulge in depressing thoughts that would yield more pain.

Statements like, "she did not let it get to her" (Awaisu 2014, 8) and "Nadia had refused to be broken" (Ibid.), remain consistent throughout the novel, *Burning Bright*, emphasising Nadia's resilience to remaining positive in her thoughts for survival. Nadia also believes that though she might use the crutches for a while, she is rather blessed and grateful to her God for keeping her strong, cleansing her from her sins and letting her find purpose in helping others (Ibid, 104).

NGO

Nadia joins an NGO, a Sickle Cell Foundation in Kaduna, that caters for patients living with sickle cell anaemia (Ibid, 149). Thus, she turns her pain to a passion (Ibid, 153). She takes up the responsibility of going to media houses requesting for a slot to advertise the NGO and all they do to benefit members of their community in Kaduna. She also reaches out to pharmaceutical companies so that they can, in a philanthropic manner offer medications to the patients suffering from sickle cell anaemia (Ibid,164). In doing this, she finds meaning in suffering, believing that her God keeps her alive for this purpose, to be able to help sickle cell patients start over their lives with hope.

Love

Love and encouragement from family and friends inspire Nadia to stay strong and live healthy. For instance, she feels like quitting at a point in her secondary education in Nigeria, because it seems pointless to strive for excellence when she constantly finds herself in the hospital, losing out on classwork. Regardless of the fact that most of her school-friends visit and check on her, Ayman, her closest friend now turned sister, is the only one who encourages her not to give up, stating that she could not imagine what Nadia is going through but, she knows that, "giving up the fight was the same as letting sickle cell win" (Awaisu 2014, 35). Her friends and family proactively and passionately care for and encourage her not to give up.

Findings and conclusion

In Maryam Awaisu's *Burning Bright*, despite the fact that the ailing character, Nadia, weaves some paradoxical metaphors of identity, pain and survival, she channels the paradoxical metaphors to fortify her morale.

Distinctively, Nadia, grounded in her religious beliefs, associates the pain from the disease she experiences, with the purification of sin, believing that suffering cleanses her of wrongdoing. She implies that being healthy prevents this spiritual cleansing, suggesting a paradox: one's sins are not forgiven in times of well-being. This concept is a striking paradoxical metaphor.

Although the paradoxical metaphors appear derailing, she twists them to soothe her mental state and makes up her mind to stay grateful, hopeful, positive, and mentally healthy regardless of the ailing circumstances. This confirms the studies of Ferrara (1994) and Francis (2017), that metaphors can be used for therapeutic purposes.

Notably, Nadia's engagement with the aspect of spirituality within her existence proved advantageous and held significant therapeutic value as it enabled her to stay mentally stable giving no room to psychological comorbidities. Thus, religiotherapy could introduce novel avenues for treatment consideration.

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Challenging the logic of domination: An ecofeminist reading of Louise Gluck's selected animal poems

Sandhra Sunny and Sharmila Narayana[*]

Abstract: This paper investigates the ecofeminist themes in the poetry of contemporary American poet Louise Glück, with a particular focus on how her selected animal poems subvert anthropocentric paradigms and challenge patriarchal narratives that marginalize both nature and women. Through a close textual analysis of these poems, the research elucidates Glück's strategies for blurring the rigid boundaries that delineate humans from nature, thereby illuminating value dualisms and unjust hierarchies.Furthermore, the study highlights how Glück's poetry critiques the logic of domination and advocates for a more interconnected and reciprocal relationship between humans and the environment. It posits that poetry serves as a powerful medium for ecofeminist discourse, offering valuable insights into the revaluation of women's relationships with nature and animals. Ultimately, this research contributes to a nuanced understanding of ecofeminist thought and animal studies, while also exploring their implications for environmental ethics and activism.

Keywords: anthropocentrism, cultural ecofeminism, contemporary poetry domination, patriarchy, value dualisms

Introduction

The emergence of ecofeminism has brought to light a profound understanding of the interconnectedness between environmental degradation and the oppression of women. Ecofeminist thinking asserts that ecological concerns like deforestation, global hunger and climate change arise from the mutually reinforcing oppression of women and the natural world (Gard and Gruen 1993, 236). Women's oppression and environmental degradation are inextricably linked, requiring

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simultaneous consideration to fight systemic injustices effectively. Animal rights is an ecofeminism issue, "We oppress animals by associating them with women's lesser status" (Adams 2002, 5). The connection between the oppression of animals and the status of women in society lies in their shared relegation to instrumental roles (Plumwood 2002, 120). Both are valued primarily for their usefulness to others rather than for their intrinsic worth. This instrumental view perpetuates their subjugation in patriarchal, anthropocentric systems. Ecofeminism highlights this connection, recognising the symbolic function of animals and women as the "other" in societal discourse, and aims to build a new political consciousness that challenges this oppressive paradigm.

The selected poems in this article, through the lens of ecofeminism, throw light on how the contemporary American poet Louise Gluck subverts patriarchal narratives that contribute to the ecological degradation and marginalisation of women. The analysis centres on how the poet challenges the logic of domination (Warren 2000, 46) that permeates anthropocentric paradigms and disrupts the value dualisms that sanction it. By scrutinising Gluck's poetic techniques and thematic choices, the study aims to unravel how she reshapes the narrative landscape to amplify animal voices, particularly of those in marginalised positions, to understand their unique experiences. The poems selected for the study are *Earthworm* (2009) and *Bats* (2009).

Many of Gluck's works explore themes related to nature, rural life, and the interconnectedness between humans and the natural world. Nature serves as a source of solace and resolution for the conflicts faced by the speakers in her poems, which often mirror the struggles present in the environment. Gluck's poetry portrays a symbiotic relationship between the self and nature, forming an "eco-self" emphasising mutual dependence, balance, and coexistence with the natural world. In collections like *The Wild Iris* (1992) and *The Village Life* (2009) flowers and animals take on emotive and authoritative roles, offering guidance and survival strategies to human listeners. Through her poetry, Gluck challenges traditional narratives that marginalize women and their relationship with nature, presenting nature as a space where female narrators can resist patriarchal conventions.

Challenging the logic of domination

In her seminal work, *Ecofeminist Philosophy*, Karren J. Warren (2000, 46) argues that specific conceptual frameworks can maintain, validate and justify unjust hierarchies of dominance and subordination. They constitute a set of values, belief systems, attitudes and assumptions and are shaped by multiple factors such as gender, class, age, religion and nationality. These frameworks are "socially constructed lenses through which one perceives reality" (Warren 2000, 46). Specific conceptual frameworks can be oppressive and, if not challenged, can continue to perpetuate the exploitation of the marginalised. For Warren (Ibid, 47), an oppressive conceptual framework explains, maintains, and justifies relationships of unjustified domination and subordination. According to Warren, multiple features constitute an oppressive conceptual framework, and together they contribute to the logic of domination. The logic of domination serves as a moral justification for keeping those who are subordinate in their place, as its acceptance provides approval for perpetuating their oppression (Ibid, 46). The article scrutinises Gluck's poems to discern how the poet challenges and undermines different aspects of this conceptual framework. The framework encompasses distinctive features such as 1) Value Hierarchical, Up-Down thinking that assigns a higher value to that which is at the apex of the hierarchical order; 2) an oppositional value dualism, which is mutually exclusive and bestows a higher value on one adjunct and 3) the notion of power and privilege, which systematically advantage the disjunct at the top of the hierarchy. Cumulatively, these attributes contribute to formulating the logic of domination that subjugates individuals occupying peripheral positions.

This logic permeates various aspects of society and is often reflected in the attitudes, beliefs systems and practices that sanction domination and control over mutual respect and sustainability. This logic not only harms marginalised groups but also contributes to environmental degradation and the exploitation of the natural world. Challenging and transforming this logic is essential for creating more just, equitable, and sustainable societies. By recognising and critiquing the logic of domination, Warren and other ecofeminist thinkers aim to promote alternative ways of thinking and being that prioritise interconnectedness, empathy, and ecological integrity. They advocate for social and environmental justice movements that address the root causes of oppression and exploitation while fostering relationships of care, reciprocity, and respect among all beings. Gluck's selected

animal poems challenge this conceptual framework by reconfiguring hierarchies, value dualisms and questioning the logic that supports human domination over animals and nature.

The first poem by Gluck titled *Earthworm*, employs the persona of an earthworm to interrogate man and challenge his sovereign gaze. In doing so, the poet also questions women's position in this hierarchical order because no attempt to liberate women (or any other oppressed group) will be possible without an equal effort to liberate nature (Gard 1993, 1).The lines challenge the prevailing narrative that positions the human speaker in a dominant role over a silent, passive nature. In this framework, nature often serves merely as a backdrop for human assertion of power and control. Assigning speech to animals and nature can blur the boundaries that separate us and bring to light the commonalities between the two species. However, language and speech are human constructs and, therefore, anthropocentric and phallocentric. It favours the masculine, and women have found it difficult to express themselves authentically within the paradigm. The male-centred language reinforces a phallocentric culture structured by binary oppositions and value dualisms. However, in Gluck's poem, the earthworm is assigned the subject position and is given control of the narrative. It contemplates, communicates, and questions its human audience. Readers may find it striking that a non-human voice is probing into human psychology and confronting our perceptions of complex, socially constructed identities (Greulich 2013, 254). Gluck writes

> It is not sad not to be human
> Nor is living entirely within the earth
> Demeaning or empty. (Gluck, lines 1-3)

The above lines disrupt the hierarchy propagated by anthropocentric ideals and attempts to blur the dichotomies that strengthen man's dominion over nature. The first line of the first poem, *It is not sad not to be human* (Gluck, line 1) questions the God-like image humans have positioned themselves in. By placing the human race as the ultimate and the most important of all creations, anthropocentrism has resulted in the formation of an ego that engulfs pity and disregard for other beings. The speaker begins the narration by affirming its value. It claims that the life of an earthworm is worthy and that living entirely inside the earth is not demeaning. Deep Ecology asserts that every aspect of the ecosystem possesses value, as highlighted by one of its

six fundamental principles (Naess 123). All living organisms are deemed intrinsically valuable, irrespective of their usefulness to human purposes. The last line, "Nor is living entirely within the earth demeaning or empty" (Gluck), challenges the notion that living in harmony with nature or being deeply connected to the earth is somehow lesser or lacking.

It implies that a life lived close to nature and its ways are not barbaric or uncivilised. In the wake of industrialisation and modernisation, a life lived far from its benefits is considered to lack a certain level of progress and sophistication. This is the earthworm's reassurance to humankind that a life interconnected with nature and its forces is far from being considered lowly. These lines further challenge the dichotomy that separates humans from nature thereby creating value hierarchies. Ecofeminism challenges value hierarchical thinking by exposing the dominance and superiority men enjoy in a patriarchal society that subordinates both women and nature. Since both women and nature are inferior in the male-centred hierarchy, they have passive and dependent roles. In a male-dominated hierarchy, both women and nature are often viewed as inferior, leading to roles that are seen as passive and dependent. This attitude reinforces conventional gender roles, where women are expected to be submissive and nurturing, akin to how nature is often treated as a resource to be exploited rather than as an entity that has intrinsic value. This reflects a societal, cultural and philosophocal perspective, suggesting that both women and the natural world lack agency. Gluck writes

> And yet
> to walk on top of a thing is not to prevail over it --
> it is more the opposite, a disguised dependency,
> by which the slave completes the master. (Gluck, lines 6-9)

The above lines disrupt the hierarchy propagated by anthropocentric ideals and attempt to blur the dichotomies that strengthen man's dominion over nature. The earthworm that resides inside the earth declares that to walk on top of it does not indicate control or dominion. It represents a disguised form of interdependence wherein humans and nature rely on each other. The above lines disrupt man's mastery of nature and his sovereign status. This passage appears to critique the notion of 'oppositional value dualism' as delineated by Warren (2000, 47), identifying it as one of the facets within an oppressive conceptual framework. Forms of oppression from both the present and the past

have left their traces in Western culture as a network of dualisms, and the logical structure of dualism forms a significant basis for the connection between forms of oppression (Plumwood 2002, 5). Oppositional dualism establishes that there are two moral opposites at work, and they create disjunctive pairs that are exclusive, independent and oppositional to each other. Examples include " value dualisms that give higher status to which has historically been identified as "male", "white", "rational." and "culture" than to which has historically been identified as "female," "black," "emotional," and "nature" (Warren 2000, 46).

Similarly, Gluck mentions the dual pair of the enslaved being and the master. The master is the one who walks on top of the earth with the assumption that he has mastery over everything that is below him. This dualistic approach constructs human identity outside nature. This structure is inherent with otherness and negating what is culturally and historically deemed inferior. Gluck's earthworm corrects this by stating that to walk on top of the earth is not to triumph over it. There is a disguised dependency at play, where one completes the other. This indicates that the human race, regardless of gender, is interconnected with nature in one way, and humans are not separate from nature. Realising this interconnectedness is the first step to restructuring man's relationship with his natural environment.

The poem ends with the note that being whole is to be one with nature. Estella Lauter (1984, 177) traces a similar pattern among women writing about nature. She notes a "degree of identification with nature, without fear and without the loss of consciousness." and this pattern "occurs in the works of a surprising number of women". Gluck's poems reflect this identification and a deep connection to nature. The above verses also foreground Susan Griffin's (1978, 226) vision that "we are nature seeing nature, we are nature with a concept of nature". This level of interconnection calls for an extension of the poetic self to accommodate her natural environment. It erases the rigid distinctions between humans and nature, fostering a sense of communion and interconnectedness where the once-clear boundaries separating the animal and human realms gradually fade. This results in an emotional and psychological communion with the natural world thereby erasing value dualisms and hierarchies. Breaking this value dualism is also evident in Gluck's next poem titled *Bats*.

The speaking agent of the poem is a bat—an individual bat speaking on behalf of its species. The animal engages in acts of

interrogation, mockery, and dispensing advice pertaining to specific facets of the human condition. The poet assigns a certain level of wisdom and insight to the animal, enabling it to assume a position that is not inferior to the human race. If an animal is thought to be a sort of organic wind-up toy, people are unlikely to go far out of their way for it. But if an animal is believed to be self-aware or rational or to have a rich emotional life, different responses are likely. The bat species is also deprived of sight, and this lack becomes a sight from which a sense of pity originates towards the animal. The poet's primary agenda is to reverse this pity with a sense of admiration for the animal. The bat claims that there is a kind of vision that is not dependent on the science of optics. A way of seeing that transcends the materialistic objective world within our immediate perception. Gluck identifies the bat's ability to see beyond things with that of a philosopher. Gluck writes

> There are two kinds of vision:
> The seeing of things which belongs
> To the science of optics versus
> the seeing beyond things, which
> results from deprivation. (Gluck, lines 1-5)

The poet attains several objectives through this poem, foremost among them being a concise introduction to the physical attributes of the species. The poet retains elements of the bat's animality to draw the readers closer to the species. The readers learn that the bat is a nocturnal animal. The bat's inability to see contributes to its subordinate status among other animals, evoking pity and sympathy. Gluck successfully reverses this pity, and the bat pities the man's inability to see beyond his immediate sight. In addition, the poet attempts to blur the non-permeable boundaries between the bat and the human world. She initiates a direct conversion, unlike in reality, where agency and voice are assigned to the animal. This direct conversation helps the readers shift the focus from the species to the individual animal. Focusing on an individual animal induces one to wonder about the sentience of that animal and its singular perception of its world. This will help the readers understand the reality of the individual being rather than the entire species (Oerlemans 1994, 138), Gluck writes

> Man mocking the dark, rejecting
> Worlds you do not know: though the dark
> is full of obstacles, it is possible to have
> Intense awareness when the field is narrow

> And the signals few. Night has bred in us
> Thought more focused than yours,
> if rudimentary;
> Man the ego, man imprisoned in the eye,
> There is a path you cannot see, beyond the eye's reach.
> (Gluck, lines 6-14)

The above lines resist the anthropocentric notion of human sovereignty as the supreme being. The repetition of the word 'dark' denotes man's ignorance of a world outside his immediate perception. The bat addresses man as 'ego'. Man is egocentric, and the current ecological crisis calls for a shift from egocentrism to ecocentrism. Michael J. Stark (1988, 178) states that egocentric needs and wants arise from a deficiency in one's existence and the desperate need for continuous affirmation, "egocentricity seeks to establish and guard a sense of unique identity and importance in a way that requires continual judgment and evaluation of the self in opposition to others and the world. This calls for excessive importance to one's self and a dire need to establish a sense of superiority to prove one's worth.

Both the earthworm and the bat are subjects in the making. They interrogate and challenge the established notions concerning the human-nature relationship. In these poems, the sovereign gaze rests with the animals and the poet herself. Nature poets often challenge the sovereign human gaze by questioning and subverting the traditional anthropocentric (human-centred) perspective that dominates much of Western thought. They aim to break away from the idea that nature exists solely for human use and exploitation, emphasising a more interconnected and reciprocal relationship between humans and the natural world. In Gluck's poetry, she delves into the interplay between various species and recognises the autonomy of non-human entities. By doing so, the poet challenges the anthropocentric perspective that often relegates nature and women to mere backdrops for male activities and narratives.

Conclusion

This text demonstrated that Gluck's select poems are daring subversions of man's superiority and dominion over Earth and its inhabitants. The verses echo the voices of women and animals, conspicuously absent from the dominant discourse of mainstream culture. This deliberate orchestration by the poet makes the readers critically examine their roles and responsibilities amidst the

contemporary ecological crisis. The poems brilliantly challenge unjustified hierarchies, question value dualisms, and revise dominant patriarchal mythic patterns. Hierarchies are structurally essential to maintaining order in a functioning society; however, they are damaging when they are not made visible. If not critiqued, it will eventually justify and naturalise the dominion of one group over the other. When read through the lens of ecofeminism, the above poems open ways to critique and reassess the above concerns. This reassessment opens ways to blur the boundaries and dissolve a hierarchy that sanctions oppression. At the same time, attempts to revalue women's relationship with animals and nature. The verses display a deep level of identification and interconnectedness with nature, making nature a safe and empowered space. As a medium for expressing personal experiences and perspectives, poetry may naturally incorporate ecological considerations.

The above poems were chosen because they refuse to give in to anthropocentric representations of the animal world where animals are not treated as individuals with inherent values and rights. The verses deliberately expose the complexities that arise when one grapples with the boundaries that separate the human and the animal kingdom. For instance, the logic of domination that has ruled androgenic activities is challenged and brought to the foreground, along with the issues pertaining to value dualisms and unjustified hierarchies. Challenging this oppressive conceptual framework is essential to model knowledge and responsibilities attendant to life in the twenty-first century. In conclusion, these poems articulate the poet's ecofeminist ideologies and offer diverse avenues for shaping more informed policy decisions at both local and global levels concerning the welfare of women and the animal kingdom.

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Inheritance and transcendence: Farley Mowat's contributions to Canadian animal literature

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Abstract: As an outstanding representative of contemporary writers in Canadian animal literature, Farley Mowat has created a new form of animal story called the documentary animal novel. While inheriting the realistic writing style of Sidon and Roberts, Mowat has developed the ecological thoughts of his predecessors in three aspects. Firstly, he pioneered the use of non-fiction in the creation of animal stories. Secondly, he developed the ecological ethics thought of his predecessors. Finally, his evaluation of human beings is more objective. As a conclusion, Mowat's animal novels put the increasingly serious ecological problems on the agenda, reflecting the author's concerns about some existing ecological problems and providing a classic model for the world's ecological literature.

Keywords: Canadian animal literature, Farley Mowat, documentary novel, inheritance, transcendence

Introduction

Born in 1921, Farley Mowat is one of the most famous contemporary Canadian authors. He had traveled the plains and mountains of Canada in his early years and had a deep affection for nature. Later, his rich life experiences related to wild animals has provided him with creative materials and laid a good foundation for his realistic animal stories. Mowat was an intrepid explorer, a rigorous scientist, and a diligent writer. He has created more than 30 works, mainly describing the earth, the sea and the wild animals in the wilderness of Canada. He has expressed great concern for the relationship between man and nature.

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His animal stories were full of strong ecological consciousness and new humanitarian concern. As a result, his work has been published in hundreds of editions around the world in 52 languages. This made him one of the most widely read Canadian authors in the world.

In Farley Mowat's animal novels, *People of the Deer*, *Never Cry Wolf*, *A Whale for the Killing*, and *Sea of Slaughter* are known as the "Ecological Quartet". *People of the Deer* is about a group of Eskimo people who have lived in the northern hinterland of Canada for generations. With the continuous development of colonial trade, many merchants came to this land with advanced weapons to seek profits. Eventually, the way of life of these "deer people" was completely disrupted. By the time Mowat visited them, their number had dropped to forty from about two thousand sixty years ago. *Never Cry Wolf* is a declaration of the innocence of wolves in contrast to traditional prejudice toward them. Through his personal experience of coexisting with wolves, the author used undisputed facts to clear the sinless of the wolves. By this effort, he hoped to completely changes people's attitude towards wolves. Traditional prejudice can be called a masterpiece of animal literature. *A Whale for the Killing* records the author's entire process of rescuing a female whale trapped in a small bay, reflecting the cruelty of human beings. In the story, whale hunters are selfish, cruel and take pleasure in trampling on the dignity of whales. The whale guards headed by the author have also made unremitting efforts to save the trapped whale. Their respect for life expresses their ecological ethics of respecting life. In *Sea of Slaughter*, the Dead Sea reports on the extinction and near-extinction status of marine and terrestrial animals along the North American Atlantic coastline from Cape Cod to Labrador. Disregarding the laws of nature, human beings slaughter various wild species according to their own wishes, resulting in the sudden decline of one population after another and eventually extinction. This article will take Mowat's documentary animal stories as an example to analyze his important role in promoting Canadian animal literature.

An overview of the development of animal literature in Canada

Since ancient times, animals have lived together with human beings on the earth. Animals and humans have closely connected and played a harmonious ecological praise song together. Canada is a suitable place for all kinds of animals to live because of its vast territory and unique natural environment. That is why Canada has abundant animal

resources. Because of this, animal literature has become an important part of Canadian literature. Animal literature refers to literary works with the theme of anthropomorphic animals and their behavioral characteristics, logical thinking, living environment and way of life. The origins of Canadian animal literature can be traced back to the animal stories told orally by indigenous Canadians. These animal stories, mainly in the form of oral literature, explained the origin of the world and life, and the interdependence of humans and animals, such as coyotes, sea turtles, beavers, reindeer, etc. However, most of these early animal stories used animals as a medium to reflect real social problems or to state some universal truth, so few of them involved discussions on ecology.

By the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century, wildlife numbers declined sharply due to the endless killing by human beings. At the same time, with the continuous intensification of the colonization process, many new trends of thought appeared in society. Under such a circumstance, many experts have paid attention to animal rights and welfare. They have incorporated animals into the scope of human moral consideration and demonstrated the moral progress of human beings. In addition, some of them have realized that animals are indispensable part of the nature, so animals have the same right to live as us humans. For these reasons, a few warm-hearted writers began to write some stories to show the living conditions of animals. Thus, modern Canadian animal literature came into being. Influenced by European Romanticism and Darwin's theory of evolution, several famous animal literature writers emerged, among which Charles George Douglas Roberts and Ernest Thompson Seton are most worthy of mentioning. In his more than 40 years of creative career, Roberts has created more than 250 animal stories by using realism. During his literary creation, he has borrowed folk fables and legends about animals. Then, he has combined his meticulous observations of wild and domesticated animals. In general, Roberts' animal stories either explore the behavior and characteristics of animals from birth to death in the form of biographies, or they are plot-oriented and include human participation. In addition, Roberts was also the first Canadian writer to propose the term "animal literature". Therefore, he has been called "Father of Canadian Literature". Another animal literature writer of the same period was Seton. He loved wild animals and was familiar with the living habits of various wild animals. His representative work *Wild Animals I Know* has taken the

survival and suffering of animals as the theme and endowed the animals in the story with human characteristics. Because of this, the animal world in his stories had values and moral judgments like human society. At the same time, Darwinian logic of survival of the fittest was reflected everywhere. It can be said that the animal stories of Seton and Roberts has closely followed the mainstream of the times and carried out ecological reflection on the living conditions of animals.

In the middle of the 20th century, Canadian animal literature has entered a new stage. Influenced by animal liberation theory and eco-criticism, Canadian animal literature has presented diversified trends, including diverse genres, plots and themes. Literary works of this period mostly focused on the tragic fate of animals to highlight their plight in the current social environment. Through animal stories, some writers tried their best to call on human sympathy and moral conscience. They wrote about "the relationship between man and nature, man and animals as well as the relationship among different people in the society" (Zhao 2019, 233). Farley Mowat was a representative writer of this period. Most of his works have focused on the relationship among people, animals and nature. During his lifetime, he has created more than 30 works. These works have been published in hundreds of editions around the world and had an ever-increasing impact on human behavior and thinking. Some of his works described the living conditions of animals in a documentary way, revealed the crime of human slaughtering wild animals with indisputable facts, and pointed out that human beings should be mainly responsible for the extinction of wild animals. Besides, Mowat has used his own personal experiences as the source of his creation, which also added authenticity to his animal stories.

Besides, the statistical methods used in Mowat's works have enriched the connotation of Canadian animal literature. Compared with the well-developed animal literature, the scale and intensity of relevant academic research are somewhat disproportionate. As an outstanding representative of contemporary Canadian animal literature writers, Mowat's animal novels put the increasingly serious ecological problems on the agenda, reflecting the author's concerns about some existing ecological problems and providing a classic model for the world's ecological literature.

A brief review of the literary studies of Canadian animal literature

The previous research on contemporary Canadian animal literature is quite fragmented. The journal articles either comment on individual works of animal literature or discuss one aspect of animal issues, but there are few comprehensive discussions of Canadian animal literature in general. To date, there are two monographs on Canadian animal literature. *Animal Victims in Modern Fiction* (Scholtmeijer 1993) proposes perspectives on empathy and interspecies understanding through the study of animal figures in Canadian fiction, with animal victims as a metaphor for the complex human condition. In recent years, animal issues have acquired new meaning in the context of ecocriticism. In 2005, the Department of English at the University of Ottawa organized a seminar titled "Animals of the Country", which explored the relevance of animal roles in Canadian literature. In "Other Selves: Animals in the Canadian Literary Imagination" (Wadland 2008), Wadland had an overview of the position of animals in Canadian literature. Additionally, John Sandlos' "From within the Fur and Feather: Animals in Canadian Literature" summarizes the reception of Canadian animal stories among readers as "understanding us and living together in this existing world and creative attempts at relationships between other species" (Sandlos 2000). Throughout these research monographs and papers, they lack the overall consideration of animal ethics and environmental protection awareness in Canadian literature. As a very important writer in contemporary Canadian animal literature, Mowat seems to have received little attention from the academic community. In the previous research results, Mowat was only mentioned in a few papers. What's more, the content was only introductory. Books related to Mowat's works are mostly translation and introductory of his novels. For example, Liu Jie has translated Mowat's "ecological documentary tetralogy" into Chinese. These novels had published them by Beiyue Literature and Art Publishing House in 1998. In my opinion, it is far from enough to translate and introduce Mowat's animal novels. Since Mowat has made great innovations based on inheriting his predecessors in creating animal stories. Therefore, he deserves more attention from the academic circle.

Mowat's contributions to Canadian animal literature

As an outstanding animal storyteller, Mowat has inherited and developed the ecological thoughts of Seton and Roberts. The strong

sense of urgency to protect the wild animals inspired his creation and gave him endless inspiration. Most of Mowat's animal stories criticize the hegemonic attitude and colonial behavior of human beings, thus warning us to be kind to all creatures on earth.

Mowat pioneered the use of non-fiction in the creation of animal stories

While inheriting the realistic writing style of Sidon and Roberts, Mowat pioneered a new literary form, with the name of documentary literature. This creative method integrates the author into the story, enhancing the authenticity and interest of the story. *Never Cry Wolf* narrates the author's true experience of spending a summer with the wolf family in the grassland area in a literary documentary style. The perspective of this work is unique, and the image of the wolf reflected is also very different from what we imagined. In the book, the author shows people his discovery based on his own experiences. Different from our traditional perception of wolves, they have their own society and can coexist friendly with human beings. Although there are territorial claims in wolf society, they maintain peace in their own world by respect, humility and tolerance. Wolves are not cold-blooded creatures who don't care about their relatives. On the contrary, they are extremely emotional. In many social behaviors, wolves can also be called the role model of civilized human beings. In the story, the author has added a lot of scientific arguments to make the work more real. The publication of this book completely broke people's perception of wolves. Using numerous facts from his own experience, Mowat refuted human prejudices and accusations against wolves. Wolves are not cold-blooded killers, nor are they responsible for the dramatic decline in reindeer populations. They feed on rodents and northern pike, and occasionally kill the old and the sick. The Wolf world is full of respect, love and tolerance, and they get along well with the author and the Eskimos. Wolf can take the initiative to regulate fertility. With their faithful mates and friendly neighbors, wolves are highly emotional animals and can be regarded as human models in many ways. The traditional charge that men has placed on wolves is completely uncalled for.

Taking *A Whale for the Killing* for another example. It is also a documentary account of the tragic death of a female fin whale trapped in a cove off the western coast of Newfoundland after being tortured by a crowd of onlookers. Through the conflict between killers and

protectors, completely different attitudes towards the trapped whale were reflected during the narration. On the one hand, those whalers represent the negative aspect of human natural morality. On the other hand, the protectors lead by Mowat do everything they can to save the trapped whale, are the embodiment of human kindness. Despite the failure of the rescue effort, cetacean lovers are comforted by the efforts of the good-natured men to free the trapped whales. At the end of the novel, the rescue is thwarted and the trapped whale dies miserably. Mowat felt a pang of grief as he recalled all the efforts he had made to save the whale, and all the human suffering he had experienced in the process. The trapped whale died and left the world of pain forever. The tragic ending has left readers of conscience with endless regret. Mowat writes: "Man has made himself the last loner on this planet, destined to be alone forever on his way to silent destruction" (Mowat 1998, 160). It is a heartfelt sentiment that reflects the author's belief that the relationship between human beings, nature and animals is inextricably linked, that the destruction of animals is the isolation of human beings, and that the destruction of nature will bring about the destruction of human beings.

Mowat inherited and developed the ecological ethics thought of predecessors

Mowat inherited and developed the ecological ethics of "reverence for life" in the animal stories of Seton and Roberts. Albert Schweitzer is a contemporary thinker with extensive influence. The bioethics he founded with the core of "reverence for life" is an important ideological resource for the world peace movement and environmental protection movement. In his bioethics, Schweitzer has extended the scope of ethics to all animals and plants, and believed that not only human life, but also all living creatures and animal lives must be respected. Harmonious symbiosis with various creatures is a necessary condition for human existence. In the context of two world wars and the deteriorating global environment, Schweitzer believed that people could no longer be arrogant and arrogant from the interconnection of life. He has earned a great reputation. Schweitzer believes that extending the principle of love to animals is a revolution in ethics, which will provide a new ideological foundation for sustainable human development and world peace.

The core ecological ethics philosophy reflected in Seton's animal stories can be summarized as "equivalence of life", which is essentially

consistent with Schweitzer's thought. Schweitzer once clearly put forward the ethical view of "all things in the world are sacred" (Martin 2016). Thus, reverence for life is the core connotation of Schweitzer's philosophical thought. Seton has created many unforgettable tragic heroes in animal stories. It is hoped that through the shaping of these typical animal images, readers can feel the excellent characteristics of animals, and finally make humans treat animals with an equal attitude and live in harmony with animals on the same land. Seton uses his animal stories to show readers some brand-new animal images. Animals in his stories have love, friendship and kinship just like human beings. Therefore, their lives should be respected. In Roberts' animal stories, animals are no longer subordinate to human beings. They are the protagonists of these stories with their rich emotions and quick thinking. The excellent qualities that the animals show us are in stark contrast to the actions of the people in the story, making every reader. It can be concluded that wild animals are indeed not inferior to humans, and they also have characteristics similar to us humans. Humans should treat wild animals equally, cherish their lives, and should not arbitrarily kill wild animals for their own interests.

In Mowat's animal stories, the ecological thought of "reverence for life" is clearly expressed and the thought of respecting animal lives permeates many of his works. Schweitzer believes: "Good is to preserve life, promote life, and enable the development of life to realize its highest value. Evil is to destroy life, harm life, and suppress the development of life. This is an inevitable, universal, and absolute ethical principle" (Schweitzer 1996, 9). This view of bioethics is vividly displayed in Mowat's works. Taking *People of the Deer* as an example, the novel reveals the evil deeds of human beings in the civilized world who kill wild deer in pursuit of commercial profits. Driven by profits, humans massacred reindeer, which also changed the fate of Ihamut people and destroyed their living conditions. For this disregard of bioethics behavior, Mowat was deeply disgusted. He went around pleading to save lives. In the story, we can see Mowat's advanced ethics of life. The core idea of Mowat is to treat all life on earth equally and fairly, including the life of Ihamut and wild animals. While Seton and Roberts only described the idea of "reverence for life" in their animal stories, Mowat has put it into practice. In *Never Cry Wolf*, Mowat has recorded the wanton killing of wolves by human beings. He was saddened by this. By living with the wolves, Mowat discovered many advantages of wolves through his dealings with

wolves, such as being wise, never abandoning his companions, and so on. Through these efforts, Mowat hopes that humans will change their view of wolves, revere their lives and stop killing them. In this respect, Mowat surpassed his predecessors.

From Seton, Roberts and Mowat's iconic animal stories, we see Canadian animal literature The rich bioethical thoughts and ecological tendencies contained in it. These stories provide literary material for our understanding of Schweitzer's ethics. Since the ethics of "Reverence for Life" does not include inanimate substances, so it has its own limitations. However, the principles of equality between animals and human beings advocated by Canadian animal writers have important practical significance. From the vivid animal stories brought to readers by Canadian animal literature, we feel the excellent quality of animals and their respect for life and love. Humans who have caused the tragedy of wild animals should reflect on their actions and end the killing of wild animals.

Mowat's evaluation of human beings is more objective

Compared with Sidon and Roberts, Mowat's evaluation of human beings is more objective. In Sidon's animal stories, the evaluation of human beings is almost always negative. Human beings have racked their brains and used various means to hunt and kill wild animals, resulting in the tragedy of wild animals. Roberts is also largely negative about human behavior in his animal stories. Driven by interests, human beings make great efforts to occupy the territory of wild animals. Only in *Moonlight Trail* does the little boy show some remorse after killing the hare. In Mowat's animal stories, he has made a more fair and objective discussion of human beings. In *Never Cry Wolf*, although most humans have prejudice against wolves, there are also animal lovers and protectors. They bring hope to the future of wild animals. For example, Mowat and the Eskimos who have frequent contact with wolves actively use facts to exonerate wolves. Everything in the world has two sides. There are groups of people who are hostile to animals, and there must be groups that love animals. The kind-hearted humans headed by Mowat went everywhere to save the trapped whale. In general, Mowat's evaluation of human beings is more objective and truer. He is not only worried about the future of animals, but also deeply comforted by the contribution that animal-loving humans have made to animals. Under the influence of Mowat and others, more and more people began to pay attention to ecological

issues, environmental issues and the living conditions of animals. People have begun to realize the importance of ecological issues, and many people have made substantial contributions to the protection of animals with practical actions.

Conclusion

In his creation of animal fiction, Mowat paid attention to the survival and development of wild animals. Its ultimate purpose for literary creation is to change the inherent view of human beings on wild animals, and finally achieve ecological harmony. Mowat's efforts have been paid off. His ecological tetralogy has received widespread attention from readers around the world and has sparked many discussions on ecological issues. Nowadays, more and more people are beginning to pay attention to wild animals, and people of insight have come forward and severely denounced those evil acts that destroy nature and animals. Governments and many organizations and individuals are joining hands to protect nature and animals. among. Mowat used his own efforts to defend the rights of wild animals and lead the development trend of ecological animal literature. His works and his great contribution to ecological literature will always inspire future generations. To sum up, Human beings and all other living creatures are closely linked in a community of common destiny. Any short-term development achieved at the cost of destroying ecology will eventually pay a heavy price. Therefore, we should treat the earth as a living community and try our best to protect the ecosystem. Since ancient times, animals and human beings have lived together on the earth. Animals provide a rich nutrition and food materials to humans, accompanying humans to spend lonely years. For animals, humans should be grateful. We should cherish their lives, regard them as a fate community, and provide them a harmonious living space.

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A linguistic study of socio-cultural values in Jordanian proverbial expressions

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Abstract: Proverbial expressions have their linguistic connotations and literary and social importance as they summarize a lot of speech and statements to indicate a specific situation or to judge a situation and to clarify it in a clear manner. The just few words of the proverb would enable the person to understand and comprehend the intended meaning without the need for further speech and explanation in many times. The proverb is a summary of the repeated human experiences which are confirmed by the practices and consequences that result from it. Proverbial expressions are important in promoting the social and cultural values that contribute to controlling, promoting and directing the individual and collective behaviors in the society. The present study aims to explore a number of socio-cultural values in Jordanian spoken Arabic by investigating the proverbial expressions that are used to show them. The study showed that these values were expressed with different proverbial expressions which were formulated in different linguistic forms and which use different tools and products to confirm their social functions.

Keywords: Jordan, values, proverbs, culture and society, national folklore

Introduction

The values are one of the topics that are of interest to many disciplines such as philosophy, religion, education, economics, sociology, psychology and linguistics. Values are one of the most important pillars upon which societies and nations are built. Social values are related to morals and principles which are general and controlling standards for correcting, directing and adjusting the human behaviors. Social values are the characteristics or the qualities that are desired by the members of the society. Social values include different ones such as tolerance, courage, hospitality, generosity, loyalty, respect, honor,

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solidarity and cooperation. Social values are one of the basic components of personality, as their impact on the behaviors, attitudes and relationships of individuals with each other and with others within their own community and other ones. Thus, they provide an important framework for guiding and regulating the behaviors of individuals and groups, as they play the role of an internal monitor that observes the actions and behaviors of the individual. The values are what the individual considers important and valuable in his life, as it represents his beliefs about his abilities to have meaning for his life, and accordingly, values are considered essential concepts in all life fields such as economic, political, social, educational and religious ones. Proverbial expressions are an integral part of the Jordanian folklore, where their importance lies in strengthening social values, such as confirming social relations between neighbors by saying 'the neighbor is before the house', promoting economic values by saying for example 'keep your white piaster for your black day', and in establishing moral values such as avoiding lying by saying 'the rope of lies is short' etc. The relationship between proverbial expressions and social values in Jordanian society is so strong which makes these expressions becoming essential part of the national cultural, social and linguistic daily repertoire of individuals and groups.

Data collection and methodology

As an exploratory study, the present research will depend on the descriptive and analytical methodology in exploring the social values in the Jordanian proverbial expressions from a sociolinguistic view. The corpus of the study is elicited from different related online and printed sources. Local media 'TV and radio programs' in addition to the personal observation of the researcher as a native member of the targeted society were another valuable source for the required data. For the limited scale of the present study, the five social-cultural values 'companionship, cooperation, family bonding, caution, and activity' will be covered with three proverbial expressions for each one of them as a representative sample. The data were investigated thoroughly in order to explore their linguistic structure and social functions.

Review of related literature

Language is essential and important part of culture and that the impact of culture upon language is intrinsic, and because language is an indispensable carrier of culture, the culture finds a better representation

through language use (Chen & Ao 2015, 36). Language is an honest repertoire that preserves the language's continuity from one generation to another (Hazaymeh 2022, 89). Cultural values play a significant role in society as they determine what actions are best to do (Ibrahim & Usman 2021, 364). According to Ebrahimi (2020, 1) 'language is formed in the context of culture; on the other hand, the culture of a society is reflected in the language's mirror. Language has a cultural backbone as a communication tool. This cultural backing is in fact the basis for the emergence of vocabulary and its conceptual boundaries, as well as the decisive factor in the image and image reflected in the words and proverbs.' As stated by (Dawaghreh & Tengku-Sepora 2020, 281; Al-Azzam 2018, 56) proverbs are considered as the mirror of a culture as they encompass many ethical values, traditions, and conventions and they occupy a significant element in people's social life as they are semantically pithy, and holding metaphor, and direct and indirect informative content through which people express their long experience through resort to proverbs. Jordanian society, like other societies, is characterized by the presence of different types of proverbs which people use in their daily social interaction in spoken dialogues (Hazaymeh 2023, 77; Hazaymeh 2021, 76). Stephenson (2008, 129) defined cultural values as those ones which are shared by a group or community, or are given legitimacy through a socially accepted way of assigning value.

Discussion and analysis

The following section will discuss and analyze the five socio-cultural values of companionship, cooperation, family bonding, caution, and activity in a number of Jordanian proverbial expressions.

Companionship

Companionship is a good and bad social relationship that a person establishes with others. Companionship is important element in life particularly the strong and honest companionship because it is one of the most important reasons for success in society. The following is a number of proverbial expressions about companionship in Jordanian society.

الرفيق قبل الطريق

Alrafeeq qabil altareeq

The companion before the road

Linguistically, this proverbial expression is a nominal and an assonance phrase that begins with a singular definite noun. It consists of three words. From a socio-cultural view, companionship is a valuable value that people admire and respect because sometimes the honest and loyal companion is closer than the biological sibling as the Arabic standard proverb says *رب أخ لك لم تلده أمك rubba akhin laka lam talidhu ummuk* a best brother 'i.e., companion' that might not be begotten by your mother. The proverbial expression Alrafeeq qabil altareeq affirms the importance of choosing a loyal and good companion before starting commuting or doing something.

جنة من غير ناس ما بتنداس

Jannih min ghear nas ma ibtindas

A heaven without people cannot be dwelled

From a linguistic point of view, this expression a nominal phrase that begins with a singular indefinite noun and consists of six words where the two words *nas* and *ibtindas* are assonance. Religiously, it is not accepted because the expression is blasphemy because it contradicts with the Quranic and hadith texts that show the great bliss of paradise as an abode of eternal joy and happiness. From a socio-cultural perception, the expression is a metaphor for the importance of the presence of people in life, as although it is paradise, but without people it has no value. This phrase expresses the value of companionship, affection and interdependence between individuals and indicates that the value of life and the importance of living in it, is in the presence of individuals because the human being is a social being by nature.

الصاحب ساحب

Alsahib sahib

The companion withdraws

This short nominal assonance phrase which is made of two words where the first word is a singular definite noun strongly confirms the importance of the companion and his impact on his friends. This expression shows that the good companion affects his companions positively, whereas the bad one affects them negatively.

Cooperation

Cooperation is one of the good and desired socio-cultural values that religion and society encourage. Consequently, this value has been expressed through a number of proverbial expressions in Jordanian Arabic as shown in the following examples.

الناس لبعضها

Alnas laba'idhh

People are for each other

This two-word nominal expression begins with a plural definite noun and has a deep socio-cultural meaning as it enhances the principles of cooperation and solidarity between people in life particularly in hard moments and situations.

إيد لحالها ما بتصرفقش

Iid lahalha ma bitsafqish

A lone hand does not clap

Linguistically, the expression is made of four words and begins with a singular indefinite noun. The literal meaning of this proverb is that one hand cannot clap, but if both hands are united together, they can clap easily. Figuratively, it uses the body part 'the hand' and the movement 'clapping' in order to express its socio-cultural connotation of the importance of cooperation between people.

من قدم السبت لاقى الحد قدامه ومن خدم الناس لاقى الناس خدامه

Man qaddam alsabit laqa alhad quddamuh wman khadam alnas hsqa alnas khuddamuh

Whoever forwards Saturday will meet Sunday in front of him, and whoever serves the people, the people will be his servants

This long proverbial expression is a relative clause which consists of thirteen words and it begins with a relative article that matches between two parts where the first one uses the two days 'Saturday' and 'Sunday', whereas the second part includes the word 'people' and 'serve' where these words are used to express the value of cooperation. One a person forwards something to others, he will get the result of it which is expressed in the proverb with the two days Saturday and Sunday. The second part of the expression express the value of cooperation through matching the words people and serve because when a person serves others, he will find someone who will serve him when he needs something.

Family Bonding

The value of family bonding is one of the important socio-cultural values in the Jordanian society that reflects the manifestations of cohesion, affection, compassion, solidarity, tolerance, altruism, guidance, assistance, protection and cooperation that unite the members of the family or the clan.

أنا وأخوي على ابن عمي وأنا وابن عمي على الغريب

Ana wiakhui a'ala ibn a'ammi wana wibin a'ammi a'ala alghareeb

My brother and I are against my cousin and my cousin and I are against the stranger

The proverb is a nominal phrase that consists of thirteen words starting with the singular subject pronoun 'ana i.e., I'. It uses the kinship terms 'brother' and 'cousin which here refers to the paternal uncle and his son' to express the value of family bonding. The proverb reflects the strong family bonding and the deep solidarity between the close relatives of the one family or tribe. The proverb shows the willingness of the person to stand with his brother against his paternal uncle's son in all circumstances and that this person is ready to support his paternal uncle's son against the stranger even if he his from the same tribe but not a close relative.

الظفر ما بطلع من اللحم

Aldhifir ma bitlaa' min allahim

The nail does not come out of the flesh

Linguistically, the proverb is a nominal sentence which is made of five words and begins with a singular definite noun. It uses the body parts 'the nail' and 'the flesh' in order to confirm the socio-cultural value of family bonding. The proverb shows that no matter how much animosity, differences, misunderstanding or disagreement arise between the members of the same family, they would not abandon each other.

الدم ما بصير مي

Aldam ma biseer mai

Blood does not become water 'blood is thicker than water'

This nominal proverbial sentence consists of four words starting with a singular definite noun. It uses two liquids 'the blood' and 'the water' to show the socio-cultural value of family bonding. The proverb shows that blood which is a metaphorical symbol of family bonding and solidarity cannot be water which means that blood is very valuable than anything else even water which necessary for living.

Caution

Caution and attention in relations with others are very important socio-cultural values which are embodied in a number of Jordanian proverbial expressions as the following example show.

الباب اللي بيجيك منه ريح سده واستريح

Albab illi bijeek minnuh reeh sidduh wistareeh

The door from which the wind comes to you, close it and rest

The expression is a nominal proverbial sentence consists of eight words begins with a singular definite noun. It uses the man-made tool 'the door' and the natural phenomenon 'the wind' to express the importance of the socio-cultural value of caution in relation with people. This proverb indicates that a person must be careful of things that open the door of confrontation, problems, negative changes, and disputes for him, so that the door from which the winds come that cause problems, a person must close it. By wind, he means the undesirable things that cause harm to a person, so he must keep them out of his way and continue his life forward with caution and attention.

ابعد عن الشر وغنيله

Ibi'd a'an alshar wi ghaniluh

Stay a way of the evil and sing for it

Linguistically, this proverbial expression is imperative sentence that is made of five words. The proverb is a clear call and warning for caution and attention in having relations with other especially those who may cause problems. It is also a caution to avoid confrontation with a notorious person or organization, etc. if such person or organization would bother the person who may have contact with them. Avoiding evil is a bless and happiness for people. So, the person would sing to evil because it is far away, not bothering him because if the evil is there bothering him, he wouldn't be inclined to sing to it as singing is something typically performed when the person is in good mood.

امشي جنب الحيط وقول يا رب السترة

Imshi janb alheat wi qool ya rab alsutrah

Walk beside the wall, and say, Oh Lord, protect me

The proverb is an imperative phrase consists of eight words. It shows the socio-cultural value of caution and avoiding problems. Walking beside the wall would protect from dangers, so it is used in this proverb as a metaphorical symbol of preserving which is accompanied by supplication to the lord for protection.

Activity

Being active and productive is a good norm and a highly appreciated socio-cultural value that people admire and respect because the person should be active in achieving his livelihood to take care of himself and his family. This value of activity is expressed in various Jordanian proverbial expressions as the following examples show.

بجيب اللقمة من ثم الطير

Bijeeb alluqma min thum altear

He takes the morsel from the bird's mouth

The proverb is a simple present sentence that is made of five words. It is used to describe the person who is active in earning his livelihood. Although the bird is high and difficult to be hunt, but the skillful and active person can hunt it. Hence, this proverb used the bird to denote the skill, activity and ability of the person to obtain his needs and livelihood, even if it is far from him.

الحركة بركة

Alharakah barakah

Movement is a blessing

This is a two-word nominal proverbial expression that begins with a singular definite noun. It enhances the socio-cultural value of activity by showing that movement to seek livelihood is a blessing.

ربنا قال إسعى يا عبدي وأنا بسعى معاك

Rabna qal isa'a ya a'abdi wi ana basa'a maa'ak

Our Lord said, strive, Oh my servant, and I will strive with you

The proverb is a nominal expression consists of nine words and begins with a singular indefinite noun. The proverb promotes the socio-cultural value of activity and seeking livelihood by showing that God will be and support the one who strives seeking for his livelihood.

Conclusion

For many peoples and nations, the intangible cultural heritage is a rich source that is passed on by societies from one generation to generation as it reflects their social, cultural, linguistic and religious specificities and the level of their interaction with the surrounding environment, people and events. Jordanian proverbial expressions are one of the most important pillars of the Jordanian folklore because they express the various experiences of the society, its culture, ways of living, and the various values and morals that govern the relationship of people with each other. The types of experiences that are taken from life on which the popular proverb is often based have an impact on the behavior of people, depending on the fact that the proverb is the result of previous experience of past generations. Proverbial expressions did not emerge randomly in the society, but rather they play a fundamental role in its cultural life, and contribute to revealing many important aspects in the socio-cultural values of a people or a society. The Jordanian proverbial expressions have their own distinct linguistic form, although their source is the same as the sources of the proverbs

of the Arab nation. But when looking at the texts of these proverbs, it is noted that some of them are directly related to the Arabic standard linguistic heritage in terms of meaning, image and word, with some slight linguistic distortion where the Jordanian colloquial dialect appears in it. The Jordanian proverbial expressions are connected with different socio-cultural values which have prominent role in promoting, directing and shaping the individual and collective behavior in the society. The present study aimed to target the proverbial expressions which are used in the Jordanian society to express a number of its socio-cultural values. It hopes to shed a glimpse of light at this socio-cultural and linguistic aspect in Jordanian Arabic with the hope too to open the door for similar related studies.

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American literature: What to teach?

Gassim H. Dohal[*]

Abstract: When the opportunity arises to teach American literature, and whoever sets the curriculum has the opportunity to choose the course content, s/he will discover that there are many challenges. Among these challenges are what should be included in this course, and which poems, plays, stories or novels to be taught. There are a lot of literary works, but time, the level of the students, and the goals of the intended curriculum may affect all of this process. In this short article, I will present some suggestions that should be taken into consideration, and to provide an overview of the worth of American literature, I will also highlight a few of the numerous works from which a thorough, varied, and representative course can be assembled.

Keywords: canon, American, college, literature, minority

Introduction

American literature ought to feature a wide range of diverse literary authors from various backgrounds. It's time to fully integrate "minorities" writers into the canon and expand curricula. The renowned masterworks in the field should be integrated with works by women, people of color, and other minorities. Students will learn about humanity, other people's lives and feelings, and patterns of human existence outside of the classroom through literature. Since the emphasis was on the writings of white men, students are expected to learn about various historical eras as represented by a range of writers rather than by a particular genre. This essay will deal with this conundrum.

Any anthology meant to introduce students to literature should avoid placing undue emphasis on any one author, genre, theme, or race in favor of presenting a variety of literary works across the genres of fiction, poetry, and drama. Different cultures should be understood and appreciated in the modern world, especially in light of the development

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of Internet technology, which has made the entire world a small village. I'll talk about what literature college students should read and how to introduce them to it in this essay.

Discussion

American literature: what is it? What should college instructors attempt to teach their introductory literature course students? Are there specific standards for what gets introduced? Will students independently research their culture if they aren't given the opportunity to do so in introductory literature courses? What about the literature of minorities? Do their races need to be represented? Do educators have an obligation to consider the needs of their students? And how can introductory courses at the university be made more engaging for students? There are a ton of questions that need to be answered. I will attempt to address these queries in the pages that follow.

In fact, the term "literary canon" designates authors and works that are deemed "major," typically by a specific group within a society. Hence, the values and interests of the strong dominant class are reflected in the canon of American literature. Therefore, Harte (1997, 94) asserts that, due to what he refers to as "great books", "we were constructed as passive students who imbibed literature unquestionably".

It is a grave error to restrict the definition of "American Literature" to the writings of white American men. Lauter (1994, 81), the *Heath Anthology of American Literature*'s general editor, points out that "the New World community [is] multi-racial and multi-cultural". Furthermore, American literature does not only refer to works that are written in the country. For her part, Greene (1997, 113) contends that "American literature is not bound by the borders of the United States" where readers explore "race, ethnicity, class, and gender".

However, we must acknowledge that every tradition has political and historical underpinnings. Gates, Jr. (1990, 107) refers to "the hegemony of the Western tradition" that indeed does sustain the prevalent social order and excludes a larger part that belongs to the tradition for social, political, and ideological reasons (Dohal, 2021).

Studies by women and minorities like African Americans are not included in the traditional canon. Some writers edit anthologies that contain in an effort to redefine the canon as "the commonplace book of our shared culture" (Gates, Jr. 1990, 92). However, any anthology

intended to introduce students to literature should avoid placing undue emphasis on any one author, genre, theme, or race in favor of presenting a variety of literary works through the provision of different genres (dramas, fiction, and poetry). The anthologies have recently included works by Native Americans, Asian Americans, African Americans, and women. College students nowadays need to be aware of and able to comprehend various cultures, such as the ones that were just mentioned. Students will learn about other cultures with diverse values in our world and may encounter them in the future by recognizing those cultures.

Study questions, however, typically follow each anthologized work. The purpose of these questions is to support students as they examine literary works. They fulfill assignments for both in-class and out-of-class use. Nonetheless, educators ought to allow pupils to ask questions. By posing questions, you kept them responsible and engaged in the learning process. Teachers might also have to put together a packet in addition to the assigned anthology.

English-language translations are valuable, in my opinion. Students will be able to learn about and comprehend various cultures in general as well as the heritage of their immigrant ancestors in particular through these works. Additionally, students may read works by literary non-American authors who wrote about America in an introductory course. Students will have the opportunity to see how other people view their culture and values through such an assignment. Minority authors may, in fact, bring up conflicts and cultural differences in their works. Additionally, the conflicts and differences found in those writings ought to be introduced to college students. Graff (1992, 44) argues that “the dispute itself becomes part of what educated persons should know”. Indeed, Graff makes the case for teaching conflicts to students in his book Beyond the Culture Wars. Given that a lot of today's issues stem from moral, religious, and ethical convictions, discussing these issues and conflicts in the classroom may be appropriate.

But now is the moment to completely broaden curricula and give minority writers—especially those from the US—their due in the canon. The renowned masterworks in the field should be integrated with works by women, people of color, and other minorities “so that the common intellectual culture of America includes representation from all its constituent people” (Ryan 1997, 173). It is imperative that

we exhibit fairness by granting minority groups the freedom to express themselves, practice equality, and have their voices heard.

Whatever form history takes, it ought to be taught. Gates (1990, 106) contends "You can't opt out of history. History may be a nightmare".

Teachers should also keep the word "introductory" in front of them when creating curricula and instructing students. Additionally, a syllabus ought to feature a wide range of writers with distinct voices and styles. Students will examine other works by the same author independently, using one piece as a model from which to construct their own readings.

A comprehensive introduction to literature should address every genre. There could be four sections to the works to be introduced: 1. Fiction (short stories); 2. Poetry; 3. Drama (primarily short plays); 4. General Section (short essays, theoretical approaches, and some parts of autobiographies if possible). Since the course is an introduction to literature, it will concentrate on short works in both the drama and fiction sections. Students will be able to independently analyze and discuss long works if they comprehend short works and can apply theories to them.

An introduction to literary theory with examples should be given in order to assist students in examining and debating the texts of an introductory literature course from various, theoretical, and critical perspectives. Students will benefit from having sample essays to help them understand the format, organization, focus, and other elements of a critical essay. These essays will help students organize and generate their writing tasks. It is true that students will be better writers in the future, regardless of the subject, the more skillfully they learn to write about literature during their literature classes.

It's difficult to separate theories from literature these days. As Graff (1992, 250) contends that "any teacher of literature is unavoidably a literary theorist". Allowing them to ask questions and making an effort to respond to them will pique their interest in reading the material and encourage both critical and creative thought. Even though the text has been selected and assigned, the class discussion and ideas should center on the concerns brought up by the students.

Last but not least, introductory literature courses ought to be created to provide substitutes for the conventional approaches to teaching college literature. The author's gender, multiple cultures, modern theories, and thematic categories that speak to the needs of the students

inform these alternatives (Dohal 2022). They will be able to establish an educational environment by utilizing a variety of strategies and tactics, including question-and-discussion formats, presentations, group discussions, and cooperative learning assignments. Discussions and group projects should be promoted since students can benefit from one another's knowledge.

A sample of literary works

Fiction

a) Basic terms: character, structure, theme, tone, setting, style, etc.

b)

Margaret Atwood (Canadian). *Rape Fantasies*
Robert Olen Butler. *Snow*
Willa Cather. *Paul's Case*
Kate Chopin. *The Story of an Hour*
Sandra Cisneros. *The House on Mango Street*
Stephen Crane. *The Blue Hotel*
William Faulkner. *Burn Burning*
Charlotte P. Gilman. *The Yellow Wallpaper*
Ernest Hemingway. *Soldier's Home*
Zora Hurston. *Sweat*
Shirley Jackson. *The Lottery*
Sarah Orne Jewett. *A White Heron*
Tim O'Brien. *The Things They Carried*
Akhil Sharma. *If you Sing Like That for Me*
Amy Tan (Chinese American). *Two Kinds*
Michel Tremblay (French-Canadian). *The Thimble*
Alice Walker. *Everyday Use*
Hisaye Yamamoto. *Seventeen Syllables*

Poems

a) Basic terms: imagery, symbolism, figures of speech, myth, and other relevant topics

b)

Maya Angelou. *Africa*
Imamu A. Baraka. *Ka'Ba*
Earle Birney (Canadian). *Canadian Literature*
Elizabeth Bishop. *The Fish*
Anne Bradstreet. *To My Dear and Loving Husband*
Gwendolyn Brooks. *We Real Cool*

Emily Dickinson. *I'm Nobody! Who Are You?*
Nikki Giovanni. *Nikki-Rosa*
Linda Hogan. *Song for My Name*
Langston Hughes. *Theme for English B*
Li-Young Lee (Chinese). *A Final Thing*
Amy Lowell. *Patterns*
Claude McKay (Harlem). *The White City*
Peter Meinke. *The ABC of Aerobics*
Mary Oliver. *The Black Snake*
Linda Pastan. *Ethics*
Octavio Paz (Mexican). *The Street*
Sylvia Plath. *Daddy*
Muriel Rukeyser. *Myth*
Sonia Sanchez. *Right on: White America*
Wallace Stevens. *Disillusionment of Ten O'Clock*
Jean Toomer. *Reapers*
Judith Viorst. *True Love*
Phyllis Webb (Canadian). *Poetics against the Angel of Death*
Walt Whitman. *Facing West From California's Shores*
Williams Carlos Williams. *The Dance*

Plays
a) Basic terms: comedy, tragedy, structure of plays, and other related dramatic concepts
b)
Maria Irene Fornes. *The Conduct of Life*
Susan Glaspell. *Trifles*
Beth Henley. *Am I Blue*
Petty Keller. *Tea Party*
Langston Hughes. *Mulatto*
LeRoi Jones. *Dutchman*
Jane Martin. *Rodeo*
Arthur Miller. *Death of a Salesman*
Eugene O'Neill. *Before Breakfast*
Anna D. Smith. *From Twilight: Los Anglos, 1992*
Luis Valdez. *Los Vendidos*

Conclusion

After this quick overview of some important elements related to the presentation of American literature, the reader can understand the

workload undertaken by the teacher who takes care of teaching such a course. The teacher can also take into account what has been mentioned here, and discover what s/he should do. In addition, the presentation of some literary works in this paper will make the reader and teacher aware of what this introduction may contain and its importance in a literature of the value of American literature.

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Whispers and words: A sociolinguistic investigation of taboos and euphemisms in Algerian young women's speech within Batna community

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Abstract: This study probes deep into the linguistic taboos and euphemisms in the speech of young women within Batna community and looks at how they relate to the sociocultural elements that influence language usage. Employing a qualitative approach, the study involves 45 female English-major students from the University of Batna 2, selected through purposive sampling. Data collection methods include systematic observations, semi-structured interviews, and focus group discussions. The results reveal that taboo categories include sexuality, unclean places, metaphysical entities, admiration expressions, fatal diseases, and context-dependent animal names. They also demonstrate that the participants tend to avoid the direct usage of these taboos, opting instead for euphemistic substitutions. These substitutions encompass a variety of linguistic strategies, including religious terms, jargon, Modern Standard Arabic expressions, non-offensive conventional phrases, loanwords, metaphors, and softeners. The study underscores the role of religious and sociocultural factors in determining taboos and highlights gender disparities in their usage, with societal norms making taboos more socially acceptable for men than women. This research contributes to sociolinguistics by shedding light on language dynamics within a specific cultural context and elucidating the intricate relationship between language, culture, and gender.

Keywords: linguistic taboos, euphemism, gendered language use, sociocultural factors, Batna speech community

Introduction

Language serves as a crucial element in shaping social interactions, reflecting not only individual preferences but also societal norms and values. Differences in language usage between males and females have garnered significant attention, with women often displaying a

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preference for more polite forms of speech, and men using more taboo words. These distinctions are deeply rooted in societal norms that dictate behavioral expectations based on gender. Despite the wealth of gender studies focusing on linguistic differences in various sociolinguistic parameters, such as age, education, and socio-cultural background, relatively little attention has been given to the exploration of gender disparities in the utilization of linguistic taboos. The primary focus of our study is to delve into the linguistic taboos and euphemisms used by female speakers within Batna community, shedding light on the cultural norms, beliefs, and values that underpin linguistic practices in this context.

Literature review

Linguistic and sociocultural profile of Batna City

Drawing on Labov's (1966) seminal study of the Lower East Side of New York City as a speech community despite its linguistic diversity, Patrick (2002, 577) contends that the concept of a speech community is a "socially-based unit of analysis." This viewpoint emphasizes the significance of social characteristics and collective behaviors within a group to elucidate language practices. Similarly, Batna can be conceptualized as a single speech community characterized by shared social norms and meanings that influence its language usage.

Batna is the main city and commune within Batna Province, Algeria. With a population recorded at 290,645 according to 2008 census, it stands as the fifth largest city in Algeria. Additionally, it holds significant importance as one of the principal urban centers in the Chaoui region and is widely regarded as the capital of Aurès. Notably, the inhabitants of Batna comprise both Arabic-speaking individuals and Berbers. All of them are Muslims.

It is worth noting that the culture of Batna reflects a mosaic of influences due to the successive arrivals of various civilizations. This includes the Romans, Islamic Empire, and the French colonization which left a lasting imprint on Algerian culture. Furthermore, the national language of Batna and all the cities of Algeria is Modern Standard Arabic which is used in formal prestigious situations including education, press and administration. Algerian Arabic or *Darija* is employed as a code in informal settings such as family conversations, markets, streets, etc.

Linguistic taboos and euphemisms defined

Linguistic taboos, as defined by Allan (2019), refer to words or expressions that can cause offense due to their reference to socially sensitive subjects. Gobert (2014) emphasizes that taboos are culturally specific. This signifies that what is considered taboo varies across different cultures. Additionally, taboos change over time. This means that what is deemed taboo in one era may not be taboo in another due to societal changes. Thus, taboos can differ both across cultures and over time. To navigate around explicit taboo language, people use euphemisms. These are the linguistic strategies used to avoid the explicit use of taboo language (Al-Azzam et al. 2017). In simpler terms, euphemism is the use of a word or phrase to sidestep saying another word or phrase that is unpleasant or offensive.

Sociolinguistic perspectives on taboos and euphemisms

Taboos and euphemisms are fundamental aspects of language use that echo the social norms, values, and cultural sensitivities of a certain community (Allan and Burridge 2006). Sociolinguistic studies have extensively examined their role in various linguistic contexts, elucidating their intricate interplay with social structures, power dynamics, and identity construction (Jay 1992). A longstanding inquiry remains: How does a linguistic community assert its authority in determining lists of acceptable words, and what cues guide the formation of these lexical boundaries? One prominent perspective within sociolinguistics is the social constructionist approach, which posits that taboos and euphemisms are not inherent in language but are rather socially constructed through interactions and negotiations within a community (Allan and Burridge 2006). According to this view, language users actively participate in the creation and perpetuation of taboo words and euphemistic expressions, reflecting and reinforcing cultural norms and ideologies (Jay 1992).

In the context of Algerian young women's speech within Batna community, sociolinguistic investigations into taboos and euphemisms are particularly relevant due to the intersection of linguistic, cultural, and gender dynamics. Hence, examining how taboos and euphemisms manifest in their speech can provide valuable insights into the intricate relationship between language, culture, and gender in this specific context. Adopting a sociolinguistic perspective, this study attempts to explore the role of taboos and euphemisms in shaping the linguistic practices of Algerian young women within this community. By

conducting qualitative analysis on naturalistic data obtained through observations, focus group discussions and in-depth interviews, this research seeks to elucidate the social functions and implications of taboo words and euphemistic expressions in this specific context.

Previous research on linguistic taboos and euphemisms in Algeria

Sebkhaoui and Yekhtar (2023) delve into the attitudes of Tiaret speakers towards taboo language and euphemisms and attempt to investigate the reasons of why these words are considered taboos by the people of this speech community. The study relied on questionnaires and interviews. The results show that insulting religion and discussing sexuality as the most contentious topics. Moreover, it was found that both taboos and euphemisms exhibit variation across individuals based on age, gender, and contextual factors.

Ghonane (2014) explores the utilization of politeness strategies to navigate around sensitive taboo topics and expressions, particularly within Tlemcen speech community. This study delves deeply into the role of these strategies in this context, focusing on how speakers employ polite forms to demonstrate respect, make requests, and avoid potentially face-threatening situations when discussing taboo themes. A questionnaire and an interview were opted for to gather data. The findings highlight the significant role of politeness in Tlemcen culture, with speakers employing these strategies both within familial settings and broader societal interactions to demonstrate respect and preserve interpersonal harmony. Additionally, the results indicate that Tlemcen speakers utilize polite forms as a means of euphemizing discussions related to sexual matters, which are considered particularly taboo within Tlemcen community.

Intersectionality: gender, culture, and language

The use of gendered language is deeply interlinked with societal norms, reflecting expectations surrounding gender roles and power dynamics (Cameron 1992; Eckert and McConnell-Ginet 2013). Sociolinguistic investigations have displayed that linguistic differences between genders are not merely linguistic but are deeply rooted in social and cultural norms (Tannen 1990). In the Algerian society, gendered language patterns are obviously shaped by cultural traditions, religious beliefs, and historical legacies. Yet, gendered linguistic practices are not static but are subject to negotiation within social interactions (Eckert 1990). In Batna speech community, young women

navigate complex linguistic terrain, negotiating between traditional norms and modern influences. Their language use is certainly influenced by factors such as education, media exposure, and social mobility (Holmes 2006).

Understanding the interplay between gendered language use and the utilization of taboos and euphemisms by Algerian young women in Batna is essential. Societal norms may dictate which topics are deemed taboos or sensitive for women to discuss openly, thereby influencing the use of euphemisms and indirect language strategies (Cameron 1992). Hence, investigating the relationship between gendered language use and the use of taboos and euphemisms provides invaluable insights into the intersectionality of language, gender, and culture in Batna community. This research endeavors to explore how societal norms shape linguistic practices among Algerian young women, particularly concerning verbal taboos and euphemistic expressions, shedding light on the intricate dynamics of language and gender in this context. In doing so, it seeks to answer the following questions:

1. Which words or expressions are deemed taboos in the speech of young female speakers within Batna community?
2. What are the prevalent euphemistic strategies opted for by the young female speakers of Batna community to navigate around taboos?
3. What cultural norms and values influence the use of taboo language and euphemisms according to the young female speakers of Batna community?
4. How do linguistic taboos and euphemisms reflect and perpetuate gender disparities within Batna speech community?

Theoretical framework: sociolinguistic theory

Sociolinguistics, as a multifaceted field of study, examines the intricate relationship between language and society. It focuses on how language use shapes and is shaped by social structures, cultural norms, and individual identities (Wardhaugh 2010). In the context of our present research, it is important to understand the key concepts and definitions within sociolinguistic theory. Firstly, language variation and change constitute fundamental aspects of sociolinguistic inquiry. Research in this field has unveiled the dynamic nature of language, showcasing variations across lexical, morphological, syntactic, and phonological levels (Labov 2006). These variations are influenced by several social

factors such as gender, age, ethnicity, socio-economic status, and geographical location, illustrating the complex interplay between language and social context. Secondly, a central notion in sociolinguistics is the speech community. It is a group of individuals who share a common language variety and regularly interact with one another (Hymes 1974). Speech communities may be delineated by geographical, social, or cultural boundaries, and they play a significant role in shaping linguistic norms and practices within specific contexts. Understanding these key notions within the framework of sociolinguistic theory provides valuable insights into how verbal taboos and euphemisms are utilized by Algerian young women in Batna community.

Methodology

Research design

Investigating the linguistic taboos and euphemisms among Algerian young women in Batna speech community, the present study opted for a qualitative approach as it allows for a deeper reflection of the language use complexities within this cultural context.

Participants and sampling

The research participants consist of 45 female English-major students at different academic levels from the University of Batna 2 (Algeria), ranging from second-year undergraduates to first and second-year Master students. All of them are residents of Batna city and fall within the age range of 20 to 40 years old. Thirty-nine (39) participants are single and six are married. Thirty ones are unemployed, two are university teachers of political sciences, six are English as a foreign language secondary-school teachers, five are English as a foreign language middle-school teachers, one is a dentist, and one is a bookstore owner. Sampling was conducted purposively to ensure diversity in age, academic level, and linguistic proficiency among the participants, thus enriching the depth and breadth of insights gathered. All the participants are current and previous students of the researcher. This rapport helped her access data smoothly considering the sensitive nature of the taboos.

Data collection methods and procedures

To capture the nuances of verbal taboos and euphemisms by the targeted participants, the researcher employed a variety of data gathering tools. These include systematic observations of naturalistic

language interactions, semi-structured interviews, and focus group discussions. This mixed-methods approach allowed for a comprehensive exploration of the issue under investigation.

Once obtaining informed consent of the participants and ensuring confidentiality and anonymity, we engaged in in systematic observations of the linguistic interactions of the recruited participants. Observations took place in informal social gatherings where naturalistic language use occurs and lasted for three months (October-December 2023). The researcher took the role of a passive observer, taking notes of contextual information and participant interactions. To complement field observations, semi-structured interviews were conducted to gain more in-depth qualitative data on linguistic taboos and euphemisms. Before conducting interviews, a detailed protocol was developed, comprising a series of open-ended questions designed to explore participants' attitudes, beliefs, and experiences related to the linguistic phenomenon in focus. The interview protocol was flexible enough to accommodate spontaneous discussions and allow participants to elaborate on their responses.

After conducting interviews with 15 randomly selected participants of the research sample, the researcher divided all the participants into groups of nine members and proceeded with one-hour focus group discussions that aimed at facilitating the collective exploration and validation of the emerging themes from the interviews. This provided a robust framework for data triangulation and interpretation.

Data analysis techniques

The analysis of gathered data followed a systematic process, incorporating both deductive and inductive approaches. Initially, audio recordings of naturalistic language interactions were transcribed verbatim. Thematic analysis was then utilized to identify recurring patterns and themes related to linguistic taboos and euphemisms. Concurrently, qualitative data from interviews and focus group discussions were coded and categorized using NVivo 14 software to identity the key themes and emergent insights.

Analysis and discussion

Types of linguistic taboos identified

Analysis of data obtained from the observation shows that verbal taboos can be divided into two broad categories: General taboos and context-dependent ones. The former refers to the words/phrases that

are tabooed whenever uttered and the latter includes those that are tabooed in specific contexts only. The first category is further divided into two subcategories: Unmentionable words/phrases and mentionable words/phrases with softeners.

Unmentionable words/phrases

Words related to sex constitute the initial subset of taboo words identified in the interactions of the present study's participants. They have been detected through their correspondent euphemistic expressions as these taboo words can never be mentioned in the daily interactions of females within Batna community. These encompass the names of sex organs, virginity, menses, menopause, homosexuality, intercourse, as well as the words related to it such as erection and ejaculation.

It is worth mentioning that the most prevalent linguistic taboos in Muslim cultures revolve around the female body and its transformations. This is due to girls growing up in environments where sexual discrimination is largely sanctioned by society. As a result, there are three primary taboo subjects related to sex in the lives of Algerian females: virginity, menstruation, and menopause.

When it comes to virginity, it is important to recognize that it holds significant value as a symbol of honor for both girls and their families. Therefore, it is profoundly sacred in the Algerian society and especially the Chaoui region. Girls are constantly reminded of the importance of virginity from a young age, instilling a fear of losing it which can result in psychological traumas affecting their lives deeply. Similarly, menstruation is another sensitive topic. Within Islamic teachings, it is considered a taboo due to the perception of females as impure during this time. Consequently, they are restricted from prayer, fasting, reading Quran, and intercourse as menstrual blood is deemed *najis* (in English: dirty).

In addition to virginity and menstruation, menopause is also unmentionable in the daily interactions of females within Batna community. It is avoided in order not to hurt women's feelings as it is viewed as synonymous with old age, failure, and the beginning of decline. Some women do not mention the word even in front of their husbands out of fear of being replaced by younger wives.

Mentionable words/phrases with softeners

This category encompasses words and phrases that are deemed taboos when uttered without specific conventional expressions. These expressions are employed to soften the impact of the tabooed word and render it more acceptable. Three types of these linguistic taboos are identified in our observations.

The first category includes words or phrases denoting unclean places or objects such as toilets or the blood of menses. The minimizers used with these words directly address the hearer and aim to preserve his dignity from the mentioned. Examples of mitigators include *azakum Allah* (May God dignify you), *hashakum* (May God exclude you from this filth), or *akramakum Allah* (May God honor you).

The second type of the tabooed words mentioned only with softeners refer to metaphysical entities such as genies or ghosts. Here, minimizers serve to protect both the speaker and the hearer from metaphysical threats. These explains that taboos originated from fear of a demonic power believed to reside within tabooed objects. This fear prompts the use of specific minimizers to ward off evil. Examples of minimizers include مسلمين مكتفين (We are subject to them and do not violate their will and command) and *Rabi y3afina* (I seek God's protection from the devil).

The third category of mentioned taboos with mitigators include the words or phrases expressing admiration for objects or qualities. These minimizers serve to protect admired objects from the evil eye, even if they belong to oneself. This could be a physical object like a car or a particular feature of beauty, or an abstract quality like skill. In the culture of Batna, it is believed that anyone's gaze can have a malevolent effect if they admire something. Thus, expressions like *allahoma salli ala Mohammad* (O God's prayers on Mohammad) or *allahoma adim nematak* (I hope that 'the admired thing' lasts forever) are used to safeguard against this. Failing to use these phrases may result in the destruction of the admired person or object.

The last type of mentionable taboos with softeners refer to fatal diseases such as cancer and AIDS. Phrases like *wa eleyathu be Allah* (God's protection is sought) or *afana Allah* (May God cure us all) are uttered to ward off diseases.

Context-dependent taboos

The second major category of taboo words identified in our observations comprises context-specific taboo words. These are originally non-taboo words in formal settings but become taboos in informal ones. Examples include words such as pig and dog. For instance, mentioning the word *dog* in the classroom by a teacher is not considered taboo. However, if a woman mentions *dog* in an informal conversation with her cousin, it would be deemed taboo. In this case, a softener such as *hashak* (May God dignify you) must be used. Religious beliefs have contributed to the tabooing of these words, as animals like dogs and pigs are associated with impurity and uncleanness.

Techniques used to avoid linguistic taboos

Observations showed that the participants of the current study pursued a set of strategies to mitigate the negative meanings caused by the direct usage of taboos. These strategies include but are not limited to:

Religious terms and jargon. Religious terminology and jargon were employed to avoid taboos. For example, the word 'intercourse' was replaced with the religious term *jimae*. A similar strategy involves utilizing jargon (medical terms). For instance, the name of the male reproductive organ was substituted with *qadeeb* or *alqadib athakari* (penis). Similarly, AIDS was referred to as 'Human immunodeficiency virus infection'. Additionally, instead of using the taboo word 'vomit', the participants opted for *yofrigh almaeda* (empty one's stomach).

Modern standard Arabic terms. In addition to religious terminology and jargon, the participants of the current investigation resorted to Modern Standard Arabic terms to avoid taboo words of colloquial Arabic. Examples include *El buraz* (i.e., feces) instead of *Khara*, *Dawrat al meyah* and *Almirhadh* (Water Closet) instead of toilet, *El farj* instead of vigina.

Non-offensive conventional phrases. Another identified mechanism is the replacement of taboo words with non-offensive conventional phrases such as *yerqud maa* (sleep with) instead of have sex, *kharja teriq* (i.e. a woman in the wrong way) instead of prostitute, *yfrgh mthantah* (i.e., to empty his bladder) instead of *yboull* (i.e. to pee).

Loan Words. This strategy refers to the use of words taken from other languages to substitute taboo words of L1. Examples identified in our observations are *indisposition* instead of menstruation, *enceinte* instead of pregnant, and *soutien* instead of bra.

Metaphors. Another strategy of avoiding linguistic taboos is using metaphors. Words referring to the menses, for instance, are replaced by metaphors like *en ropo* (on vacation), or *matesalish* (She is not praying) since Muslim women cannot pray in days of menses.

Conventionally Fixed Terms (Softeners). This technique means adding conventional words (minimizers) before or after the taboos to minimize their unpleasantness as already mentioned.

Silence. A strategy frequently employed by the participants of the current study is silence. This tactic involves the speaker opting to withhold speech rather than uttering a taboo word.

Participants' perceptions of the reasons why certain words are considered taboos

Religious reasons. According to the thematic analysis, the respondents think that the reasons why certain words are considered taboos are in the first place religious. A participant, for example said, "People use the names of animals to degrade others." (Interviewee 7) Indeed, in Muslim societies, some animals are viewed filthy. The Holy Quran degrades some animals and their behaviors and considered them to be inferior to humans, such as dogs panting in verse 176 in *Surat Al-A'raf* . "His example is that of a dog: if you chase it away, it pants, and if you leave it, it [still] pants", and donkeys braying in verse 31 in *Surat Luqman* "The ugliest of all voices is certainly the braying of donkeys". Therefore, when humans are addressed using animal expressions, it often implies certain negative characteristics attributed to the recipient, such as being filthy, inferior, obedient, foolish, ugly, or ignorant. Specifically, within Batna community, calling someone a sheep suggests they are obedient; labeling them a donkey or ox implies foolishness and/or obedience; and referring to them as a pig or dog conveys notions of filthiness and/or inferiority. Similarly, expressions related to prostitution are considered taboo because prostitution is considered shameful and sinful in Islam. Consequently, using such expressions implies associations with filthiness, cheapness, and inferiority.

Sociocultural Reasons. Thematic analysis indicates that sociocultural factors emerge as a predominant theme. Given that Algerians are Muslims, it is logical that religious teachings and factors have become ingrained as social norms within the community. Participants emphasized that within Batna community, the common linguistic taboos that revolve around the female body and its

transformations are sociocultural. As one respondent expressed, "Girls grow up in an environment where societal approval of sexual discrimination is evident, leading to the spread of taboos of sexuality." (Interviewee 9) Other participants think that the emphasis placed on sexual morality in the cultural norms of Batna region is behind the taboos around sex and sexual activity. Indeed, terms referring to sexual intercourse often carry connotations of someone's submissive position, with women typically depicted in this role. Consequently, these terms are frequently wielded within culture, primarily by men, as a means to assert dominance over the listener and imply their inferiority relative to the speaker.

Moreover, terms referring to certain supernatural creatures are considered taboo because most people believe that mentioning these entities may summon their presence, leading to harm inflicted upon both the speaker and the listener. Interestingly and as already mentioned, the religious and sociocultural factors that make some words taboos are interrelated. Many individuals harbor a fear of supernatural beings like Satan due to their portrayal as influential deceivers and destroyers of humans within Islamic teachings. The euphemistic expressions, *maranich nsali* (i.e. I'm not [currently] praying) and *maranish tahra* (i.e. I'm not [currently] clean) instead of meses, are deeply rooted in religious beliefs. Muslim women do not pray in their period and the blood of the menses is also considered impure in Islam.

Furthermore, the respondents think that the reason why places and objects such as body waste are considered taboos is cultural. These terms denote filthiness, as they are filthy by nature (e.g., lavatory, shoes). One participant said that "The word *Shoes* connotes dirtiness in our culture because they touch everything they step on. They are also worn on the lowest part of the body. That's why mentioning the word 'shoes' in front of a person without dignifying him would be inappropriate." (Interviewee 12)

Gender Dynamics in Using Linguistic Taboos

Since the present investigation is concerned with linguistic taboos and euphemisms among females of Batna community, it is pertinent to tackle gender dynamics with this linguistic context. According to the participants, Algerian women generally exhibit a greater tendency to avoid taboo language compared to men. They attribute this trend to prevailing societal norms that place greater emphasis on women to

communicate with solemnity and serenity. These social expectations contribute to the stigmatization of women who use taboo language, labeling them as cheap, while simultaneously normalizing and even valorizing its use by men, equating it with masculinity. In many Algerian communities, it is more socially acceptable for men to use taboo language than it is for women. This finding aligns with the observations made by Aliakbari and Raeesi (2015) and Talley and Hui-ling (2012), where female respondents noted a significant double standard regarding the use of taboo language. This double standard implies that taboo language is perceived as exclusively acceptable for men, creating a disparity in its usage between men and women.

Conclusion

The study of verbal taboos has been viewed as a delicate subject for academic research due to its sensitive nature. There is also no doubt that tackling the taboos of a given society is hoped to add new dimensions for understanding it. The present paper probes into the linguistic taboos and euphemisms among young female speakers in Batna speech community. The findings reveal a cautious use among these speakers when addressing certain topics. Identified taboo categories include sexuality and the bodily changes experienced by women, words or phrases denoting unclean places, terms associated with metaphysical entities such as genies or ghosts, expressions of admiration for objects or qualities, names of fatal diseases, and certain context-dependent animal names.

Analysis of the corpus utilized in this study demonstrates that speakers tend to avoid the direct usage of these taboos, opting instead for euphemistic substitutions. These substitutions encompass a variety of linguistic strategies, including religious terms, jargon, Modern Standard Arabic expressions, non-offensive conventional phrases, loanwords, metaphors, and softeners. Furthermore, the study highlights the presence of both religious and sociocultural factors contributing to the designation of certain words or expressions as taboos. Additionally, societal norms within Batna community play a significant role in making the use of taboos more socially acceptable for men than for women.

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"Nothing in this kitchen is unplanned": Food as performance in Mark Mylod's *The Menu*

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Abstract: Cooking transforms raw food into cooked food and raw materials into an edible culture. It is a performance art that requires skill. This paper analyses a multi-genre film, *The Menu* (2022), and how food plays a performative role. The setting is a restaurant where the dining space becomes a site of performing food. A satirical horror-thriller, *The Menu* presents the efforts of the chef to prepare the food relished by the customers. But what happens when they fail in their purpose? The theatrical experience of the film draws from the social experience of food, especially the satire on haute cuisine served in posh restaurants. Food is not always what is eaten; the paper looks at the inedible elements in the food that contribute to the performative quality of the film. Thus, this paper contributes to establishing the performative aspect of food through factors associated with culinary experience.

Keywords: performance studies, haute cuisine, *The Menu*, Mark Mylod, satire, inedible food

Introduction

Food extends beyond its importance of nutritional value and is associated with tremendous cultural, social, political, and personal signification. Everything associated with food has been seen as "larger than life" (Gimblett 1999, 1) and is "always conditioned with meaning" (Mintz 1996, 7) and symbolism. Rooted in traditions and culture, it is a viable tool to highlight and discuss several issues pertinent to individuals and society. In addition to the symbolic functions of food, it is also a medium of storytelling and creative expression. One can narrate a story through food. One can express their identity through food. One can showcase their culture through food. One can highlight social inequities and other problems in society

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through food. Hence, both personally and socially, food has the power to examine the systems of the world. This transformation of raw materials into a symbolic representation of society is a performance.

Within the field of performance studies, there has been an ongoing debate regarding what can be considered performance and what does not come under this label. As Richard Schechner (2013, 2) puts it,

> Performance must be construed as a 'broad spectrum' or 'continuum' of human actions ranging from ritual, play, sports, popular entertainments, the performing arts (theatre, dance, music), and everyday life performances to the enactment of social, professional, gender, race, and class roles, and on to healing (from Shamanism to surgery), the media, and the internet…Along the continuum new genres are added, others are dropped. The underlying notion is that any action that is framed, enacted, presented, highlighted, or displayed is a performance.

The act of preparing food, showcasing craftsmanship, and transforming the raw material into cooked edible food makes cooking, eating, and other aspects of food a performance. Cooks and chefs use technique and skill to present food deemed palatable by its tasters. Food as a performative art includes this display and presentation of food which satiates the eaters, symbolically interacts with them, and channelizes their memories to give them a memorable dining experience. Also, since "performance lacks a distinctive medium" (Carroll 1986, 78), food can be studied under this discipline of performance studies. As Andreea Micu (2022, 17) says,

> All forms of human action with communicative purpose, whether conscious or unconscious, could be considered performance and therefore be included as topics to research in performance studies. Scholars and practitioners in performance studies not only study performances as staged practices and aesthetic objects, but also as expressions of broader cultural and social process…In other words, if an embodied cultural expression has social significance, it can be considered as performance.

However, the representation of food in films has long been disregarded, overlooked, and side-lined. Mostly, the food scenes appear "to help the plot along. These scenes were seldom about the food itself, and they were almost never intended to celebrate food" (Zimmerman 2009, 26). In the past, the films have either obscurely depicted food or used it for comic gags (as in Charlie Chaplin

movies); seldom have they been used to depict the psychology of individuals and relationships or as a commentary on the socio-cultural scenario. Gradually, this change is seen, and food films (where food is at the centre) are increasingly being deployed as a genre. Mark Mylod's *The Menu* (2022) is one film that keeps food at the centre, literally and figuratively. Food does not just occur as a technique to show progress in the plot but is the anchor of the film. Food is performed within the performance of the film, making it a meta performance. An analysis of this performance of food within *The Menu* would inform us of the symbolic, social, and cultural meanings embedded within the film. As Drake points out analyzing a film does not only refer to the analysis of the acting but also other elements on the screen. One of these elements studied in this paper is food. Performing food and satirizing the ways of the world makes *The Menu* remarkably significant to examine. Victor Turner and Edie Turner (2007, 334) agree with this power of food within a cinematic study.

> Food, food taboos, and ways in which food is shared and exchanged make up a kind of cultural grammar and vocabulary which often give clues, when their symbolism is decoded, to basic attitudes and values of the group and to its social structure.

Therefore, this paper aims to study how food is performed in *The Menu* and how this performance informs the audience of the satiric depiction of haute cuisine in the contemporary world. Thematically, food is central to the film. It depicts the story of Julian Slowik, a high-end chef of an exclusive restaurant, Hawthorn, who is fed up with the elite clientele of his restaurant; the guests he has been serving with all his heart and soul are incapable of appreciating the food prepared for them, they fail to understand what it takes for the chef to present the food in front of their guests. The film presents food not just as a mere prop to the story; there would be no story if food is removed from it. Moreover, the paper also highlights the performativity of food and attempts to establish performance studies as an important lens to study food as a pertinent factor in society.

Discussion

An American comedy-thriller-horror, *The Menu* portrays Julian Slowik, the hauteur who gives long, pompous monologues about the production of the ingredients and creation of the impeccable

dish. At times playfully and at other times fearfully, this film satirizes the haute cuisine and the guests who are disconnected and disinterested in the culinary process of the brilliant food served at his restaurant. As a chef, Slowik has risen to this level where his expertise surpasses all, but he is disappointed in serving guests who fail to appreciate his skills and the fine food served on their table. He repeatedly mentions a chef's purpose, and how disheartening it could be to lose that purpose as the dishes are "in a conceptual twist, an extension of the cook" (Farnell 2017, 24). Cooking, an everyday activity proposed by Schechner, is one of the eight ways of performance. This film, however, not only looks at cooking as a habitual ordinary activity but also lends a ritualistic feature to the factors associated with food. To enable an extensive analysis of the film as performance, this paper uses Barbara Gimblett's concepts in context to the convergence of food and performance. Gimblett explains three junctures at which performance and food intersect: to perform is— to do, to behave, and to show. This paper examines *The Menu* through the lens of these junctures as laid down by her. Firstly, according to her,

> To perform is to do, to execute, to carry out to completion, to discharge a duty— in other words, all that governs the production, presentation, and disposal of food. To perform in this sense is to make food, to serve food. It is about materials, tools, techniques, procedures, and actions. It is about getting something done. It is in this sense, first and foremost, that we can speak of the performing kitchen (Gimblett 1999, 2)

The site of the kitchen or, in this case, the island and the restaurant space become an integral part of the performance. Hawthorn, the immaculate restaurant, has a live open kitchen where the preparation of food takes place. Right opposite the pristine kitchen space is the beautifully arranged dining area, where all the guests are seated in a way that they all have a clear view of the kitchen. Along with various shots of food preparation for the film's audience, guests of the restaurant are "free to observe the chefs as they innovate." However, photography is not allowed to the guests as the "ephemeral nature" and beauty of the food is to be experienced in real life (*The Menu*, 00:10:11-00:11:15). The guests are a part of the cooking process instead of being disassociated from it. However, this proximity of the kitchen and dining space is not similar to the perceived proximity between the cooks and their guests. This film and Slowik, the head

chef in the film, through his culinary genius, elevates the status of the dishes to that of art. Both— the technique of preparing the dishes and the subtext of the dishes— are rich and add to the compelling world of Hawthorn. This island restaurant in the film symbolizes a coercive force that shows the desires and aspirations of the people invited to dine. Not only that, it digs into their past rekindling some of the memories for them. All these engagements are done to bring out the hypocrisy, dishonesty, and insincerity of the guests' past. Food prepared and served their comments on the social experience of the restaurant and of living in a society based on specific class divisions. Food becomes a window into the lives of the guests and the world they are a part of. Both the guests, receivers in the film, and the audience partake in this experience through the food presented in the film. Other cooks and providers in the film are elated to be a part of this performance along with Slowik and are even willing to kill and die on his command. Similarly, being invited to this island as a guest and experiencing the magnificent food at this exquisite restaurant is a matter of huge pride.

At the next juncture, performing refers to behaving. "Whether a matter of habit, custom, or law, the divine etiquette of ritual, codifications of social grace, the laws governing cabarets and liquor licenses, or the health and sanitation codes, performance encompasses the social practices…" (Gimblett 1999, 2). The guests' dining experience at Hawthorn differs from the usual dining experience at any city restaurant as it converges into a performance where a strict code of conduct is expected of the guests, who do not have the liberty to deviate from it. The rules are fixed. Though served a six-course meal, what food is to be served, when it is to be served, how it is to be consumed, and even the reactions to it are all predetermined. The dishes are not only flavours and tastes to be experienced but a series of psychological manipulations on the guests. It becomes a tool of control. For every guest, the menu is the same. It is fixed. Generally, eating is a routine behaviour, which Bourdieu (1977) calls 'habitus,' but is destabilized and redefined in this restaurant through the dramatization of this performance (the theatrical way Slowik organizes the night) within a performance (acting in a film).

After the guests take their seats at Hawthorn and the dining experience begins, the curtain rises with Julian Slowik, the head chef, introducing himself and the concept of the night's feast to the guests. The chef and the protagonist of the film, Slowik, is also the narrator

who informs the guests time and again about the dish being served and the reason behind serving that particular dish. He keeps the conversation straightforward. It is candid yet rehearsed. He says,

> Tonight it'll be our pleasure to feed you…Over the next few hours you will ingest fat, salt, sugar, protein, bacteria, fungi, various plants and animals, and, at times, entire ecosystems. But I have to beg you of one thing. It's just one. Do not eat..Taste. Savour. Relish. Consider every morsel that you place inside your mouth. Be mindful. Do not eat. Our menu is too precious for that. And look around you, here we are on this island. Accept. Accept all of it and forgive (*The Menu*, 00:15:50-00:17:02)

A lot of what he says is instructional— steps that the guests have to take and guidelines that they have to follow. Slowik introduces each dish, and his disappointment with the world is dramatic. The emphasis on not eating but relishing every bite and every morsel suggests the importance of experiencing what is on the table. It is not just about the dishes prepared for the menu; it is the story that comes with this preparation. The narrative and the anecdotes with each course and dish are important to understand. It is not just the food to be eaten, but as Allen Shelton (1990) asserts, the codes of decorum are equally significant. *The Menu* creates a clear divide between the givers (the chef and his staff) and the takers (the guests). Slowik believes it to be the responsibility of the chef to present the best food to their guests, their sole purpose being– to make the guests happy. However, the snobby guests of the elite class, who fight hard to be invited to premium restaurants like this one, have no idea about the kind of effort it takes to present such dishes they devour. At this restaurant, they are not expected to finish their food carelessly but to mindfully enjoy and be thankful. According to Slowik, who himself is hinted to have risen from a nobody to a star chef, the struggles of the contemporary class and social inequities in the food industry are crucial problems. Through the gourmet food presented to them, the class of the guests and the power dynamics they assert are deliberately highlighted to bring out their thoughtlessness towards food and its providers. Slowik detests their haughty privilege and arrogance. Food, thus through "performance studies often act on or act against settled hierarchies of ideas, organizations, and people" (Schechner 2013, 4). Finally, the last juncture is that of showing. According to Gimblett (1999, 2)

> When doing and behaving are displayed, when they are shown when participants are invited to exercise discernment, evaluation, and appreciation, food events move towards the theatrical and, more specifically, towards the spectacular. It is here that taste as a sensory experience and taste as an aesthetic faculty converge.

Slowik pre-planned everything in the film. He has set the stage for himself and his entourage of cooks, whom Lillian calls "the marching band" (*The Menu*, 00:17:06-00:17:10), to display the food, narrate a story behind every dish, and let the haughty, arrogant guests take the experience. The tour of the island, smokehouse, workers' quarters, and the seating at the restaurant— are all a part of the plan where these guests are merely performing their roles attributed by Slowik. They are illusioned to think it is their choice to be there, but it is due to the careful selection done by Slowik. After the sous-chef Jeremy shoots himself, Slowik announces that everything dramatic is a part of the night's menu. He says, "It's a part of the show, this is what you're paying for…this is an exclusive experience." All the guests, including Lillian, the famously dreaded critic, are left wondering if "this is just theatre, this is just stagecraft." The silence and stillness of the characters and the background, the internal introspection that it requires the guests to go through, and with a focus on uncluttered frames in the visual storytelling, this performance is likened to "the Japanese minimirasuto style", a theatrical but still minimalist in style (*The Menu*, 00:42:00-00:43:50). The atmosphere created henceforth, sets the reflective tone of the film.

In this theatrical performance, all the guests signify the discerning elite group of society. And their role is equally important to make sense of the rest of the show. "It matters because this menu, this guest list, this entire evening has been painstakingly planned…Nothing in this kitchen is unplanned", he further adds (*The Menu*, 00:46:15-00:46:36). However, the presence of not-so-much-impressed Margot spoils the entire plan since she was a last-minute entry and does not fit into the snooty elite intended for the night. The "gastronomic actors" (Goffman 1967, 151), the guests, are reduced to mere ingredients within a degustation concept where some of them have been regulars at Hawthorn yet do not remember a single dish they enjoyed. He satirizes the people who are ignorant of the process behind the food and where the food comes from— how it is procured, who makes it, the time and effort behind the dish— these are some questions which all the diners are conveniently unaware of and indifferent to. The ending of the film

is depicted as cathartic for the guests who accept their fate at the hands of the chef, who punishes them for their ignorant existence as a guest. As David Szanto postulates, "Food performance, however, can also reassure and nurture those who witness it" (2018, 230). This is true for the guests at Hawthorn, the cooks, and the audience of the film. Apart from the film's audience, consumed by the satiric portrayal of hierarchical divisions in society, the film's characters are reduced to ingredients of *s'more,* which, according to Slowik, is a pretentious dish just like its admirers. The restaurant becomes a stage where the guests are meticulously crafted into the dish to confront their aspirations and fears. All of them, thus, are subsumed, cleansed, and purified in the flames. However, just like a performance it does not resolve all the questions raised throughout the film; instead, allows the audience to engage with them further.

The film is very visual, and the centrality of food adds to its visual grammar. From the close shots of cooking the food to plating and readying it to display for the pretentious customers, the film has visually appealing shots and the sound of delicious food being cooked and served. Thus, cooking, presentation, styling, display, and eating are all activities associated with food, which contribute to further pushing the "black box model" to accept and embrace cooking and food as a performance art. (Parker and Sedgwick 2007, 200). The food exists on the multisensory level within the film, which adds to the overall performativity of food as "performances communicate on multiple sensory levels, usually involving highly visual imagery, dramatic sounds, and sometimes even tactile, olfactory, and gustatory stimulation…one is not being told or shown something so much as one is led to experience something." (Bell 1997, 160). Unique to this film are certain foods which belong to the "case of inedible spectacle" (Gimblett 1999, 3), they may not be edible but are extremely visual and tactile. For instance, the breadless bread plate with savoury accompaniments. Every guest is equally surprised at being served a gorgeous-looking empty plate, which is described as "the bread that you will not be eating tonight was made from a heritage wheat called red fife, crafted with our partners at the Tehachapi Grain Project devoted to preserving heirloom grains" (*The Menu*, 00:22:25-00:23:15). It is served with "unaccompanied accompaniments." In another instance, the kitchen scissors stabbed into the chicken thigh resound with Slowik's horrific childhood story, which is served

alongside the customized tacos printed with shameful facts from the guests' lives that serve as reminders of their despicable deeds.

Conclusion

Thus, the entire film is symbolic, theatrical, and performative. Food becomes an integral part of the narrative and is as important as the actors following the script. Culinary artistry through the performance of food is mocked and satirized as a commercial product in contemporary times. Haute cuisine is a commercialized symbol of a consumerist world. The dramatic presentation of the six-course meal served with thunderous claps and blatant announcements to eat elevates the entire dining experience as art where "an art of the concrete, food, like performance, is alive, fugitive, and sensory" (Gimblett 1999, 1). Mark Mylod's *The Menu* is among a few films like *Babette's Feast*, *Eat Drink Man Woman*, etc which are effective ways of expressing concerns of the society which are rendered more visible to the world through food. Since the restaurants are "experience in codes" (Shelton 1990, 524-525), Hawthorn, the restaurant in the film, becomes a symbolic site of social decay, and the dinner table, a "site of sociological and cultural exchange" (Farnell 2017, 222). Therefore, social structures performed through food within *The Menu* enhance the performance of the film.

The film on screen becomes a seamless narrative of a lopsided society, a social and cultural phenomenon that finds its expression through food. While the restaurant becomes an experience of a lifetime for the guests, this film becomes an adventurous as well as a thought-provoking experience for the audience. A meta performance (a performance within a performance), *The Menu,* with its themes of power dynamics and extravagance associated with gourmet dining etiquettes, proves to be a social commentary and a cultural performance wherein all the agents are active instead of passive. Of course, they are active only when and to the extent that they are allowed to be. The film displays food as being performed both ordinarily and ritualistically. The medium of food and the form of cinema, maintaining a sensorial harmony, push to reinterpret the traditional boundaries of Performance Studies, making food an intricate vehicle for social critique through its storytelling.

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Food and memory in Parimal Goswami's autobiographical writing *Smriti-Chitran*

Ishani Choudhury*

Abstract: Food is central to our identity and existence. Food is a medium of one's own expression. Food, cooking, eating, meal experiences- all are often loaded with memories. The present article aims to investigate the ways in which memories about meal experience occupied a central place of importance in an autobiographical writing of twentieth century Bengal. *Smriti-Chitran* was composed between 1956 and 1958 by Parimal Goswami (1897-1976). He was a renowned Bengali litterateur, photographer and newspaper editor. He himself did not claim his composition as an autobiography, rather he mentioned that he was trying to draw a sketch of his memory and in such a sketch he had tried to preserve his self and his time. The present study intends to focus on- food as a signifier of a range of emotions, as a tool for personal expression, and as a reminder of the past- through the prism of Goswami's *Smriti-Chitran*. While analysing food memories reflected in the Bengali autobiographical text *Smriti-Chitran,* the goal of the present author is to explore how any good food invoked such spontaneous memory, how meal experience got enmeshed with emotional-social-material relations, how food memories became integrally connected with some memories of illness and how food became signifier of happy as well as troubled days.

Keywords: memory, food, autobiography, Bengal, twentieth century, nostalgia

Introduction

The present article aims to investigate the ways in which memories about the meal experience occupied a central place of importance in an autobiographical writing of twentieth century Bengal. This paper thoroughly studies Parimal Goswami's *Smriti-Chitran* where food memory on the one hand evoked nostalgia of any particular place or

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any close friend; on the other hand, food-oriented memories helped in highlighting a person's psychological-social-cultural realities and identities. *Smriti-Chitran* was composed between 1956 and 1958 by Parimal Goswami (1897-1976). He was a renowned Bengali litterateur, photographer and newspaper editor. Parimal Goswami composed five memory sketches which included *Smriti-Chitran* (1958), *Dwitiya Smriti (*1962*), Aami Jaader Dekhechi* (1969), *Patra-Smriti* (1971) and *Jokhon Sompadok Chhilam* (1973). Other compositions of Parimal Goswami include 'Dushmonter Bichar', 'Ghughu', 'Tramer Sei Lokti', 'Black Market', 'Detective Shibnath', 'Shubho Bibaho', 'Mar ke Lenge', 'Magic Lonthon', 'Budwud', 'Pothe Pothe', 'Benami Chithi o Heerer Angti', 'Sapta Pancha' 'Rabindranath o Bignan', 'School-er Meyera', 'Merupother Jatridol', 'Ashare Deshe', 'Adhunik Alokchitran' et cetera. All his writings were reflection of the then social relation, cultural life, economic condition- a mirror of everyday existence. The initial request for writing *Smriti-Chitran* came to Goswami from Pranatosh Ghatak, the Editor of Bengali periodical *Masik Basumati*; and since then, Goswami started composing *Smriti-Chitran* and completed the entire autobiographical composition within next 18 months. He himself did not claim his composition as an autobiography, rather he mentioned that he was trying to draw a sketch of his memory and in such a sketch he had tried to preserve his self and his time. The present study intends to focus on- food as a signifier of a range of emotions, food as a tool for personal expression and food as a reminder of the past - through the prism of Goswami's *Smriti-Chitran*.

Food is not just a substance for fulfilling one's appetite, fuelling ourselves and satisfying the biological need; rather food's role is much more significant in human life. Food is rather central to identity and existence. Food is a medium of one's own expression. Food, cooking, eating, meal experiences- all are often loaded with memories. When someone starts composing an autobiographical narrative, he or she depends on "the access to memory to narrate the past in such a way as to situate the experiential history within the present" (Smith and Watson 2010, 22). Now, at the very beginning of the present paper, it is necessary to answer two important questions – first, what do we mean by 'memory' and second, what is the role of memory in an autobiographical writing. To answer the first question, memory is not just simply bringing to mind any information encountered at a previous time (Foster 2009, 3). Memory is a delicate matter; historians, archaeologists, philologists are expected to use memory carefully

(Nadali ed. 2016, 4-5). Memory is considered as both cause and effect of human thought. Memories are not mere saved images taken from the brain, but an interaction between the past and the present (Sutton 2001, 9). It must be kept in mind that "whenever the experience of some past event influences someone at a later time, the influence of the previous experience is a reflection of memory for that past event" (Foster 2009, 3). Memory is an integral part of daily life, closely connected with one's existence, emotions, attitudes and social relations. Memory cannot be identified only as a truthful recording of past events. Memory is an active and selective process with both strengths and weaknesses (Ibid, 137).

Now coming to the second question, memory is the 'source, authenticator, and destabilizer' of autobiographical narratives. Remembering involves a re-interpretation of the past in the present (Smith and Watson 2010, 22). The process is not a mere passive act of retrieval from memory bank; rather, in the act of remembering, the meaning of the past is actively created. In autobiographies, "narrators become readers of their experiential histories" (Ibid, 33). As explained in the work of Abarca and Colby (2016, 5), "the first link between food and memory or the first characteristic that produces food memory, is the sensory and emotional nature emitted by and through food's material and symbolic social and cultural functions". The taste of any good food is "powerful enough to invoke involuntary and autobiographical memories" (Varghese and Parui 2019, 156). Memories of special meals prepared by loving family members have an ability to evoke powerful emotions in human being (Lyons 2009, 1). Effect of food memory can often be caught up with many other material relations (Fox and Alldred 2018, 10). While analysing food memories reflected in the Bengali autobiographical text *Smriti-Chitran,* the goal of the present author is to explore how any good food invoked such spontaneous memory, how meal experience got enmeshed with emotional-social-material relations, how food memories became integrally connected with some memories of illness and how food became signifier of happy as well as troubled days.

Literature review

It is undeniable that experience of eating food always has a biological, emotional, social and cultural connotation attached to it. Food has been marked by social scientists as an important site of memory. The present article needs necessarily to review the pre-existing studies on

the relation between meal and memory. It is relevant for the present work to discuss how scholars, especially in recent years, have started describing 'food memory' or 'edible memory'; how they have increasingly explained the ways in which meal experience got attached to personal memories. In the field of food and memory, David E. Sutton has made a crucial contribution through the text *Remembrance of Repasts: An Anthropology of Food and Memory*, published in 2001 wherein he has dealt with issues of memory from a variety of perspectives. Sutton has used his observations from his research in the Greek Island of Kalymnos where he identified how food plays an important role in recollecting one's memory. According to Sutton, "ability of food to both generate subjective commentary and encode powerful meanings would seemingly make it ideal to wed to the topic of memory" (Sutton 2001, 6). Sutton has further argued that food memories constitute a 'form of historical consciousness' (Ibid, 26). Renowned anthropologist Carole Counihan in her work *Around the Tuscan Table* specifically focused on experiences and memories concerning food and eating in the context of late twentieth century Florence, Italy. Counihan has highlighted that certain foods can become symbols of the past which are no longer regularly consumed as they are either too difficult to prepare or no longer customary (Counihan 2004, 25).

In this context of literature review, mention must be made of the paradigm-shifting analysis of leading Neuroscientist Gordon M. Shepherd who has coined the term 'Neurogastronomy' as the study that examines how the brain creates flavour and how it affects the mnemonic process. In Shepherd's words "Neurogastronomy starts with brain and asks how it creates the sensation of the food" (Shepherd 2012, 5). According to this research, humans have a much more highly developed sense of flavour because of the complex processing that occurs in the large human brain; and it is this high level of processing – including systems of memory, emotions, higher cognitive processing and especially language – that gives human the unique 'human brain flavour system' (Ibid, 4-5). Another mention worthy scientific research in this domain was done by John S. Allen. His text *The Omnivorous Mind* explored perspectives on food and eating from a cognitive point of view. He has demonstrated how humans as a species use brains to 'think' food (Allen 2012, 2). He provides readers with a physiological analysis for understanding food's capability to influence and inform human memory.

Jennifer A. Jordan has used the term 'Edible Memory' in the title of the book published in 2015. Jordan demonstrates that "edible memory reveals human's remarkable capacity to invest objects with personal and social meaning; and the unique qualities of food as a carrier of such meanings" (Jordan 2015, 41). Edible memory has also been marked as capable of describing one's personal memories of 'things eaten at formative moments' of life (Ibid, 43). In *Gastrophysics: The New Science of Eating*, Charles Spence has dedicated an entire chapter on food memory, giving it the title 'The Meal Remembered'. Spence has argued in the context of food memory that "our memory of a meal, at least of an enjoyable one, is where so much of the pleasure of the experience resides. It can last for days, weeks or even years" (Spence 2017, 165). A unique quality of food memories has been identified by scholars that although the sensory and emotional implications of food memories function within the individual, yet they are always socially and culturally grounded (Abarca and Colby 2016, 5). In a recent research paper 'Mapping Emotions, Culture, and Identity' published in 2022, the relation between food and memory in the context of a novel has been highlighted with minute details as it focused on how Esther David's Book of Rachel employs food codes as markers of memory to connect Rachel's past and present" (Raviya and Sharma 2022, 47).

These writings have shed light and induced the present author to better interpret the relation between food and memory. The present article while drawing upon and taking insight from this wide range of texts, expands its own analysis to a broader line of argument to illuminate and analyse the detailed points of food, eating and meal experiences in the context of a Bengali autobiographical text of mid twentieth century India.

Food and childhood memories in *Smriti-Chitran*

Parimal Goswami was reared up in a village in Pabna (at present in Bangladesh) in the eastern part of Bengal. The time period was early twentieth century when India was still under British colonial rule. His father was a Head of the Institution at a high school and a great enthusiast about reading-learning. Parimal Goswami's entire childhood got spent amidst various books, periodicals and journals. Purchase and consumption of fish constitute a crucial part of his childhood memories; *Ilish Mach (*Hilsa*)* appearing as the predominant one (Goswami 1960, 15-17). Other fishes whose delectable taste found its place in the memory of Goswami were *Piyel*, *Bnashpata* and *Kharsola*.

Hilsa is a beloved species of fish found in the water of South Asia. For the Bengalis, Hilsa is not a mere delicious fish but a representation of tradition, a symbol of cultural heritage, an essential ingredient of festivity and an integral part of existence. It is believed that Bengalis know their fish very well. Bengali's love for fish is well-known since the ancient period. It is also argued that Bengalis can easily identify which skin and bone to remove to get to the favourite fleshy part of the fish (Roy 2021, 54-55). Various fish-recipes have found their place in Bengali cookbooks[1] of colonial period like *Pakrajeshwar, Byanjanratnakar, Pak Pranali, Amish o Niraamish Ahaar, Barendra Randhan* et cetera. This overwhelming attachment with fish can also be visualized from *Smriti-Chitran***,** the autobiographical narrative which is under consideration for this paper.

As discussed earlier, food memories remain integrally connected with various material condition. In case of Parimal Goswami, his memories regarding Hilsa were blended with the simple living style of his ancestral village, the condition of rural market and the rate of everyday food items. As mentioned in his *Smriti-Chitran*, in those years of early twentieth century, monthly family expenditure was just 5 rupees and daily market expenses never exceeded 1 *ana*[2]. A medium size Hilsa used to cost 1 *paisa*; once even 8 Hilsa were purchased at the cost of 1 *paisa* because of unexpected abundance. Goswami narrated the purchase and consumption of Hilsa during his childhood in detail. During the season of Hilsa, wholesalers from outside used to gather to sell huge amount of Hilsa on the bank of the river at the south-eastern part of Goswami's ancestral village. *Maachher Muro* (fish head) was sold immediately and young Parimal Goswami could buy those in the early morning as it was quite adjacent to their place

[1] Before the nineteenth century, there are no references to cookbooks in Bengal. The first two such cookbooks were Bisweswar Tarkalankar's *Pakrajeswar* (1831) and the anonymously written *Byanjanratnakar* (1858) both of which were composed under the patronage of the king of Burdwan district in Bengal. By contrast to these elite volumes, Bipradas Mukhopadhyay (1842–1914) wrote the first cookbooks in Bengali intended for a general population of readers. In 1883, Mukhopadhyay published a monthly periodical with recipes entitled *Pak Pranali* to teach Bengali women new preparations. With the turn of the century women authors began to publish cookbooks as well in Bengal. The most significant volume in this period was Prajnasundari Devi's *Amish o Niraamish Ahaar* (1900). In 1921, Kiranlekha Ray's *Barendra Randhan* got published. See, Choudhury 2017, 3-4.

[2] *Ana* meant a smaller unit of currency in colonial Bengal. 1 Rupee used to have 16 *ana*. *Ana* itself consisted of another smaller currency unit called *ganda*.

(Goswami 1960, 16). He gladly remembered that 16 such *muro* could even be bought at the cost of 1 *paisa* and the main meal of those days consisted of *muror jhol*[3] and *charchari*[4]. Goswami's love and attachment for Hilsa is also evident from a lecture delivered by him on 6th June, 1972 at the *Sahitya o Samskriti* Department of Calcutta Radio where he mentioned that "in the Gita Lord Krishna had said that in whatever way one prays for me, I shall satisfy him and our hilsa says that in whatever way one fries me I shall satisfy him. None can stay away from its alluring taste. Frying is not the only option, at least fifty preparations can be made from it" (cited in Gupta 1989, 37). Moreover, the particular attraction towards *Maachher Muro* can be noticed from the lines from a text entitled *A Marriage to India* that Goswami cited during his lecture- "but the chef d'ouvre of the Bengali kitchen is its fish curries especially made with the unparallelled hilsa fish, and the supremely tasty part of this finest of all fish is its brain. If you are an adept, you will know just how to hold your lips to the tiny cerebral cavity and with one suck of the breath have the taste of gods on your tongue" (cited in Ibid.). Returning to the discussion of *Smriti-Chitran*, Parimal Goswami further recollected that during winter days, Hilsa was not easily available, but other fishes were abundant enough to fill the gap. One had to visit daily market just to buy fish; other food items like fruits-vegetables - including mango, jackfruit, guava, banana, custard apple, eggplant, chilli, pumpkin, gourd - all were mostly grown at premises of the residential house (Goswami 1960, 17). One striking point regarding everyday food consumption was noted in *Smriti-Chitran* that onion consumption was not publicly prevalent in the house of Brahmin caste in the village and such people had to secretly bring onion and onion-sprouts to home in a properly covered manner. Food memory in autobiography like *Smriti-Chitran*, thus, is not only confined within the involvement of an individual, rather it supports to get a broader understanding of the socio-economic perspective.

Nostalgia[5] got reflected in *Smriti-Chitran* as Goswami described his memories about the place called Ratandia (a part of British India at

[3] *Muror jhol* is fish head curry or stew.

[4] *Charchari* is a dry dish of spiced vegetables cooked in oil and often with fish bones.

[5] Nostalgia is a term that denotes a wide range of mnemonic and evocative practices. The term has been coined in 1688 by the Swiss medical student Johannes Hofer to refer to a new medical condition that first made its presence among displaced people, particularly soldiers, in 17th century Europe. Nostalgia became epidemic in Europe in

that time, presently in Bangladesh). Since 1910-11, he became increasingly intimate with Ratandia which seemed to be very close to his heart, to his imagined ideal space. We know that nostalgia is not just re-experiencing of emotional pasts, but also a longing for times and place that one has never experienced. (Holtzman 2006, 367). Food became fundamental to this nostalgic recollection as he reminisced the feeling of getting elated while plucking tasty plum-like fruits in the winter season. He further remembered the happiness associated with the eating of peas directly from the tree and the joyful moments of consumption of fresh thickened layer of sugarcane jaggery (Goswami 1960, 35). This nostalgic memory can never be complete without remembrance of sweetmeats. As Chitrita Banerjee has mentioned in her renowned text *The Hour of the Goddess*- "ask any Indian and you will be told that Bengal excels in the taste and variety of its milk-based sweets" (Banerji 2006, 107). Bengalis are famous for having a sweet tooth. The recollections in the autobiography under consideration here also could not stay away from highlighting sweet consumption moments. In *Smriti-Chitran*, Goswami's memories of the local fair included *rasogolla*, *pantua* and *jilipi*[6] being prepared in the huge *Bhiyen* (*bhiyen ghor* in Bengali means a makeshift kitchen or room for making sweetmeats) at the land of the local Zamindar. In the words of Goswami, "it was a fresh preparation made with fresh ingredients, which is eternally famous in the Pabna-Faridpur region. This taste can never be expected in Calcutta. This sweetmeat store was a heaven for the childhood" (Goswami 1960 35-36). It is evident that food-centric nostalgia played a crucial role for Parimal Goswami in anchoring its readers to the minute but significant experiences of his childhood. Food memories presented in Goswami's autobiography also highlighted that nostalgia and food experience share connection with belongingness, social bonding and cultural heritage.

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the wake of the French Revolution. Gradually it got turned into a virtue in the hands of the Romantics. See Swislocki, *Culinary Nostalgia* 2009, 3.

[6] *Rasogolla*, *pantua* and *jilipi* are Indian traditional sweetmeats. *Rasogolla* is a syrupy ball-shaped sweetmeat made from *chhana* or cottage cheese. *Pantua* is a kind of ball-shaped sweetmeat soaked in a solution of sugar. *Jilipi* is a kind of coil-shaped sweetmeat which is crisp fried and then immersed in thickened sugar syrup and withdrawn for serving.

Remembering the sick-diet: Episode of adherence and defiance

Diseases have affected the path of human history since time immemorial. Bengal in the colonial era became severely troubled by the high rate of diseases and death. Fevers, cholera, dyspepsia, dysentery, diarrhoea, malaria were observed as frequently disturbing diseases. Medical manuals, household guides and health journals in colonial Bengal constantly highlighted the necessity of appropriate sick diet or *pothyo* at the time of such diseases. It was believed and constantly reiterated in the Bengali prescriptive literature of late nineteenth and early twentieth century that *swasthyakor pothyo* or a healthy diet could help the Bengalis fight the diseases, epidemics and the growing debility. Ancient Indian tradition of Ayurveda[7] became increasingly referred in the context of prescribing ideal diet at the time of ill-health. Appropriate sick diet became increasingly identified as essential for bringing back vitality (*jivanishakti*), good health (*suswasthya*), nutrition (*pusthi*), fitness and strength (*sobolota*) and rejuvenation (*punarujjivan*) to counter illness.

Historians and Social Scientists have continually demonstrated how Malaria became one deadly disease and a major cause of concern in the colonial Bengal as well as India. The predisposing cause of Malaria in colonial Bengal had its root in the topography of the riverine areas and the insanitary habits of the people; yet the proximate causes stemmed from the colonial infrastructure too (Samanta 2018, 2). As noted in the pages of *Smriti-Chitran,* Parimal Goswami became affected by Malaria since his childhood. Goswami remembered that he was repetitively suffering from Malaria in around 1911-12. As part of the prescriptive sick-diet, rice and milk became forbidden at that time of Malaria fever. On the one hand, these restrictions made one tempted towards various food items, on the other hand extreme debility was caused by fever and meal restrictions, as recalled by Goswami (Goswami 1960, 42). In the tenure of one month fever, he used to

[7] *Ayurveda* is a traditional Hindu system of medicine practised especially in India and parts of the Far East, based on ideas of balance in bodily systems and placing emphasis on diet, herbal treatment, yogic breathing etcetera. In Ayurveda, all material things were believed to be composed of five elements (earth, air, fire, water and space) in various combinations. In the body these combinations take three forms- *vata, pitta, kapha* (translated as wind, bile and water) which when in balance result in good health. Concept and practices of this Ayurvedic science got developed over centuries and were codified in *Charaka Samhita, Susruta Samhita*, Vagbhatta's *Astanga Hridaya*. (See K T Achaya, 11)

imagine the joy of the those who were allowed to consume rice. On hearing a news of the arrival of a new Malaria medicine in Calcutta, he even undertook journey from Ratandia to Calcutta as he heard and believed from heart that the new medicine would not inflict any food restriction upon the malaria patients. After reaching Calcutta by train, his main focus got shifted from purchasing the new medicine to satisfyingly tasting food like *sondesh*[8], *dimbhaja*[9], *luchi*[10], *rabri*[11], *rasogolla* as he felt that fulfilling his craving was more important than the medicine and he was also confident enough that the medicine would ultimately eliminate any diet-oriented restrictions for him (Goswami 1960, 43). The most exciting matter was that finally he returned from Calcutta without buying the medicine and meanwhile he had recovered also.

Malaria again troubled Goswami in the following years. As he came under the treatment of doctor Rasiklal Datta in Calcutta, he was prescribed a change of weather and a diet comprising of Milk and Barley in the morning and afternoon, rice for lunch and *ruti*[12] or *luchi* for dinner (Goswami 1960, 65-67). Walking in the fresh air was also advised. For a healthy environment, Goswami was taken to Sahebgunj, but once again following the prescribed diet became a cause of problem. in place of the advised milk-barley, he started consuming *rabri* or *malai* prepared on the previous day at a local shop. As he wrote in his autobiography, "*dudh-er sathe somporko thaklei holo*" (it is sufficient to be connected with milk). Gradually, the monotony of *rabri* led to consumption of more exciting preparations including *rasogolla, sondesh, pantua, pera*[13]. He was elated to think that milk was an integral part of all these preparations; hence he was not completely deviating from the prescriptive diet. While returning to Ratandia, he bought medicines and a fresh tin of barley of a foreign brand with a resolution to follow the prescription. Goswami has portrayed the days of disease, suffering and pain sarcastically in his *Smriti-Chitran* and prescriptions of *pothyo* and the defiance as well as deviations have occupied a crucial space in his memory. Malaria did

[8] *Sondesh* means a kind of delicious sweetmeat of various shapes. The name has been derived from the term to the giver of good news.
[9] *Dimbhaja* means fried egg.
[10] *Luchi* is a kind of small and thin saucer-shaped bread fried in oil or clarified butter.
[11] *Rabri* is thickened and sweetened milk.
[12] *Ruti* is baked, grilled or roasted bread mostly based on wheat flour.
[13] *Pera* is an Indian sweetmeat, usually prepared in thick, semi-soft pieces.

not fail to accompany Goswami to his urban life of college days, even he was compelled to skip an examination due to the same disease as it caused absence of concentration and created problems in the academic continuity.

Reminiscences of hostel and mess meals

By the middle of the nineteenth century, Calcutta was a thriving colonial city (Prasad 2006, 246). Calcutta was central to the colonial middle class of Bengal for it constituted the heart of three kinds of institutional networks, crucial for the emergence of the nineteenth and twentieth century middle class as a distinctive formation: the new kinds of schools and colleges which came to be considered the indispensable entry points into the new professions, the printing press and clerical jobs in government or mercantile offices (Sarkar 1997, 170). Educational opportunities and a perceived prospect of better medical facilities as pull factors and malaria in the countryside as well as the declining income from tenure-holding as push factors, had determined the rising population of Calcutta (Banerjee 1997, 82). The population of imperial Calcutta was male dominated like all other primate cities of colonial India and became increasingly so as the city grew in size. The immigrants were mostly students of college and university or job seekers as well as recently employed youth. This group of educated male in most cases came to stay in the cities alone leaving their family at the rural ancestral homes. The wave of immigration increased to a great extent in the first half of the twentieth century, especially after the First World War.[14]. Two kinds of accommodation were commonly noticeable for the educated male immigrants - the student-hostels managed by the educational institutions and 'mess' or boarding-houses run by private owners. Hostels were located adjacent to the institution itself whereas the privately owned 'mess' and boarding-houses were established in around the Amherst Street, Mirzapur Street, Cornwallis Street,

[14] In the Census of 1901, it was recorded that the total population of the city on the night of 1st March 1901 was 949144. There has been an increase in past thirty years of 31.7% as population in 1872, 1881, and 1891 were respectively 706511, 684710, 765510. (Blackwood, *Census of India 1901*, 17-24*)*. Among the population of Calcutta 31.9% were born in Calcutta, and 68.1% belonged to outside Calcutta who emigrated to the city. Census Report of 1931 showed the total population of Calcutta Municipal area and Fort William area as to be 11,96,734 and the number of immigrants had increased to a great extent. (A.E. Porter. *Census of India, 1931*, 2, 15)

Harrison Road, Upper Circular Road, Rammohan Road of Calcutta, as these were nearer to the institutions like the Medical College, Presidency College, Calcutta University and the office area of Dharmotolla and Esplanade (Choudhury 2017, 198-199).

The privately owned 'mess' or boarding houses were undoubtedly a 'new concept' in the history of urban accommodation of India (Dasgupta 2011, 33). The hostels, boarding houses and messes were often described as joint families (Chaudhuri 1942, 31-32). In the words of Bipin Chandra Pal, the renowned nationalist leader of Indian freedom struggle, messes in Calcutta were 'like small republics' and 'were managed on strictly democratic lines' (Pal 1932, 193). Sushobhan Sarkar, a noted academician and historian of Bengal, after getting admitted to Presidency College, began to stay in a 'mess' named 'Fraternity Home' located in the north of Harrison Road. In the course of time, Sarkar had to shift to the famous Eden Hindu Hostel, adjacent to his college, as per his father's wish (Sarkar 1982, 15). Brajendra Narayan Chaudhury after his arrival to Calcutta initially started staying in a 'mess' of Old Baithakkhana Market area, but soon got shifted to a 'mess' of Harrison Road where inmates were mainly having ancestral origin in Dhaka and Sylhet. Next year, he had to shift to a new 'mess' in Nur Muhammad Sarkar Lane, where seats were received mainly on the basis of family relation (Chaudhuri 1942, 31-32). When Parimal Goswami arrived in Calcutta for his studies, he got a seat in a room in the first floor of the college 'mess' of Vidyasagar College (erstwhile Metropolitan Institution), where he had to share that room with four other students. He became very glad to receive a seat at a corner wherefrom the view of street was clear enough to remove his monotony in that new atmosphere of a 'mess' (Goswami 1960, 92-94). Goswami along with other students were shifted to a new hostel of the college at the Cornwallis Street in 1918 (Ibid, 104).

Hostel or 'mess' meal experience was not new to Goswami. As he recalled in *Smriti-Chitran*, earlier he had to stay at a Hostel at Pabna where he had to shift to eating vegetarian food being disgusted with excessive hilsa consumption (Goswami 1960, 79). The reminiscences of the Pabna hostel particularly consisted of a very generous non-Bengali sweetmeat seller who used to visit the hostel with his extremely delicious *sondesh* and *khirer luchi* which began to appear as a special attraction to all the residents of that hostel ignoring the concern of expenses and health hazards. Goswami's memory about the hostel inmates, the study time, the funny incidents – all were

intrinsically connected with meal experiences and special moments of food consumption. He further noted his remembrance of the practice of the preparation of *kheer* from 1 *seer* milk in the afternoon using an old stove as tea was not yet known in Pabna region in those years of 1915-16. Goswami has recorded the meal experience at Calcutta college hostel in detail. He recalled that 50 or 60 inmates used to seat together for the meal. they were given meat once a week and meat-preparation used to be of 2 kinds, cooked with onion and without onion which was identified as '*Niramish Mangsho'* (vegetarian meat). Lentil, fish or meat were served in separate bowls. The breakfast and afternoon snack were served at hostel rooms. (Goswami 1960, 107) Goswami's food memory also reminded him of the mischievous tricks of his hostel inmate Khitish who through his clever deeds somehow managed some extra meat or prawn from the *pachak thakur* (paid cooks of the mess/hostel).

The 'ordinary food' available in the 'mess' or hostel could not satisfy the palate of the inmates, for which they increasingly depended on the tea stalls, street food or public eateries. Balaichand Mukhopadhyay, the noted Bengali litterateur, also mentioned in his autobiography that when he started staying in a private boarding house name 'Diamond Boarding House', the meal provided by the boarding authority could not satisfy him at all. The kind of rice which was provided, the quality of the lentil, and *charchari* as well as the fish curry- nothing was satisfactory according to him. For that reason, he decided to cook by his own (Mukhopadhyay 1978, 114-115). Goswami's Calcutta days soon made him fond of tea. In *Smriti-Chitran*, we can find that in 1925 Goswami along with friends even went to Howrah station in the mid-night for drinking tea and he had given the description how his friend Shibdas managed to have tea even after finding that tea-stalls were closed at that late hour (Goswami 1960, 179-180).

Meal consumption beyond the domain of lovingly-served home cooked meal of ancestral villages got reflected in the pages of *Smriti-Chitran.* Thus, it can be observed that the experience of meal of young male adults residing in the hostel, boarding houses or 'mess' was much different from that of their ancestral home where in general, they did not have to device any trick for getting an extra piece of fish or meat. It is undeniable that the burgeoning emigration of the educated young male adults to the urbanised sites of education and employment amounted to the severance of their meal from the interiority of the

family-household and a consequent commodification[15] of the meal, whether the young émigré was now an inmate of a hostel or 'mess' in the city/town and/or was having to depend for the meal on eateries or tea stalls or sweetmeat shops in the urban milieu.

Conclusion

Narrated memory is an interpretation of a past that can never be fully recovered (Smith and Watson 2010, 22). While reading an autobiographical narrative, the readers become intimate with the act of remembering, and start to get engaged with the experiential world of the narrator. Through the pages of *Smriti-Chitran* Parimal Goswami created a complete picture of his experiences and he took the readers to a few moments of the first few decades of twentieth century. For instance, when Goswami described the alluring smell and delicious taste of the cooked items during his journey by Steamer in the year 1917, readers can imagine and situate themselves amidst that food memory and readers might feel some sort of connection with that exciting experience (Goswami 1960, 89). Similarly, when readers get to know about the consumption of the small cakes from hawkers in Darjeeling while lying down on the grasses, it again takes the readers to the feel of intense fulfilment which Goswami had mentioned as 'indescribable' (Ibid, 63). *Smriti-Chitran* continued to detail Goswami's Santiniketan days as a student of Kala Bhawan, the remembrance of an event of a Japanese student eating spicy potato curry that he found as 'very hot', the 'comic moment' of students rushing to the dining hall at the very first sound of a bell, the recollections of early years of writing career of Goswami, his experience of an earthquake, his acquaintance and interaction with the renowned Bengali litterateurs, doctors, and periodical editors of the time, his involvement with the journals and periodicals, the crisis caused by Black Market and many such facets of late colonial Bengal.

Goswami in the last segment of his *Smriti-Chitran*, takes the readers to the tough days of Second World War and Famine. Bengal had to

[15] Commodification is a term for things being assigned economic value, which they did not previously possess (according to the Marxist theory). In brief, commodification means transformation of something into commodity. Marx's own reanalysis of the concept of commodity was a central part of his critique of bourgeois political economy. In most contemporary sense, commodities are the goods or services which are to be found in a society where capitalism has penetrated. (See, Appadurai, 2005, 34)

witness in 1943 one of the worst famines that history had ever recorded (Ghosh 1987, 15). From the early part of May 1943, people began to flock to Calcutta from villages of Bengal. Hundreds of sick, starving and ragged destitute migrants were observed to gather near the dustbins and making riots among themselves for just a few particles of the putrid foodstuffs and often wailing for a cup of rice starch or *fyan* (rice starch). They had left their villages being compelled by hunger and were obliged to enter the death trap of Calcutta. Here, Goswami's recollection of food was nothing but the image of hungry, starving people dying on the streets of Calcutta. The sight of sick, starving, dying people appeared to him as a cause of pain, frustration and dilemma. The content of *Smriti-Chitran* ended in a transitional phase of Indian history. The post-1945 memories were recorded by Goswami in a latter volume entitled as *Dwitiyo Smriti*.

In case of any autobiography, through the words of the narrator, fragments of his/her experience touch the mind and life of the readers. The present study has demonstrated the ways in which *Smriti-Chitran* proves that remembrance of a meal experience is closely connected with a space, a time, and people with whom the consumption moment was spent. Food memory can neither be identified as separate from one's self, nor as too insignificant in one's life. The present article has highlighted through the prism of Goswami's *Smriti-Chitran* that minute details of a food memory constitute a major part in one's autobiography by connecting various other aspects like family, health, tradition, socio-economic condition, and many such matters.

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The creative fecundity of "Nsukka School" artists towards inspiring action through climate-focused installation art

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Abstract: Climate change is real and it is a global crisis that needs to be addressed with inspiring artwork. In view of this, the study examines the nature of creative fecundity at the level of creative ideology for select "Nsukka School" artists who through the manipulation of common-place materials sourced from the environment, created artwork that draws attention to climate change, as well as issues bordering our natural environment, particularly in the Niger Delta region of Nigeria where oil wells, tankers, as well as pipelines that spill oil from time to time on farmlands and natural waters. For the study, data was collected from extant literatures and personal communications with the artists. As a qualitative research, the study employed historical, technical, descriptive, and interpretative methods of data illumination and analysis. To back up the points being made, visuals of the artwork have been embedded. The study reveals that these artists as social commentators have conveyed ideas centering on climate change and environmental crisis with unconventional media. At the tapestry level of artistic fecundity, they have exquisitely created enchanting statement pieces, as part of their positive contributions to tackling the exploitation of the natural environment. Undoubtedly, this would inspire other artists, who are interested in these creative initiative and advocacy, since they would widen the scope of their creative imaginations of proffering solutions to tackling mundane issues.

Keywords: climate change, environmental issues, installation art, Nsukka School artists

Introduction

Climate change refers to long-term shift in temperature and weather pattern, caused mainly by human activities, especially the burning of fossil fuels like coal, oil and gas. Its consequences range from intense droughts, water scarcity, severs fires, rising sea levels, flooding,

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melting of polar ice, catastrophic storms to declining biodiversity, among others. These affect our health, ability to grow food, housing, safety and work. Global impact of climate change requires urgent need for collective action. In this regard, climate change has been the focus of the COP (Conference of the Parties) held every year since its inauguration in Germany in 1995. It is a convention, where world leaders come together to agree on best ways of addressing the climate crisis such as limiting global climate change, and achieving net-zero emissions by 2050. Attempts from scientists while playing important role does not negate the power of art in raising much needed awareness and mobilizing the people. This is because art is a veritable tool for evoking emotions, spurring conversations and creating synegy between people and their immediate environment. Artists play a key role in raising awareness and inspiring action and as such, need maximum support and recognition, so that in so doing, collective actions could be inspired towards the protection of our planet. In view of this, companies and digital art publishers such as the Talenthouse and Art Help have been on the mission to creating a healthier planet and inspiring artists to take action. Art Help is partnering with Talethouse towards inspiring people, particularly artists to pay attention to and take action against climate change. In the same vain, the Prince Claus Fund and the Goethe-Institut are issuing a new call for proposals to support cultural and artistic initiatives to tackling pressing environmental issues around the world. Also, the call for proposal: Cultural and Artistic Responses to Environmental Change, is part of the commitments by Prince Claud Fund and Goette-Institut to support artists who are finding creative ways towards addressing environmental issues and the climate crisis. Because flood, soil erosions, the depletion of the ozone layer, deformation, bush burning, desertification, drought and oil spillage, among others, have become real threats that constantly tear apart the very fabrics of the society, artists have been enjoined to make concerted efforts towards using art to portray these with a view to drawing much needed attention to their ravaging effects. The soul of an artist dies who keeps silent in the face of tragedy (Gbaden 2001).

It follows from the above that artists have been highlighting the climate crisis, turning their artwork into activism, being fully aware that the parameter for determining social art roles, is its genuine concern for the environment. Climate change and environmental issues have become a creative resource for the artists who trained at the

Department of Fine and Applied Arts other wise known internationally as "Nsukka School" which has been described as a revivalist movement that appropriates and promotes traditional Igbo design called *uli* to raise important questions of identity. For these artists, "materials and cultural environments provide the resources as well as the altar on which this creative ritual assumes corporeal form and soulful essence" (Asogwa et al. 2021, 2). An Igbo fable has it that a story is incomplete without the mention of the tortoise. This is true when writing about Nsukka School, without the mention of El Anatsui, who Professor Sandra Klopper said is one of the critically most acclaimed sculptors working in the contemporary global art world, and "possibly the most relevant living African artist of this time" (Morgan 2016). Anatsui developed the attitude to repurposing and transforming commonplace materials into art and in so doing, articulated a shift in the creative direction in the Nsukka School. He made his students to become aware of the change in global art trends and attune themselves with its varying modes of presentation (Odoh 2011, 30-31). Through his creative tutelage, students have been exposed to cheap materials littered here and there in the environment for creating artwork. Chika Okeke-Agulu unequivocally said that Anatsui cultivated the artistic imagination in students. Some of his students such as Ekene Anikpe, Clement Onyekadi, Uche Onyishi, and Erasmus Onyishi have learnt to "exude creative energy, imagination and spirit of enquiry. Being committed to the idea of constant experimentation and exploration, they often come up with fresh and exciting expression possibilities" (Akabuike, 2023), manipulating common-place materials towards generating visual imageries whose metaphorical import is targeted at articulating the climate change and environmental issues. Becoming aware of the currency in art, they created installation artwork which emphasis space engagement and address climate change and environmental issues in Nigeria.

In attempting to engage the installation art of the select Nsukka School trained artists, the study used data collected mainly from extant literatures and employed historical, technical, descriptive, and interpretative methods of data analysis to examine one of the various dimensions of creative consciousness and also underscore the kind of inner artistic necessity that propels creative artists at the Nsukka art department.

Visual discourse of climate-focused installation art

The issue of how best to protect the natural environment has engaged critical stakeholders as artists, who have been in the vanguard of curtailing the rate at which the environment is polluted through human activities. In recent decade, climate change and related themes are rising in the art world. Moreover, the role of artworks is increasing substantially due to their potential power for raising awareness and helping to educate a broader public. This is because art can generate social discourse through conveying information about climate change in novel ways (Nurmis 2016). Lee (2021, 3) observes that "climate change art encompasses diverse approaches, including traditional media, installations, performance, art-activism, and social sculpture." In his own view, Bill Mckibben (2015) emphasizes that for climate change to be effected there is the need to meaningfully engage the other side of our brains that deals with creativity so as to approach problems with our imagination. And to help do this, the artists are best suited. In view of this, the artist Antoine Bertin's installation "333Hz" explores the global tempo of deforestation. It invites the visitors to listen to the evolving tempo of deforestation around the world. Also, Susie Ibarra and Michele Koppes *Water Rhythm* tells a story of our entanglements with a changing climate and changing landscapes of our own making. By skillfully integrating science, music and art elements together, *Water Rhythm* led listners into the full knowledge of how we cannot extricate ourselves from the Earth's freshwaters. Again, giving climate change a physical form, through her work "The Sewer Soaperie," Catherine Sarah reacted to Typhoon Haiyan which happened in Philippines in 2013. Another good example is Olafur Eliasson's "Ice Watch" installation of seven big ice blocks which draws attention to the melting of Ozone layer, caused by climate change.

El Anatsui's *Offering to the Weather* executed at the Zweites Symposium Nordseekuste, Cuxhaven, Germany was an installation/performance art. It was a huge mound of earth on top of which the artist had placed a large black pot he made. In the performance, each of the six people covered themselves with white shawls and carried out rituals to the weather spirits. According to Ottenberg (1997, 178) "it was an excellent example of Anatsui's ability to innovate; it's one of his most postmodern works." Ever since then, this genre as adduced by Oloidi (2003, 7) has been "attracting many acolytes, particularly from his Nsukka environment."

Undoubtedly, the creative sensibilities of Nsukka-trained artists draw from the professional altar of Anatsui's creative tutelage. And just like Anatsui, artists such as Ekene Anikpe, Clement Onyekadi, Uche Onyishi, and Erasmus Onyishi, among many others, "create artwork that draw from their environment, making use of materials that already existed, whether as objects in the environment or artifacts that have been made and already have had a social life" (Onwuegbucha 2015, 68-9). Lee (2021, 3) noted that "contemporary art stimulates artists to engage the public area as a platform in order to inform a broader audience about ideas and concepts relating to the environment." Poised to do this, these Nsukka-trained artists lend their voices to the clarion call for information dissemination on climate change and its negative implications, through their artworks created with materials from the environment. For example, *Strata* (Figure 1), *Hood* (Figure 2), *Transmogrification* (Figure 3), *Grave Yard* (Figure 4), *Oil Spillage* I (Figure 5), *Oil Spillage II,* (Figure 6), *Receptionists* (Figure 7), *Dots in Space* (Figure 8), *Climate Change* (Figure 9) and *Mushroom* (Figure 10) are thought-provoking installation works emanating from the artists' creative vision towards inspiring action on climate change and environmental issues in Nigeria.

The *Strata* (Figure 1) is a pyramidal installation made of a parent triangular structure which in turn, houses nine trangular shapes of the same size, held firmly together with adhesive, of which the artist's aim is to unify all the triangles as a homogenous unit. For the sake of creating contrast, six of the triangles contain nothing inside of them and the other three at the top, centre and bottom are skillfully filled and arranged with thousands of synthetic straws of different colours of red, green, blue, orange, and yellow, reflecting the soil strata. It is therefore, intended that while all the triangles are separate units, they simultaneously form a homogenous whole. What Anikpe's references to the pyramidal forms (symbol of ancient Egypt) tend to draw, is an attention to the exploitation of the natural environment that is as old as man's earliest quest for progress and development (Onuzulike and Obodo, 2012). Onuzulike and Obodo, further write that Anikpe speaks of the strata series as an attempt to "re**straw**cture" and to conserve the earth's ecology as well as to check its gradual depletion through erosion and flooding, just like straws are channels of flow and siphonage. Through its bright colours that heighten a feeling of polychrome and optical effects, the artwork serves dual functions of utility and aesthetics.

Figure 1**:** *Strata*, straw, and glass, 2021. © The artist.

Figures 2 & 3: *Hoods* and *Transmogrification*, aluminum and wire, 2021. © The artist.

In *Hoods* (Figure 2) and *Transmogrification* (Figure 3), the artist repurposed hundreds of aluminum beverage cans, using the circular

bottom to form his composition. And with copper wires, he tied them together into an installation that delights one's sensory perception. While the *Hoods* numbering four installation works of different heights are tied with strings to the ceiling and made to rest on the floor to have or take the posture of cobras that are ready to strike or bite, *Transmogrification* is an assemblage on the floor. Notice the change in its shape from the flat area to the semi-circle shapes skillful assembled to depict transmogrification. To Transmogrify means to change or distort something; hence this work according to the artist is "a call for human beings to desist from distorting the natural environment" (Ekene Anikpe, personal communication, July, 2021). The shimmering quality of the material, lends them visual tension and optical alignment, especially when installed or exposed to light, thereby creating a sharp and clear outcome. The artworks spell-out deep insight into the artist's intimate grasp of media, including the creative process and production, to borrow from Aniakor (2015). They show that in the search for intelligibility, art remains the only veritable tool for Anikpe toward engaging and addressing climate change and environmental issues.

Drawing attention to issues bordering our natural environment, Clement Onyekadi employs a crude method. By skillfully manipulating condemned motor oil/lubricant, newspapers, cellophane sheets, as well as other petrochemical products or related materials, meaning is lend to these installations (Onuzulike & Obodo 2012). His works site-specific installations address the negative effects of oil exploration, particularly on the lives of the entire Niger Delta people of Nigeria. The Niger Delta, located in the Atlantic coast of southern Nigeria is the world's third largest wetland. It occupies a total land area of 75,000 square kilometers, and it is the world's second largest delta with a coastline of about 450 km (Awosika 1995; Ukiwo 2009). Niger Delta is composed of 9 out of 36 states in Nigeria, (Abia, Akwa Ibom, Bayelsa, Cross River, Delta, Edo, Ondo, Imo and Rivers), and has 185 out of 774 local government areas. The strategic polito-economic importance of Niger Delta revolves around the fact that nearly all of Nigeria's proven oil and gas reserves and a total of 159 oil fields and 1481 wells in operation are located in the region (Nwilo & Badejo 2006). Through his works, "he specially examines issues of oil exploration and its attendant problems of resource and waste management, which eventually triggered off resource control in the Niger Delta"(Onuzulike & Obodo 2012, 105). Onyekadi uses his

works to draw attention to environmental pollution, especially in the Niger Delta, where oil spillage has been deplorable, without remedy, hence the interrogation by the artists with the instrumentality of art, knowing that "climate change art encompasses diverse approaches, including traditional media, installations, performance, art-activism, and social sculpture" (Lee 2021, 3). David Buckland (2013, 367) argues that "art has the power to move people." This is true of Onyekadi's installation entitled *Grave Yard* (Figure 4) that stirs up some cold feelings in the viewers because of its repulsiveness, scary nature, and the gory sight it presents. The installation shows a graveyard, suggested by low and short ridge-like forms of red earth and pieces of stones. On the graves are standing wooden Christian cross. The immediate cause of the victims' death is seen in clothes that are soaked in motor oil, serving as epitaph which carries inscriptions on the individual grave of the victims. In the work, the artists rendered a perfect impression to depict the tombs of the victims who died as a result of oil spillage and the resulting environmental pollution in the Niger Delta (Ozioma & Obodo 2012). It is to be noted that even though the installation is ephemeral in nature, it leaves lasting impression of climate-themed art as having the capacity to inpire action long after its creation.

Figure 4: *Grave Yard*, stones, sands, cloths, and wood, 2022. © The artist.

Onyekadi's oil spillage installation series are good examples of such works that engage the beholder into talking to him or herself. He used empty barrels of oil to metaphorically capture the oil wells, tankers, as well as pipeline spilling oil on farmlands and natural waters. It is a well-known fact that oil spillages destroy the aquatic life and frustrates agricultural activities, which the resultant effects, as well as the far reaching consequences are food shortages (Onuzulike & Obodo 2012).

Figures 5 & 6: *Oil Spillage I* & *II*, drums and sardine tins, variable installation, 2023. © The artist.

Repurposing and transforming empty tins of sardine collected from and around his immediate environment where they are often littered here and there, as a conceptual medium, he suggests the consequences of devastating aquatic life (Onuzulike & Obodo 2012). In the *Oil Spillage I & II* (Figures 5 and 6), tins of sardine were flattened, bound together and folded a little bit. It is as if they are gushing out of the drums, thereby, depicting everyday oil spillage in the Niger Delta. These installation works are true examples of "endless creative possibilities that the living environment offers in terms of ideas, materials and forms are indeed numerous and demand the attention of the discerning artist" (Odoh 2011, 29) to develop owl's eye view to turn things around and make lasting artistic statements.

Noted Odoh (2014, 12), "the life of an artist presupposes a conscious sensitivity to the environment as a potent sources of ideas and materials." Uche Onyishi, another Nsukka School artist created *The Receptionist* (Figure 7) out of a log of wood, he sourced from the

Nsukka environment to address climate and environmental issues. Using chisel and angle grinder and following the wood's natural shape, he achieved different incisions of bold forms on it and burnished them to a level of bright sheen in contrast to the dark part of the wood, whose hollow has been pyrographed with an electric flame. It is a free standing piece that stretches its hand - a metaphor for beckoning on humans to desist from indiscriminate cutting of trees which has far-reaching effects because of its disruption of the delicate ecological balance that leads to greenhouse gases in the atmosphere, loss of habitat, soil erosion and natural disasters vulnerability. This is increasingly impacting negatively on our environment. Through this artwork, the artist explores ways in which art can contribute in sustaining our environment.

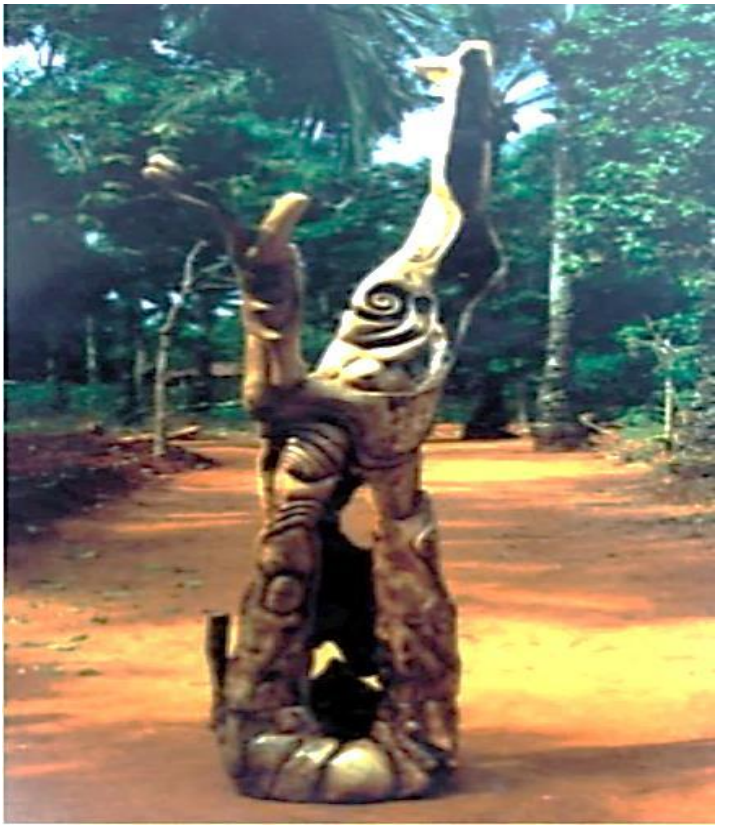

Figure 7: Uche Onyishi, *The Receptionist*, wood, 2023. © The artist

Other of his thought provoking installations include *Dot in the Space* and *Climate Change*. *Dot in the Space* (Figure 8) is "a constellation of 'dusts' webbed and balled into an imposing structure of rock and metal and then rolled out to sail in space.

Meticulously, Onyishi deconstructed nature in what seems to be a calculated articulation. This, he achieved by using natural stones as the earth and metal rods as the iron working which represents technological development and its environmental implication. Here, the earth is depicted as containing holes caused by depletion of ozone layer and its implication for climate changes (Onuzulike & Obodo 2012).

This outdoor monumental work executed with pieces of laterite stones, lends credence to the fact that "contemporary art stimulates artists to engage the public area as a platform in order to inform a broader audience about ideas and concepts relating to the environment" (Lee 2021, 3).

Figure 8: *Dot in the Space* stones and iron, 2006. © The artist.

It is noted that "the core issues of environmental and climate change revolve around the destruction of man's natural habitat through his daily activities, especially land use, oil exploration, industrial manufacture, and other developmental programmes and activities that result in deforestation, land and water pollution, and emission of greenhouse gases into the atmosphere" **(**Facts about Climate Change, cited in Onuzulike & Obodo 2012).

On how climate change spurred artistic interventions, Onuzulike & Obodo (2012, 100) argue that:

> While such European artists like Heather Ackroyd, Dan Harvey, and others are receiving funds from government as commissions to create public sculptures, and installations that call attention to, as well as raise the much needed awareness to climate change in their individual countries, it appears that what most African countries are overwhelmingly focusing on are issues bordering on economic and political survival. Until lately, perhaps, they have not bothered with what appears to them as 'academic' quips represented by climate and environmental change discourses. However, in spite of lack of government or public support, a number of Nigerian artists have not turned a blind eye to the obvious global problem.

Brenthel (2016, 34) is of the view that "climate change art could be interchangeable with expression such as "environmental art "or "ecological art," in term of dealing with environmental issues."

Throwing some items involving non-biodegradable materials into the water is significantly contributing to water pollution. This poses potential health risks to aquatic creatures and human beings who make use of it for survival. In view of this, Uche Onyishi's *Climate Change* (Figure 9) which was created out of some fertilizer bags, which were scorched by fire heat and installed in an asymmetric balance of a colourful composition to make statement on climate change and environmental crisis caused by this practice of polluting the waters, as a method of seeking solution and response.

Figure 9: *Climate Change*, feed bags, 2022. © The artist.

Through fabric appropriation, Erasmus Onyishi believes in the anatomy of the medium, in terms of originality which is not absolute but relative. To him, fabrics are design units on their own that when used in a re-contextualized state, it yields an aesthetically charged works.

With fabrics rolled and wrapped smoothly around different materials like metal, wood, cattle horn, and glass, he created colourful artworks that are visual metaphors, whose conceptual framework is profoundly thought-provoking, without undermining their thematic probing. For example, *Mushroom* (Figure 10) is an installation involving eight different sizes of umbrellas assembled, and grouped to depict mushrooms. Here the artist explored mushrooms and depicted how human beings attach themselves to the natural environment. He sees the mushroom as a symbol of collective growth because the sprouting mushrooms live alongside the grown ones, showing a perfect example of how people should be socially organized in a given territorial space devoid of environmental degradation. In this way, “public art can be substantial in raising awareness of climate change” (Lee 2021, 15).

Figure 10: *Mushroom,* fabrics and metal, 2022. © The artist.

Conclusion

All over the world, art genres: sculpture, painting, photography and installation are being used by artists to address climate change and environmental issues.

Nsukka School trained artists at the tapestry level of artistic fecundity have exquisitely created installation artwork on climate change and environmental issues through repurposing objects and creating enchanting statement pieces, as part of their positive contributions to tackling the exploitation of the natural environment, lending credence to Lui et al. (2022, 1) assertion that "climate change is impacting on all aspects of contemporary life and that many artists provide a compelling vision for speculative futures, awakening a creative consciousness using imagined worldviews."

The study took a cursory look at the installation artworks of Anthoine Bertins, Olafur Eliasson, Sussie Ibarra, Michele Koppes and El Anatsui to show how art can facilitate the understanding of climate change and environmental issues, before delving into the installation art of select Nsukka School artists such as Ekene Anikpe, Clement Onyekadi, Uche Onyishi, and Erasmus Onyishi whose creative experiments like their teacher, El Anatsui, are seamless in scope and

range, inferring that by the seamlessness of their creative imaginations and a fecundity of creative output, they continue to expand the boundaries as they journey through the pathways of creative discovery.

The study looked at, examined, analyzed and interpreted their installation artworks that are characterized by their visual richness, and stylistic diversity, affirming that "throughout the history of art, the relationship between the artist and the environment accounts for diverse and enduring art statements that define the very essence of existence" (Odoh 2011, 29). The study observes that they are multimedia artists whose creative sensibilities gear towards relying on art to "critically interrogate man's actions and its resultant consequences within socio-political, economic, cultural and environmental space" (Odoh & Odoh 2021). The study shows that these daunting installation artworks open up new vistas for artists seeking to "intuit space by knowing that there are as many spaces as there are variations in the human condition" (Aniakor 1989, 29), agreeing with Rable-Boshoff (2022, no page number) assertion that "the question of how human beings are to understand their role in creation is of particular interest in our current time of extreme exploitation of the earth and severe environmental degradation."

The study reveals that Nsukka artists as social commentators have conveyed ideas centering on climate change and have also factored in environmental sustainability in their artistic production with materials sourced from the environment.

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Regional comics literature in India: An analysis of the comics *Sudden Muanga*, Manipur

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Abstract: The article seeks to enhance our comprehension of comics by investigating them as products shaped by historical factors within the context of Mizoram's regional comics. It delves into various aspects related to the socio-cultural circumstances under which these comics were created, shedding light on previously unnoticed or unexplored dimensions. Furthermore, through an analysis of the comic book *Sudden Muanga*, this article explores the portrayal of prominent political figures who have been caricatured within the realm of long-form political cartoons. This analysis aims to incorporate a more accurate depiction of historical reality into discussions about history. Ultimately, the article underscores the importance of studying the development of regional comics in India, an area that has received relatively little research attention compared to its more widely recognized counterpart, such as *Amar Chitra Katha*, while preserving the unique regional characteristics of these comics.

Keywords: Mizo, comics, region, history, culture

Introduction

Indian comics literature has maintained a deep and ever-expanding connection with its audience, even in this era of advanced technology and abundant entertainment options. The term 'regional' carries a multitude of meanings that demand detailed explanation, especially within the context of Mizo comic books. These indigenous branches of Indian comics, often categorized as uncharted territories, have remained largely unnoticed by academic peers and critics. For instance, Narayana Debnath's creation, *Bantul the Great*, possessed extraordinary abilities like deflecting bullets, stopping trains, and even

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having a whale for breakfast. Meanwhile, V T Thomas, also known as Toms, a cartoonist from Kerala, introduced *Boban and Molly*, characters who embarked on childlike adventures while also offering contemporary social and political satire within their comics. *Amar Chitra Katha*, on the other hand, primarily focused on using comic books to disseminate education. *Raj comics*, on the contrary, delved into the superhero genre, heavily influenced by Western comics, and initially published their works in Hindi language, targeting the northern part of India. Although a significant portion of *Raj comics* is still published in Hindi, there are limited editions available in Bhojpuri, Nepali, Bengali, and English. In this manner, the popularity of comics in India has waned due to the widespread use of the global language, English.

In March 1977, a fresh comic book was introduced in Mizoram by the independent publishing house *ELES Comics*, titled *Sudden Muanga*. This comic was the creation of Lalsangzuala Varte, an artist who also worked as an associate professor in the Department of Mizo at Lamka College in Manipur, using the pen name Laisaizawk. Initially conceived to humorously depict his own childhood experiences with close friends, *Sudden Muanga* eventually evolved to chronicle the adventures of the tribal superstar known as 'Sudden'. The comic series presented a sophisticated satire of Mizo society at the time, mocking politicians while employing clever wordplay.

Initially, *Sudden Muanga* delved into mundane themes, poking fun at people in the artist's immediate circle. However, it quickly gained widespread popularity in Mizoram and Manipur, largely due to its use of the Mizo vernacular and its focus on regional-specific topics. Beginning as a cyclostyled production in 1977, the comic ran until 2003, totalling nearly 94 issues. Set in a pastoral tribal setting, the series featured an extensive cast of characters who exemplified the incorrigible aspects of human nature and the recurring cycle of social problems.Even after the artist's passing in 2016, the character of *Sudden Muanga* continued to hold a special place in Mizo popular culture. His likeness remained beloved and enduring in the region, to the extent that a movie and a song were created in his honour posthumously. Despite the immense popularity of the comic series, it has largely been overlooked by the field of comic studies. However, *Sudden Muanga* has received brief mentions in newspaper articles, social media blog posts, and references in scholarly works. In the comics, the central character is *Sudden Muanga*, also known as *Pu*

Muanga. He differs from the typical portrayal of comic book protagonists in that he lacks conventionally attractive physical features, being a tribal Christian Mizo male. Notably,his distinctive appearance includes a prominent bulbous nose, a jutting chin, and a somewhat cross-eyed gaze. This artistic choice aligns with Scott McCloud's idea that simplifying facial details in drawings can make characters more cartoonish and, paradoxically, more universally relatable (McCloud 1994,31-37).

Unlike the common depiction of comic book heroes with attributes like masculinity, physical appeal, and superhuman abilities, *Sudden Muanga* breaks this style. The artist satirizes the character by emphasizing his deficiencies, highlighting that despite his talents, typical Mizo values are notably absent in him. *Sudden Muanga* is often seen wearing cowboy-style attire, a fashion trend influenced by the American West and popularized following the Allied forces' impact during World War II. This style gained widespread attention in the 1940s' but it wasn't until the Mizo National Front (MNF) uprising in 1966 that it became associated with the romanticized image of the heroic guerrilla fighter. Joy L Pachuau underscores the significance of the cowboy or guerrilla fighter as a style icon during the Mizo revolt from 1966 to 1986 (Pachuau and Schendel 2015). This sartorial choice served as a potent symbol for young men in Mizoram during that tumultuous period, reflecting their aspirations and ideals.

Locating the regional in comics

In her book 'Visuality and Identity in Post Millennial Indian Graphic Narratives', E. Dawson Varughese (2019) highlights the importance of exploring the 'inauspicious' elements within graphic narratives in regional languages. She emphasizes the need for a 'different way of seeing' and a departure from the traditional themes of heroism and honor, as seen in series like Anant Pai's *Amar Chitra Katha* (Varughese 2019, 111). Aruna Rao commends visual artists such as Aabid Surti, along with the creators of *Indrajal* comics, for their creation of *Bahadur*, an adventurous detective and one of India's earliest indigenous comic characters. *Bahadur* was firmly rooted in contemporary Indian life (Rao 2001, 8). Surti's ingenuity paved the way for other influential artists like Mario Miranda and Manjula Padmanabhan, whose relatable stories not only made comics engaging but also provided valuable social commentary on various societal issues. Consequently, comics and graphic narratives serve as powerful

tools for expressing dissent and shedding light on the less savoury aspects of Indian history. Regional comics also serve the purpose of portraying the unique characteristics of India's diverse cultures (Khanduri 2010,173).

The memory of the insurgency period in Mizoram, spanning from 1966 to 1986, has had a lasting impact on the society, even after the acclaimed peace accord of June 30, 1986. During the height of the insurgency, curfews were imposed, and censorship was rampant, discouraging any form of writing. It was after this turbulent period that comics were first published in the humble town of Churachandpur, Manipur, away from the violence in Mizoram. These comics provided an escape for the youth who had witnessed mass destruction, bombings, and human rights violations. The comics of the 1980s and 1990s can be characterized as indigenous or regional due to their focus on Mizo culture and society. They incorporated elements of Mizo vernacular creativity, gunfights, kung fu, and Western cowboy character tropes. The artists drew inspiration from various artistic and narrative traditions, transforming them into a medium that aimed to entertain and provoke thought, often focusing on the socio-cultural norms of society. This made comics an effective tool for educating the indigenous minority and reconnecting them with their cultural heritage.

Following the peace accord, Mizoram attained statehood in 1987. The MNF initially won the first state legislative assembly election but later lost its dominance to the Congress party in 1989. Since then, Mizoram transitioned from a union territory to a state, marking a significant shift from oral traditions to written and visual forms of expression. Artists have drawn on elements of comedy and satire, inspired by pulp fiction novels, to create a cultural artefact within popular culture. This transformation has been instrumental in indigenizing a Western-dominated art form, comics. The artist, while playing the roles of cultural critic and auteur, used this medium to humorously challenge the authority of certain church leaders and their adapted faith. Their consistent targets included lay evangelicals, church leaders, politicians, and cultural guardians of their time.

Prominence of implicit history

The interest in history and its portrayal within graphic narratives has its roots dating back to the 1980s when Art Spiegelman's graphic narrative, *Maus* (1986) tackled the Holocaust. This approach is applicable to the context of Indian historical events, given the enduring

importance of memories associated with the National Emergency and the Naxalite movement. These events have become central topics, employing an unconventional lens of 'inauspiciousness' as advocated by Varughese, thereby offering an alternative perspective to traditional historical accounts. While *Amar Chitra Katha* is often credited as the pioneer in historical graphic storytelling, having been first published in 1967 for a pan-Indian audience, the contributions of regional writers and illustrators have often been overlooked. Self-publishing has emerged as a viable means for them to express themselves. Consequently, regional language-based comics challenge the notion of a singular Indian historical narrative, embracing their indigenous aspects, including language. Hayden White, who introduced the term 'historiophoty', argued that visual images and their narratives hold as much historical truth as traditional historiography (White 1988,1193). Nayar contends that the visual dimension of graphic novels, or graphic narratives in this case, not only "contributes significantly to our understanding of history but also raises questions about how history can be represented" (Nayar 2016,14). This help to understand how comics provide commentary on historical events, entities, and situations through both text and images, thus shedding light on underreported issues. Examining comics from a historical perspective aims to uncover entities referenced in various contexts and their societal relevance. In this manner, the author highlights the power dynamics in Mizoram from the 1980s to the 2000s, offering a comprehensive historical viewpoint.It draws references from graphic narratives or comics to create a new historical narrative while challenging and subverting the official narrative, seeking validation as useful corroboration in the discourse of history (Ashkenazi and Dittmar 2019, 4).

Decoding embedded narratives in the visual dimension of a text, in addition to textual components like speech and thought bubbles, is a compelling aspect. While some aspects of the historical narrative may be overt, such as journalism, reportage, or biography comics, others may have implicit traces that require careful interpretation. Examining comics in the Mizo context reveals images and caricatures addressing specific issues, which must be contextualized to be understood within the comic's narrative. The interpretation of these images depends on the reader's cultural connection to the elements used in a particular context.

In the case of *Sudden Muanga*, a fictional setting, there is a clear contextual record. The western cowboy backdrop is evident from the outset, influenced by western pulp fiction novels like Oliver Strange's 'Sudden Novels'. The title as well as the different character's names such as Sudden Muanga, Clement Hrangtudai, Abraham Chalchhuna etc.,bear this western resemblance despite the backdrop of a rustic ethnic Mizo surrounding.However, within the region's historical and cultural context of 1977, it represents a clear departure from Indiannotions of style and etiquette. The thematisation of the American western cowboy motif originates in 1940s with the region's people recruited by the Allied forces during the World War II (Zama and Vanchiau 2016).

Despite the resistance against British imperialism, cowboy paraphernalia, such as wide-brimmed hats and guitars, were embraced in Mizoram, shaping a modern identity that challenged the mainstream perception of the region as 'tribal'. This stylistic shift prompted cultural resistance against the hegemonic Indian state.Following the 1966 revolt, the cowboy motif took on the symbolism of a romantic heroic guerrilla fighter, serving as a powerful style icon for Mizo youth during the insurgency period (1966-1986). The comics' plot draws inspiration from western pulp fiction novels, depicting antagonism between indigenous Mizos as the cowboy settlers and the Nationalist mainstream, represented as the 'Native Indians' or *Shabito*. This portrayal reflects the indelible impact of the 1966 revolt on the Mizo psyche, gradually reducing insularity and alienation toward the 'other' (Zama and Vanchiau 2016, 40).

In volumes like 'Invincible' and 'Holy War', the comics reference the post-accord period in Mizoram and the events leading up to its signing. Characters like Shabito I, resembling the former Prime Minister Indira Gandhi, symbolise the Indian National Congress' dominance. Although gender-related traits are not emphasized, they share similarities, with Shabito I wear a headdress with feathers and fringes, symbolizing the Native Indian aura. Subsequently, as Shabito II emulated Rajiv Gandhi, the comics also drew parallels between Shabito III and P.V. Narasimha Rao; two contemporary and key Indian political figures. Therefore, the depictions of historical personages provided insights into Mizoram's political history, and restored memories of the peace settlement.

The portrayal of political figures underscored by their prominent features has resulted in heterogenous depictions, where targets of

ridicule are juxtaposed against oblique representations. Thus, the panel in the comics, which depicted Shabito I's order to 'Kill them all' was clearly an unfavourable depiction, supported by his loyalty to the insurgency and his intolerance towards the famed *Gospeliana*. The latter was a preacher turned politician who evoked a strong resemblance to Laldenga, the founder of the Mizo National Front.

The comics' reconstruction of the narrative sheds light on the challenges met after the accord and addresses politically charged stories that print journalism often avoided. This parallel narrative in the comics also explores efforts for repatriation, with Shabito I and Gospeliana, as well as Kapriduma, vacating his sheriff seat to Gospeliana, revealing political motivations. Lalsangzuala's long-form political cartoons capture the politics of the time, employing what Oyvind Vagnes describes as "graphically asserting the truthfulness through the admission of artifice" (Vagnes 2015, 159).

In order to maintain a focus on the subject matter, the connection between the graphic narrative and the supporting evidence taps into the potential of Mizo regional comics as both an analytical and expressive tool. This approach is exemplified in *Sudden Muanga*, where the political power structures in Mizoram, most notably in the timeline between 1980 to 2000, provided a detailed running commentary on the shifting governance, and the different political leaders involved.Kapriduma is a recurring character throughout the comic series and is a target of satire, given his distinctive curly hair and moustache, traits reminiscent of Lalthanhawla. Like Kapriduma's efforts in the comics, Lalthanhawla in real life also played a role in addressing political instability in the state and actively intervened in peace accord settlements. A particular instance in the comics showcased the altruistic surrender of his Sheriff's post to make way for Gospelliana. This act could have alluded to Lathanhawla stepping down from his office to make way for Laldenga as the new Chief Minister of Mizoram.

Furthermore, the comics depict Lalthanhawla's benevolence through his welcoming behavior when officials from the Apache camp visit Rualrem City, in so much that he dismisses their violence towards the youth symbolised by the death of an individual called Ramchhana (whose name translates as Saviour of the land). The comics also depicted his mournful state upon learning of Shabito's assassination by his two bodyguards, an event parallel to the late Prime Minister Indira Gandhi's assassination. In the volume *Temptation*' we are introduced

to a hand gesture on the cover of *Sudden Muanga*'s 'Rularem Weakly' edition greatly admired by Kapa, who believes it to be the late Shabito's and this highlights Kapa's compassion for the Apaches over his own ethnic brethren.

The comics also highlight Kapriduma's appointment to the Finance committee, a position that symbolizes the Ninth Finance Commission of India. The comics also highlighted Kapriduma's appointment to the Finance committee, which recalled the nomination of two politicians namely, Lalthahawla and NKP Salve to the Ninth Finance Commission of India. These appointments had not only attracted media attention, but aroused suspicions regarding the political aspirations of Lalthahawla and Congress (I). In a similar vein, the comics offer commentary on political figures like Brigadier Thenphunga Sailo, Laldenga, and Lalthanhawla as they grapple with various governance issues, including the influence of the Synod Church in policymaking. The comics provide a subtext of the events during the rise of the Mizo National Front (MNF). For example, they depict Lalkhirvela, an ally of Gospeliana, representing MNF dissidents responsible for the party's split and withdrawal from politics. Lalkhirvela forms an alliance with Kapriduma, betraying the former Sheriff and ultimately leading to Kapriduma's victory. The text suggests that these leaders faced accusations of political scandals and administrative inefficiencies, leading to their downfall. Additionally, the comics creatively criticize themes such as censorship, which was prevalent during the insurgency, and was used to suppress dissent. Kapriduma is portrayed as a political leader who threatens negative news coverage against the government while engaging in character assassination of his political opponents. Overall, the comics provide a rich case study for exploring how history can be conceptualized in comic studies, offering a significant amount of social realism and political commentary.

Conclusion

The fusion of comics with historical narratives opens a promising avenue for exploring undocumented or neglected aspects of history. This intersection sparks a dialogue between storytelling and established historiography (Ashkenazi and Dittmar 2019, 49). It is commonly assumed that everything holds historical significance, and by examining the arguments presented in regional comics from Mizoram, an implicit history emerges. This narrative not only challenges the prevailing mainstream nationalist discourse but also

enriches historiography with a perspective that written texts often fail to convey. The context of insurgency and political history plays a pivotal role in shaping the content of these comics. *Sudden Muanga*, as the leading feature, continues to shed light on the real-life excesses of individuals, political leaders, and church figures.

Given India's multicultural and multilingual diversity, regional comics, particularly those from the Northeast India like Mizo comics, have established their own historical significance within the national context. Joy L. Pachuau underscores how the dominant nationalist discourse tends to interpret this region from its own perspective, compelling the local population to construct their own culture and assert their identity through historical discourse allowing for a self-identification in their own terms (Pachuau 2014, 14). This emphasizes the necessity of spotlighting and revitalizing indigenous comic books tailored for minority audiences. These comics elucidate historical events and situations often overlooked in traditional history curricula. Therefore, the article advocates for highlighting regional aspects, such as the region's diversity and aspirations, to prevent marginalization by dominant overarching frameworks like *Amar Chitra Katha* or Diamond and *Indrajal* comics, which tend to depict a single narrative history of Indian comics. Despite facing declining readership since 2003, comics like '*SuddenMuanga* have not deterred new comic artists like L. Chhangte and Lalhmachhuana Zofa, along with publishing house Scream Magazine in Aizawl, Manipur, from creating exceptional content centered around Mizo folklore. Similarly, Th. Kirankumar's comic book 'Folktales of Maram, Mao, and Poumai' recently explores cultural ethos in comic book format. While commercial success is a natural aspiration, it can only be achieved by encouraging comic book artists to delve into the true essence of their culture beyond the dominant discourse assigned to them. This approach provides an opportunity to present and study India's rich cultural diversity.

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Exploring the realistic nature of animation film in ecological storytelling

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Abstract: As technology developed, storytelling advanced from being told from mouth to mouth to a phase wherein the mise-en-scene or diegesis of stories could come alive through the magnetic audio-visual medium known as film. Animation, a unique technique of film, has gone beyond merely amusing its ever-increasing audience with its exciting non-human characters to becoming an effective means of portraying reality with its incredible storytelling mechanism. This article uses the eco-critical theory to undergird its arguments on realism in animation. It employs literary, direct observation and media content analysis methods to examine selected animated films (*FernGully: The Last Rainforest*, *The Lion King* and *Moana* representing different environments of the Australian rainforest, African Savannah and Polynesian area respectively). The study considers the nature of animation in telling realistic ecological stories that live camera lenses, angles and conventional classroom situations may not be able to capture. It bared the fact that animation is an incredible film technique that can demonstrate stylistically the effects of the negligence of the environment by humans in a manner that film audiences/learners can gain insights and pragmatically become advocates for nature/green culture and environmental protection. The conclusion is that if the animation technique is creatively utilized in schools in different ecosystems, it can present to its audience/learners, complex ideas such as the need to preserve Mother Earth from wanton destruction for the common good of human beings in a simple but imaginative way.

Keywords: animation film, ecological storytelling, nature, ecocriticism, human behaviour, Green Culture

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Introduction

Worldwide, storytelling is a vital aspect of culture that can be used to edutain, infotain and correct societal ills. It is a resourceful literary device that could be used to engender positive or desirable changes in human behaviour, especially in developing societies (Omoera 2012). Today, people seldom find it convenient to converge on a commonplace, such as the marketplace or village square, to participate in the art of storytelling due to reasons varying from tight schedules to finding it unnecessary to meet at orthodox venues of the enactment. Other reasons may be linked to religious, educational or social factors. But with the advent of technology and its development over the years, several storytelling media have emerged and among these is the animation film.

Animations or animated films are a means for storytellers to tell larger-than-life stories. It is a form of storytelling that naturally lends itself to creative and high-concept ideas (Lowe 2004). Although animated films appear not to be taken seriously in the adult world as they are deemed childish and lacking depth in content, a critical look shows that they finely address adult subject matters and sophisticated themes on different levels. Animated films have become one of the means for storytellers to interweave real issues affecting society such as ecological degradation and its resulting consequences to sensitise the audience on the need to preserve the environment.

Animations have the potential to serve both affective and cognitive functions. "Affective function refers to portraying things in a humorous, spectacular, or bizarre way so that learners will be attracted to pay attention to the learning materials and motivated to learn. Cognitive function refers to the clear presentation of dynamic matters (which might be abstract and difficult) that can allow learners to understand in an easier way" (Lowe 2004, 558). Going by this, telling ecological stories through animation technique presents a lively atmosphere for learners to be educated on the effects of certain harmful practices on the environment as well as understand the need to check environmental despoliation.

As a technique, animation is able to tell stories from a figurative and hyperrealistic point of view. It does this through the use of imagery illustration to build an integral representation of a phenomenon, sounds and colourful scenes. It attracts the attention of the learners and appeals to their senses of sight and hearing which foster retentive memory and recalling ability. As an art form, it is never without

consequences as it holds the power to influence the conceptions and attitudes of its audience. It is in this context that this article examines animation film as a means employed by creative storytellers to expose ecological issues and mobilise learners/audiences/populace to protect and preserve the environment. In doing this, it hopes to arouse advocates of green culture for society's transformation using qualitative research methods to interrogate three animated films, *FernGully: The Last Rainforest* (1992), *The Lion King* (1994), and *Maona* (2016).

Theoretical infrastructure

This study uses the eco-critical theory to foreground its interrogation of realism in selected animation films – *FernGully: The Last Rainforest*, *The Lion King*, and *Maona* – that serve as textual referents. Ecocriticism has been apprehended as the study of literature and the environment from an interdisciplinary standpoint, where scholars analyse texts that explicate environmental concerns and examine the various ways literature treats the subject of nature (Schneider-Mayerson Weik and Małecki 2020; Akoh and Ugwu 2023). The point here is that ecocriticism or eco-critical theory takes a multidisciplinary perspective by exploring the works of writers or researchers in the context of environmental issues and nature. The theory envisages a critical approach to the study of ecology as represented in literature.

Glotfelty (1996, xviii) affirms that "ecocriticism is the study of the relationship between literature and the physical environment. Just as feminist criticism examines language and literature from a gender-conscious perspective, and Marxist criticism brings an awareness of modes of production and economic class to its reading of texts, ecocriticism takes an earth-centred approach to literary studies". In essence, ecocriticism argues in its literature that a host of environmental problems including climate change effects such as flooding, erosions, epidemics and pandemics are caused by environmental degradation – an unhealthy interaction within the ecosystem (Akoh and Ugwu 2023). The theory holds that the protection of the natural environment is key to safe living. It, therefore, "advocates systematic usages of natural resources like coal, gas, forests, etc., for a sustainable future" (Mishra 2016, 168). Marland (2013, 846) adds that ecocriticism is "the representation in literature ... of the relationship between the human and the non-human, largely from the perspective of anxieties around humanity's destructive impact

on the biosphere". We argue that the selected animation films in this study, *FernGully: The Last Rainforest, The Lion King*, and *Moana*, in their nature, raise issues that speak to the kind of anxieties Marland alluded to. It is in this context that eco-critical theory or ecocriticism is apt to this research that seeks eco-perspective remediation of a contemporary environmental situation.

Methodological considerations

This study adopted a qualitative methodology that was expressed in the modalities of the literary, direct observation and media analysis methods to interrogate the texts that were selected for exploration. We reasoned that a combination of these methods could give us an insight into how "human activities have significantly altered three-quarters of the land and two-thirds of the oceans, changing the planet to such an extent as to determine the birth of a new era" (Jeffries 2020, 3). Hence, a robust methodological approach that could probe technological and artistic boundaries of what has been called "technoetic arts" (Ododo 1999) is apposite. We consider animation films under "technoetic arts," which focuses upon the juncture between art, technology and the mind in this study as divisions between these areas are gradually dissolving due to developments in science and cultural practice in the age of 'de-compartmentalization of knowledge.' As Glotfelty (1996, xx) claims, there is "troubling awareness that we have reached the age of environmental limits". Therefore, the solution to the issues of the environment requires the contributions of not only science and technology, but arts and literature, and animation sits at this juncture as a storytelling technique.

Animation as a storytelling technique

Animation is an abstract form of expressing ideas that has a 'documentary feel' and is an effective storytelling technique in showcasing reality. Wells in his 1998 book, *Understanding Animation* succinctly declares that there is a relationship between the abstract expression of characters through the models and the constituent elements of the everyday world, which lends itself more towards mimesis. Most often, when an animated film (story) presents an abstract world or idea to the audience, it does not really mean that the idea presented is totally strange. Instead, the world being presented is made recognizable to the audience. The model character may not be human, yet its unique qualities and behaviour will represent that of real

people in society. In a bid to remain recognizable as well as believable, model characters will exhibit human behaviour in talking, expressing their feelings as real people will do, and above all, discussing the day-to-day issues that affect the populace.

According to Mayer and Moreno (2002, 85), "Animation is viewed as a simulated motion picture depicting the movement of a drawn (or simulated) object". As a unique storytelling technique, it aids in visualizing abstract processes, ideas, concepts and issues. Although animated films are often reserved for recreation and entertainment, it suffices that it has a positive impact on the education process. Together with other techniques elaborated as a result of rapidly developing information and communication technologies (ICTs), the use of animations has been strongly encouraged as an innovative, constructivist and students-centred alternative to the traditional learning approaches in many countries (Sanger, Brecheisen and Hynek 2001).

Rieber (1990) posits that it is easier to understand abstract and difficult themes such as ecological challenges using animation techniques. Some of the most important benefits of animation as a storytelling cum teaching technique according to Sanger, Brecheisen and Hynek (2001) are that they assist to understand abstract and invisible learning concepts as well as improve students' learning motivation. Ecological issues such as environmental degradation, pollution of different kinds, deforestation, ozone layer depletion due to harmful environmental practices and their contributing effects on human beings and the ecology can be presented to learners in a way that is technologically mediated and easy to understand through animated storytelling.

Realistic nature of animations

Animation is a form of cinema that does not depend on a photographic reproduction of the real. The concept of realism is slippery to pin down due to the fact that animation is inherently artificial. Hence, in this article, an attempt is made to give an insight into how animation's depiction of reality is a look-alike of the actual physical world we live in – the similarities and differences between the world represented in animations and the actual experience of real life. Unlike in a live-action context, realism is difficult but not impossible to achieve in animation. Wells (1998) makes such an attempt at explaining realism in animation with the term 'hyper-realism'. He claims that in

animation, the depiction of characters, objects and environments are "over-determined and exaggerated so that they move into "a realism which is simultaneously realistic but beyond the orthodoxies of realism" (Ibid.). What this means is that animations capture reality but stretch it a bit to create a particular kind of reality far above the possibilities of real life.

In agreement with Wells' concept of realism in animation, Rowley (2006) in *Life Reproduced in Drawings: Realism in Animation* uses the term "ultra-realism" to describe this tendency towards a heightened or exaggerated depiction of the real. According to him, "this reality is not defined by the correlation between the animated world and the real world (or classical live-action cinema), but instead by a set of conventions that serve as animation's particular substitute for reality". This implies that different animated films will portray reality in different ways. Hence, an analysis of the conventions that generally define the notion of 'realism' in animated cartoons is necessary to illustrate the different types of realism found in cartoons. Rowley identified several types of realism that can be seen in animations, such as; visual realism, aural realism, realism of motion, narrative and character realism and social realism. As much as each of the types of realism highlighted above may not achieve literal realism, they aid animated films to achieve a sense of believability and verisimilitude (closeness to reality) as one of the greatest challenges of the animated form has been to creating realistic effects in a medium that is inherently artificial.

Synoptic analyses of selected animated films

The three animated films with discernible environmental themes selected for examination are *FernGully: The Last Rainforest*, *The Lion King*, and *Moana*. The feature films are weighty in their ecological messages. Human beings are portrayed to be 'aggressive destroyers' of nature all in the name of survival and in a bid to initiate new things through oil or chemical-driven technology. This article furthers its discussion through synoptic analyses of the aforementioned films and footnotes of inherent ecologically instructive messages.

FernGully: The Last Rainforest is an Australian-American animated musical fantasy film. It was adapted from a book of the same name written 15 years prior by Diana Young. It is set in an Australian rainforest inhabited by fairies including Crysta, who accidentally shrinks a young logger named Zak to the size of a fairy.

Crysta is a fairy with a curious nature living in FernGully, a pristine rainforest free from human intervention. The fairies of FernGully once lived in harmony with humans, but believe them to have gone extinct after being driven away by a malevolent spirit named Hexxus (pollution). Crysta is the apprentice of Magi, a motherly figure fairy who imprisoned Hexxus in a tree.

Crysta explores a new part of the forest and meets Batty, a bat who claims to have experimented on humans, giving him an obstreperous and unstable personality. Crysta refuses to believe him (the bat) until she encounters lumberjacks cutting down trees. She sees Zak, a young human whom Crysta accidentally shrinks when she tries to save him from being crushed by a falling tree, though does not know how to restore him to normal size. The tree that Hexxus is imprisoned in is cut down by Tony and Ralph, Zak's superiors. Hexxus quickly begins to regain his powers by feeding on pollution. He manipulates humans to drive to FernGully. In FernGully, Zak meets Pips, a male fairy envious of Zak’s relationship with Crysta. Zak begins to fall in love with Crysta but hides the true reason that the humans have returned. When the signs of Hexxus's resurrection begin to manifest in poisoned trees and rivers, he admits that humans are destroying the forest. The fairies mount an attempt to defend their homes, but knowing their fight is hopeless, Zak convinces Batty to aid him in stopping the machine before it destroys them. When Zak makes his presence known to Tony and Ralph, Hexxus takes over the machine and begins to destroy the forest.

Magi sacrifices herself to give the fairies a chance, and she tells Crysta to remember everything she's learned. Zak manages to stop the machine, depriving Hexxus of the source of his power, but he manifests himself within the oil in the machine and begins to ignite the forest ablaze. Crysta seemingly expends herself by allowing herself to be devoured by Hexxus and all seems lost until he begins to sprout limbs and leaves like a tree. Pips with the rest of the fairies rally the powers they have been given, which causes the seed that Crysta feeds him to start growing riotously. Hexxus is crushed and erased by the newly grown tree at the very border of FernGully which bursts into bloom. Crysta appears after the fight, having survived her ordeal and admirably succeeds Magi as a magical fairy. She gives Zak a seed, begging him to remember everything that has transpired and she sadly restores him to his human size. He (Zak) buries the seed in the soil and

tells Tony and Ralph that things need to change. The seed sprouts new growth for FernGully, while everything returns to normalcy.

This film exhibits the danger and the need to preserve the world's ecosystem. Through an eco-critical reading of the film, some lessons are discerned. From *FernGully: The Last Rainforest*, for instance, the rainforest is located near Mount Warning, on the eastern coast of Australia, but the film shows that the entire universe is this article's range of signification. The film further explains the consequences of rainforest destruction and addresses the economic push behind this destruction. The character of Batty introduces the secondary lesson of animal experimentation, though with a light touch that presents this potentially horrifying motif as essentially humorous. However, this does not invalidate the lesson thereof.

Next is *The Lion King*. It tells the story of Simba, a young lion who is to succeed his father. The story is situated in the Pride Lands of Africa. A lion rules over the animal kingdom from Pride Rock. King Mufasa's newborn son, Simba, is presented to the assembled animals by Rafiki, a mandrill who serves as shaman and advisor. Mufasa shows Simba the Pride Lands and explains to him the responsibilities of kingship and the 'circle of life,' which connects all living things. Mufasa's younger brother, Scar, covets the throne and plots to kill Mufasa and Simba so he can become king. He tricks Simba and his best friend Nala (whom Zazu reveals is betrothed to Simba) into exploring a forbidden elephants' graveyard, where they are attacked by three spotted hyenas who are in league with Scar. Mufasa is alerted to the danger by his majordomo, the hornbill Zazu, and rescues the cubs. Though angry with Simba, Mufasa forgives him and explains that the great kings of the past watched over them from the night sky, from which he will one day watch over Simba.

Scar sets a trap for his brother and nephew; luring Simba into a gorge and having the hyenas drive a large herd of wildebeest into a stampede that will trample him. He informs Mufasa of Simba's danger, knowing the king will rush to save his son. Mufasa saves Simba but ends up hanging perilously from the gorge's edge and is betrayed by Scar, who sends him tumbling to his death. Scar convinces Simba that the tragedy was his fault and advises him to flee the kingdom which he heeded. To cover up, Scar tells the pride that both Mufasa and Simba were killed in the stampede and steps forward as the new king, allowing a large pack of hyenas to live in the Pride Lands.

Simba collapses in a desert and is rescued by Timon and Pumbaa, a meerkat and warthog who are fellow outcasts. Simba grows up in the jungle with his two new friends, living a carefree life under the motto 'Hakuna Matata' ('no worries' in Swahili). Now an adult, Simba rescues Timon and Pumbaa from a hungry lioness who turns out to be Nala. She and Simba reunite and fall in love, and she urges him to return home, telling him the Pride Lands have become a drought-stricken wasteland under Scar's reign. Feeling guilty over his father's death, Simba refuses, runs off and encounters Rafiki, who tells him that he does not know who he is. Rafiki reminds Simba that he is Mufasa's son and Mufasa's spirit lives on in Simba. He is then visited by the ghost of Mufasa in the night sky, who tells him he must claim his rightful place as king. Realizing he can no longer run from his past, Simba chooses to return home.

Aided by his friends, Simba sneaks past the hyenas at Pride Rock and confronts Scar who taunts him over his role in Mufasa's death and forces him to the edge of the rock, where he reveals to Simba that he murdered Mufasa. Enraged, Simba pins Scar to the ground and forces him to reveal the truth to the others. Timon, Pumbaa, Rafiki, Zazu, and the lionesses fend off the hyenas while Scar, attempting to escape, is cornered by Simba at the top of Pride Rock. Scar begs for mercy and attempts to blame the hyenas for his actions; Simba spares his life but orders him to leave the Pride Lands forever. Scar then attacks his nephew but Simba manages to toss him from the top of the rock. Scar survives the fall but is killed by the hyenas, who overhear him betray them to Simba. With his enemies gone, Simba takes over the kingship as it begins to rain. This signifies a kind of renewal of life in the charred land. Later, with Pride Rock restored to its former glory, Rafiki presents Simba and Nala's newborn cub to the assembled animals, continuing the circle of life.

Ecology-wise, there are two major lessons in this film. First, the sheer scale and spectacle of the African savannah are shown in all their glory. Through this film, the audience/learner is made to see one of the last world's true wildernesses and the last place on earth where we have both herbs of wild grazing mammals and large numbers of mammalian top predators inhabiting in harmony. The filmic images exemplify the beauty of nature and the balance in the ecosystem before human intrusion to kill off, eat and domesticate the rest of the large mammal populations. The savannah is rightly 'worshipped' by the

animation in *The Lion King*. The opening circle of life sequence is a powerhouse that never fails to leave an emotional impact on readers.

Second, we have the notion of ecological connectedness and sustainable use. For instance, the wise father figure Mufasa, spends a good deal of time schooling the young Simba that all parts of the savannah (ecosystem) are connected. The green grasses serve as food for lower animals such as rabbits, goats and antelopes while predators such as hyenas, tigers and lions in turn depend on these lower animals for survival. This shows the essence of the circle of life. Mufasa intellectually and practically understands his role as a keystone predator and tries to educate Simba urging him to respect every living creature because they in one way or the other have a role to play in preserving the ecosystem. If the smallest earthworm is eliminated from the ecosystem, the plants feel the pain, the herbivorous animals are exposed to danger while the carnivorous animals like the lion and leopard suffer the hazardous effects and so does everything else in the system.

From the diegesis of the film, Mufasa (the lion) is seen as king because he has the power and wisdom to manage the whole ecosystem. This is exemplified when Scar runs the show and abuses the roles that guide the circle of life, the entire system collapses and there is starvation, erosion, drought and death. This is a powerful message for us humans, who are after all the most important keystone predator on this earth. To have the best of the environment, humans must respect every living and nonliving thing in their environment to preserve and ensure nature's continuity.

The last film to be considered is *Moana*. This animated feature film tells an adventurous tale of a spirited teenager who sails out on a daring mission to prove herself a master way-finder and fulfil her ancestors' unfinished quest. During her journey, Moana meets the once-mighty demi-god known as Maui. Maui steals the mystical heart of goddess Te Fiti. The heart is a small luminous stone which has the power to create life. He steals it to gift it to humanity, but as he flees the island with the stone, he is attacked by a lava monster, Te Ka, causing the stone to fall from his hand and disappear into oblivion. Centuries later, we meet Moana, the princess of a small island in Polynesia, who has a special connection with the ocean. The ocean calls out to her but her family prevents her from venturing out beyond the reef, for fear of losing her. As Moana grows up, she is told that a

life of being the village's chieftain awaits her. But her heart is set on venturing out into the ocean.

The islands around them slowly begin to fade away and fall into disrepair because of the curse caused by Maui when he stole the heart. Several stories and secrets are revealed to Moana by her cocky grandmother, and they convince her that she has been chosen by the ocean to find Maui and restore the heart of Te Fiti. She set out on the ocean along with her pet chicken HeiHei to search for Maui. When she finds him, she realizes that he is an extremely self-centred, self-absorbed, egomaniac. She has to get inventive and treat him with the utmost respect to get him to find the lost heart of Te Fiti. Moana forms a special bond with Maui to navigate their way through the waters to replace the heart of Te Fiti with the mother island. Although Maui loses his magical hook during the process and leaves Moana to finish the task on her own through newfound courage, she puts her skills to use and replaces the heart of Te Fiti. Goddess Te Fiti returns in full bloom and the islands around Polynesia are rid of the curse that was causing them to perish. Te Fiti eventually repairs Maui's broken hook and restores his powers.

Reading *Moana* through the lens of ecocriticism reveals a fascinating story of nature that fell out of balance and became a destructive rather than nurturing force when Maui stole the heart of Te Fiti, the goddess of creation to win the approval of humans. When humans plunder the beauty of the earth, they reap the dire consequences of their actions. The film captivatingly takes hold of us when Te Kā, the furious lava monster, is revealed to be Te Fiti herself running amok. In a haunting moment, Moana walks straight up to Te Kā and sings, "I know your name / They have stolen the heart from inside you / But this does not define you / This is not who you are." Touched by the sincere song, Te Kā sees how empathetic and remorseful Moana is refrains from her aged-long anger and allows Moana to touch her. When Moana returns the heart, Te Kā reverts to Te Fiti in all her green, grassy, and floral splendour.

Te Fiti breaks the curse of species extinction, crop loss, and pollution that has inflicted the ecosystem as soon as Moana returns her heart, i.e., as soon as she commits to treating her with more care. Maui took for granted the blessings of Te Fiti (beauty of nature) and plundered too much. Te Fiti responded by becoming Te Kā (maltreated nature or nature in disrepair), who cursed the land and made it inhospitable. Moana corrected this wrong and invariably told a bold

parable about environmental stewardship. Obviously, ecological damage cannot be reversed as quickly as it is in the film, but the film's audience is shown a more pragmatic way to preserve Mother Earth for human existence and benefit.

Conclusion

Ecological degradation is a serious issue with palpable grave repercussions globally. Filmmakers over the years have focused on this issue using animation techniques to sensitise the audience/learners/populace on the consequences of harmful practices on the environment. This article used an eco-critical reading of *FernGully: The Last Rainforest*, *The Lion King* and *Moana* to reiterate the need for observance of a profitable ecological awareness (Green Culture) by governments and individuals around the world.

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Critical intersection praxis linking artistry, music and ideology in filmic depictions of select Nigeria's witchcraft worldviews and inclinations in Niyi Akinmolaya's *My Village People*

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Abstract: In many climes, witchcraft is designated a paranormal phenomenon because its manifestations lack empirical evidence, interpretation, and clarity. In Nigeria, the acknowledgment of the efficacy of witchcraft as an abiding and pervasive reality reflects a culture-specific worldview. Stories of witchcraft manifestations abound in Nigeria and in Nollywood films; however, the veracity of these narrations remains a continual subject of passionate argumentation because the supposed deeds by witches are not empirically verifiable. This paper represents another interpretive attempt, seeking a deeper elucidation of witchcraft phenomenon portrayals in a Nollywood film, which looks at the role of music and creative vision in narrative realization. In addition, this study interprets the application of choice authorial utilization of magical realism and relevant creative arts to generate visual metaphors in scenes of shape shifting in *My Village People*, a Nollywood film which until now, has not received a dedicated study, examining its portrayal of witchcraft and the utility of music in extending witchcraft narratives. Furthermore, this study highlights the film's efficacy as a platform for worldview re-aggregation and in the end; the study concludes that the shape-shifting depictions with distinct creative vision represent a critical intersection of arts and ideology, and a narration-enhancing approach that motivates quality-screening experience.

Keywords: magical realism, social ecology, visual metaphor, witchcraft, worldview

Introduction

Filmic depictions of mystical realities such as witchcraft show that filmmakers' authorial latitude subsumes differing utilization of

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relevant creative arts and artistry in their extension of narratives beyond the limits of rationality and empiricism (Cloete 2017; Aniago et al 2019; Aniago et al 2020). Films in this category depict paranormal actions such as shape-shifting, telepathy, clairvoyance, teleportation, and astral travel as typical realities to support claims of witchcraft, even though some reject such postulations. As Nollywood films continue to present witchcraft stories, a number of questions have continued to resonate and the following are a few examples: what are the valid actual physical manifestations of witches? What are witches preferred colour(s) at appearance? What are their preferred mission times? What are the kinds of music/sound ascribable to them at appearance? What are their specific operational approaches? In response to these questions, the depictions of witches in films indicate evident divergent suppositions and a lack of unanimity regarding interpretations of the phenomenon of witches and witchcraft. To this end, how do filmmakers come about their ideas of witchcraft and witches, which they communicate in their films and how can a film viewer ascertain when a film's witchcraft story emanates from one or a combination of the following. A dependable research finding subsuming verifiable locale-specific worldviews; deliberate disinformation; an ignorant misinformation; an honest mistake, or a mere creative imagination? Scholarly foray and interpretations attempting to provide elucidations on witchcraft in disciplines such as religion, culture, sociology, geography, and philosophy abound (Evans-Pritchard 1937; Offiong 1983; Behringer 2004; Irwin 2009; Waters 2019; Kroesbergen-Kamps 2020). However, there is a paucity of studies dedicated at the analysis of music and other artistic elements' utilization in creative depictions of witches' shape-shifting and the interrogation of the veracity of information subsumed in such depictions in the Nollywood film *My Village People* directed by Niyi Akinmolaya. In response, we have assembled scholars in film studies, fine and applied arts, media, and music studies to combine their disciplinary perspectives to deepen the understanding of the embedded social ecology praxis subsumed in *My Village People's* portrayal of witches and witchcraft. Hence, this study utilizes relevant conceptual ideas in magical realism theory, to provide a 'thick description' of some creative depictions of shape shifting in *My Village People*. The purpose is to elucidate on the application of select artistic elements such as music and sound as functional tools for the extension of locale-

specific dominant worldview concerning witchcraft phenomenon in parts of southern Nigeria.

Literature Review: Witchcraft, Witches, and Shapeshifting as Paranormals Realities

Studies indicate that perspectives on witchcraft revolve around locale-specific worldviews and Nigerians widely classify witches as supernatural humans capable of paranormal actions such as shape-shifting, (a mystically induced total or partial reversible transformation of the physical form). Nigerians regard it as pejorative to call someone a witch, however, there are instances its application metaphorically denotes an expression of consternation at a person's phenomenal cognitive propensity. Studies indicate that in Nigeria and several parts of Africa, regardless of individuals' religious inclinations, gender, social status, and level of education "the fear of witchcraft and witches is very dominant, and many things are explained with the idiom of witchcraft" (Offiong 1983, iv). This deeply ingrained Nigerian worldview on witchcraft evokes a range of responses such as fear, stigma, and misunderstandings (Jayeola-Omoyeni et al 2015). Consequently, the widespread inclination and fascination in Nigeria is that witchcraft connotes mystical, diabolical, dangerous, and paranormal powers, which individuals appropriate to cause harm to other people. For instance, this abiding enthralment played out in 2022, when an interdisciplinary international conference, titled, 'Witchcraft: Meanings, Factors and Practices' organized by the Professor B. I. C. Ijomah Centre for Policy Studies and Research, University of Nigeria, Nsukka was announced, and several individuals within and outside the campus responded with fervent disapproval. Their opposition in many ways situate the conference as a disguised "gathering of practicing witches and wizards, and an attempt by the organizers to spiritually cede the university to witchcraft, pollute the land, attract God's wrath, initiate innocent people into witchcraft and aggravate the country's social problems" (Uchendu 2023, 11). Essentially, the disapprovals typify a dominant ideology in Nigeria that witches "possess supernatural powers, which enable them to travel physically and spiritually to torment their victims" (Ernest-Samuel 2015, 47), and Nollywood films variously represent suppositions and polemics that situate local specific worldviews as dominant variables.

The academic study of the portrayals of paranormal, mystical, or supernatural realities' such as witches and shape-shifting in literature

and films falls within the conceptual frame known as magical realism, which Isabela Allende (1991, 54) describes as "a way of seeing in which there is a space for the invisible forces that move the world". Magical realism "relies upon the presentation of real, imagined or magical elements as if they were real" thus "magical realism therefore relies upon realism but only so that it can stretch what is acceptable as real to its limits" (Bowers 2004, 210). Bowers' expression, 'the presentation of the imagined or magical elements as if they were real' and Allende's suggestion that people widely acknowledge the efficacy of 'invisible forces' highlight the praxis of the two contending worldviews: the believers' worldview and the skeptics' worldview. The believers unambiguously acknowledge that witchcraft, witches, and shape-shifting are prevalent paranormal, supernatural, or mystical realities in Nigeria. The skeptics dismiss witchcraft, witches, and shape-shifting as fantasies and figments of imagination by emphasizing the lack of empirical basis for verification of claims. Hence, a deeper understanding of the portrayal of witchcraft, witches, and shape-shifting in a film such as *My Village People* requires informed and dense assessment, to determine if the enactments are propelled by either one or both of the dominant worldviews on witchcraft in south-south and southeast regions of Nigeria.

In discussing the dominant worldview on paranormal and shape-shifting in southeast and south-south regions of Nigeria, this paper adopts Clifford Geertz's 'thick description' concept, which relays that a researcher will be able to draw a better understanding of a people's social realities and inclinations, through a deliberate aligning of his analysis within a locale-specific context and worldview. Invariably, this supposition explains the core ideas in 'social construction of reality theory', which provide the basis for deeper contextualization of the dynamics of meaning-making convergences and divergences about all human realities from locale-specific point-of-views. The social construction of reality theory, according to Peter Berger and Thomas Luckmann conceptualizes that each culture or social group develops its understandings of the world, through creation, sustenance, and modification of definitions, meanings, and perspectives on things (Leeds-Hurwitz 2009, 892). Thus, to what extent do the narrative and portrayals in *My Village People* align with the dominant worldviews on shape-shifting in Southeast and South-south regions of Nigeria?

The social construction of reality concerning shape-shifting revolves around assumptions and suppositions propelled by locale-

specific social realities and the following three sets of assumption dynamics (essential, affective, and evaluative) influence the construction of realities. The essential assumptions "provide a culture with the fundamental cognitive structures people use to explain reality, and affective assumptions underline notions of beauty and style, and influence the peoples' taste in music, art, dress, food and architecture as well as the ways they feel about themselves and life in general" (Heibert 1983, 89). The evaluative assumptions "provide the standards people use to make judgments about right and wrong" (Ibid.). The notion is that social construction of reality leads to the generation and aggregation of a people's worldview, which is their vision of life, or "a framework or set of fundamental beliefs" through which they view the world and their calling and their future in it (Olthuis 1985, 2). This vision of life, "may be so internalized that it goes largely unquestioned; it may be greatly refined through cultural-historical development; it may not be explicitly developed into a systematic conception of life; it may be theoretically deepened into a philosophy; and it may not even be codified into creedal form" (Ibid, 2–3). Essentially, "this vision is a channel for the ultimate belief which gives direction and meaning to life", hence "it is the integrative and interpretative framework by which order and disorder are judged, the standard by which reality is managed and pursued" (Olthuis 1983, 3). Therefore, a worldview represents "how people perceive and explain their world, or the ways things are, or change in their environment" (Nwoye 2011, 306). The explanations of James Olthuis and Chinwe Nwoye indicate that worldview influences belief trajectories and assumptions, which determine people's suppositions, behaviours, thought patterns, meaning-making dynamics, ways of responses to stories, claims, and suppositions about paranormal realities such as shape-shifting enacted in fictions and films.

Referring to a phenomenon such as shape-shifting as a supernatural reality denotes that it "surpasses the limit of our knowledge", hence, "the supernatural is the world of mysterious, of the unknowable, of the un-understandable" (Durkheim [1965] 1912, 39). Lyle B. Steadman and Craig T. Palmer (2008, 4) describe the supernatural as that "beyond identification by the senses", while Evans-Prtichard (1937, 108) describes it as that which "cannot be directly apprehended by the senses". Benson Saler (1977, 34) describes the supernatural as "a broad cover term for a variety of postulated realities, forces, or 'being' that are usually denominated as 'spiritual' or 'superhuman' and whose

effects surpass those possible of achievement by ordinary human capabilities". According to Samuel Brainard (1996, 359-360), though "it has proven difficult to agree on what it means for an experience to be mystical", scholars have continued to present 'mystical experience' as "a coherent category of experience". He notes that "the experiences we call 'mystical' or translate from other languages as being 'mystical' all have two characteristics" – 'non-ordinariness' and 'profundity' (Ibid, 362). The non-ordinariness of mystical realities means they are inexplicable through empirical or conventional processes (Ibid, 373), and profundity, encapsulates experiences such as telepathy, clairvoyance, and astral travel, which may be considered naturalistically unexplainable (Ibid, 379). For example, mysticism, Hans Penner (1989, 11) notes, "covers a host of beliefs and experiences", Sallie King (1988, 273) observes that mystical experience is "a form of awareness in which the experiential sense of a separate subject and object is not present", but is 'anomalous' (Proudfoot 1985, 148). A reference or description of anything as supernatural indicates the trajectory of a worldview because as rational beings humans think and assume based on acquired knowledge, subsisting indoctrination, social contexts, and prevailing circumstances (Schaeffer 1972, 3). Therefore, a film supposedly embodies in its story locale-specific social contexts, history, culture, philosophy, and traditions, which expose viewers to ideas for assimilation, worldview formulation, and inclination re-aggregation.

Synopsis and select scenes of witchcraft, telepathy, and clairvoyance in *My Village People*

The story of the film *My Village People* revolves around two characters, Prince and Haggai, while the film's actions occur in two locales – Lagos (where Prince resides and works), and Okovi (where Haggai resides with her grandfather Ndio, a witch coven leader and a prominent Okovi elder). Prince is an orphan and a young man, with a younger sister Princess, who is his only surviving sibling. Prince is in his late thirties, he is a Nigerian, and his ancestral village Okovi is located in a coastal area in the south-south region of Nigeria. Prince resides and works as a marketing executive in a company in Lagos, south-west Nigeria. He has been away from Okovi for twenty years and he is in Okovi just to partake in his sister's customary wedding ceremony, which by tradition must be in the bride's village. Upon his arrival at the site of the traditional marriage ceremony, he sees his

sister, her suitor, his relatives, and other well-wishers dancing and singing. He joyously joins and excitedly sprays them with crisp currency notes.

After the traditional wedding ceremony, Prince and his village-dwelling uncle Jakpa visit Ndio who had requested through Jakpa, a convivial visit by Prince. At the end of their conversation, Ndio instructs Haggai, his granddaughter, to take the gallon of palm wine and roasted meat he offered Prince as a gift, to his hotel room and keep him company. Earlier, while the celebrant and well-wishers were singing and dancing, Haggai stood at a significant distance from the merriment as she intently fixed a romantic gaze on Prince as he danced. Haggai is apparently in her mid-to-late twenties or early thirties.

In the hotel room, Haggai pleads with Prince to declare earnestly, romantically, and severally to her – I love you. She is convinced that appropriate utterances of the declaration would spiritually untie her from the covenant bond with her witch coven. Due to exuberance, Prince excitedly accedes and makes the declaration – I love you – twice to Haggai because he is keen on having an intimate and romantic moment immediately with her, which he decidedly began with fondling. Haggai halts his enthusiastic incursion, and demands that he continues the declaration. Haggai's weird request spontaneously disenchants and dampens Prince's momentum and desire. Recognizing the damage her unusual request has done, Haggai pleads with Prince to continue the declaration but Prince bluntly declines and opts to sleep, noting that he has lost his drive. Haggai gets sad and ends her plea. She lays agonizingly quiet on the bed beside Prince to spend the night with him. Throughout the night, there was no physical incident between them. Very early in the morning, Prince stealthily collects his clothes and sneaks out of the hotel room oblivious that Haggai saw every movement he made including his stealthy exit while she lay in bed pretending to be asleep. In the next scene, Prince is in a chatty mood in a cab at outskirts of his village, heading to the airport for his flight to Lagos.

Manifestations Portraying Haggai and the Old Women as Witches

There are actions and manifestations by Haggai and the three old women in the film that portray them as witches in line with Nigerian worldviews. Haggai's first appearance in the film is the time Prince arrives at Okovi from the airport and joins his sister and others in the

dancing. In this first scene, a local jazzy music without lyrics but drumbeats and metal-gongs rhythmically introduces the celebratory mode and locale specificity. Haggai stands at a distance and appears detached. Her countenance suggests intense concentration and emotional coldness. Her facial expression with distinctive features such as her tightly squeezed lips and penetrating cold glare relay an ominous aura that depicts passionate animosity. In this scene, Haggai's demeanour is indistinctly suggestive; however, the hotel room scene where she delivers a bottle of palm wine and roasted meat her grandfather presented to Prince during his courtesy visit presents marginal archetypes ascribable to witches. First, her request to Prince to proclaim to her – I love you – many times is strange. Then her abrupt transition from responsive to detachment to the cuddling by Prince through stiffening of her body, transfixing of her gaze at the door, and appearing to sense and feel something invisible before hastily and stealthily running to hide behind the door is uncanny. Few second thereafter her spooky behaviour, a knock eerily resonant on the door. Perplexed Prince glances at Haggai before heading towards the door to open it. As Prince opens the door, standing outside are three middle-aged women. Politely he exchanges greetings with them. The leader of the women informs Prince that their mission is to give him their locally manufactured soap, which he will promote and sell in Lagos for them. Diplomatically, Prince tries to refuse but they persist thus, pretentiously he accepts to take the soap in the morning around 8 am before embarking on his journey to Lagos just to encourage them to let him be. Prince's acceptance appears comfortable to them, however before bidding Prince Goodbye, deliriously they inform Prince that they are aware that Haggai is in the room with him. As Prince closes the door, he tells Haggai to relax that the women are not aware that she is with him. In response, Haggai counters.

This scenario projects possession of clairvoyance and telepathic abilities by Haggai and the three women. In line with predominate Nigerian witchcraft worldview, it is only mediums and witches that exhibit paranormal powers and abilities. Haggai's action, which indicates that she possesses the paranormal ability to perceive and sense invisible presence situates as a witch. The supposition here is that Haggai possesses one or a combination of the following paranormal abilities. The ability to smell invisible presence of humans and paranormal beings from a significant distance or the ability to hear the inaudible movement-induced sound of various categories of

entities, or the abnormal ability see distant things remotely regardless of the impediments that hinder normal human sight line such as non-transparent things like room walls. Her actions and manifestations suggest that she possesses elevated senses, particularly clairvoyant and telepathic.

According to Rosemary Ellen Guiley (1992, 95), clairvoyance is a "paranormal vision of objects, events, places, and people that are not visible through normal sight". The idea here is that clairvoyance experience is when you see things that are real but without physical form, then you are experiencing clairvoyance, an ability to see the unseen (Nathaniel 2013, 8). Haggai in the opening scene through a clairvoyant ability was able to sense that Prince is spiritually elevated. Similarly, the request by Ndio for Prince to visit him suggests that Ndio is spiritually elevated which aids him in perceiving Prince's spiritual elevation. Ndio sends Haggai to take the Palm wine and roasted meat to Prince's hotel room and stay with him, as bait to lure Prince nearer to him. The suggestion in the film is that eating or drinking anything from a witch is a risk because it aids the witch in bewitching the individual. Prince's actions project him as reckless because despite his sister's warning, to avoid hugging, eating, and drinking anything offered to him by anyone suspicious, he abandons caution, to pursue a one-night non-commitment romance with a stranger Haggai. Prince's inability to sense that Haggai is a witch places him as a spiritually dormant entity. An occurrence that situates the three middle-aged women as witches takes place on the road leading to the airport after Prince leaves Haggai behind in the hotel room. In the car, Prince calls his sister and gladly gloats, letting her know that he is heading to the airport because he departed from the village by 4 am. While he is conversing, suddenly in the foggy morning vision, the cab driver sees the three middle-aged women standing in the middle of the road. Perplexed, he frightfully applies the car brakes abruptly. The appearance of the three women is mysterious and in Nigeria, such an occurrence is attributable to a possession of paranormal powers, attributable to witches mostly. Therefore, the questions, which defy empirical elucidation, are how did the witches know that Prince had begun his journey to the airport and how did they appear suddenly in the middle of the road in front of a vehicle that is moving at a reasonable speed?

Analysis of Haggai's shape-shifting as visual metaphors: Perspectives and theories

There is a substantial scholarship on perspectives and interpretations of witchcraft, witches, and their paranormal phenomena. Some of these studies present shape-shifting (a paranormal and reversible total or partial transformation of the physical form) as a mystical and universal phenomenon within locale-specific interpretations. A shape-shifter Katharine E. Mawford (2020, 10) explains that "must have the ability to effect self-transformation" and it is this ability that "sets them apart from mortals who are subjected to transformations at the hands of gods or other supernatural characters". In a reaction to the prevalence of supernatural characters in Nollywood, Grace Kumwenda (2007, 109) notes that "whilst some scholars and filmmakers criticize the prevalence of themes of witchcraft, magic, and the supernatural, it is these very themes that draw local audience". Rationalizing this preponderance and the viewers' interest, Onuzulike (2009, 180) thinks that "Africans' religiosity is one of the pillars on which the current knowledge of Africa is built" thus "it is difficult to separate African culture from African traditional religions because religion is embedded in the culture". Onuzulike's observation points at a social variable 'religion' as that which propels the social construction of reality in communities. According to Dauda Musa Enna et al (2015, 177), viewers of Nollywood films "form their opinions about Nigeria, her peoples and practices based on what they watch" and "the contents, some of which are latched with magical stunts, ritual and witchcraft scenes, and extreme belief in the supernatural, have the propensity to interpret Nigeria's worldview externally". Enna et al in their contribution elude the efficacy of the visual metaphor in films as that which propels the aggregation of perspectives and worldviews that situate instances of shape-shifting as either typical or actual realities which are alluded to variously by Nwaozuzu et al. (2021) and Chidi-Igbokwe et al. (2022).

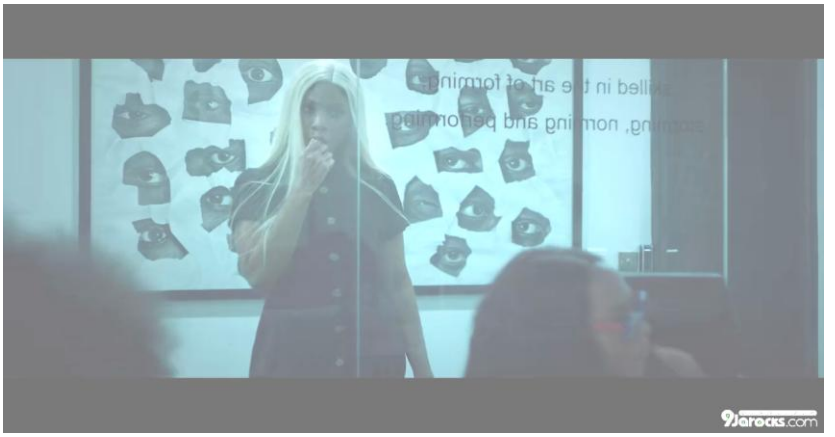
In several scholarly interpretations of instances of shape-shifting, there are evidences of convergence and divergence of observations regarding why, when, and how shape-shifting occurs. An example of convergence in these studies is the wide acceptance that shape-shifting is a paranormal reality because does not yield to empirical elucidation. Therefore, each community defines shape-shifting according to their inclinations and worldviews, which accords with the view that "man is an animal suspended in webs of significance he has spun" (Geertz

1973, 5). This supposition by Clifford Geertz captures the definitive core idea of the concept of worldview and its utilization in social construction of reality – "the processes by which, people jointly construct their understandings of the world" (Leeds-Hurwitz 2009, 891). According to Peter Eastwell the supernatural as well as the metaphysical are widely viewed as:

> That outside the observable universe, violating natural laws, and about god or a deity and is commonly associated with things like spirituality, occultism, spirits, the divine, the miraculous, fairies, vampires, ghosts, goblins, and other unearthly beings, including angels (2011, 18).

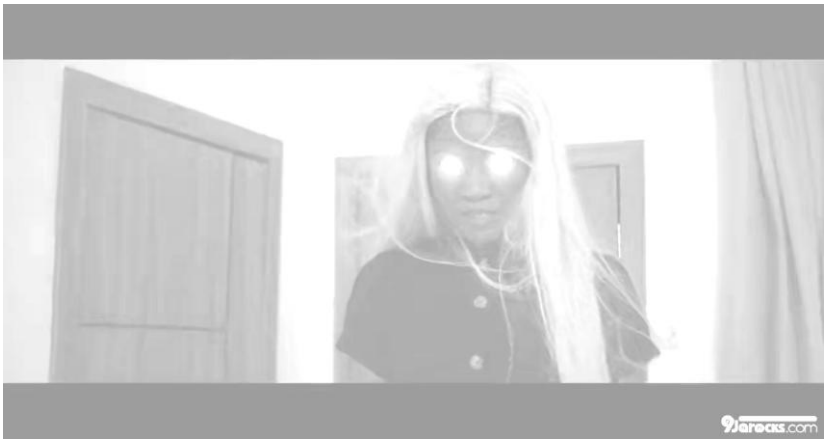
The contribution by Eastwell tacitly accepts the existence of human realm and supernatural realm. That intersection can occur between the two realms, hence, the ability of some humans to engage in paranormal actions, hence the supernatural essence of witchcraft "involves the use of supernatural forces for evil or harmful intent" (Petrus and Bogopa 2007, 3). A witch manifests in ambiguity as well as operates "both as a human being, with a natural, physical body, and, at the same time, also a 'superhuman' being, able to control both natural and supernatural forces for evil" (Ibid.) More so, Petrus and Bogopa observe that "humans are believed to possess the capacity to bring the natural and supernatural forces together, either for the benefit of their societies, as in the case of traditional healing, or for the detriment of society, as in the case of witchcraft or sorcery" (Ibid, 8). The rationalization here is that supernatural forces are in themselves neutral, however, humans acquire means of manipulating these forces either for good or evil purposes (Ibid.)

The snapshots below provide visual testimonies of the claims that witches can change their physical appearances as presented in the film *My Village People*. In snapshot, number 1 Haggai appeared at the venue where Prince is presenting a marketing proposal to clients. Haggai's apparition was only visible to Prince, and due to shock and freight, Prince appears absent-minded temporally leading him to pause his presentation involuntarily. The film indicates that Prince witnesses an apparition of Haggai, which situates apparition as a real occurrence, despite the inability of the others in the room with to acknowledge the appearance. The idea here is that Nigerians routinely categorize innumerable failures by many Nigerians to perform creditably and optimally as machinations of cruel witches.



In snapshot 1, Haggai appears at the venue where Prince is presenting a proposal to clients in Lagos

In snapshots 1 and 2, Prince sees Haggai's apparition, which no one in the room sees. So our question is did Prince see an apparition of Haggai, is the apparition a fiction or a reality, and why is the apparition a testimony of a very few individuals among people? In our field study, the respondents overwhelmingly agreed that apparition is a reality and severally some of the respondents provided stories to support their conviction. We asked the respondents questions regarding the choice of Haggai's dress and wig in her apparition. None of the respondents provided a reason behind the choice, thus, most of the respondents suggest that witches are at liberty to appear at will in any form and appearance. What this means is that there is no culture-specific knowledge that stipulates the dress design and colour code for witches during the apparition. Therefore, while all the respondents widely claim that witches appear and that they have heard stories suggesting the appearances of witches, none of the respondents indicated or claimed they know the specific dress design and colour witches must appear in. The respondents mostly suggested that witches could appear in any dress design and colour of their choice. As regards the plausibility of allowing only Prince to see the witch (Haggai) when she appeared at the venue of the proposal presentation, all the respondents observed that during the witches' apparition, the reality is that not everyone will see them. However, none of the respondents provided a plausible reason for this supposition.



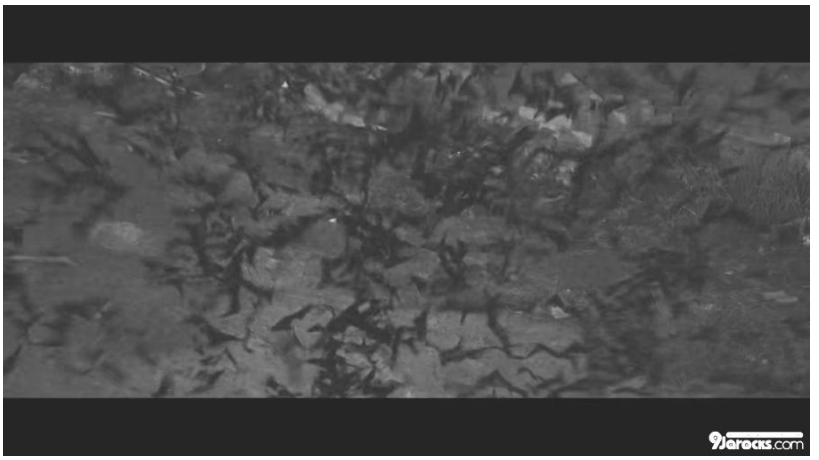
In snapshot 2, Haggai appeared in Prince's Living room at Lagos

In response to snapshot 2, most of the respondents suggest that the eyes of the witch (Haggai) are a film effect to drive the narrative further. The flashing eyes as a visual metaphor, suggest energy and power, which Haggai utilizes to achieve a purpose.

In snapshot 3, Haggai appeared at Prince's compound in Lagos with other witches

In snapshot 3 where Haggai is standing in Prince's compound in Lagos outside his window, she is dressed in the same cloth and wig as in snapshots 1 and 2. In frame 3, there are six girls wearing black coloured gown however, only Haggai is wearing a blonde wig, whereas the rest are wearing black wig. So what is the significance? None of the respondents was able to provide a plausible interpretation that links locale-specific witchcraft worldview from any part of Nigeria. Hence, we suppose that the blonde wig is aesthetical and a

means of providing clear character identification. The dressing of Haggai in snapshots 1 and 2, and snapshot 3 with her accompanies suggest that witches can appear as they wish and not strictly in a locale-specific traditional attire.



In snapshot 4, Haggai who appeared at Prince's compound in Lagos with other witches as presented in snapshot 3, shape shifted to birds

In snapshot 4, the blackbirds indicate that Haggai and her four co-witches have shape shifted to blackbirds. All the respondents suggest that witches can shape-shift to birds and other animals of their choice. However, there is no concordance as regards the kind of bird(s) or the colour the bird must appear in. Some of the respondents suggested that Ravens, Crows, and Awls are the most common bird witches in Nigeria shape-shift and assume their natural appearances.

On Ability of Witches to Mysteriously Interrupt of Human Actions and Affairs

We relied on a specific scene; where Prince and Ame, his girlfriend and co-worker are discussing to extract responses from the respondents. In the scene at a restaurant after Prince and Ame finished preparing the marketing proposal for the following day's presentation and he was about to kiss her, his phone rings and interrupts them from kissing. Angrily, Prince picks his phone, and listens, and it is Haggai, he ends the call and asks Ame for a second opportunity to kiss her. Reluctantly, Ame accedes and as they are about to kiss, the phone rings again, disrupting them once more. Ame observes that she saw him switch off the phone, yet it rings. For the third time, Ame agrees to kiss Prince, again as they are about to touch lips, the phone rings.

These three interruptive calls are all from Haggai, so the question we put to the respondents is can a witch achieve such a disruptive call as Haggai did, even though she did not collect the phone number? In addition, we asked the following questions to the respondents: do witches have the ability to disrupt any activity by people at any time, and can a witch mysteriously discover an individual's phone number in a bid to utilize it to make calls just as Haggai did? In response to the questions, most of the respondents agreed that witches can interrupt the activities of people at will, while few indicated that they do not have an answer. In response to the possibility of a witch being able to remotely and mysteriously obtain a phone number just as Haggai did, again most respondents contend that witches can do it, even do they do not have a story to back it up. Other respondents indicate that they are finding it hard to accept that a witch can do that.

The Incident at Prince's Office and Home

Even though Haggai called Prince and demanded his Lagos residence and office addresses, Prince declined, Haggai managed to teleport to the exact addresses. Even though Prince queried how she got his number and Haggai did not clarify, Prince waved the matter aside. In their phone conversation, Haggai intimates Prince that she will visit him in Lagos despite his refusal to give her his addresses. In response, Prince, derisively tells her that she will not locate his address because she does not have it and angrily he ends their conversation. Hours later Haggai mysteriously appears to Prince at his Lagos office during the proposal presentation and thereafter at his home. Snapshots 1, 2, and 3 capture these incidents. The theory the makers of My Village People present is that Haggai can locate Prince in Lagos because she collected his picture, which she used for appropriate incantations to help her locate Prince. Haggai after appearing at Prince's office in the morning during his proposal presentation, in the evening she called Prince and informed him that she was at his house, specifically outside the window. As Prince relaxes on his couch, his phone rings and the following dialogue, ensues between him and Haggai, which poignantly indicates to Prince that he is not daydreaming.

> Prince: Hello!
> Haggai: Dear Prince, I told you I was coming. How good was the presentation? You do not want to answer. I am at your house.
> Prince: Which house?

Haggai: The one in Lagos, you thought I was playing. Look through your window Prince.

Prince walks to the window, fearfully he shifts the curtain to have a look and he beholds Haggai standing mischievously outside the window with five girls all dressed in black gown as captured in snapshot 3. Prince screams impulsively and withdraws his gaze. Seconds after, he attempts a second look through the window and sees the transmogrification of Haggai and the girls into blackbirds as snapshot 4 shows. Very frightened by the occurrence Prince runs out of the house with his car key and drives straight to the residence of one of his former office mates. Unfortunately, this friend and office mate, refuses to have him for the night, because he intends to be alone with his bride who visited. Prince leaves the friend‘s house dejected and drives off with his car. In his car, while driving he calls his younger sister Princess. In his conversation with Princess, Prince confesses to her that he hugged Haggai against her advice not to hug anyone. For mitigation, Princess advises him to discard the clothes he was wearing the time he had physical contact with Haggai and the night both slept in the same bed at the village hotel. In response to the above scenario, the respondents from our field study claim that the presentations in the film *My Village People* represent the worldview widely held in Nigeria. The supposition here is that a witch can trace a person with whom they have had physical contact because just as dogs can trace things and individuals through their ominous acute smell sense, witches can do likewise. Most of the respondents note that witches can utilize incantations and any personal item such as cloth, shoes, and socks to trace and locate an individual remotely because any items mentioned can store an individual's smell, hence, the advice by Princess that he had to incinerate the items immediately.

Meanwhile, while it is easier to incinerate cloth, shoes, and socks, it is difficult to clean the embedded smell in a room one has occupied, hence, Princess advised him to go to a hotel. However, in the hotel room, Prince begins to feel agitated and promptly he leaves the room to stay outside with security men. More so, the plea by Prince to the security men keep him awake revolves around the notion that witches operate prominently at night and not daytime. The supposition is that light obstructs and keeps them at bay.

Metaphors of Music, Sounds and Colours in Select Scenes Extending the Narratives of Witchcraft

The opening scene commenced with jazzy drum beats replicating the tom-tom drum sounds and metal gongs. This first scene captures Prince's entry to the village as he alighted from a taxi, which brought him from the airport to attend his younger sister's traditional wedding ceremony. In the next scene, the Prince and Princess are at Uncle Gakpa's for a discussion after the traditional wedding. Sequentially, in the background weird sounds of birds and local dialect rendition, rhythmically suggest an eerie atmosphere. In the third and fourth scenes, similar sounds of birds (from crows, ravens, and awl), dogs barking and crickets presented as background sounds filled the atmosphere. Sounds from these animals are commonly attributable to witchcraft in Nigeria variously. The sounds of the cricket suggest the time of the day, which is dusk as well as the locale of action, which is a hinterland in the creek environment. The barking from the dogs is attributable to the presence of spiritual beings, which African believes the dogs can either see or perceive. Thus, a dog barking at no physical being is ascribable to the presence of invincible powers, forces, or beings in the vicinity. In five and six, the sound emanating from the wooden gong provides cadence and rhythm, whereas the trumpet sound draws attention to the transition from action to action. The tolling sound of a large church bell is in itself not directly linked literarily to the extension witchcraft narration in the film; rather it creates the aura of a mystical atmosphere. The background faint ocean wave sound also adds to the allure of ominous potent, as it alludes to the locale's nearness to the coast. There is hardly any convincing empirical explanation. Hence, their actions fall within the paranormal. While the cab halted on the road, intermittently the cries of Crows created a perfunctory rhythm enveloping the atmosphere and surrounding it with awe and gloom.

At the beginning of the film, the first scene commences with music that is jazzy in nature without lyrics. It contains a combination of drumbeats and metal-gong sound. The sound of goat, crow, and birds of different kinds continued at the background during the meeting between Prince and Uncle Jakpa, which is claimed to be at the sun setting, so the sounds are used to depict time of the day. Then when the Princess was about to depart, local sound with Ishan lyrics, metal gongs with villagers dancing and singing. Then as Haggai appears, the sound gradually drowns creating ominous atmosphere. When the

witches appear at the window, the sound of crow sounded. As they entered Ndio's house, the foreboding sound and the witches appear. Foreboding sound continues during the meeting with Ndio, with indiscrete sound of metal gong. As Haggai brings in the meat and palm-wine—the church bell dolls twice and stops. At the background is an ocean wave like sound moving up and down.

The Prince sings in the room as he moves in with Haggai. The song suggest ecstatic mood--- probably because he is with a beautiful girl and the visit to his village is going well and is exciting him. As Prince is asked to say I love you by Haggai, the background sound of a trumpet draws flowingly – long suggesting anticipation. When the witches arrive at the hotel room the sound of crow, cricket continued. In the early hours of the morning, sparrows and crickets sounds continues, in the car as they are driving out of the village, song going on is a gospel music by an Igbo gospel music group—the music is a plea and supplication for guidance and safety for the roads and travelling. Then suddenly the witches appeared, he applies the break, the gospel music stops, the witches' appearance is followed by sounds of crows and crickets, and numerous indiscrete nocturnal insects, birds, frogs, and rodents, laced with the Ishan melody used at the beginning of the film.

As he arrives Lagos, contemporary blues sounds as the background and accompanying music—the lyrics is about, fame, quest, and the queen of the coast. In addition, the sounds of the office phones ringing suggest activities and business of the office. In the restaurant where Prince and his girl friend are seating, the music and sound is a cool tone with a feminine voice, which suggests romance and calmness otherwise required for romantic dinning. The sound reduces and increases for emphasis. After his chat with Haggai, locale sound and foreboding music and sounds continues. As he goes to the window to verify if Haggai is outside, and similarly when he goes gain for authenticate his first sighting and she turns to birds, he sees her and to register the level of shock, a trumpet sound indicates emphasis for his shock and thus his moment of shock coincides with sound. Then each time Haggai or Princes' girl friend in their mood as witches, get angry, massive ocean wave-like wind sounds, followed by distinct animal sounds, while at the background he jazzy sound continues. The jazzy sound apparently replicates non-African typical instrumental sounds.

Conclusion

The study examined the portrayals of witches as paranormal humans who are capable of actions that are phenomenal and a subject of continual debate because the acclaimed actions are not explainable through empirical interpretation and deduction. The study highlights abiding and pervasive acknowledgment of witchcraft efficacy as part of the social ecology and worldview in Nigeria. Hence, the depictions of witches and witchcraft in the focused film *My Village People* exhibit ideological inclinations, choice of authorial utilization of magical realism and relevant creative arts as a means of generating visual metaphors, which the viewers tend to decode from their perspectives as informed by their social ecology. The study utilizes content analysis in discussing selected scenes in the focused text *My Village People*. Our analytical judgment leans on magical realism theory, which revolves around the premise that the explanation and descriptions of paranormal or mystical realities such as shape-shifting and witchcraft are not empirically verifiable. Our first observation is that the film *My Village People* like other films is an efficacious medium of worldview re-aggregation and portrayal of didactic parameters concerning Nigeria's witchcraft worldview. Focusing on aspects of witchcraft manifestations portrayed in the film *My Village People* the study indicates that although an empirical basis does not exist for the explication of the occurrences, Nigerians are continuing in their exhibition of deep-seated acknowledgment of those occurrences' actual and typical realities. The study explained the versions of mystical occurrences ascribable to witchcraft in Nigeria, such as astral travel, clairvoyance, telepathy, and shape-shifting. The study highlighted the application of creative arts and creative vision as a means of realizing some mystical occurrences, which represent a critical intersection of artistic creativity and ideology in laying out visual metaphors as guided by locale-specific ecology and imaginative impressionism. In conclusion, the study affirms that film is a product of artistic creative vision exhibited through a conscious select addition and subtraction of realities describable as actual, typical, mystical, as well as imaginary ideas through meticulous camera shoots and editing to form a desired narrative. Consequently, it is vital to pursue more analysis of films to understand the veracity of the information they present because it is an efficacious medium of information dissemination. The study adds to existing knowledge on culture, tradition, and worldview circulation and aggregation through film. The

study discusses shape-shifting as a product of witchcraft and as a paranormal phenomenon.

The second observation is that film infuses information into the consciousness of the viewer because the viewer assimilates and appreciates the information embedded in the film's story and locale, which instigates an aggregation of the viewer's subsisting inclinations, worldview, and ideology. The dynamics and reflexes of human meaning making in many ways are attributable to the mechanics of nature and nurture. As regards the efficacy of nurture concerning the dimensions of an individual's interpretation of his realities, theories of the social construction of reality indicate that the available knowledge to an individual determines his interpretation of his realities. Therefore, as man encounters information and assimilates knowledge continually, his worldview will continue to evolve because his meaning-making dynamics are evolving. Since worldview influences human actions partly, the sources of human information and knowledge such as films must remain continually a major focus of scholarly interest and study.

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The nexus between cinema and pedagogy: Using movies in sociology and social policy classes as 'educational' instruments

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Abstract: Due to the fact that they suggest 'visual' and 'audial' aids within the learning environment, this article discusses several movies that can be benefited in sociology and social policy classes as educational instruments. That's why, based upon his own experiences, the author describes a cinematographic approach to teach this discipline, which creates a 'productive' as well as 'inclusive' pedagogical environment for college level students. In this study, the scenes and related themes of sociology and social policy within those scenes were unveiled for a number of movies. In line with sociology and social policy discipline, topics uncovered in this paper include gender roles, discrimination, addiction, industrial labor, disadvantaged groups, racism, unionism, aging, prisoners, class conflict, unemployment, inequality of opportunity, family, the future of labor as disadvantaged group, and immigration. As research method, content and document analysis were used. Actually, the paper consists of three main parts. In the first section of the study, related literature about the usage of cinema particularly in sociology as well as social policy education was shared. In the second part of the paper, the scenes in the movies listed and their associations with sociology and social policy content was mentioned. Concluding remarks and discussions constitute the last episode of the paper.

Keywords: social policy, education, sociology, social policy and movies

Introduction

In spite of debates, hesitations, negativities, and the questions about their 'adaptability' to the whole educational environments as instructional aids for years (Crandall 1926, 109; Di Palma 2009, 47; Kemp et al. 2014, 1, 20; Arumsari and Isti'adah 2019, 1-6; Dhanya et. al. 2021, 1280; Florescu 2014, 351, 352; Champoux 2005, 49, 50; Champoux 2001, 78-99) it is to be assured that movies or motion

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pictures are unrivalled ways to teach something to the students and they are commonly benefited by educators from social (e.g. economics, history, sociology, social policy, geography) to applied sciences (e.g. medicine, engineering, psychology), as significant pedagogical instruments. The reason behind the usages of movies as instructional mediums is the fact that they are fairly motivating the students (Van Gelderen and Verduyn 2003, 539) even those who are disinterested (Luccasen and Thomas 2010, 136), they enable them to learn better via exposure to social and economic issues (Icen and Tuncel 2019, 230), and they stimulate active learning procedurals with the presence of imageries, scenes, and conversations (Darbyshire and Baker 2012, 28). Within the learning process, imageries are actually the core of "memory aids" (Myers 2004). More than that, movies in classroom environments are much more contemporary than chalking and talking strategy, which does not work anymore (Sexton 2006, 406). According to Laukötter (2016), movies activate the emotions of the students, which is absolutely a positive thing for learning activity. Again, to the viewpoints of Laukötter (2016), films are to be regarded as "a negotiation of the modern human subject and its emotions" (Laukötter 2016, 181, 199, 200). According to the reports of Demerath (1981, 71), movies are the facilitators of teaching in a pedagogical way, and "films serve as a bridge between the world of lectures, research, and textbooks, and the world that really matters. [..] More than just illustration, a good film can provide emotional immediacy and probing insight. [..] Even the non-literate student can relate to movies as hot medium". Wagner (1956, 7) stated that students' hearts can only be touched through motion pictures, which is the pre-requisite for effective learning. Glass (1997, 9, 10) signalled that movies differentiate and diversify the teaching in a positive sense with their visual and audial strengths. Milner (2014, 196) stressed that movies trigger students' awareness towards learning. Leet and Houser (2003, 326, 327) referenced that the context that movies provide is useful for instructors while teaching.

The pedagogical influences of cinematography upon sociology and social policy discipline are almost identical with other disciplines. Referencing the fact that movies can be "traps" within teaching and learning environment at times, Demerath (1981, 69); on the other hand, demonstrated that movies can be utilized in sociology classes as instructional aids due to their contribution to sociological analysis, understandings of cultural formation, and construction of reality.

Tolich (1992, 344, 345), who searched for sociological themes in *Modern Times* (Charles Chaplin, 1936), *Roger and Me* (Michael More, 1989), and *Annie Hall* (Woody Allen, 1977), mentioned that these movies can be a perfect fit for teaching 'social problems', 'class conflict', 'alienation', 'early effects of industrialization', 'unemployment', 'poverty', 'labor market mobility', and etc., all of which are in line with the contents of sociology and social policy courses. In parallel to the viewpoints of his predecessors, Dowd (1999, 324) referenced that beyond their functionality as leisure time activities, movies are the portrayals as well as representations of society; that's why, their utilizations in the teaching settings are quite critical; in particular, for teaching 'popular culture', 'social changes', 'social psychology', 'mobilities', 'war themes', and 'revolutions'. In their research implemented on Turkish students, who took sociology and social psychology courses, Kennedy, Şenses and Ayan (2011, 1) also proved that movies are indispensable parts of sociology instruction, and they are critical supplements for teaching "the death penalty", "gender equality", and "prejudice". Andrist et al. (2014, 196-202), who laid a great emphasis upon the fact that cinema is the inevitable parts of sociology education, pointed that videos and movies that can be benefited to teach sociology can be categorized under the name of "conjuncture", "testimony", "infographic", "pop fiction", "propaganda", and "détournement" ones. In a way, they tried to build a particular 'typology' to meet the learning goals of sociology. Here, "conjuncture" movies refer to documentaries, which represent social realities. When it comes to "testimonial" films, they are subjective and grounded upon humans' experiences. "Infographic" illustrates the movies that overlap the data or statistics with strong visual framework. "Pop fiction" is related to popular culture and tradition centered cinematographic contents. As for "propaganda" oriented movies, they involve policy integrated messages to persuade masses, which is vice versa of "détournement" movies that is far from 'elitist' infrastructure (Andrist et al. 2014, 196-202). Burton (1988, 263) also ensured that films are fairly effective tools that engage students into sociology and in a way social policy classes and they offer real life experiences, which enable students to assess social and economic issues from different perspectives. That's why; Burton (1988, 263) made a long list about sociologically driven movies and their thematic categorizations. For Sooryamoorthy (2007, 547), due to their visual representations of socially realistic matters, movies are strong denominations of

communication that appeal to sociologists at the same time. To the viewpoints of Sooryamoortyh (2007, 547), movies can be utilized as research instruments in sociology as an academic discipline. Balabantaray (2022) also proved that movies, which are the portrayals of diversified social segments as well as cultural peculiarities, can be aided for sociological analysis. The reason behind this reality is the fact that they represent the norms, cultures, and pluralistic features of the society as a whole like fashion, marriage patterns, family structure, artistic forms (music and dance), habits of consumption, heroistic desires, modernization, urbanization, industrialization, and so on and so forth. Collett, Kelly, and Sobolewski (2010, 258) demonstrated the fact that usages of movies in sociology classes suggest the students unprecedented opportunities which is unattainable for them to experience in their daily lives. "Experiential learning" sustained through imageries and "fostering deeper understanding" are the key arguments that back up these allegations. Valdez and Halley (1999, 286) had identical idea that movies are complementary pedagogical tools for sociology classes. To illustrate, they mentioned that films are frequently promoted to comprehend the Mexican American culture. Alongside all academic publications that analyze sociology and social policy disciplines with cinema, Elembilassery and Ray (2017, 347) underlined that cinematography entirely fits for teaching labor sociology, predicaments of working class, and labor relations concept. Therefore, whole literature available paves the way that cinema can be a fantastic instrument to teach sociology and social policy curriculum.

Reflections of movies assisted sociology and social policy teaching experience

As an academic staff and on average, I teach social policy courses to 50-100 students per year. While teaching social policy discipline, teaching method that I have been practicing for years is that I break up the monotonous atmosphere of the class through giving up 'chalking' and 'talking' and I strive hard to capture the attention of the students via cinema and / or movies. Of course, it is unfeasible to make the students watch the whole film during lecture time; that's why, only short clips are required to watch. When I employ this procedure, I technically involve discussion sessions following movies or short clips illustrated within the course. The second approach preferred is that following the lecture and having thought the theoretical concepts concerning social policy, I give particular movies to the students as

assignments and students are required to write a research paper in detail about the social policy content or perspective of those selected movies. The paper given as assignment is expected to include detailed reflections of the pupils about the explicit or implicit messages of the movie, plots, character definitions, symbols, dialogues, photography, sound, lifestyle or life story of the directors, the economic, philosophical, historical, sociological, and political framework, and so on and so forth. The third prioritized strategy is that the movies are entailed to watch before coming to the classroom and the students are required to take notes about the subject matter, characters, plots, and the features of the movie and they are required to partake in the debates organized during the lecture. Afterwards, the students are given homeworks about the assessment of the argued movie. As a result of these manners of teaching, the students come into the resolution that there is social policy content in each movie and their socio-political perspective is adapted to everyday happenings. Therefore, theory overlaps with practice within the academic discipline of sociology and social policy. Depending upon the feedback obtained from students, it can be referenced that most of the students tell me that this is closely in correlation with the 'visual' and 'audial' facet of the movies. In the aftermath of learning movie-oriented approach to social and economic problems, the students suggest me new (novel) films about particular social policy issues or social problems, which is gorgeous feedback for the sustainability of this manner of teaching.

It is functional to give elaborate information about the designation of my usual social policy courses. The course designed here is just for undergraduate students with no sociology and social policy prerequisites. However, it can be implemented to the graduate level students as well. It is normally offered to the undergraduate students of Labor Economics and Industrial Relations in the School of Economics and Administrative Sciences. Sometimes, the students from other departments like International Relations, Banking and Finance, Cinema, Economics, Political Science, and Public Management can also take this course as electives. The class meets weekly, and it lasts about three hours on average. In the first lecture and at the very beginning of the term; a detailed syllabus, outline of the course schedule, and a conceptual framework are given to the students, which is something like a 'roadmap' for them. Normally, the lecture is divided into two main units. In the first part, theoretical framework about social policy issues and movie analysis is shared with the

students. Then some pre-selected illustrations, pictures, dialogues, and symbols belonging to the focused movie are displayed, which triggers discussion or group work and sustains student involvement during the lecture. Following the course, they are required to write evaluation papers. It is also mandatory for the students to make presentations that enable them to synthetize their understanding of social policy (problematic) with movie analysis. The understandings of the students are also measured with a midterm and final exams. At times, quizzes are added. Furthermore, students' participations into the classroom activities and their performances are regarded as assessment criteria.

Instructors can utilize and apply this method of sociology and social policy teaching in their courses as 'fundamental' or 'supplemental' teaching materials because of several reasons. First and foremost, movies assisted classes enhance the awareness of the students to the theoretical knowledge and they differentiate the learning environments for instructors. Second, this manner of teaching facilitates learning, and it is an absolute assistance to memory, which collects and retains info or data for a long period of time. Third, this methodology integrates 'theory' with 'practice' and last but not the least, discussion and learning capabilities of the students improve, which is achieved through student involvement characteristics of movie assisted classrooms.

In the aftermath of indicating the objective and the methods of the study, I provide a sample of movies here that I use within the classroom environment, the topics and the scenes to be associated with their sociology and social policy contents and or backgrounds. Of course, it is unlikely to cite all the scenes, and all the dialogues of a particular movie as it is beyond the scope of the research, so I specify the flashiest and the most impressive ones. At the same time, the movies given as part of pedagogical examples can be enlarged.

The purpose of the study

The ultimate objective of the paper is to document the impact of the movies that can be benefited for sociology and social policy instruction. In a way, it aims at capturing the attention of the educators to the cinema owing to the fact that it suggests novel perspectives for the students, and it revitalizes contemporary tutoring manoeuvre for scholars on a college level because of its visual and audial assistance. Additionally, the footprints of all 'social' and 'economic' problems (e.g. class conflict, unemployment, discrimination, disability,

disadvantaged groups, social exclusion, aging, urbanization, social stratification, human trafficking, racism, industrialization, labor unionism) can be ascertained in cinematographic content, movies, or clips. It suggests wide range of educational materials embedded with scenes, imageries, instructive, and informative conversations. That's why; educational environments cannot be isolated from this technology; which is the case for sociology and social policy discipline. More than anything else, the present study attempts to demonstrate the personal experience of the researcher, who has been implementing this manner of teaching in his classes. The researcher comes to the resolution that well-chosen movies contribute to positive learning capability of the students, and they stimulate learning and differentiate teaching environment. This pedagogical philosophy is the direct association of theory with practice.

Research method

In view of the fact that the paper is actually qualitative in nature, two methods were implemented within the framework of the research. The first method is content analysis, which is a key approach and well-formed data analysis procedure that originated from the investigation of textual data (Kolbe and Burnett 1991, 243). However, it is not peculiar to solely text-oriented analysis but also encompasses the examination of visual materials, conversations, and audial data (Stemler 2015, 1). It is "indigenous to communication research and is potentially one of the most important research techniques in the social sciences." As a method of research, content analysis, which gives the opportunity to researchers to make certain deductions from the data in association with their contexts, tries to analyze sets of data based upon a particular context regarding their meanings to groups, social structures, or cultural forms (Krippendorf 1989, 403). As for the second research method called document analysis, it is practiced for the analysis of "the function of documents as data source in a qualitative research" (Bowen 2009, 27).

The concepts (topics) and the movies correlated

Several movies were selected that are personally benefited while teaching social policy courses in association with their 'social' and 'economic' perspectives discussed within the course. It can be assured that the cinematographic approach to sociology and social policy teaching enhances the motivation of the students towards the field and

learning process becomes a fun. The films are determined based upon social and economic problems unveiled within the field like gender roles, discrimination, addiction, industrial labor, disadvantaged groups, racism, unionism, aging, prisoners, class conflict, unemployment, inequality of opportunity, family, the future of labor (work) as disadvantaged group, and immigration. Of course, many more topics and their connections with series of movies can be included within the framework of the research, yet this will be beyond the scope of the study.

Concept: *gender roles*; movie: *Dangal* (Nitesh Tiwari, 2016)

I always benefit from *Dangal* (2016), a real-life story, while I am teaching 'gender roles' as part of sociology and social policy courses. In this movie, Amir Khan (Mahavir Singh Phogat) plays a leading role as a father and as a wrestler, who is 'sexist' and who is concerned about the gender roles within the rural norms of his vicinity. As stated in the movie script like "Uncle was hoping for a boy but a girl was born" (Scripts.com [accessed: 15.03.2023]), he always desires to have a son so as to make him a popular wrestler, but the life opens a novel page for him with his two cute daughters. In his life journey, the unique objective of Mahavir is to grow his daughters as a wrestler. However, the problem at that time is that wrestling is the sport that is carried out only by males in India. The women possess cliché and pre-defined roles like getting married, having babies, preparing meals, being a homemaker, and so on and so forth. Therefore, strict cultural barriers are available for females who would like to be wrestlers in a man dominated culture. That's why; they have a long path to eliminate all these obstacles. Mahavir, along with his daughters named 'Geeta' and 'Babita', strives a lot to overcome these traditional handicaps and both of them becomes a national wrestler as well as champion and the prejudices about the fact that wrestling is a man sport is totally ruined. In particular, Geeta's championships in 2010 Commonwealth Games converts into an entire hope for the whole girls in Indian society, who have ambitions to prove themselves in a masculinized community.

Concept: *discrimination*; movie: *Gunjan Saxena: The Kargil Girl* (Ali Khan Ak and Sharan Sharma, 2020)

So that the topic of discrimination (fundamentally gender discrimination) can be taught to the students in an effective manner, one of the Bollywood movies called as *Gunjan Saxena: The Kargil*

Girl (2020) may be utilized. As in the former case, this is a real-life story, which elucidates the tragic as well as heroic narrative of Gunjan, who would like to be a soldier like her father and her brother both of whom also serves for Indian army. The movie initiates in an airplane and Gunjan would like to look out of the window, yet still her brother does not allow her to do so. As a matter of fact, she is repressed by her brother Anshuman, and meanwhile, a hostess realizes the situation and takes Gunjan to the cockpit of the plane, which pushes her to be a pilot in the upcoming future. This is the turning point in Gunjan's life. From that time on, she strives very hard to reach her target to eliminate the social and cultural barriers starting from her own family. She is, on the other hand, so lucky that she is backed up by her father in every stage of her career. She proves her capability in a series of tests and exams, and she becomes a successful female pilot in Indian Air Force. But the matter is that there is not anybody in the army as a female pilot other than Gunjan, therefore; she is exposed to many processes of discrimination as well as social exclusion by males. She, as the member of the Indian Air Force, cannot partake in social organizations and even her training fails due to her gender. The men pilot regards her as weak, and they do not have any positive attitude towards her progress. Within the minds of the male pilots, employment of a female in the Indian Air Force is something like an attack to their male dominated careers. In the end, she quits the army and tries to accept the social norms ascertained in Indian society, and so returns to her family. However, the outbreak of Kargil War in 1999 makes a radical change in the army, the pilots are called out including Gunjan and she executes perfect missions as a talented pilot. More than that, she saves her commander and some other soldiers from the battlefield with her helicopter. Via her diligence as well as hard work, Gunjan annihilates all gender-based impediments. Due to the fact that the movie is based upon a true discrimination story, using it as part of the sociology and social policy pedagogical procedure works a lot.

Concept: *addiction*; movie: *Flight* (Robert Zemeckis, 2012)

Addiction is another topic covered in sociology and social policy courses. It also has some psychological facets too. The drama that I can suggest on this topic is the *Flight* (2012) in which the leading role belongs to Denzel Washington (as Whip). Denzel is a gifted pilot in US, but he has an absolute problem; that is drug addiction. As a man who lives alone because of the fact that he divorced from his wife, he

has psychological problems too. One day, on which he takes a drug, Whip attempts to run the airplane with his co-pilot Evans that is unaware of the situation. When they are on the air, the airplane breaks down and they all have a plane accident. Some of the passengers and the cabin crew lose their lives; but the majority of them stay alive including Whip, Evans, and Margaret (a hostess). That's why; a legal investigation begins to fix the reasons behind the crash. In spite of all his attempts to keep himself away from drug and alcohol, Whip unfortunately fails to do so. In the end during the trial, he confesses that he has addiction, and he takes drug as well as alcohol before taking off. Even he utters that he's drunk at that moment. Thus, national transportation committee sends Whip to federal prison where he finds the opportunity to rehabilitate himself and where he quits his bad habits. To the statements of Whip, he is "free for the first time in his life" (Scripts.com [accessed: 16.03. 2023]. This is a nice film to discuss the problem of addiction on the basis of sociology and social policy framework, which will be an absolute stimulus for course takers.

Concept: *industrial labor*; movie: *Modern Times* (Charlie Chaplin, 1936)

Modern Times (1936) is a super film that I prefer to teach industrial labor or labor sociology in connection with Fordism, Taylorism and the impacts of Great Depression upon industrialized societies. Charlie as a factory worker in the movie is a silent figure but fairly impressive in terms of his strength stemming from his illustrations of factory working, a monotonous way of employment, routine jobs, and critical analysis of technological advancement. Via the cameras fixed in workplaces, the employer, whose only concern is to increase production capacity and to minimize the costs, controls everything within the factory from top to toe and he, Mr. Observer and Controller, is the real owner of machines, production line, and even the employees. In the opening ceremony of the movie, some symbols such as clocks, running sheep, subways, and smoked industries are consciously utilized. Here, the clock symbolizes the significance of 'timing' in modern societies as well as the segmentation of family life from the work itself. When it comes to the running sheep, it can be alleged that the movie lays an emphasis upon "rush hours" enforced by modernization. This can be interpreted in a way that big masses are manipulated like 'animals' and they all have a certain shepherd called

as employer, the big boss. In this system, new manners of transportation like subways, railways, and cars are provided and all these serve for capital accumulation of business owners. Smoked industries are direct representations of industrialized communities, which will provide freedom, welfare, high wages, independence, elimination of classes, and so on and so forth. However, this is not the case in practice. To the viewpoints of Chaplin, modernization coming with industrial revolution brings artificial ways of life and work, psychologically disordered people, mechanic occupational procedures, all of which serve for business owner, not employees. Chaplin has the idea that unique solution for this economic system is unionism and the brotherhood of workers. Maybe, socialism is the first step to do so.

Concept: *disadvantaged groups*; movies: *Forest Gump* (Robert Zemeckis, 1994) and *Laal Singh Chaddha* (Advait Chandan, 2022)

As an academic topic, disadvantaged groups are the 'heart' of sociology and social policy courses. In my instructions, I systematically get benefit from *Forest Gump* (1994), a US movie; and its Indian version *Laal Singh Chaddha* (2022) in order that I can teach this issue in an effective way. These two movies represent two disabled men and their miraculous life story. In the former one, Forest is characterized by Tom Hanks while Amir Khan is the Laal himself. Both tell the audience that fragile groups can be absolutely successful in life and also at work on condition that they desire, and these movies are full of positive as well as optimistic messages concerning disadvantaged groups. The reason is that large masses see Forest and Laal in the movies as "hero in the historic wars like Vietnam and Kargil", "well-educated men", "sport champions", "perfect lover", "perfect father", "entrepreneurs", "business owners", "family member (as father)", and so on. Due to the fact that these two men are the portrayals of peace, childish nature of humans, accomplishments, goodness, and goodwill; they are quite special for society as a whole. Maybe, it can be alleged that they are advantageous from birth, yet the great majority of the people are not aware of this reality. All these things pave the way that these two films are nice examples for academic analysis of fragile groups and they can be used as part of sociology and social policy instruction.

Concept: *racism*; movie: *Hidden Figures* (Theodore Melfi, 2016)
Racism is another topic to be discussed within sociology and social policy contextual framework. In order to teach this topic, I frequently handle this situation. The movie includes fantastic scenes and messages about the problem of racism and its roots in US in 1960s. It is about the legendary story of basically three bright black women living and working in high top US institutions like research centers in Virginia and NASA Space Task. Because of her unprecedented capabilities on mathematics and analytical geometry, Katherine is appointed to space task team where she is exposed to discrimination stemming from her race and sex. To illustrate, even the toilets are categorized for whites and blacks in workplaces under the name of "*colored bathroom*"; that's why, Katherine goes to another building to go to the toilet, which takes much time for her. Therefore, it can be put forward that the workplace is not comfortable for Katherine at the beginning. However, along with her diligence and meticulous work, she proves her capability and helps to the landing of *Friendship 7* capsules in a successful manner. Additionally, Mary, another black and successful woman characterized by Janelle Monáe, would like to be an engineer in NASA and applies for that position, but she is not accepted in view of the fact that the position requires more courses to be taken. And she applies to Hampton High School, which is full of whites, to take additional courses at night, yet her attempts are in vain. Mary takes this case to the court, and she wins and gets her right at the end. Dorothy, another visionary and intellectual colored woman, makes a revolutionary change on an electronic computer in NASA and she, with her black team of women, reactivates the machine. These three blacks as well as intellectual women contributed a lot to the US space programming, which is in competition with Soviet Union at that time.

Concept: *unionism*; movie: *Bread and Roses* (Ken Loach, 2000)
In this film, unionistic struggles of janitors in USA are uncovered with characters like Adrien Brody as Sam Shapiro and Pilar Padilla as Maya, who illegally immigrated to the US from Tijuana border through the assistance of human traffickers. It is a well-known fact that unionism emerged as a reaction to industrial revolution, long hours of work, unfair distribution of wages, and harsh working conditions. This is also the case in this movie; however, the events take place in service industry. Following her migration, Maya struggles a lot to find a convenient job for herself, but there is no way out. At last, she starts to

work with her elder sister Rosa as a janitor in big plaza but in an undocumented way. Owing to Maya's unregistered manner of employment, she faces to face a great deal of challenges in workplace such as discrimination, inequalities, sexual exploitation, long hours of work, uninsured way of hiring, and etc. This negative treatment is valid for all female employers working in that sector. One day, Maya becomes acquainted with Sam, who is the representative of a union, and all changed radically not only for Maya but also for whole janitors working in that plaza. They try to unionize in spite of Mr. Perez's interferences and his attempts to block the process. At the end of the movie taking its strength from the socialist perspective, janitorial workers make a strong protest in Los Angeles streets under the campaign of Service Employees International Union. The name of the campaign is "Justice for Janitors" and the protests are oriented upon the message that "as women employees, we want both bread and roses" (https://www.youtube.com [accessed: 12.05.2023]. Here, the word "bread" symbolizes their desire to be treated equally and their rights of work whereas "roses" lay an emphasis upon their genders, which means that they would like to work and open a space in a men dominated labor markets.

Concept: *aging*; movie: *The Intern* (Nancy Meyers, 2015)

Aging, a sort of socio-economic risks within social security framework, is considered as one of the hot topics of sociology and social policy courses. It is a great matter for everybody sooner or later, but more than that the way of dealing with the problems in this period is more critical than that. So that this issue is to be taught in an effective manner, this movie and its video clips are frequently used by author during the instruction of this course. As a matter of fact, the movie tells the story of Ben, Robert de Niro, who is a retired person and who converts his old age into an advantage because of the fact that he was appointed to a particular work as a senior intern that belongs to Jules, owner of the fashion startup company in Brooklyn, New York. In this comedy drama, Ben contributes a lot not only to the affairs in the company but also to the Jules' personal life and at the end, he acts something like her mentor or advisor. Additionally, Ben's optimistic behaviours, work-oriented experiences, good communication skills, interpersonal characteristics, his regular, tidy and neat style as well as his close and helpful manner at work alters workplace positively. This movie perfectly illustrates the fact that age is not a barrier or a

handicap to do something good or useful for humans or to advance in the career; in the stark contrast, it can be a pushing force for changing something favorably both at work and within the lives of others. For this reason, the slogan of the movie is entitled as "Experience never gets old" (https://www.imdb.com [accessed: 15.05.2023].

Concept: *prisoners as disadvantaged groups*; movie: *Shawshank Redemption* (Frank Darabont, 1994)

As stated well in advance, disadvantaged groups are another key issue within the context of sociology and social policy education, which is also the case for 'prisoners' too. Their participations in the labour force, their integrations into and adaptations to social life, their stages of employment are the phases available to be planned. Within these processes and depending upon social and cultural norms, there are a great many risks for these people like discrimination, racism, adaptation, social exclusion, unemployment, low levels of wages, social stratification, sexual abuse, and etc. All these social and economic problems are valid for the prisoners in *Shawshank Redemption*, an American popular drama, in which Andy Dufresne and his close friends in Shawshank State Prison in USA is concentrated. Andy, a genius banker and an accountant, possesses two consecutive life sentences due to his wife's and her lover's murder. During his imprisonment in Shawshank, Andy comes across a lot of problems including maltreatment by security officials, sexual exploitation by "the Sisters", discrimination by other prisoners, a ceaseless threat with death by Norton, the head of the prison and many others. During his imprisonment, Andy assists many security officials and guardians on their tax payments, financial plans, and future investments and following an assault by "the Sisters", Andy was appointed to the library by Warden Samuel Norton and over there, Andy meets with Brooks, an old man nearly imprisoned for fifty years. Later on, Brooks is paroled in 1950s, but he cannot adapt to the real world, and he always thinks that he is the commodity of prison, and he belongs to there. That's why, one day he hangs himself. By the way, Andy develops his works in the jail, and he achieves to establish a new library, and he learns from Tommy Williams, a young prisoner, that Tommy's cellmate in another prison undertakes the responsibility for Andy's case. Afterwards, Andy explains the situation to Norton, yet still Norton does not do anything owing to Andy's capabilities for laundering his money and more than that, he gets Tommy killed with

so-called claim that he attempts to escape. At the end of the movie, Andy escapes from the prison and Red, one of his closest friends, goes to Andy, who lives in Zihuatanejo, a Mexican town on the Pacific. Last but not the least, it can be claimed that the movie portrays the life of prisoners and their predicaments in labor markets in a fantastic manner; hence, it is commonly benefited by the researcher for sociology and social policy pedagogy.

Concept: *class conflict*; movie: *Snow Piercer* (Bong Joon Ho, 2013)

Class conflict is such a crucial topic to be contemplated in line with the curriculum of sociology and social policy courses. In teaching environment, the movie named after *Snow Piercer* is a critical 'lab' for outstanding teaching of this theme. This movie addresses a future projection for humanity within the framework of climate change and those who achieves to be alive tries a lot to continue their life in a train that follows the same navigation in a circular way. Outside the train, there is a snow and a freezing weather, inconvenient for humans; and inside the train, the remnants of human are segregated depending upon their classes. It is something like moustache and beard case. The last wagon belongs to those who are the poorest, who are socially and economically segregated from the others, and who have the lowest level of income, which can be comprehended from their living circumstances, their manner of clothing, and their hungers. That's why; the people struggling in this wagon constitute "unhappy majority" in a particular society. Interestingly, the passengers living in the tail does not have any idea about upper classes and what's going on in the next wagons on account of the fact that it is forbidden for them to go over. One day, a revolt or let's say a revolution was organized by Curtis and Edgar and they eliminate the security officials, and the people of the lowest class possesses the opportunity to transfer to other wagons. As they change the wagons, they realize the fact that people are categorized depending upon their way of life, income, skills, life styles, and abilities. Different wagons represent different and divergent residents. More than that Curtis is curious about privileged Wilford, who creates this closed system and would like to ask him the reason behind his motivation to form such a place like that. The movie ends with an explosion and the train gets an accident, so everything becomes upside town. The people getting out of the train comes to the resolution that there is not a freezing weather; contrarily, it is quite appropriate for them to live, and they understand that they are deceived

by the creators of this unequal 'order' (system) for years just for its sustainability.

Concept: *unemployment*; movie: *Cinderella Man* (Ron Howard, 2005)

Unemployment impels labor force to be 'disadvantageous' compared to those employed; that's why, it is to be regarded as one of the principal issues in sociology and social policy courses. Just as lecturing this particular subject matter, the researcher regularly gets benefit from *Cinderella Man*, which depicts the vehemence of Great Depression in 1929 and its negative consequences on US labor markets. Throughout the film, dramatic life story of a box champion called James J. Braddock is referenced. Due to breaking his hand in the ring, Braddock has to give up boxing, which turns into a great burden financially in the aftermath of Black Thursday. He struggles a lot to find a secure job, which is unfeasible in those years, and which pushes him to be unemployed. Even if he finds a few jobs like docker, they are seasonal. A great majority of US residents lose their income and because of the lack of social security systems and insurance agencies, the masses become the victims of the system economically. In particular, free market economy, which gains a great momentum following industrialization, results in catastrophe for all Americans. With his economic reform package called 'New Deal' that prioritizes state intervention into the markets, everything changed radically with Roosevelt's election. This is also the case for Cinderella Man characterized by Russell Crowe in the middle of 1930s. As the movie scrutinizes unemployment, poverty, the crisis of free market economy, labor surplus, deficiency of social security systems including unemployment insurance, and the significance of state intervention into the economic matters, it is an excellent sample to be utilized to teach the problems of labor markets, fundamentally unemployment.

Concept: *inequality of opportunity*; movie: *October Sky* (Joe Johnston, 1999)

October Sky is also to be concentrated upon as part of sociology and social policy education for its emphasis upon inequality of opportunity. The movie, as a biographical drama, unveils the true story of Homer H. Hickam, who becomes a NASA engineer in spite of his father, a miner in Coalwood, West Virginia and despite bad living conditions and unqualified circumstances of education over there. In 1950s, Coalwood

is an isolated place in US where unique sector to be employed is mining as the name suggests. There are plenty of work accidents and explosions in the mine, so deaths and disabilities are regarded as quite normal. Therefore, teenagers are free from the equality of opportunity, which is also fostered and clinched by members of education. At this point, the leading figure is Principal Turner, who does not have any belief about the academic potentials of his students, and he has the idea that most of the students studying in his school will go to coal mines to work. According to his philosophy of life, they do not have any chance other than that. However, a group of students like Homer, Quentin, O'dell, and Roy differentiated the bad fate of Coalwood guys through the assistance as well as priceless guidance of Miss Riley, a visionary teacher in the same school. Via a rocked they innovated, they initiated to prepare for a National Science Fair, which will be held in Indianapolis. They, as a team, win the top prize and Homer as well as his friends gets scholarship offers from various universities and colleges. By means of this development, they study in perfect colleges, and they find jobs in variant sectors other than mining, which demonstrates that they get equal opportunities in their careers.

Concept: *family*; movie: *The Pursuit of Happiness* (Gabriele Muccino, 2006)

In relation to family sociology, *The Pursuit of Happiness* (2006) can be used within sociology and social policy curriculum. The movie lays a great emphasis upon family ties, which only enables people to grapple with economic and social problems and which directly connects humans to life. Chris Gardner, the leading actor, lives in San Francisco, USA and works as salesman of X-rays. However, his business is not so promising, and it is impossible for him to convince the doctors to purchase those machines. That's why, all the ways go to poverty, unemployment, and financial problems. Because of all these, his wife Linda leaves from New York to find a job at her sister's boyfriend's restaurant, so Chris and his son Christopher remains alone. Chris struggles a lot to find a particular job to support his family and he gets an internship from a company acting in capital markets, yet his employment in this firm depends upon his success in stockbroker license exam. In spite of all the negative circumstances, Chris becomes successful in the test and gets a great job offer. Chris makes a perfect job for his family especially for Christopher that motivates him to do something better.

Concept: *the future of labor as disadvantaged group*; movie: *Replicas* (Jeffrey Nachmanoff, 2018)

From the perspective of labor sociology and the future of work, the movie called *Replicas* is an excellent sample to be studied. This science fiction movie, commonly used as part of sociology and social policy instruction by researcher, delineates Industry 4.0, artificial intelligence (AI), changing work styles, digital labor, labor priorities, and labor relations in the years ahead. William Foster is a scientist working as synthetic biologist and an expert on neural mapping while Ed Whittle is on the fore front with his human cloning activities. The research center, in which these guys are employed are so innovative that it is home to novel scientific discoveries that have a potential to alter military operations, trading issues, and the portrayal of labor. On a rainy day, Foster and his family have a tragic traffic accident and all the family members, except William, die. Then William calls Ed to clone his family and he uses memory transfer machine to reactive their mental capabilities and memoirs, and their initiatives work. William's family comes again, and they start to live together. Additionally, William transfers his own mind to Subject 345, a robot operating with AI, to eliminate the threats coming from outsiders like Jones. This is actually a visionary and open minding movie in terms of picturing the position of technology in relation to Industry 4.0 as well as AI and it suggests a holistic perspective for humanity about what will happen next.

Concept: *immigration*; movie: *The Swimmers* (Sally El Hossaini, 2022)

Immigration embedded with an original movie like *The Swimmers* (2022) is another social and economic issue to be discussed in sociology and social policy instruction. This topic, its causes, results, and the manners are always on the main axis of this discipline. From this framework, it can be addressed that this movie is a perfect fit to teach this issue. The plot is about a group of Syrian refugees, in particular, two sisters like Yusra and Sarah Mardini, and their struggles to move to Europe in the aftermath of Syrian Civil War, which created an economic, political, and social instability in the region. For many Syrians including these girls, the war, bombings, political upheavals, economic problems, uncertainties, insecurities, and many other factors can be assessed as 'pushing' factors for immigration whilst job opportunities, financial support, medical care and education facilities,

and technological improvements are the 'pulling' instruments of this population flow. Owing to these concerns, Yusra and Sarah depart from Syria to go to Turkey, first of all. Later on, they pay smugglers to transfer them to Lesbos, a Greek island located on Aegean Sea. Having arrived at Lesbos, they find a way to go to Germany where a new life begins for these sisters. Here, Yusra becomes a member of Refugee Olympic Team and partakes in Rio 2016 Olympics and gets a medal while Sarah starts to work as a volunteer in Refugee Camps in Lesbos. Hence, it can be ensured that this movie is quite popular about the depiction of immigration as a 'social' problem and its possible reasons and consequences.

Discussion

Due to their suggestions of "real life experience", their illustrations of economic and social problems (Sexton 2006, 417) and their portrayals of disadvantageous or marginalized groups,[1] the movies have become significant educational instruments and their usages in pedagogy have skyrocketed for the last three decades, which is also valid for sociology and social policy instruction as well. Admittedly, the studies that connect "sociology" instruction with movies and cinema studies date back to 1980s due to their powerful assistance to teaching environments (Demerath 1981, 69). However, it is also to be noted that these sorts of studies have gained a big momentum in the aftermath of 2000s. In association with this discipline, there are a number of studies in related literature. In this study, the movies benefited by the author while delivering the course were compiled and the reasons behind their utilizations were also clarified. In order to create an effective learning environment, Hollywood and Bollywood movies are commonly benefited. That's why, fifteen movies were listed, elucidated, and prioritized. In some courses and in line with the topics uncovered, the clips or short videos from these selected movies are illustrated whereas the whole movie is sometimes shared for the others to stimulate the

[1] Disadvantaged groups like disabled people, employed children, immigrants, refugees, women, employees, those sexually abused and etc. are so varied within cultural and social norms of each community that their representations in global cinematography are also widely distributed. Thus, for illustrations of disadvantaged and or marginalized groups in cinema, see also Bielby and Bielby 1996, 248-270; Summerfield 2009, 935-957; Philips 2004, 253-272; Maule and Russell 2005, 51-55; Hershfield 2010, 170-185; Datta 2000, 71-82; Kılıçkıran 1997, 89-111; Wang 2015, 589-622; Davis 2017, 39-50; Martínez-Sotelo 2016, 127-144; Smolin 2011, 74-89; Andersson and Sundholm 2019, 19-34.

learning activity and if time demanding situations are of no avail. Furthermore, the students are required to write a 'detailed' analysis as an assignment that links theory with practice. From these perspectives, it can be claimed that current study clarifies the pure experiences of the researcher.

Modern Times (1936), as one of the cases focused within the study, is a 'fascinating' sample for sociology and social policy instruction and it is concentrated upon by many intellectuals from different perspectives in the literature (Stewart 1976, 295-314; Kotkin 2001, 111-164; Korte 2010, 123-141; Galanopoulos 2008, 117-30; Grace 1952, 353-363; Hurley 1960,313-320). However, its strong emphasis upon industrialization and the industrial labor that it created are closely probed within the context of this paper. In close coordination with the study of Tolich (1992) and Demerath (1981), it can be ensured that the author preferred to take advantage of this movie from sociological and socio-political background and the ideas of Tolich (1992) and Demerath (1981) overlaps with the points shared by the author in this research.

Within the scope of the research, the movie called *The Pursuit of Happiness* (2006) is referenced to teach the issues concerning sociology of the family, which includes diverse topics ranging from the dynamics of a particular family, inequality, problem of divorce, the influences of globalization upon family relations, marriage patterns, marriage education, etc. (Nonoyama 2000, 27-41; Hood-Willams 1986, 270-272; LaRossa 1984, 315-322; Kolb 1950, 65-72). On the other hand, the identical movie is listed as one of the top films used to teach the principles of economy, not social policy or sociology solely. To illustrate, the studies conducted by Mateer, O'Roark, and Holder (2016, 213) upon 105 educators stressed the idea that this film places 17th amongst the greatest films for teaching economy. More than that, Lv, Guo and Li (2017, 473-477) analyze the same film from individual American values perspective whilst Adriani and Nugroho (2021, 213-219) focus on the movie from a social perspective. Temmy (2009, 68-72) portrays the cultural side of the movie, though. Therefore, this paper and its claims contradict with these scholars mentioned. To the writer's personal point of view, this is true strength of social sciences in which each scholar regards divergent things from the same case.

An American miracle named after *Forest Gump* (1994) is other film focused in relation to sociology and social policy pedagogy in particular from the standpoint of disadvantageous groups. Yet still,

same movie is examined from various perspectives like teaching the past (Wineburg et al. 2007, 168-177), literary and semiotic studies (Benihingan 2018, Rutsyamsun and Sakinah 2023, 22-30), hierarchy of needs (Fiedhawatie 2013), postmodernism (Scott 2001, 23), ascertaining personality traits, and instruction of psychology (Manggalasari and Luthfiyati 2018, 89-92). As seen in the related literature, not a single study or research that scrutinizes the movie from the author's outlook is available; so, it can be affirmed that the approach adopted in the study suggests novel insights for the analysis of this movie and for cinema studies. These kinds of conceptual contradictions are also existent for other movies like *Shawshank Redemption* (1994) (Xinya 2016, 61-69; O'Sullivan 2001, 317-334) *Cinderella Man* (2005) (Radošinská 2018, 20-37; Llarena 2018, 101-120), and *October Sky* (1999) (Kangas, Cook and Rule 2017, 45-65; Wissehr, Concannon and Barrow 2011, 368-375; Hébert and Neumeister 2001, 224-235) within the overviews of literature.

As one of the chosen cases in the paper, *Bread and Roses* (2000), nevertheless, and its philosophy of analysis is in coordination with the current literature. The unionistic struggles as well strikes clinched with socialist ideals, the combat with capitalist and free market economy, and the critics against capital owners in US labor markets are clearly identified in this study, which is the case for former studies (Guzmán 2012, 101-118; Boyd 2001, 106-109).

In addition to those movies mentioned and discussed well in advance, new modern films such as *Laal Singh Chaddha* (2022), *Hidden Figures* (2016), *Snow Piercer* (2013), *Replicas* (2018), *The Swimmers* (2022), *The Intern* (2015), *Dangal* (2016), *Gunjan Saxena: The Kargil Girl* (2020) and so on and so forth are also added to the cinema assisted sociology and social policy curriculum, which symbolizes the fact that the paper is visionary and promises a contemporary approach to the discipline and to the social as well as cinematographic sciences as a whole.

Conclusion

Beyond their structural and entertaining aspects, movies can be referred as sinequanons of education, which is the case for sociology and social policy discipline. In literature, movies are frequently used for the instruction of a wide range of topics such as economics, geography, history, politics, medicine, and etc. accordingly. The scenes, conversations, explicit or implicit messages, symbols are more

effective than 'talking' and 'chalking' philosophy or strategy. Moreover, usual and audial infrastructure of cinema plays a very crucial role on conveying pedagogical implications. That's why, the usage of cinema for academic studies and their manners of teaching are very promising.

Limitations and further suggestions

Indeed, the research has some limitations. First and foremost, the study just focuses upon personal experiences of the researcher and secondly, empirical research is not available, which may be problematic for the cases and the results debated all through the paper. Third, just a limited number of cases or movies were mentioned, and the others were not shared as they are beyond the scope of this study. What's more, computer software programs like Nvivo, Maxqda, and or SPSS were not benefited. For future researchers, it can be suggested that either a qualitative or quantitative study can be conducted upon a number of students concerning the impacts of those movies listed in the paper.

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SOCIAL SCIENCES RESEARCH

Politics of Indian migrant labourer migration during COVID-19: A visual discourse analysis of liminality and communitas through cartoons

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Abstract: As the COVID-19 pandemic dawned, society was reduced to a state of exception. The most turbulent sight in India was the exodus of migrant labourers onto their homelands as the formal labour market collapsed. This act of 'migrating back' emerged from the desire for 'home' during an uncertain phase of societal existence. This research examines the social and spatial liminality of migrant labourers during a necropolitical era of restricted mobility. The same state of exception invoked by the coronavirus demanding a curbing of mobility turned out to be a counterforce behind the act of migration migrant labourers embarked on. Cartoons on migrant labourer migration during the COVID-19 pandemic by select artists such as Satish Acharya and Manjul are explored in detail to understand how the various visual techniques are exploited to portray the liminal state of the communitas of migrant labourers. Placed within the methodological framework of 'liminality and communitas' put forth by Victor Turner, the discourse analysis method would be aided by Scott McCloud's comic theories. The migrant labourers, while performing the act of migration, constitute a 'communitas' and exhibit the traits of a collective community that experiences a state of liminality. Further, the study analyses how select artists have used the spaces within the medium of cartoon to depict the 'liminal space' and the 'collective liminal identity' the migrant community inhibited while on an exodus to homelands. The study examines the same by analysing visual narratives within the cartoons, focusing on visual symbols and metaphors, dialogues, colour palettes, lines and perspectives, etc. The spacing of these elements uncovers the larger social, political, and economic discourses within which the plight of the migrant labourer community is embedded. Thus, examining the same reveals the politics of migration of these migrant labourer communities within the geopolitical backdrop of India.

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Introduction: **Lockdown and its diverse impact on India's internal migrants**

The COVID-19 pandemic trampled governments worldwide, with India no exception. There were many repercussions, but some sectors were more vulnerable. The Indian government announced a nationwide lockdown on 24 March 2020 without prior notice and heavy restrictions imposed overnight. The sudden announcement of the lockdown stunted all kinds of mobility, commercial activities (Rajan, Shivakumar, and Srinivasan 2020, 1021; Rahaman et al. 2021, 788). This had a significant impact on India's internal migrants. India is one of the countries in the world with a high rate of internal migration, driven by employment and work demands in search of economic stability (Rajan 2013; Rahaman et al. 2021, 789). A significant section of those employed within informal sectors are further vulnerable and alienated from availing social security benefits and even fundamental rights at workplaces (Rajan, Shivakumar, and Srinivasan 2020, 1023; Srivastava and Sutradhar 2016, 27-48). Thereby, the impact of the lockdown was even more complex on informal migrant labourers, particularly marginalised and daily-wage labourers, due to job loss and trimming (Rajan, Shivakumar, and Srinivasan 2020; Bhagat et al. 2020, 705-718).

The plight of migrant labourers in India during the lockdown reveals fault lines within the economy and society (Ranjan 2021, 721). During the initial phase, the government failed to address the fundamental issues of migrant labourers like economic crisis, food shortage, unemployment, lack of transport facilities and financial and ration relief (Bhagat et al. 2020, 705-718; Rahaman et al. 2021, 788). As Krishnakumar and Rana say, the government had not developed any appropriate strategies to handle millions of internal migrant labourers, informal sector labourers and houseless populations during the first phase of the lockdown period (2020, 389-391). About one and a half months after the lockdown, measures like announcing special trains came forth. However, coupled with anxiety and sudden uncertainty, the very first month of lockdown, precisely post-March 24th, 2020, was the worst phase for these migrant workers communities.

> The commencement of the lockdown generated widespread panic among migrants across India's major cities and states of destination, kicking off concerted attempts to return predominantly to rural hometowns in the states of origin. From the scale of the attempted exodus, it is evident that the government did not account for India's enormous magnitude of internal migrants, with the four-hour notice preceding the first lockdown taking migrant workers by surprise. (Rajan et al. 2020, 1022)

The powerlessness made them powerful enough to take decisive steps. In the Indian context, the political reactions and measures taken to tackle the virus caused this imposed immobility-driven liminality that forced the migrant worker community to form communitas and protest against the same. “Large number of migrants stranded in the first lockdown were unable to claim their rights because they were not registered under laws such as the Inter-State Migrant Workmen Act, 1979 and the Building and Other Construction Workers Act, 1996” (Deshingkar 2022, 177). This act of 'migrating back' emanated from this 'desire for home' and 'feeling of security and belongingness'.

This paper explores the social and spatial liminality of these migrating migrant labourers in a necropolitical era of restricted mobility. Select cartoons by two renowned Indian cartoonists, Satish Acharya and Shailendra Pandey, known as Manjul, have been chosen for this study. The agenda is to examine in detail how these artists have used the spaces within the medium of cartoons to depict the collective liminal identity of migrant workers. Placed within the methodological framework of 'liminality and communitas' put forth by Victor Turner, the discourse analysis method would be aided by Scott McCloud's comic theories. More than exploring the unique style of these two artists, the rationale of this study is to examine the visual techniques and tools used within the select cartoons that reveal the 'liminal' identities of the communitas of migrating migrant workers during the lockdown period. These cartoonists' selected web cartoons on X (previously Twitter) are viewed as visual narratives of the pandemic scenario in India. They can be viewed as critiques of the socio-political dimensions of the pandemic through satire. Widely disseminated through social media, these digital cartoons by these political cartoonists can be viewed, as Yadav calls it, as “a counter-hegemonic narrative of the pandemic in India” (2020, 266). All the selected cartoons were published during the first week of lockdown after its unprecedented announcement on 24 March 2020. This period saw a

mass reverse migration flow from metro cities and urban areas to rural parts (Rahaman et al. 2021, 790). The abundant freedom and options that software offers within the digital space are the reason for creating comics and cartoons with ease, and thereby, this explains how these digital cartoonists respond to these events in real time.

Methodology and Method: **Victor Turner's idea of 'Liminality and Communitas'**

Coined by Arnold van Gennep, the concept of 'liminality' was developed by Victor Turner within a sociological backdrop to denote the middle phase of a ritual process where an individual undergoes a transition from one social status to another (Wels 2011, 1). This liminality is an ambiguous state of 'no longer' and simultaneously 'not yet'. Turner (1966, 359) says that liminal personae are "neither here nor there; they are betwixt and between the positions assigned and arrayed by law, custom, convention, and ceremonial". Turner himself was not strict about the contextual use of the concept; thus, Turner's concept of liminality is used within various fields to understand this in-betweenness. Originating from the Latin word *limen*, which means 'threshold', the idea of liminality refers to a situation where some thresholds or boundaries are crossed and exist in a state being neither here nor there or a state of transition (Turner 1967, 20). Thereby, it is a stage of ambiguity. Liminality is not simply crossing or straddling a boundary or threshold. Instead, the liminal space, phase, or condition is temporary ambiguity, fluidity, and statuslessness, defined by the brief lifting of normal social rules and, more significantly, the momentary levelling of social ranks and statuses. Turner (1966, 95) calls "this momentary social levelling and temporary utopian feeling of social oneness, this underlying of deeply held humanitarian value, communitas".

Due to temporary ambiguity, these migrant workers embarked on an exodus and ended up being in a liminal state of belonging nowhere, neither the real home nor the migrated home. They went into a state of limbo, and in this state, they crossed the rule of no travel, thus, in a way, exerting more power to their identity of being bound by laws. These liminal personas or threshold people often experience structural inferiority as "these persons elude or slip through the network of classifications that normally locate states and positions" (Turner 1966, 95). By migrating, they reacted against the sovereign's powers; hence, they slipped through the rules of the sovereign of imposed

mobility. The liminality dawns on migrant labourers in their rite of passage of trying to pass through a state of lockdown and isolation. Migrant labourers are 'transitional beings' or 'liminal persona', defined by a name and a set of symbols. Analysing these comics for the set of symbols and signs through which they are depicted gives us an insight into how their liminal identity is portrayed. Since the chosen discourses are web cartoons, the visual discourse analysis method would be performed using Scott McCloud's comic theories as it facilitates delving into the unique aspects of visual storytelling and the dynamic possibilities offered by the digital medium.

Analysis: **Cartooning the liminality of the migrant communitas: a visual analysis**

The COVID-19 pandemic exacerbated a profound "crisis of mobility" among India's internal migrant labourers, compelling many to seek refuge in their hometowns (Rajan et al. 2020, 1021). This crisis plunged them into heightened vulnerability and liminality, characterised by what Deshingkar (2022, 176) terms "hyper-precarity". These migrants, already marginalised within urban settings due to informal employment, lack of access to state welfare, and protective legislation, found themselves further marginalised amidst pandemic-induced immobility, rendering them essentially belonging nowhere—a liminal space. However, rather than succumbing to this liminal state, migrant workers utilised it to subvert state controls and regulations. In navigating this liminality, their identities became increasingly complex. Identity, encompassing socio-cultural affiliations with home communities, occupational roles, and spaces, clashed with the imperative to "stay at home" during lockdowns, compelling them to "go back to their homes" despite the challenges of urban life. While liminality and marginality are distinct concepts, there exists a connection between the two, as marginalised individuals often find themselves on the threshold of liminality (Brown 2007, 25). Marginality implies restricted boundary-crossing, whereas liminality suggests the freedom or ability to traverse boundaries actively. The marginality of migrant labourers propelled them into a state of "liminars" during the pandemic, caught between their urban workplaces and rural homes. Their exodus, constrained by transportation shutdowns and restrictions, thrust them into a state of transit, where they lingered in ambiguous spaces like highways, railway stations, and makeshift shelters, unable to reach their

destinations or return home. This state of in-betweenness induced feelings of disorientation and ambiguity. Communitas emerged amidst this liminality as migrant workers bonded over shared experiences of unemployment, uncertainty, and the common goal of returning to their rural origins. Despite their diverse backgrounds and occupations, they formed a collective identity driven by the imperative of survival and the quest for belonging.

In most cartoons, the selected artists' predominant utilisation of silhouette figures is a strategic visual device to represent migrating migrant labourers within the thematic context. By eschewing distinct physical features, these figures evoke a sense of communitas, emphasising the collective vulnerability inherent in their shared experience of hyper-precarity. Moreover, the depiction of these migrating figures in elongated queues, seemingly without defined endpoints, adeptly communicates their liminal transit state, elucidating the perpetual in-betweenness characterising their journey. The cartoon 'Survival!' by Sathish Acharya, posted on 29 March 2020, shows an exodus of people entering a giant maze in the shape of a lock. Right next to a fallen figure, another figure is seen screaming, 'The key is survival'. Within the vast land outside the maze is a newspaper that says, 'Corona lockdown migrants walk home'. The mass of people standing in queues to enter the maze shows the in-transit state of these migrants. The lock-shaped maze can be viewed as a symbol of the vulnerable and marginal states into which the lockdown has locked them. The cartoon by Manjul created for Mid Day and posted on X on 30 March 2020, part of the Mumbai Meri Jaan series, again shows silhouette figures with luggage on their head running. This single frame again highlights the in-transit state of these migrants. The bent legs in the caricature show that these figures are running for their lives. These silhouettes of migrants against empty landscapes and backgrounds evoke a feeling of anonymity and dislocation.

Althusser's idea of repressive state apparatus can be used to examine migrant worker migration during COVID-19, where the state employed repressive apparatuses such as police, military, and legal systems to maintain travel restrictions after the sudden announcement of the lockdown. These measures hampered the survival measures of migrant workers and contributed to the chaos and hardships. 'The Plan!' by Sathish Acharaya, posted on X on 30 March 2020, shows the exodus of migrants carrying their luggage through a deserted land. Interestingly, they are walking over a human figure with a head buried

in the ground. A sartorial examination of the figure wearing a kurta and vest reveals it depicts a politician. Here, the traversing migrants are portrayed as minuscule black silhouettes. However, the political figures they are walking over are exaggeratedly enormous. A close analysis of the cartoon reveals the dynamic power imbalance within a liminal space. Lying as an obstacle, the head-buried political figure indicates the government policies that served as an obstacle for the migrants and the government's passivity towards the struggles of migrant workers during the initial lockdown phase. The speech bubble emanating from the burrowed figure which says 'PLAN?' is a symbolic representation of the unplanned measures the government took to curb the virus that seriously affected migrant lives. However, these silhouette figures trample and walk over the figure. Their liminality vests them the power to inverse the power dynamics. They walked over the government-imposed immobility, and through that liminal identity, they exerted power back with their mobility. A reverse visual approach is visible in Manjul created for 'First Cut' posted on 28 March 2020 on X. Here, a figure's leg wearing a tattered pant and rubber slipper can be seen in a walking motion and considering the context, the figure can be presumed to be a migrant worker. Between the migrant's legs is a silhouette figure speaking through a mic on a podium that reads 'GOVT. ' The silhouette figure is seen to be saying, 'Here are the steps I'm taking to fight corona'. Juxtaposing this dialogue alongside the steps of migrants in transit highlights the irony of discriminating government measures. The enlarged size proportion of walking migrants' feet against the figure on the podium again asserts the power that embarked on these migrants when pushed into a state of liminality. The background of this cartoon again consists of faded sketches of migrants' feet in motion in tattered pants and slippers, further asserting this idea of being in transit as a marginalised and vulnerable community.

Yet another cartoon by Manjul was created for First Cut and posted on X on 27 March 2020. It shows a migrant worker returning home. He is seen walking on a police lathi, almost like a tightrope walk. The figure is seen to be carrying huge luggage on his back, and it is sarcastically a saffron-clad, plumpy, political figure with the phrase 'lockdown planner' written on the back of his dress. This single-frame cartoon is embedded with various visual symbols that portray the identity of migrant labourers as communitas of liminality. This image of a tightrope walker further enhances this as they are seen to be

balancing precariously, trying not to fall. The police lathi on which the figure is walking symbolises the various obstacles on their journey back imposed by the different repressive rule-enforcing bodies of the government. Most of these comics portray migrants in transit as figures clutching onto their belongings and luggage, but the luggage carried here with exasperation is a political representative. This is quite symbolic of how the government's unplanned lockdown measures forced them to perform this tightrope walk bearing a liminal existence during an era of imposed immobility. Unlike other cartoons discussed, which consist of silhouette figures, here, there is a humanised focus on the weary face of the traversing migrant worker. A physiognomic analysis reveals that he is struggling with fatigue and despair.

Satish Acharya's cartoon 'Home!', dated November 26, 2020, portrays a migrant family in destitution on a footpath, juxtaposed with a police officer nearby. The father, depicted urgently preventing his emaciated son from crossing into the road, ironically implores, "No! No! Stay Home! Don't cross the Laxman Rekha!" This dialogue satirically underscores their lack of a conventional home as they subsist on the footpath amidst rags and empty utensils. Their homelessness paradoxically becomes their home, highlighting their liminal existence. The migration from economically stable urban employment to impoverished rural homes signifies a ritualistic transition to a former identity. Amidst the crisis, millions returned to their rural origins for social support and security. Hindered mobility compelled arduous journeys akin to pilgrimage, symbolising a passage from turmoil to resolution. This journey mirrors ritualistic rites of passage, marked by trials like physical exhaustion, hunger, and governmental restrictions. These trials parallel individuals' challenges in traditional rituals, fostering community and solidarity. Ultimately, such rituals culminate in transformation and reintegration into society.

The Supreme Court verdict on the Ayodhya dispute and the retelecast of Ramanand Sagar's Ramayana provided fertile ground for the creation of political cartoons, exemplified by Satish Acharya's 'The Long Walk' and Manjul's cartoon for First Cut. Acharya's work depicts a mass exodus of migrant workers against the backdrop of the 'Ramayana Returns!' slogan on a towering wall, emphasising the government's failure to address their plight. The use of contrasting orange and blue hues underscores the sarcastic reference to Ram Rajya, evoking the ritualistic undertones of the migrant exodus. Similarly, Manjul's cartoon juxtaposes a political representative

emotionally engrossed in the Ramayana retelecast with stranded migrants on a deserted highway, drawing parallels between their predicament and Lord Ram's exile. This symbolic comparison accentuates the ritualistic aspect of migrant labourers' liminal identity, elevating their journey to a quest for salvation amidst political complexities surrounding the Ayodhya conflict and Ram Mandir construction. Mahatma Gandhi's concept of Ram Rajya, initially grounded in principles of people's sovereignty and moral authority, becomes entangled with contemporary debates over Hindutva agendas, adding layers of nuance to the migrants' quest for a sense of belonging. Ultimately, these cartoons critique the government's prioritisation of religious symbolism over addressing the pressing needs of migrant workers, reframing their migration as a symbolic rite of passage towards an elusive notion of purity and salvation.

Conclusion

McCloud's exploration of the visual language of comics underscores the potency of symbols, metaphors, and visual techniques in conveying intricate concepts. This effectiveness is apparent in political cartoons portraying migrants' challenges, emotions, and societal implications. These cartoons prompt readers to reflect on issues surrounding migrant labourers' liminality, engaging them emotionally and intellectually. Through nuanced use of scale, perspective, and colour, these visual elements foster a profound understanding of migration complexities and resultant liminal identities. Turner's concept of liminality describes a transitional phase where individuals exist between established social structures. Migrant workers, trapped between urban employment and rural homes due to travel restrictions, exemplify this liminal state. Cartoons depicting their plight often feature endless queues and highways, symbolising a journey with no clear destination. Drawing techniques like converging lines emphasise the mass exodus towards an elusive goal, enhancing the portrayal of transit. Within this liminality, Turner's notion of communitas emerges as migrant workers form a collective identity and solidarity in the face of adversity. Silhouette figures symbolise this communal struggle, their dynamic poses conveying distress and determination. A subdued colour palette underscores the migrants' plight against barren landscapes, evoking a sense of exhaustion and despair. These cartoons also depict power dynamics between migrants and authorities, employing visual metaphors like maze imagery and size exaggeration. Zooming-in

techniques humanise their distress, while symbolic motifs like spirals emphasise the chaotic nature of their journey. Furthermore, the association of migration with rituals, such as the Ram Mandir dispute, adds layers of meaning, highlighting the suspension of social norms and roles during liminal phases. The COVID-19 pandemic introduced a new layer of complexity, enforcing immobility while igniting migrant mobility. Cartoons metaphorically depict necropolitical forces pushing migrants into a liminal state, where they exist in motion yet belong nowhere. Through these visual techniques, the cartoons poignantly illustrate the liminal identity of migrant communitas, shedding light on broader social, political, and economic discourses surrounding migration during the pandemic. In conclusion, analysing visual elements in political cartoons unveils the intricate politics of migrant labourer communities amidst the COVID-19 pandemic in India. By effectively conveying complex concepts like liminality and communitas, these cartoons offer profound insights into the migrant experience and the socio-political forces at play.

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Lockdown: A real-life paradoxical experience to survive in new normal conditions

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Abstract: Lockdown is a paradoxical state of affairs implemented by the government to control the pandemic, in which people remain inside their homes and only leave for necessary purposes. In an ironic experience, it makes a case for people's spiritual aspects of health and well-being to maintain interpersonal interactions during the lockdown. A notion or concept known as "lockdown as a paradox" is applied to examine the rejuvenating influence on welfare, health, and interpersonal relationships. The real-life paradoxical experiences of people will be found through qualitative methods such as textual analysis and recorded testimonials. The main sources for the research include written accounts of people's actual experiences and literary works like *My Day's in Solitude by Annie Issac, Thoughts Unlocked: Lockdown Days Musings by G. Sreenivasan and The Day Before Today: Lockdown Stories by Gayathri Gill Lock Tales*. Through personal accounts and first-hand accounts of individuals' experiences throughout the lockdown, the research observes good health and well-being. In the interim, it investigates how lockdowns might be used as a chance for all-encompassing growth.

Keywords: lockdown, paradox, new normal, survive, life

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Introduction

A lockdown is a contradictory condition in which inhabitants of a nation are communicated to stay at home to stop the spread of the COVID-19 virus, where they are only allowed to leave their homes to obtain necessities (Piryani n.d., 1–5). The COVID-19 pandemic has led to a lockdown, affecting relationships and health. This research explores the impact of lockdowns on people's well-being and relationships, aiming to maintain global sustainability. It uses testimonies and anecdotes to explore the resilience of interpersonal bonds and the "lockdown as a paradox" theory to analyze social connectedness, distancing, standards, identification, communication, inclusion, and isolation.

This is further elaborated on with the concept of social influence by Wen Marc Lim in his article. He says that,

> Taken collectively, the theory of social influence acknowledges that humans, unlike animals, possess volitional control (Lim & Weissmann, 2022), which means that individuals are capable of acting based on their own decision or choice. This is a fundamental tenet that needs to be acknowledged before any social process is considered, such as Kelman's three-process theory of attitude change (1958) (e.g., compliance, identification, and internalization). Therefore, the degree to which the society (as espoused through social norms) can influence the individual (as reflected through social identification) will depend on how persuasive the social norms are in convincing the individual to identify with that society, and thus, shaping the individual's desire for social connectedness and social distancing with that society, as well as the subsequent impact that these antecedents have on the individual's degree of engagement in social interaction and the outcomes of that decision on the individual's extent of inclusion and isolation in society (W. M. Lim 2022, 4).

Lockdown as a paradox influences the characters and people in lockdown literature to live in New Normal conditions. The term "new normal life" refers to a way of living in which people and characters must change to fit in with the new norms that society is establishing, such as new behaviours, habits, and moral standards (Cordero 2021, 344–45). The new normal life conditions are wearing masks, online classes, working from home, social distancing, and online prayer meetings which are evident in the primary sources.

Work from home

Sreenivasan discusses this in light of his experience with COVID-19 while working from home. He is aware of how his supervisor views this. When his supervisor inquired about his health, Sreenivasan began to consider the inconsistencies.

> Did you think about the COVID-19 meeting, which has saved you today from bad remarks of your boss? How about that health report you got last week, which, if positive, would have broken your life? (Thoughts Unlocked: Lockdown Days Musings 34)

Sreenivasan, a worker, adapted to lockdown life without justification, maintaining work habits both inside and outside the home office. He recognized the benefits of remote work, including enhanced work-life balance, job satisfaction, and increased creativity, and his supervisor praised its flexibility (Wethal et al. 2022, 325–43). Despite his limitations, he was nevertheless able to integrate eating and travelling by wrapping up his work early. Sreenivasan gave a real response to his work-from-home policy and seemed to find it amazing. During the work-from-home phase, Sreenivasan may have adhered to abstract qualities, which might be items viewed as entities in and of themselves (Gardner n.d., 57–62).

Sreenivasan adapted to his job by analyzing social, physical, temporal, and material limits. He intensified his examination and created a new normal by suppressing anxiety to maintain positive relationships. During lockdown, he realized his job controlled his home time, allowing him to maintain good health and well-being (Cropley et al. 2022, 3). He successfully managed his internal recuperation during the lockdown by controlling his behaviour and taking breaks. His response prompted the manager to assess the mental health of his staff, enabling them to understand the challenges of working from home and encourage others to do the same (Mohammed et al. 2022).

He discovered that when working from home, he should continue to lead a healthy lifestyle. Sreenivasan discovered that removing himself from his profession was crucial for his physical and mental well-being. In response, he distanced himself and allowed room and time for others to adjust to the subtleties of lockdown limitations (Jaiswal and Arun 2022). His supervisor approved his work, and his inherent sense of well-being and self-worth drove him to survive the lockdown. He followed guidelines for physical and mental well-being, taking breaks

for rehabilitation. This control stemmed from his work. In response to his work-from-home routine, Sreenivasan chose to see any disagreements constructively, divert his attention from worry, and concentrate on work autonomy (Mohammed et al. 2022, 1–21). Sreenivasan's response during the lockdown improved his adaptability, autonomy, and fulfilment, fostering relaxed interactions with family and coworkers. His response raised awareness, equipping them with mental skills and reducing work-related stress, resulting in cordial relationships with family and co-workers.

Online mass and prayers

Rev. Dr. Kurian Mattam claims that the lockdown limited his ability to perform social services and his ability to celebrate Holy Mass. Even though he complied with official rules, he considered them a barrier to the opportunity to grow in his faithfulness to God and others in conflicting circumstances. He realized that his unwavering faith in God gave him the strength to endure the limitations, pain, and misfortune of the lockdown. In addition, he strove to improve his interpersonal relationships by surrendering his internal needs to control his worldly interests. In addition, he took control of his life and learned to live with hope, which helped him manage his fears and problems. Because he was comfortable practising his beliefs ardently, his faith may be described as self-renouncing faith in this context. According to Upenieks, "Greater spiritual seeking during these times, though stressful at the moment, provide individuals with an opportunity to achieve greater maturity in their faith and lean on it more heavily to see them through difficult periods" (Upenieks L. et al. 2022, 857). He may even recommend the same to anyone he is in contact with. He created a positive attitude toward his contradictory living position, which helped him maintain balance in his life. It made it easier for him and the people he interacted with to maintain a cheerful outlook on life (Crea, Filosa, and Alessandri 2021, 739). Lockdown was therefore a fresh start and may be regarded as permission to exist in the new normal. According to Fr. Kurian, by affecting people's emotions, thoughts, and behaviours during the lockdown, this optimism brought about by faith and hope could restore our paradoxical lives.

On the other hand, Fr. Kurian acquired the ability to deal with hardships, setbacks, and difficult circumstances in life. He developed this ability by living a devoted life to God and carrying out his responsibilities with sincere faith. It showed that he battled for

everyone and himself in the paradoxical circumstance, acting like a knight of faith. In Kierkegaardian understanding, "to exist as spirit, as self, is to live in faith and as a knight of faith" (Hall 1995, 12-41). As a result, Fr. Kurian became a man of faith in difficult circumstances and gained a positive relationship with God, the "self," and people. He prayed for the benefit of his faith communities, for instance. In response to the meaninglessness of life, Fr. Kurian found purpose in Holy Mass, prayer, and ongoing interaction with his friends. It demonstrated how one had to battle relentlessly against the odds to become hopeful in the face of absurdities and inconsistencies (Kusumalayam n.d., 45:228). Fr. Kurian's acts demonstrated altruism and service-mindedness, which helped him build relationships within the religious community. It aided in his and his acquittances' ability to lead fulfilling lives (Kenkmann et al. 2022, 315–316). The freedom, charity, and compassion Fr. Kurian showed his friends demonstrated his optimistic and faith-filled reaction to the lockdown. He consequently felt joy from his never-ending pursuit of happiness, love, and the truth (Dion 2021, 25). The study looked at how Fr. Kurian and his followers' experiences in faith communities with self-examination, faith, hope, self-denouncing, common good, and altruistic service helped them think practically about living with reciprocal reciprocity in the new normal conditions during the lockdown (Rassendren n.d., 296).

Mother – video calls

Annie's mother was unable to see Annie; she became agitated and inquired about how Annie survived the lockdown. She purchased a smartphone for her mother, who loaded WhatsApp as soon as she received it. Throughout the pandemic, she was specific about whom she wanted to visit and speak to.

> On getting her smartphone, the first application she installed was WhatsApp. Though it was a test of patience for me, she finally learnt how to do video calls. She was really happy that she could see me while talking. But within a month, the video call become an occasional weekend ritual (My Day's in Solitude 22).

Annie's mother picked up the skill of using WhatsApp video calls during the lockdown. The other option available to Annie's mother in this situation—since they are unable to meet in person—is for her to make video calls using WhatsApp. During the lockdown, her mother spent more time interacting with her, which helped to allay her fears of

the COVID-19 pandemic. Annie feels that her mother consciously tries to care for her son and daughter and to be aware of their well-being. During the lockdown, she asks Annie for assistance in using her newly acquired smartphone, which she uses to make video calls on WhatsApp. While Annie acknowledges her responsibilities and has promised to teach her mother how to use WhatsApp video conversations, she has denied ever assisting her mother. This carries over to the obligation of looking out for one another while they are alone. Annie remembers how much her mother cared about her subjective well-being. The main purpose of her mother's WhatsApp video calls is to inquire about her daughter's wellbeing. Intimacy was demonstrated by Annie's mother's concern, which she felt throughout the lockdown and in the evidence she recalled. As a result, she will always remember her video calls throughout the lockdown.

In Annie's and her mother's cases, video conversations were crucial to maintaining a sense of social contact. Annie recalled that her mother thought video chat was the best method to interact with people in person. It was used before the lockdown, but video chats were a common way for us to stay in touch with one another and communicate our emotions and worries to the people we care about. During the epidemic, Annie's mother spoke with her via video conversations in this way. Annie recalled that after she began video-phoning her mother each time, it significantly lessened her worries about her. She could show Annie her love, care, and devotion, giving her more bravery and self-assurance during the lockdown (Marler, Hargittai, and Nguyen 2022, 37). By avoiding the restrictions of space and time, it was discovered that they shared a sense of continuity and continuous belonging. The development of a mother's emotions was greatly aided by digital contact, which made Annie, while living alone, want to stay near her mother and remember her love for enduring the lockdown.

Social distancing

Gayathri Gill stated that she was unsure whether or not to adhere to social distancing since she was concerned that her family may contract the COVID-19 virus given its unpredictable spread. In her work, The Day Before Today: Lockdown Stories, she described her predicament of adhering to social separation as a lockdown precaution put in place to stop the COVID-19 virus from spreading.

> SWEET COLD WINTRY SMILE. CHECK. Standing in my social distancing circle. Check. My eyes firmly on the doorway. Check. Nose inside mask inside hoodie. Hand inside gloves inside jacket. Check. Four People allowed in at a time. I'm third in line, this may take a while. Air pods in. Ambience out. Check out" (The Day Before Today: Lockdown Stories 45).

She stated that while people were urged to wear masks, wash their hands, use sanitiser, and maintain social distancing to prevent the COVID-19 virus from spreading during the lockdown, they were nevertheless permitted to walk outside and buy necessities. Social separation keeps oneself apart from other people in public to avoid being touched or subjected to any visual or auditory cues from another person or characters (Saha, Goswami, and Saha 2021, 295–300). Despite adhering to social separation, Gayathri Gill was conflicted over her concern about her family contracting the COVID-19 virus due to its unpredictable spread. By keeping her distance from the businesses in public areas, she demonstrated her anxiety about what would happen after going out to buy necessities. Stated differently, she felt restricted in her movements both within her home and outside it. She became aware of how her neighbourhood, stores around her, layouts, and residence were all beginning to resemble paradoxical spaces.

Gayathri Gill, on the other hand, was tired of the social separation that was in place throughout the lockdown. She was worried about the consequences of living in the house or other domestic space and going public, thus she found it hard to adhere to social separation. Because of the problems of social separation in public spaces, she decided to adapt to domestic spaces. In addition, she decided to practise social separation to safeguard her family and herself if she needed to go grocery shopping. Lockdown tactics caused her family and her to undergo abrupt adjustments. Gayathri Gill's sudden behavioural changes were brought on by the lockdown and were explained by Hall's theory of cultural norms.

> Cultural norms are the most important factors to describe the preferred social distance. Hall stated that what is intimate in one culture may be personal or social in another, and suggested that there are specific customs regarding the spatial behavior. He grouped the cultures into two different classes: contact and noncontact cultures. Contact cultures use closer interpersonal distances and engage in more touching, whereas people in noncontact cultures exhibit opposite preferences and behaviors (Sorokowska et al. 2017, 579).

Lockdown limited Gayathri Gill's life in the non-contact culture, despite her deep yearning to be in the contact culture. She had to reconsider her life after becoming aware of her existence, and she bravely and optimistically challenged both contact and non-contact cultures. The most beneficial adjustment to her daily routine and behaviour was her decision to purchase groceries online. She closely adhered to lockdown protocols to stop the spread of infection and support or enhance his family's health and wellbeing (Hu et al. 2021, 1127). In addition, Gill overcame feelings of uncertainty, loneliness, and existential fear brought on by the social separation that ensued during the lockdown. The digital media outlets assisted her in lowering her fear of contracting the COVID-19 virus (Zolnikov and Furio 2021, 249).

On the other hand, Gayathri Gill decided to stay in the domestic area to safeguard her family from the COVID-19 virus. According to the study, she made the right decision by buying online, which allowed her to spend a lot of time with her family. She spoke with her family, friends, and neighbours via video conversations on WhatsApp, which served as a substitute platform. Gayathri Gill conducted office and personal meetings in their private area using Google Meetings, Zoom, Imo, and Microsoft Teams (Teater, Chonody, and Hannan 2021, 44). In addition, she could go on with her family's needs during the lockdown. Her personal, home, and professional environments had all become liminal, according to the study. Consequently, she was able to give her life purpose in this transitional area. The study also looked at how she adjusted to this new method of supporting her life and relationships since she believed that by living together in the home, their lives were becoming more meaningful (Dykstra 2009, 91–100). They had enough time to spend together after a long time because of the lockdown. In addition, she helped the family members feel a sense of acceptance in the contradictory home environment. In particular, this belongingness is described by Baumeister and Leary's Belongingness Model (1995) as humans having, "a pervasive drive to form and maintain at least a minimum quantity of lasting, positive, and significant interpersonal relationship" (Smith, Leonis, and Anandavalli 2021, 14). It made it easier for them to live under the new normal. She thus took care of her family's physical and emotional health, strengthening their relationship.

Google meet, Zoom and Microsoft team – online education

Tensin stated that he was not enrolled in any universities or schools because their parents were afraid of the COVID-19 virus spreading and would not send them. Simultaneously, students' anxiety levels in household settings increased due to increased screen usage and smartphone addiction. It harmed the psychological and physical well-being of the learner. Several factors contributed to his increased stress levels, including his worry about his education, getting out and seeing friends, travelling, taking online classes, and his safety and that of his family members (Hargreaves et al. 2020, 1917–1923). He felt hopeless and anxious because he thought his parents were not getting along (Tso et al. 2022, 54). Tensing, in particular, realized that being under lockdown was denying him the chance to explore and discover the purpose of his life, which made him fearful of being alive.

Conversely, he claimed to be less physically active, have inconsistent sleep patterns, and have a poor diet, which led to weight gain and a decline in cardiorespiratory fitness, as well as social and emotional stress for their family and financial strain (Cortés-Morales et al. 2022, 381–90). Being confined to a room hindered his ability to develop normally and impaired his social cognition and emotional development. Strict prohibitions were imposed upon him and his friends, such as the inability to play in parks or streets and the prohibition against touching anything (Katawal 2014, 153). In addition, his unemployed parents were living in poverty. At first, he thought that the lockdown meant he could stay at home. He dreamed of being free to go as they pleased, but in the end, they discovered how detrimental starvation at home was to their social, emotional, and physical health. These mental health issues had an impact on the pupils' academic performance and were evident in their home lives.

He desired to live a meaningful life in his own home and to be free in their eyes. He investigated how the lockdown limitations increased their stress, worry, and terror. He experienced long-term emotional effects from this traumatic moment, which lingered in their thoughts. Unfortunately, he was unaware that he was under stress. He consequently recognized the significance of mental health (Idoiaga Mondragon et al. 2022, 8).

> Mental health does not exist on its own. It is an integral and essential part of overall health, which can be defined in at least three ways – as the absence of disease, as a state of the organism that allows the full performance of all its functions or as a state of balance within oneself

> and between oneself and one's physical and social environment (Bhugra et al. 2013, 3).

After looking into his mental state, he discovered that he was even less fond of not playing, hanging out with friends, and doing things. During the lockdown, he felt uneasy, uncared for, and unduly reliant on his parents for everything. Additionally, it informed Tensin about health issues like anaemia, sinusitis, and migraines (Majumdar, Biswas, and Sahu 2020, 1193). Tensin's teachers and parents helped students recover from psychological distress through counselling, preparing them for new normal conditions. They encouraged open communication, creative activities, household work, and lockdown measures, allowing students to live freely and behave normally (Ray, Goswami, and Kumar 2022, 7). He took the initiative in reading habits which encouraged him to improve his linguistic abilities. These empirical experiences made him more confident and bolder in the paradoxical spaces.

Consequently, he responded to their dilemma of attending classes by attending meetings frequently to enhance his interaction level in online classes. He said that his college uses synchronous or asynchronous communication to solve the major problems faced by students, parents, and teachers (F. P. Lim 2017, 230–34). It solved the dilemmas experienced by him and his friends in social spaces. Besides, he finds that teachers gave creative assignments that would make them think and move within their space for academic activities (Forbes et al. 2012, 273–80). The author's e-learning habits transformed their academic approach, fostering a better understanding of collective values and reducing anxiety during lockdown, while also enhancing the virtualization process in domestic spaces. He experienced attention, socialization, encouragement, and support from his family and staff during the lockdown. Consequently, he told the staff to give creative assignments to people of higher- standards who were self-sufficient (Palau et al. 2021, 190). Online education provided a stress-free way for students and staff to make their lives meaningful in domestic spaces during lockdown. It helped parents cope by cutting fees and imparting holistic values. Students expressed interest in returning to college through online meetings, and Professor Patricia responded by using online modes for classes, counselling, meetings, and mentoring (Cahoon, McGill, and Simms 2021, 443–450).

Conclusion

The study found that the new normal conditions like online prayers, classes, social distancing, WhatsApp video calls, and working from home have drastically changed the lifestyle of people during the lockdown. It shows the strong spirit of people in the recorded testimonies and lockdown literature to survive in the new normal conditions. The study also identifies that the dilemma and paradoxical choices made them choose the right values—attachment, love, care, well-being, and belongingness—for them to survive in the new normal. Lockdown, as a paradoxical situation in the initial stages of people's lives, has become part of their lives. The above testimonies, experiences, and anecdotes of people are true examples of people's lives in harmony in the post-COVID world.

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The diasporic experience of cancer: An inquiry into Anita Moorjani's *Dying to Be Me*

Renuka Shyamsundar Belamkar[*]

Abstract: The narratives of illness attempt to capture the well rounded experience of illness which include the patient's life before and after the illness. They present the patient as an individual with a complex structure of their many identities that interact with each other. These narratives draw attention towards the effects and role of the patient's identity and environment in their experience of trauma and healing. They expose the nuanced and complex pathology of the illness experience which does not begin and end with the trauma of the physical body. In the context of prolonged experiences of chronic illness the changes it demands of the patient are life altering. It does not only affect the physical health of the individual but also impacts the various aspects of the personal and even professional lives. The layers of the patient-author's identity such as their gender, ethnicity, religion, nationality etc. impact the experience of their trauma of illness. In this context the paper attempts to analyse the connection and role of the patient's diasporic experience into their journey of illness through Anita Moorjani's *Dying to Be Me*. The paper will employ frameworks from diasporic studies- Homi Bhabha's work on the third space to analyse the impact of her diasporic identity on the experience of illness and healing.

Keywords: health/medical humanities, trauma, autopathography, patient-authors, cancer, NDE, identity

Anita Moorjani's book *Dying to Be Me* is a popular autopathographical account about her experience with cancer and her unusual NDE (Near Death Experience) that led to her recovery and healing. The book does not limit itself to the parts about her NDE and subsequent healing but begins with her childhood experiences. Moorjani's account is one among the many narratives of illness that came to the forefront in the last few decades. These narratives of illness put forth an experiential

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evidence of the encounter with illness which is often not part of the clinical records. They create a space for the patient to become the subject of their stories and not remain an object of the clinical records. The act of narativising their experience of illness allows them to bring together the various threads of their life which were disrupted by the illness.

The narratives of illness attempt to capture the well rounded experience of illness which includes the patient's life before and after the illness. They present the patient as an individual with a complex structure of their many identities that interact with each other. These interactions are affected by the illness which introduces the identity of the patient into the existing structure. The layers of the patient-author's identity such as their gender, ethnicity, religion, nationality etc. impact the experience of their trauma of illness. In this context the paper attempts to analyse the connection and role of the patient's diasporic experience in the journey of illness through Anita Moorjani's *Dying to Be Me*. The paper will employ frameworks from diasporic studies to analyse Moorjani's identity as an Indian Sindhi in Hong Kong and its impact on her experience with cancer and NDE (Near Death Experience).

Moorjani's narrative is divided into three sections which can be read as the three phases of pre-illness, illness and post-illness life. These sections are further divided into chapters which cover the overall arc of her life beginning with her childhood experiences. The narrative draws attention to the impact of factors such as culture and environment on her experience of illness. These influences also shape her identity and her belief system. Through the chapters a connection can be observed among the three phases of her life. It challenges the isolated lens through which the illness experience is viewed.

In the first chapter "Growing Up Different" she explores the nature and nuances of her diasporic experiences. Her father, because of his business, travelled around the world before settling in Hong Kong when she was two years old. She was exposed to three different cultures and languages there. She says her "childhood was a mixture of the east and west" (Moorjani 2016, 12). In this chapter she traces the shaping of her religious and cultural identity as a child. She writes about her belief in the concepts of karma and nirvana because of her spiritual exposure to her roots, which also taught her about meditation and chanting. These methods, as she describes, help to "cleanse the mind of impure thoughts and assist us in our quest for enlightenment."

(Moorjani 2016, 15) She even addresses that meditation helps in developing awareness that each individual is more than their physical self. She relies on this philosophy during her NDE and subsequent healing phase. The impact NDE leaves pushes her towards a changed form of living which derives help from her past. She later revisits some of the learning she was exposed to during her childhood about spirituality. Her diasporic experience does not occupy the central focal point in her narrative. It lays in the background as a facilitator of the larger narrative of her life and provides an insight into the background of journey. The elements of diaspora can be read through her narration of illness and healing and not vice versa. This research does not look at the text as a diasporic narrative but uses the framework of diaspora to understand its influence on the experience of illness and healing.

Moorjani's childhood experiences can be placed in the third space that Homi Bhabha explained in his work *The Location of Culture.* In the text he addresses the position of in-betweenness of cultural identity which according to him is not framed or defined under any one culture. But, is a hybrid space and an on-going process that does not assimilate under any fixed identity. "It is the inbetween space that carries the burden of the meaning of culture, and by exploring this Third Space, we may elude the politics of polarity and emerge as the others of ourselves." (Bhabha 1949) Moorjani forms her identity at the intersection of the many cultures and religions she was exposed to during her formative years. "The idea of hybridity works for all kinds of subject positions: any place where you can cross categories, inhabit two subject positions at once, or find the space between defined subject positions, is a place of hybridity." (Klages 2006, 159) Her identity goes through a constant change in the background of her larger narrative of illness. She experiences being in this point of criss cross because of the conflicting nature of cultures and religious beliefs around her. Her religious identity was at conflict due to the exposure to two different and contrasting schools of thought and beliefs.

Moorjani lacked a definitive understanding of her identity due to her position as a diaspora. This pushed her towards the need to be assimilated in the host culture. Narrating her first day of getting ready for school she describes the new uniform which is a symbol of her complex identity which always made her stand out. The uniform provided her a sense of similarity to those around her, it provided her with a sense of belonging. It allowed her the ability to blend into the surrounding. Though she physically and visually assimilated, the

questions about the religion made her feel differently. Her classmate asked if her family went to the church every Sunday, to which she responded by saying that they went to a temple instead on every Monday evening. This lack of assimilation which was a product of the cultural atmosphere around her which finds a parallel in her post trauma/healing phase where the adult chooses to not want to assimilate in her society. The healing phase that begins with her NDE also weaves a stronger sense of self and identity for her.

The NDE provides her with a new purpose to live and a different understanding of the self. She begins to reject the social conditioning and recognise the self without any boundaries. She reevaluates her own belief system post NDE and questions herself, "Is it purely cultural and social conditioning? It might have applied to me at some point, but does it still hold true? … In some situations, maybe, but in a lot of cases, the answer was a definite *no*." (Moorjani 2016, 114) Her NDE helps her chanelise her experiences towards the process of healing. Where the child in school wanted to be part of the surrounding host culture and share the identity, the adult post NDE did not feel the need to do so. Her experience post NDE delineates the wavelike journey of the formation of her new self and identity. Homi Bhabha in his text *The Location of Culture* talks about the formation of the self through an inward experience, he says that it is

> ... a measure of the 'me', which emerges from an acknowledgement of my inwardness, the depth of my character, the profundity of my person, to mention only a few of those qualities through which we commonly articulate our self-consciousness. (Bhabha 1949, 48)

The self emerges and grows post her NDE drawing from the strength of self she gains through the interactions she narrates to have had during that period. Though the frame of this experience is similar to the childhood journey of finding her identity it differs in the perspective through which she gazes at it. The non-linear nature of the healing process shows her struggle of finding herself post the illness and mirrors her childhood struggle of wanting to assimilate. While the struggle of childhood is directed outwards, the adult post NDE directs the gaze inwards, "I understood that true joy and happiness could only be found by loving myself, going inward… Previously when I felt lost, one of the first things I did was to search outside for answers." (Moorjani 2016, 115)

Moorjani's identity is in a continuous process in what Bhabha (1949) calls the third space. He defines this space as that "which gives rise to something different, something new and unrecognisable, a new area of negotiation of meaning and representation." Her struggle with her experiences as a diaspora passively influences the self. The identity of being a cancer patient adds to the existing multitude of identities that are in a dialogue with each other in the third space. They make room for a new identity of the patient-authors that is framed as a product of the interaction between the existing life experiences and the experience of illness. The personal and the socio-cultural aspects of the patient's life influence and play an integral role in the journey through illness and healing, "... illness is the way in which an individual interprets his or her experiences with the use of cultural categories and the influence of social relations." (Kleinman et al. 1995; Young 1982)

Moorjani fed into the guilt of being a patient due to her social environment. She thought of herself as a problem for the parents which prevented her from sharing the experience of illness at home; she pretended to be happy and adjusted well. It furthered the struggle to be accepted in the surroundings that she was a part of. She recollects the parts of her childhood where she craved a sense of belonging. Her diasporic identity furthers her anxiety and her sense of uprootedness. She longs for a space she can assimilate and fit within. She fights the feeling of an outsider which takes a toll on her mental and emotional self. She says, "I wanted more than anything to fit in, to be accepted and liked. I couldn't change my skin colour or race, and it made me feel so helpless!" (Moorjani 2016, 20) Due to her diasporic identity she feels different everywhere. She does not feel the sense of belongingness in either of the spaces. She mentions not wanting to fit into the ideal image of an Indian that her parents wanted her to conform and mould into, "But I don't want to be more Indian! I want to be more like my classmates! I thought." (Ibid, 21) Her struggle with identity spreads across religion and culture. She internally fought back the practices her parents forced her into. She initially did not want to attend the vedanta classes that she was supposed to attend with the others her age from the same community. But she began to enjoy the discussions about spirituality and became popular among the others; though she still wanted to be accepted by those in her school. She inclined more towards being accepted into the culture of her hostland, "How I wish I could merge everything and be as popular at school as I am with my Indian friends… Why can't my schoolmates see in me

what my Indian friends see?" (Moorjani 2016, 22) In Moorjani, the multifaceted identity initially causes confusion and lack of clarity regarding her beliefs and her own sense of self. The narrative traces her journey of finding the meaning through the NDE. It is through that experience that she finds and holds on to a reason to live.

In the chapter titled "Seeking Salvation" Moorjani explores her response to cancer. She acknowledges and explains the intense emotions she felt as she began to accept the knowledge of her illness. She presents a detailed account of the ways in which she responds to the attempts of curing herself, she explores various types of healing. She goes to Pune, India to learn about Yoga and ayurveda. She spends six months under the guidance of a master following strict diets, trying herbal remedies with a routine practice of yoga. She acknowledges the improvement in her health. She begins to feel better and the master she was under also helps her ease her fears of cancer. By the end of her stay there, both her and the master were convinced that she had healed from cancer. This leads to her feeling positive and victorious. Even on her return she was told by many that she looked well. But not long after her return when they enquired about her treatment and stay at pune, her mode of healing was met with concern and negative remarks. Most remarks questioned the authenticity of the mode and denied the belief that cancer could be treated through this mode. These remarks and opinions begin to affect her own sense of positivity and healing allowing the fear to return and reside in her psyche. As a result of the responses she receives on her previous attempt at healing, she attempts to understand Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM). But this mode was in direct contrast to everything she learned and practised at the yoga centre. This contradiction and confusion led her to try Western Neuropathy. The lack of inclination towards a fixed mode of healing can be viewed as a reflection of her own identity as a sindhi diaspora. The nature of heterogeneity in her Sindhi identity is reflected in her experience of healing. The confusion she felt identifying and choosing between two religions as a child resurfaces in her contradictory choice of healing methods.

> "I worked on forgiveness therapy… I travelled through India and China, meeting Buddhist monks, Indian yogis, and enlightened masters, hoping that they'd help me find answers that would lead to healing. I tried being vegan, meditating on mountaintops, yoga, ayurveda, chakra balancing, Chinese herbal medicine, pranic healing, and Chi Gong. But despite all this, my cancer just kept getting worse.

> My mind was in a total state of confusion as I continued to lose myself further and further in different healing modalities… (Moorjani 2016, 135)

The various healing techniques and approaches that she explores are largely associated with the cultures that she was exposed to as a child. Hong Kong, being the hostland, was dominated by the Cantonese Cultural practices that exposed her to the knowledge of modalities such as Chinese herbal medicine and Chi Gong. Both of the modes trace their roots and presence in the Cantonese culture, Chi Gong is a part of an ancient chinese tradition which uses exercises and postures using the mind, body and the spirit to improve health and well being. Yoga, chakra balancing, meditation and ayurveda are often associated with the culture of her homeland, India. The influence of both the spaces contributes to the making of Bhabha's third space where she embraces her hybridity in relation to her perspective towards life. The chapter dedicated to the narration of her healing journey post NDE does not weigh one culture of practice over another but instead presents an inclusive and hybrid understanding.

The response, that follows her denial and a refusal of the illness, is a sense of acceptance that pushes her towards attempting to heal herself. The contracting points of while she accepted the illness she lacked knowledge about the illness which, in desperation for life and health, forced her to research and try various modes of healing without staying with any one mode. In hindsight she wishes that she had gone back to Pune and resumed the same treatment when she was met with the same fear and negativity due to the kind of responses she got on her return to Hong-Kong. "In hindsight, when that began to happen, I should have gone back to India to regain my health again. Instead, I actually started to be influenced by the scepticism I was facing over my choice of treatment, so I remained in Hong Kong." (Moorjani 2016, 51) As a result of the many contrasting healing modes she began to stress about and fear everything. Due to the contrasting diets that they all presented she stopped eating and feared food. The confusion further fed her deteriorating health. She began losing control over the mind, self and the body. The fears of the self began to affect the body negatively.

The body began to define and affect her emotional and psychological self. She began to withdraw from reality and by extension from people and the conversations. She wanted to escape from every detail that spoke of or forced her to confront cancer. The truth haunted and forced her to rely on different reasons to make sense

of the trauma that had begun to consume her. The cultural ideas that attempted to provide a reason and understanding to her illness heavily relied on the concept of karma. Moorjani, had also believed in karma due to which when people used karma to describe the cause of her illness she began to feel uncomfortable and ashamed that she deserved the suffering she was going through. This further took away any hope left within her exposing her to the illness furthermore. "It seemed as if I was being judged, and it also made me feel helpless. *If this is retribution for something I did in a previous life,* I wondered, *how can I change it? What can I possibly do about it now?* Thoughts like this would leave me feeling completely hopeless about my situation." (Moorjani 2016, 52)

The cultural belief systems made it difficult for her to look through the trauma into a possibility of healing. It coloured her understanding of the illness as a pathological condition. "Cultural beliefs and behaviours influence the individual's perception of disease aetiology, illness and disease labels." (Turner 1996, 717) She failed to see the anatomy of the illness and began to let abstract philosophical concepts consume and defeat her willingness to heal. She isolated herself into her own cage and refused to meet with the external reality that existed beyond her illness and trauma. She began to deny any kind of encounter with the external world, shrinking her life experience. This further led her towards a state of hopelessness and disillusion about life. She questioned the very essence of living and the reason behind wanting to heal and live a healthy life. She began to lose purpose in life and prepared to give up. The suffering, physical and psychological, caused within her an existential crisis. The suffering that she was faced with, began to make her question the very ground of existence.

As a conclusion, Moorjani conveys through her experience the message of overcoming the struggle of illness. Through her process of healing she attempts to draw the attention of the readers towards the attitude of the ill person which plays an important role in the recovery. She talks about a more philosophical approach towards life. She is also critical of the society that teaches the outward rather than the inward look, it places the focus and importance on the outer reality rather than on the inner self. She says how society does not promote self-love, it instead tags it as selfish. And for Moorjani the NDE helps identify this flaw in the society. She says that there exists a certain cultural expectation within the society, specifically the social and the cultural beliefs and perceptions attached with the illness of cancer adds to the

trauma of the ill people. The common belief that cancer is an incurable disease, she says, added to her own fear and negativity about her life after the diagnosis. After her recovery she finds it difficult to fit into the society around her. This world she says seems too superficial for her in comparison to the other realm that she experiences during her NDE. It becomes difficult for her to have the usual conversations with the people around her. For her the society lacks the depth that she finds and experiences post her recovery. She no longer finds the need to live up to the society's expectation of 'perfection'. She does not necessarily criticise the medical system or offer an alternate therapy but talks about one's attitude towards life. She advocates self love and believes that healing in a way has to happen from within.

The experience of illness cannot be viewed in isolation within the walls of a hospital. It can not be studied as a physical ailment alone. Autopathographies such as Moorjani's challenge this notion about an illness; they force an in depth reading of the multiple aspects of the patient's life that impact their trauma and healing. A patient's identity is not a singular structure; it includes all the pillars that previously held the individual's sense of self. The new formed identity of being a patient is added to the existing set of identities of the individual. These narratives bring together the many pillars together through the articulation of their illness experience. The accounts about illness separate the knowledge of a disease from the experience of illness, the knowledge of the doctor from the experience of the patient, the factual medical reports from the personal narratives. They contribute to the area of Medical/Health Humanities and facilitate a patient-centric approach towards treatment. They fight the dehumanisation of patients and provide an identity to the ill individual. Through the identity of the patient-authors they gain subjectivity and authorship over their story.

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"We do not want to take risks": Defensive medicine in maternity wards and its implications for maternal health

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Abstract: Efforts have been made to reduce high maternal mortality in Ethiopia through the expansion of health facilities, training of health professionals, and the promotion of delivery attended by skilled personnel. On the other hand, defensive medicine is one of the obstacles to ensuring maternal health. Therefore, we aimed to investigate the extent of defensive medicine, the reasons for its practice as well as its implications for maternal health in South West Ethiopia. We used mixed research and collected data from maternity wards in four public hospitals. We found that health professionals in maternity wards practice a significant degree of defensive medicine. However, the practice is difficult to detect since it is embedded in local contexts. Therefore, although commendable efforts have been made so far, maternal health and healthcare services are left with a long way to go in the study area.

Keywords: maternal health, defensive medicine, Ethiopia, maternity ward, referral system

Background

Maternal health has won the attention of policymakers and health professionals in Ethiopia mainly since the Millennium Development Goals. To this end, home delivery and traditional birth attendants have been outlawed. However, a threat to maternal health has been documented by various studies during institutional delivery. Studies from various countries show that defensive medicine is a common practice in maternity and labor wards. Defensive medicine involves "medical actions performed mainly to prevent being sued rather than

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actually to aid the patient' (US Congress's Office of Technology Assessment 1994). In other words, defensive medicine is "a doctor's deviation from the usual behavior or that is considered good practice, to reduce or prevent complaints or criticism by patients or their families" (Toker et al. 2004). The deviation from usual behavior occurs in this case when a doctor avoids high-risk patients or high-risk procedures as well as when he/she orders tests, and procedures and makes visits to reduce malpractice liability. At the core of deviation from usual behavior be it in ordering tests, diagnosis, or avoiding high-risk patients or procedures is to protect a doctor or oneself from criticism or liability but not to primarily help a patient (Klingman et al. 1996; Ortashi et al. 2013; Zhu, Li, and Lang 2018). The practice compromises patients' health and increases healthcare costs.

However, a review of the literature shows that there is a dearth of studies in Ethiopia about the practice of defensive medicine in general and in maternity wards in particular. We came across a report by Biruk et al. (2015) which analyses medical malpractice complaints between January 2011 and December 2013 and the decisions made by the Health Professionals Ethics Federal Committee of Ethiopia. Another report entitled "Surgical and Medical Error Claims in Ethiopia: Trends Observed from 125 Decisions Made by the Federal Ethics Committee for Health Professionals Ethics Review" was published in the Journal of *Medicolegal and Bioethics* in 2019 (Wamisho, Abeje Tiruneh, and Enkubahiry Teklemariam 2019). Similarly, a cross-sectional study on defensive medicine in Ethiopia was published in 2023 (Eskinder Amare Assefa et al. 2023) which focuses on surgeons in Ethiopia. The study reported the widespread practice of defensive medicine in the country and suggested the necessity for further studies. Therefore, it is essential to investigate this practice and its implications mainly for maternal health in Ethiopia where maternal mortality is still high (WHO 2019). Accordingly, we aimed to:

- Investigate the extent of defensive medicine in maternity wards in public hospitals in South West Ethiopia.
- Identify the characteristics of defensive medicine in the study area.
- Analyze the implications of the practice for maternal health.

Methods and settings

Study area

The study was conducted in Ethiopia, a country located in East Africa. Jimma Zone[1] was a specific study area. The Zone has a total of approximately 2.7m population, predominantly living in rural areas. There are 122 PHC, 562 health posts, 4 primary hospitals, 2 general hospitals, and one tertiary hospital in Jimma Zone. At each health post, 2 Health Extension Workers (HEWs) are staffed to provide preventive and some curative health care services. HEWs provide support to households within catchment areas and visit pregnant women and mothers with children.

Methods

We used a concurrent mixed research design in this study. We purposively selected seven key informants for the qualitative data while all health professionals working in the maternity and labor wards of four public hospitals in Jimma Zone were respondents for quantitative data. The criteria used for inclusion in the sample for quantitative data are being a health professional in the maternity and labor wards and serving at least one year or more in any public hospital found in Jimma Zone. We observed the day-to-day activities in the maternity and labor wards, as well as conducted key informant interviews with seven health professionals using interview guides. However, we administered a survey questionnaire for the quantitative data where the response rate was 100%. We achieved a 100% response rate because we stayed at the study site collecting qualitative data. We were able to collect the data from a total of fifty-one respondents. Most (61%) of them are males. Around 72% (n=37) of them were B.Sc Degree graduates while 7.84 % (n=4) were medical doctors.

We collected the data in February and March 2020 and from September to November 2021 as part of our mega research project entitled "Anthropological Insights into Maternal Health and Health Care Services in Jimma Zone, South West Ethiopia". The break in between was due to the Covid-19 lockdown. The other reason was the problem related to logistics.

[1] Zone is the third administrative structure next to the federal and regional government.

Ethical clearance

We secured ethical clearance for this research from Jimma University before data collection. The chief clinical Director of each public hospital permitted access to research participants. The research participants also consented after they read our letter of ethical clearance from Jimma University in addition to our verbal explanations about the intent of the study.

Results

The Practice and Extent of Defensive Medicine

The health professionals reported that they order extra diagnoses and tests to increase their confidence in medical decisions and actions (60.78 %, n = 31), refer patients to other specialists when they believe that intervention is risky (66.67 %, n=34), and avoid high-risk procedures even if it could save the life of a patient (60.78%, n=31). Moreover, 52.94 % (n=27) believe that complaints by patients/their family members against health professionals are increasing whereas 21.57(n=11) were not sure of it. The data from key informant interviews also substantiate the practice of defensive medicine in the study area. A key informant explained:

> … There are times when the health workers refer patients to Jimma University Specialized Referral Hospital to reduce the risk of bad health outcomes. However, risk-taking at times depends on the health worker's decision because some may fear to conduct surgery for fear of bad outcomes while others could conduct an operation assuming that they need to help the patient no matter what the outcome could be. So, some health workers could take risks to help a patient. However, others may refer a similar case to Jimma University Specialized Referral Hospital when they are afraid of taking risks. (Key informant Six)

The Local Context of Defensive Medicine

Although defensive medicine refers to the measures taken by health professionals to avoid being sued by patients or their caretakers, it could be practiced in different ways under different contexts. The healthcare system in our study area works by chains of referral systems where health extension workers advise patients to seek service at health centers, health centers refer patients to primary hospitals or general hospitals and these hospitals refer patients to tertiary hospitals. Ideally, this referral system intends to best treat a

patient whose case is too complex to deal with at the lower chain of the referral system.

However, the health professionals responded that they refer patients to other specialists when they believe that intervention is risky (66.67 %, n=34) and avoid high-risk procedures even if it could save the life of a patient (60.78%, n=31). However, the referral could be justified citing a shortage of blood units for transfusion or lack of electricity and backup diesel generator to conduct surgery. A key informant from one of the hospitals reported, "For example, we referred four mothers yesterday; two for cesarean section and two due to prolonged labor. All could have been delivered here. ... But we also do not want to take risks by trying to treat them in the environment where the necessary inputs are unreliable." (Key informant One).

Why Defensive Medicine?

The health professionals reported different reasons for their practice of defensive medicine. Although the ultimate reason is their fear of harassment by the family member of a patient at best and litigation at worst, the knowledge and skill gaps as well as the unreliability of health care service inputs were also contributing to the practice of defensive medicine.

• Fear of Harassment and Litigation

About 52.94 (n=27) of the respondents believe that complaints by patients and/or their family members against health professionals are increasing. The other 23.53% (n=12) disagreed with this belief whereas 23.53 % (n=12) health professionals reported that they were not sure. Moreover, 50.98% (n=26) of the respondents indicated they faced similar complaints during their service years. Similarly, the health professionals reported that they feel they could face physical harassment by the family members of patients due to bad treatment outcomes (49.02%, n=26), and they are concerned that they may be victims of the increasing complaints against health professionals and may face lawsuits (33.33%, n=17). Moreover, 70.59% (n=36) reported that they always keep in mind the legal implications of their day-to-day activities. A key informant explains these points as follows:

> … There are times when the health workers refer patients to Jimma University Specialized Referral Hospital to reduce the risk of bad health outcomes. However, risk-taking at times depends on the health worker's decision because some may fear to conduct surgery for fear

> of bad outcomes while others could conduct the operation assuming that they need to help the patient no matter what the outcome could be. So, some health workers could take risks to help a patient. However, others may refer a similar case to Jimma University Specialized Referral Hospital when they are afraid of taking risks. (Key informant Six)

Another key informant dissected the intricate issues surrounding defensive medicine in which he stressed the involvement of many factors in the problem of defensive medicine and individual differences in its practices. He said:

> The problem with the service we provide in this hospital is the fact that it is a referral hospital. This is an end stage. We admit patients whose condition is the worst. Therefore, our intervention may not always yield positive outcomes. But this is unacceptable to the relatives of a patient. The principle of right patient-right treatments is one of the solutions to the problem. It also reduces the concern of medical doctors… A limited number of family members of patients may also insult or try to physically attack health workers. For example, we had a fistula patient whom we treated here but died. Then, her brother tried to physically attack health workers claiming that the health workers killed his sister. Despite all these challenges, however, many medical doctors are sympathetic to their patients, take risks to save the lives of their patients, and even cover the expenses of their patients when they are unable to pay. (Key informant Seven)

While the above key informant reported the experience of insult and physical attack on health workers due to undesirable treatment outcomes, another key informant reported that there are times when relatives of a patient could take the case to court. In this regard, he recounted his experience before two years as:

> Occasionally, the patient's family may take the issues to court. For instance, there was a case two years ago where the health workers made surgical interventions and blood transfusion. But there was bleeding. So, they referred the case to Jimma University Specialized Referral Hospital where the patient died. So, the husband sued the health workers in our hospital who were involved in the surgery stating the problem lies here. But the court freed the professionals of the allegations. At times securing the consent of both patients and family members may take time for surgery. This on the other hand impacts the outcome. (Key informant Six)

• The gap in knowledge and skill

58.82 (n=30) respondents confirm that they always consult senior professionals before medical intervention. Common understating among health workers about the health status of their patients and when to do what is essential in health service. This facilitates what one of our key informants calls "the right patient-right treatment" (Key informant Seven). However, we found the existence of gaps in this common understanding as well as the skills necessary to provide quality service among health workers mainly at health centers and primary hospitals. For instance, a key informant at a general hospital lamented,

> … the health workers at the health centers do not have the opportunity to update themselves. They make wrong assessments of the patient when they refer to us. We tried to solve this problem through mentorship though the mentorship is not active this time… (Key informant One)

Another key informant from the other hospital substantiated the existence of this gap. He said that one may come across gaps in understanding the right time for intervention on the part of health professionals. This complicates the process of health care services including maternal health (Key informant Five). While the above key informants are from primary and general hospitals, a key informant at a specialized referral hospital shared similar concern (Key informant Seven).

• Unreliable inputs

Healthcare service requires several material inputs in addition to trained human power. However, the availability of these inputs was not reliable in our study setting. This in turn facilitated the likelihood for the practice of defensive medicine. Health professionals equate the provision of health care services where inputs are unreliable with risk-taking. For instance, electric power fluctuation was reported as one of the major reasons behind the practice of defensive medicine. The other is the shortage of blood units in case a patient needs it. A key informant stated:

> There are shortages of inputs to deliver services. There is a critical shortage of electric power. The power from the main line from Ethiopian Electric Utility is erratic. We have two diesel generators: one new and the other very old to cope with this. But the new one did not function for the last one year due to a lack of spare parts in the

> country. …. The other one is a very old diesel generator that functions irregularly. It is not reliable for operation. Hence, we refer patients to Jimma University Specialized Referral Hospital. The doctors are reluctant to take risks due to this erratic nature of power. … The assessment for referral cases often reads 'no electric light, no blood for transfusion, OR is not functioning' (Key informant One).

Discussion

Defensive medicine occurs when medical practitioners follow certain procedures primarily to avoid malpractice litigation. The maternity and labor ward is among the hospital wards where health professionals practice defensive medicine. In our study, both quantitative and qualitative data reveal that a significant number of health professionals were engaged in this practice. This is concurrent with studies that indicate defensive medicine is a common practice in maternity wards (Ali et al. 2016; Zhu, Li, and Lang 2018). The factors that force health professionals to practice include fear of litigation and harassment by the family members of a patient for bad health outcomes. In this regard, our study is aligned with (Eskinder Amare Assefa et al. 2023; Ortashi et al. 2013). The respondents reported that they fear legal actions against them for bad health outcomes of their services (Key Informant One, Two, Three, Four, Five, Six, and Seven). Accordingly, 70.59% (n=36) of our respondents reported that they always keep in mind the legal implications of their day-to-day activities. Their concern is high mainly when they have low confidence in themselves about their knowledge, skill, and experience. In addition to fear of litigation, fear of harassment including physical attack by family members of a patient was found to motivate health professionals to practice defensive medicine in our study. Therefore, they avoid high-risk patients and procedures, order unnecessary tests, and refer patients to other specialists working in specialized hospitals. These practices are similar to the findings by Ortashi et al. (2013), Klingman et al. (1996), and Ali et al. (2016).

Nevertheless, the context of the practice is different in our study. i.e., health professionals use the local referral system to practice defensive in which they justify the referral by the unavailability or unreliability of inputs. In other words, while the referral system works using the national guideline for the referral system, implicit in the referrals especially from primary and general hospitals is the practice of defensive medicine. The referrals are not only justified by the seriousness of the health condition of a patient but also by the

unreliability of inputs such as electricity to conduct operations and blood units in case a patient needs transfusion. This is the most common practice that our study shows.

However, the implications of defensive medicine for maternal health are very worrying. Our study showed that about 67% of the respondents refer patients to specialists when they think the patient is at high risk. It is one thing knowing that the patient with a risky medical condition gets the service from a more experienced person. On the contrary, the referral complicates the condition of the patient because they have to travel long distances to seek the assistance of these senior professionals who are often found in tertiary hospitals. Moreover, our study revealed that the absence or low number of maternal mortality at health centers, and primary and general hospitals does not necessarily indicate better maternal health or low maternal mortality. The Key informants stressed that since health professionals do not take risks, maternal mortality is very rare in those hospitals from where they are referred.''(Key informants One and Three). In addition, traveling long distances due to referrals drains the resources of patients. A key informant at a general hospital confirmed that patients and their families dislike the referral system because it exposes them to more costs (Key informant Two and Three). This is congruent with the findings of Kibret and Firisa (2024).

Conclusion

Institutional delivery has been promoted in Ethiopia as one of the best mechanisms to ensure maternal health. Efforts have been made to this end by expanding health facilities, training health professionals, and outlawing traditional birth attendants, and home delivery. On the other hand, studies in different parts of the world indicate the practice of defensive medicine in maternity wards which inspired us to conduct this research. We found that there were systematic practices of defensive medicine to a large extent that negatively affected maternal health and healthy motherhood. Therefore, although commendable efforts have been made so far, maternal health and healthcare services are left with a long way to go in the study area due to the practice of defensive medicine in maternity wards.

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Artificial Intelligence in healthcare: Problems and prospects of ethical and legal regulation

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Abstract: The main problems and prospects for ethical and legal regulation of artificial intelligence in the field of healthcare have been researched. It has been stated that artificial intelligence is one of the promising directions in medicine, its implementation will make it possible to analyze significant amounts of information about patients from different databases, which, as a result, will contribute to both saving time and the accuracy and timeliness of prescribing or adjusting treatment. The issues of the legal nature of artificial intelligence, the main legislative acts at the national and international level, which regulate activities in this direction, have been considered. The European Union (EU) draft of Artificial Intelligence Act, which provides for the classification and regulation of an artificial intelligence program based on its potential risk, has been analyzed, its main tasks and requirements for EU member states have been outlined. It has been found that Ukraine is also taking part in the implementation of this bill (the sandbox regulator "was launched", a working group on the legal regulation of artificial intelligence was created in the National Bar Association of Ukraine). The issues of legal personality of artificial intelligence, protection of the right to privacy in the process of functioning and operation of artificial intelligence have been

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considered. The basic ethical principles of using artificial intelligence in medicine and the main legal aspects of introducing artificial intelligence into the healthcare system have been determined. Attention is focused on the need to regulate native legislation that governs activities in this field, because namely the lack of clear legal regulation of these issues contributes to both rapid technological development in this direction and the emergence of risks that will be accompanied in connection with its popularization.

Keywords: artificial intelligence, medicine, legislation, ethical principles, protection of the right to privacy, databases

Introduction

One of the promising directions in medicine is the further introduction and development of artificial intelligence, which has a wide range of applications (prevention, diagnosis, treatment, monitoring and forecasting the course of diseases, development of medicines, as well as their individual selection taking into account the characteristics of a particular patient, genetic research and etc.). Artificial intelligence systems help automate routine processes in hospitals, accelerate them and make them more efficient. This applies to the visualization of various medical images - ultrasound, CT scans, MRI scans. Smart bracelets that are capable of reading a person's vital signs, sending data to a doctor's email and calling an ambulance in cases where it is necessary are quite common today. We should note that since 2016 in the United States of America, companies such as Amazon, Siemens and IBM, have been using artificial intelligence systems, collecting data and processing information and thereby making significant progress in diagnosing skin cancer, sometimes even faster and more efficiently than doctors. In December 2022, there was a scientific breakthrough in the field of reproductive human rights - the Ecto Life company introduced the world's first installation for artificially infants cultivation (the functionality of one artificial intelligence installation includes: bearing up to 30 thousand infants per year; tracking the development of a child; providing notification of any possible deviations, monitoring this process using a mobile app by future parents) (Solution of fertility problems, 2022).

The concept of "artificial intelligence" was first used in 1956 at a conference at Dartmouth College in the United States of America, the main goal of which was to develop computer systems capable of performing tasks that typically require human intelligence. Artificial intelligence is the ability of engineered systems to acquire, process and

apply knowledge and skills (ISO/IECTR 24028, 2020). Nicholas J. Schork notes that artificial intelligence—machine learning, neural network designs, and a wide range of related methods that can be used for searching relevant patterns in vast sets of data (Nicholas J. Schork 2019, 267).

The implementation of artificial intelligence will make it possible to analyze significant amounts of information about patients from different databases, which, as a result, will contribute to both saving time and the accuracy and timeliness of prescribing or adjusting treatment. This, in turn, will lead to a gradual transition of the healthcare sector from a reactionary to a preventive and prophylactic level. In this context, the scientific thoughts of Alan Turing are reasonable: "artificial intelligence is a premonition of the future..." (Androshchuk G.O. 2021) and Yu. Tyuri: "the use of such technologies makes it possible to increase the efficiency and productivity of any processes, helps strengthen competitiveness ... and improves well-being of citizens" (Tyurya Yu. 2022, 145).

At the same time, the presence of obvious advantages of the further implementation of artificial intelligence systems in the healthcare sector also implies corresponding risks that will certainly be accompanied in connection with their popularization.

Legal foundations for the use of artificial intelligence in healthcare

Artificial intelligence is a new challenge for the legal system and the economy, a new phenomenon that has a multiplying effect, a legal phenomenon in the structure of legal relations, a new object of legal regulation (Androshchuk G.O. 2021, 60). As for Ukraine, "the legal regulation of social relations related to the use of artificial intelligence is at the initial stage of its development" (Anishchenko M., Gidenko I. 2023, 66). Certain aspects of this concept are enshrined in the Law of Ukraine "On the Protection of Personal Data" (requirements for the processing of personal data - collection, storage, use, transfer and protection). In December 2020, the Concept for the Development of Artificial Intelligence in Ukraine (hereinafter - Concept) was approved, which defines the goal, principles and tasks of the development of artificial intelligence technologies in Ukraine as one of the priority directions in the field of scientific and technological research (Concept for the Development of Artificial Intelligence in Ukraine, 2020), and also identifies the issues (absence/imperfection of legal regulation of artificial intelligence (education, economics, public administration,

cybersecurity, defense), imperfection of legislation on the protection of personal data, lack of application of these technologies in judicial practice).

It should be noted that in April 2021, the European Commission, in order to create a safe environment for the operation and development of artificial intelligence, developed the Artificial Intelligence Act, which provides for the classification and regulation of an artificial intelligence program based on its potential risk. Among the key tasks of this bill: determining the risk levels of artificial intelligence systems (hereinafter - AIS); introduction of mandatory certification for certain AIS; establishing requirements for certain AIS to inform users that they are interacting with an artificial intelligence system and not a human; introduction of uniform rules for working with artificial intelligence technologies; ensuring security and compliance with current legislation; providing legal certainty to facilitate investment and innovation in artificial intelligence; promoting the development of a unified market for legal, safe and reliable programs using artificial intelligence (AI Act, 2021).

In order to check whether artificial intelligence systems truly comply with the standards, the requirements of the bill stipulate that EU member states must create appropriate authorized bodies that will both conduct conformity assessment and carry out control in this direction. As we can see, the main goal of the Artificial Intelligence Act bill is to create an environment in which "... users can be confident that their rights will be protected, and the developer or supplier of the artificial intelligence system will bear responsibility for negative consequences" (Artificial Intelligence, 2023).

It is expected that the document will come into force no earlier than 2026 and, accordingly, will affect the legal regulation of artificial intelligence in Ukraine, since Ukraine is a candidate country for the EU.

It should be noted that Ukraine is currently taking part in the implementation of this bill, in particular, the sandbox regulator has been "launched" for developers of artificial intelligence programs. As G. Rumyantsev, state expert of the Directorate of European and Euro-Atlantic Integration in the Ministry of Digital Transformation of Ukraine, notes: "... this is a controlled environment within which development companies will be able to develop their product at the initial stage so that it takes into account the requirements of the future act of the European Union" (Artificial Intelligence, 2023).

In addition, the National Bar Association of Ukraine has created a working group on the legal regulation of artificial intelligence, the main tasks of which are to analyze the legal issues of the development and functioning of artificial intelligence, determine the boundaries of its use in various industries, protect personal data collected by artificial intelligence systems (develop an algorithm for their storage and use).

Continuing, we note that in accordance with the Concept for the development of e-healthcare dated December 28, 2020 No. 1671-p and the Action Plan for its implementation dated September 29, 2021 No. 1175-p, as well as the Action Plan for the implementation of the Concept for the Development of Artificial Intelligence in Ukraine for 2021-2024 dated May 12, 2021 No. 438-p the main directions are the implementation and development of personalized medicine, telemedicine, systems for forecasting healthcare needs, as well as resource planning using artificial intelligence technologies. The directions have been defined, however, the creation of an appropriate regulatory framework is not provided for, which, as a consequence, will lead to legislative gaps and will negate "... all the positive aspects from the implementation of artificial intelligence technology into the national healthcare system" (Anishchenko M., Gidenko I. 2023, 67).

In addition, the legal personality of artificial intelligence has not yet been enshrined at the legislative level. The legal personality of artificial intelligence is one of the current topics in jurisprudence. According to Tim Mulgan, there are several main approaches (concepts) to determining the legal personality of artificial intelligence:

– exclusive legal personality (granting the status of a subject of law only to a person);

– minimal inclusivity (artificial intelligence is considered as an autonomous agent);

– moderate inclusivity (artificial intelligence as an autonomous agent or a legally capable agent without legal personality);

– full inclusivity (recognizes artificial intelligence as a person with legal personality similar to human) (Mulgan T. 2018).

Reasonable in this context is the scientific thought of N. Martsenko "... the use of artificial intelligence technologies in fields such as medicine... encourages of thinking about the extension of the legal regime of a source of increased danger to this object of civil rights. Which, as a result, will contribute to better protection of the rights of users of artificial intelligence technologies" (Martsenko N. 2019, 96).

At the same time, when operating and implementing its activities, artificial intelligence can cause harm to both individuals and public relations. Due to the fact that today "artificial intelligence is not recognized at the legislative level as a subject of legal relations, responsibility for its actions must be taken by the person under whose leadership certain actions were performed (Cerka P., Grigiene J. 2015). In addition, we believe that the legal regulation of the activities of artificial intelligence must be regulated with mandatory consideration of the risks of its use.

We are impressed by the scientific opinion of Kenneth Davis, Jr., Francois, A. Camin Murray, who highlight ten legal aspects of the introduction of artificial intelligence into the healthcare system: legislative and regulatory requirements; ethical considerations; compensation; contract law; torts; antimonopoly legislation; employment and labor issues; confidentiality and security risks; intellectual property; compliance programs (Kenneth Davis, Jr., Francois 2021).

Ethical principles for the use of artificial intelligence in healthcare

The World Health Organization has defined the basic ethical principles for the use of artificial intelligence in medicine, which should become the basis for further regulatory and legal frameworks:

– the principle of protecting human autonomy (protection of privacy and confidentiality, obtaining validated informed consent to protect personal data, the use of artificial intelligence should not violate human autonomy);

– the principle of human well-being and safety, as well as public interests (artificial intelligence technologies should not harm humans, developers must take into account regulatory requirements for safety, accuracy and effectiveness for clearly defined cases or indications);

– the principle of ensuring transparency, understandability and legibility (artificial intelligence technologies should be transparent and understandable for developers, healthcare professionals, patients, users and regulatory authorities; ensure responsibility for the use of artificial intelligence in appropriate conditions and by properly trained people);

– the principle of ensuring inclusiveness and equality (artificial intelligence mechanisms should be intended to encourage broad and equitable access and use) (Ethics and Governance of Artificial Intelligence, 2021).

To improve the effectiveness of the application of the above principles, it is necessary to legislatively regulate the contractual obligations of relations in connection with the development and use of artificial intelligence mechanisms for medical purposes, because it is extremely important for both the developer and the medical provider who use it to have clear contractual terms governing the sale and use artificial intelligence technologies. According to O. Rossilna, contractual terms should include: expectations for technical services (definition of efficiency indicators that will be satisfied); guarantees (the developer must define guarantees for the buyer); compensation for damages (the developer and the buyer must determine the procedure for allocating risks); insurance (due to the fact that services provided through using artificial intelligence technologies have associated risks, the buyer has the right to insure his business) (Rossilna O. 2022, 160).

Protection of private information in the application of artificial intelligence in healthcare

The issue of protecting the right to privacy in the process of functioning and operation of artificial intelligence in the healthcare sector is quite relevant at the moment, because medicine is quite closely connected with the accumulation and processing of significant volumes of "sensitive" information. Article 32 of the Constitution of Ukraine defines: "The collection, storage, use and dissemination of confidential information about a person without their consent are not allowed, except in cases determined by law, and only in the interests of national security, economic well-being and human rights" (Constitution of Ukraine, 1996). Human rights to protection their personal data are provided for by the Law of Ukraine "On the Protection of Personal Data" (Article 1,2). Article 39-1 of the Fundamentals of Ukrainian Legislation on Health Care also enshrines the patient's right "to confidentiality about the state of their health, the fact of seeking medical help, diagnosis, as well as information obtained during their medical examination" (Law of Ukraine, 1992). According to the Convention for the Protection of Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, "... the right to health is also the right to information and confidentiality of information" (Article 8) (Convention for the Protection of Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, 1950). For example, in the decision of the European Court of Human Rights dated August 27, 1997 in the case of "M.S. v. Sweden", it is noted that confidentiality of health information is a basic principle of

the legal system of the member states. “Personal data, … as well as health-related data…. cannot be subject to automated processing unless native law provides appropriate guarantees” (Convention for the Protection of Individuals with regard to Automatic Processing of Personal Data, 1981).

It should be emphasized that in May 2018, the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) came into force, which defines the rules for the collection, processing and storage of personal data in the European Union. The GDPR interprets health data as a “special category” of personal data that is considered to be “sensitive” by nature, and establishes a higher level of protection for its processing. This document defines standards for the protection of “sensitive” information, and also increases the responsibility for the protection of private information, including for developers of artificial intelligence systems. Thus, in France, Clearview AI company (a developer of facial recognition software using artificial intelligence) received significant fines due to the illegal use of private information. According to the Office for the Protection of Personal Data in France, Clearview AI uses private information without the legal consent of users and at the same time there is no legitimate interest for such collection, which is a serious violation of the GDPR (Artificial Intelligence, 2023).

Thus, the development of artificial intelligence systems must be carried out taking into account the principles of legality, consent, limitation of data processing and compliance with the requirements of the GDPR for their protection. In addition, current native legislation must provide appropriate guarantees for the protection of private information, even though the functioning of artificial intelligence systems involves working with large databases.

Conclusion

To summarize, we note that despite the fact that the implementation of artificial intelligence in the healthcare sector has great prospects, it is not without its problems. First of all, native legislation needs additional regulation. After all, it is the lack of clear legal regulation of these issues that contributes to both the rapid technological development in this direction and the emergence of risks that will certainly be accompanied in connection with its popularization. It is necessary to legislatively provide for increased responsibility and accountability when using artificial intelligence technologies in the healthcare sector of Ukraine.

In addition, the implementation of artificial intelligence in medicine involves interaction between software developers, medical professionals, technology experts and lawyers. When developing artificial intelligence algorithms, it is necessary to establish the ability to provide clear, accurate and effective recommendations and standards for well-defined cases or medical indications. Indeed, ensuring transparency and accountability in the process of application of artificial intelligence should be a priority in promoting legal and ethical practices in the healthcare sector.

In our opinion, the use of artificial intelligence in healthcare management is very promising. This greatly reduces or even eliminates corruption risks. For example, carrying out large purchases of medical equipment and medicines using blockchain technologies with the subsequent conclusion of smart contracts, establishing disability and selecting for leadership positions in healthcare institutions using artificial intelligence. All this will contribute to integrity and transparency, strengthening the principles of democracy and human rights in the healthcare sector.

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The concept of free speech right: Indian trajectory journey

Foram Patel[*]

Abstract: Free Speech as a practice impacts society at large along with a deep impact on the nature of the working of a nation as well. Free speech has been discussed as a theory and practice for ages but the impact of how far it is freely provided to the society matters a lot. Theorizing free speech and implementing it shall impact the society and the people living in it, as such rights are not only fundamental but also human in nature. This paper focuses on discussing the right of free speech, its legal trajectory through judicial review, and its facets such as rights, reasonable restrictions, etc. especially with reference to the Indian perspective. This paper shall draw the baseline to understand the concept of free speech as a right in India that shall affect the society at large.

Keywords: constitutional rights, legal regulation, internet law, free speech

Introduction

The world is diversified in different nuances such as history, culture, society, and people. Some of the countries have similarities based on the system of governance, which is driving them to establish a welfare state. Democracy is one of such important components, which needs to be enjoyed by the countries to reach the "welfare-ness" in nature of governance. In the course of the centuries, the world has succeeded in preserving cultural, ethnic, and linguistic diversity. Because of this diversity, people always have the opportunity to share their ideas, but more importantly, to compare them. It was also because of this diversity that countries were able to improve their systems and even cause positive changes in other countries.

The right to enjoy the freedoms enumerated to individuals has provided them with the status of "being" since ages which idealizes the establishment of a civil and democratic society so that justice can be provided to all. "Free speech" is a concept that has been in discussion

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for ages, and stands to have the same attention even in the internet era. The internet for the first time has made it completely possible to fulfil the freedoms enumerated to the individuals. *Free speech* is essential in a democratic society and can serve purposes including individual self-fulfillment, the discovery of truth, enhancement of the individual's decision-making capacity, and also to set up a mechanism that can establish a balance between stability and social change. It is regarded as the cornerstone for various other rights and plays an active role in ensuring that rule of law prevails within society. The evolution of *free speech* in India can be traced all the way back to India's pre-independence period. The right to free speech is not unrestricted but is subject to fair limitations that are consistent with the constitutional limits. As a consequence, a balanced approach to protect such rights is needed. We can, therefore, imply that the right to free speech should be given and used for the general public interest.

Further, the infringement of these rights can only be for a demonstrable justification, and the manner of infringement must be a restrictive alternative. This article will discuss the burgeoning scope of *free speech* laws in India showing the trajectory of the rights bringing in changes in its forms and also the creation of new policies to balance them which has resulted into the present forms of free speech rights in India. With the advent of technology and "social media" platforms, the enjoyment of *free speech* rights has been expanded. After the advent of social media platforms and internet establishments, the rights associated with it became a profound platform for discussions and deliberation.

Scope of the rights of free speech in India

The judiciary has consistently indicated that any formal offensive content that might be subject to criminal law requirements should be judged on fair criteria rather than by those who perceive danger from any hostile perspective. (Maharasthra v. Sangharaj Damodar Rupawate (2010) 7 SCC 398). There are several Indian court decisions that defined the boundaries and importance of the "free speech" right of the citizen. In Re Harijai Singh (AIR 1997 SC 73 at para 9), the relationship between the right to *free speech* and the functioning of a democratic society was explained by the Supreme Court of India.

The Apex Court established that the citizens must be informed of democratic processes, which would help in facilitating participation. Thus, it is essential to ensure that there is free and fair dissemination of

information to the public. In another case, "Indian Express Newspaper (Bombay)(P) Ltd. v. Union of India" (AIR 1986 SC 515 at para 11), the court allowed the petitioner's argument that increasing the customs duty on newsprint would adversely affect its publication and dissemination. By corollary, any prohibitive burden on a newspaper would be above Art. 19(2) and would not be saved by the same provision. The court observed the right to *free speech* of a citizen:

> It helps an individual to attain self-fulfillment.
> It assists in the discovery of truth.
> It strengthens the capacity of an individual in participating in decision-making.
> It provides a mechanism by which it would be possible to establish a reasonable balance between stability and social change.

Judicial review for free speech in India

The trajectory of free speech from the judicial perspective in India can be understood by seeing the judicial trend for free speech rights. Starting from Romesh Thapar case to recent developments in judicial view shall help us understand the development of *free speech rights* in India. The right to free speech took a turn with the case of Shreya Singhal v. UOI(AIR 2015 SC 1523) where two women were arrested for allegedly making offensive and inappropriate remarks on Facebook about the importance of shutting down Mumbai after the death of Balasaheb Thackeray. The plaintiff asserted that Section 66A infringes on the right to *free speech*, rendering it ineligible for constitutional protection under Art. 19. (2). Art. 14 and 21 have been violated, and there is no discernible difference between those who use the internet and those who use other communication mediums. The court struck the provision down, holding it to be unconstitutional and observed that Section 66A was arbitrary and excessive as it disproportionately set restrictions to the right of an individual of *free speech* and *expression*. There is no definable standard under which an individual may be booked for an offence as the language is vague and undefined. The Court in Shreya Singhal used a test to determine whether an act causes a disruption in the current existence of the entire community or merely affects an entity in personem. The Supreme Court held that only incitement must draw the scrutiny of Art. 19(2), and there is no need to promote judicial overreach by enhancing the scope of the restriction.

It is pertinent to note that the maximum number of cases booked under the erstwhile Section 66A of the IT Act pertained to 'offensive' messages on social media. In Nithyananda Swami v. S. Arathi Rao and others (Original Application No.494 of 2012 in C.S.No.409 of 2012 dated 10 October 2012), the defendant, a Godman of huge public standing, had been accused of sexual assault by many of his devotees. He subsequently took to social media to defame and post offensive content within the means of the law about the plaintiff. The Madras High Court ruled that videos posted on social media sites like Facebook could be used as evidence in criminal cases and to incite hate against the plaintiff. Social media has become a vital form of communication in India.

The government has strictly regulated the speech, which has been criticized by the judiciary in various instances. While the country is still not fully equipped with a data security bill, the government has initiated various stop-gap measures, which have regulated social media rather than protected the rights of data providers. To protect the rights on social media, India introduced Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Media Ethics Code) Rules, 2021 but it has also been challenged or questioned for many times in the courts to date. These discussions can be gathered from certain judicial pronouncements which provide us with the view of judiciary for this issue. The Bombay High Court has stayed in adherence of two clauses of Information Technology (Guidelines for Intermediaries and Digital Media Ethics Code) Rules, 2021, which requires digital news media and online publishers to adhere to the Code of Ethics as prescribed by the rules. "In so far as Rule 9 is concerned, we have found it prima facie to be an intrusion of the petitioners' rights under article 19(1)(a). We have also held that it goes beyond the substantive law, therefore we have stayed clauses 9(1) and 9(3). The rule is not stayed in its entirety," Chief Justice Dipankar Dutta said. (Agij Promotion of Nineteenonea Media Pvt. Ltd. & Ors. V. UOI). The Kerala High Court has similarly restrained any coercive action against LiveLaw under Part III. Although the petitions in these and other cases pertain broadly to the entirety of the Intermediary Rules (i.e., both Part II and III). The Madras high court's order is the first one that pertains to Part II of the Rules i.e., the part governing digital intermediaries (Digital News publishers' association v. UOI). Even though shedding light on the right to free speech, it is not justifiable to understand the concept only by the judicial trend itself that discussed the rights themselves. The

absolute understanding of the rights can be gathered when understand with the restriction imposed upon them by the law.

Restrictions on the free speech right

The limitations imposed by Art. 19 have been subjected to numerous judicial interpretations (2). These restrictions were adjusted twice by the First Amendment Act and the Sixteenth Amendment, both of which were ratified in 1963. The Supreme Court determined particular tests for the reasonableness of the limits in Papnasam Labour Union v. Madura Coats Ltd. (AIR 1995 SC 2200 at para 15) as given below:

> (a) The restriction sought to be imposed on the This rights guaranteed by Art. 19 of the Constitution must not be arbitrary or of an excessive nature to go beyond the requirement of the need of society and object sought to be achieved.
> (b) There must be a direct and proximate nexus or a reasonable connection between the restriction imposed and the object sought to be achieved.
> (c) No abstract or fixed principle can be laid down, which may have universal application in all cases. Such consideration on the question of quality of reasonableness, therefore, is expected to vary from case to case.
> (d) In interpreting constitutional provisions, courts should be alive to the felt need of the society and complex issues facing the people which the legislature intends to solve through effective legislation.
> (e) In appreciating such problems and felt need of the society the judicial approach must necessarily be dynamic, pragmatic and elastic.
> (f)It is imperative that for consideration of the reasonableness of restriction imposed by a statute, the court should examine whether the social control as envisaged in Art. 19 is being effectuated by the restriction imposed on these rights.
> (h) The reasonableness has got to be tested both from the procedural and substantive aspects. It should not be bound by processual perniciousness or jurisprudence of remedies.
> (j) Restriction imposed on these rights guaranteed under Art. 19 of the Constitution must not be arbitrary, unbridled, unanalysed and excessive and also not unreasonably discriminatory. Ex hypothesis, therefore, a restriction to be reasonable must also be consistent with Art. 14 of the Constitution.
> (k) In judging the reasonableness of the restriction imposed by clause (6) of Art. 19, the court has to bear in mind Directive Principles of State Policy.
> (l)Ordinarily, any restriction so imposed which has the effect of promoting or effectuating a directive principle can be presumed to be a reasonable restriction in the public interest.

Reasonable Restrictions are well established under Article 19(2) of Indian Constitution which can be listed and understood as:

Sovereignty and integrity of India

The government is now required to restrict any secessionist actions that threaten the country's sovereignty and integrity under Art. 19(2). In this regard, in N.T Rama Rao v. Telugu Desam (1995 (3) ALT 929), the court held that any anti-national sentiments which attempted to thwart the unity of the communities should be penalized and could not seek the protection of *free speech* and *expression* rights.

Security of the state

In the matter of State of Bihar v. Shailabala Devi (AIR 1952 SC 329), the court held that any incitement of the people to commit crimes would endanger the integrity of the state. Therefore, the ban amounts to a reasonable restriction.

Public order

After the favorable decision in Romesh Thapar towards *free speech* rights, the term public order was inserted in the First Amendment Act to nullify the effect of the decision. The petitioner in Ramji Lal Modi v. State of UP (AIR 1957 SC 620) challenged the validity of Section 295A of the IPC before the Apex Court. The court held it absurd to suggest that insult to religion could have no bearing on public order to attract Art. 19(2) given Art. 25 and 26 of the Indian Constitution, while granting freedom of religion, were expressly subject to public order. A.G. Noorani notably noted that there should be no "hate speech" in the society that incites communal passion in the people. He notes that it is always possible for the state to deal with "hate speech" and nip it in the bud. All we require is the political will and administrative resolve to solve this puzzle. He noted that it is imperative to have a conscious state-driven effort to eliminate "hate speech" wherever and whenever it arose among the public.

One of the recent and significant cases concerning internet control is Bhasin v. Union of India (Writ Petition (Civil) No. 1031/2019 dated January 10, 2020). It is about the internet lockdown imposed in Jammu and Kashmir in early August of 2019. Before issuance of Constitutional Order regarding Art. 370 and its working in the state, the Indian government had imposed restrictions on online platforms and the freedom of movement. It was to ensure little retaliation to the unilateral imposition of the constitutional order by the government. This internet shutdown has limited many journalists and the general public's ability to move and travel and publish content on *freedom of*

speech and *expression* rights. The written petition was lodged by Ms Anuradha Bhasin, a journalist, who argued that "free speech" was important and that the current restrictions violated Art. 19 of the Constitution of India. The court upheld the internet limitations, ruling that online *free speech* is unquestionably a this right. It may, however, be limited in the name of national security, but such an order would be subject to judicial review. The court laid down a test for proportionality, which was the critical aspect concerning the question of restricting these rights. The test reads as under:

1. There is a legitimate restriction.
2. The restriction is bound by necessity.
3. If there are any alternatives to the restriction.
4. The measure taken is the least restrictive.
5. The restriction is open to judicial review.

The Apex Court further observes, "degree of restriction and the scope of the same, both territorially and temporally, must stand to what is necessary to combat an emergent situation… The concept of proportionality requires a restriction to be tailored by the territorial extent of restriction, the stage of an emergency, nature of urgency, duration of such restrictive measure and nature of such restriction."

Decency or Morality

Section 292-294 of IPC provides for actions that are considered immoral and indecent and restricted under Art. 19(2) of the Constitution. As laid down in R v. Hicklin ([1868] LR 3 QB 360) Hicklin's test states that the test for determining what is considered obscene or indecent is "whether the tendency of the matter charged as obscene tends to deprave and corrupt the minds which are open to such immoral influences." Keeping this test in mind, the Supreme Court in Ranjit Udeshi v. State of Maharashtra (AIR 1965 SC881) dismissed the appeal by observing that viewing certain parts of the book as divorced from the entirety would depict a skewed picture of the contents of the book. Thus, the penal statute would not get attracted in the present case.

Contempt of Court

The infamous case of Justice C.S. Karnan v. The Honourable Supreme Court of India ((2017) 2 SCC 756) mentions:

> We have given our thoughtful consideration to the factual position noticed hereinabove, as also, the submissions advanced by learned counsel, who assisted us during the hearing. We have carefully examined the text of the letters written by Shri Justice C.S. Karnan,

> from time to time. We had closely examined the suo-motu procedure adopted by him, whereby he passed orders which were derogatory to the administration of justice, before he was issued a notice for contempt, by this court. We have also carefully analysed the orders passed by Shri Justice C.S. Karnan suo-motu (in the purported exercise of the jurisdiction vested in him under Art. 226 of the Constitution of India, read with Section 482 of the Code of Criminal Procedure), even after the issuance of the contempt notice to him, by this court. His demeanour was found to have become further aggressive, after this court passed orders from time to time, in this case. The contents of the letters addressed by him contained scandalous material against Judges of High Courts and the Supreme Court. His public utterances turned the judicial system into a laughing stock. The local media, unmindful of the damage it was causing to the judicial institution, merrily rode the Karnan wave. Even the foreign press had its dig at the Indian judiciary. None of his actions can be considered as bona fide, especially given the express directions issued by this court on 8.2.2017, requiring him to refrain from discharging any judicial or administrative work. To restrain his abuse of suo-motu jurisdiction a further order had to be passed by this court on 1.5.2017, restraining Courts, Tribunals, Commissions and Authorities from taking cognisance of any order given by Justice Karnan.

The Supreme Court recently adjudicated suo motu contempt proceedings against Senior Advocate Prashant Bhushan. Bhushan's tweet about the current Chief Justice of India S.A. Bobde states, "CJI rides a 50 Lakh motorcycle belonging to a BJP leader at Raj Bhavan Nagpur, without a mask or helmet, at a time when he keeps the SC in lockdown mode denying citizens their right to access Justice!" The court declared that the tweets have scandalized the court and lowered its authority. The Supreme Court also relied on its ruling in Re: Vijay Kurle & Ors.((2019) 9 SCC 521) based on the information obtained, there was no mistake in registering a suo motu case. Bhushan was found guilty of contempt by the Supreme Court, but Twitter was released from the case because it served as an intermediary.

In yet another case concerning criticism towards a governmental authority, the police arrested senior Congress leader Pankaj Punia following a complaint that he allegedly "hurt religious feelings" and "promoted enmity between different groups on ground of religion" through his tweet. In his tweet, Punia targeted Yogi Adityanath's Uttar Pradesh government and was a rant on the saffronisation of the politics of the state. "The complaint was registered under sections 295-A (Deliberate and malicious acts, intended to outrage religious feelings), 153-A (Promoting enmity between different groups on the grounds of

religion, race, etc.), 153 (Provocations with intent to cause a riot), 504 and 505 of IPC, and relevant sections of Information Technology Act, 2000." While the arguments for the case were minimal, the Supreme Court of India was quick to dismiss the writ petition for quashing criminal proceedings.

Defamation

Defamation is a penal offence under Section 499 and 500 of IPC and is covered within reasonable restrictions under Art. 19(2) of the Constitution. The Two Judge Bench of the Supreme Court in Subramanian Swamy v. The Union of India (AIR 2016 SC 2728) dismissed the challenges to the constitutionality of the reasonable restriction regarding defamation. It observed that this restriction is in public interest and is not excessive in any manner. Subramanian Swamy, Arvind Kejriwal and Rahul Gandhi, some of the well-known petitioners in this case, were charged with criminal defamation. Criminal proceedings were stayed due to pending constitutional proceedings. The Apex Court held that there existed a constitutional duty to respect the dignity of individuals and therefore, the challenge to criminal defamation fell through. The court recognised that this right to *free speech* and *expression* is bound by reasonable restrictions as specified within the constitutional framework. However, these restrictions should remain within the parameters of reason and should not be excessive. The balance should be assessed by weighing importance to rights of individual as well as community. The Bench held the law on criminal defamation was distinguishable from other cases such as Shreya Singhal as the law in the former was explicit and did not require any more clarification.

Conclusion

Freedom of Speech rights and their reasonable restriction and the exercise of the same on the internet are governed by different laws of the country in India. Several developmental changes in policy can be considered as a requirement to govern the same in the best possible manner. The legal provisions should be implemented in a harmonious way to avoid any conflict of rights or interests in the society. And so, establishment of a proper governing body must be done so that efficiency and consistency is maintained. Judicial interpretation of the right to *free speech* has been a balancing act between the individual rights of the citizen and the public responsibility of the judiciary to ensure peace and tranquillity. It is pertinent to note that the scope of

this right continues to be tested with new judicial precedents created over time. It is imperative to understand that a salient feature of Indian jurisprudence is the unbridled attempt to wrest these rights from the governmental arm of the state. The present laws on the governance of *free speech* on the Internet need a developmental approach to ensure integrity and freedom at the same time. The responsibilities for the actual implementation of the plans of action will remain with the concerned assigned authority in their sphere of work. Public, private, and government sectors shall be involved with their respective jurisdiction to implement the policy governing *free speech* on the Internet. *Free speech* rights and their reasonable restriction and the exercise of the same on the internet are governed by different laws of the country in India.

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In the driver's seat: Sustainable leadership as catalysts for sustainable development

Muhammad Bilal Shaukat and Waqar Alam*

Abstract: The notion, in the driver's seat, sustainable leadership as catalyst for sustainable development is of highly importance in the embryonic age of community development. Prior research highlighted the importance of sustainable mechanisms and identified various limitations within the realm of sustainable leadership (SusL) and sustainable performance (SusP). With this in mind, this endeavor was designed to offer managerial and policymaking professionals insights into various potential avenues, encompassing areas like poverty mitigation, sustainable education, and community development. Building upon theoretical foundations of the Resource-Based View (RBV) and a comprehensive synthesis of integrated literature we formed a research framework with aims to investigate how SusL influences SusP. We also introduce a mediating mechanism of a novel concept of sustainable project management (SuPM) in this relationship. This research introduced four propositions that await additional validation. These propositions emphasize the need for further empirical evidence in the context of SMEs, thereby setting the stage for future studies. In essence, this research elaborated on both theoretical and practical contributions concerning the influence of SusL on SusP through the novel concept of SuPM.

Keywords: sustainable leadership, sustainable performance, sustainable project management, Resource Based View (RBV)

Introduction

Firms have usually assessed their performance through criteria such as equity, debt, and their market positioning (Siddiqui & Shaukat et al. 2023). However, the contemporary business milieu witnesses a growing influence of stakeholders in urging companies to combine social, ecological and economic considerations in their decision-making and strategic planning (Shaukat et al. 2022). The escalating

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market competition and heightened communal awareness of sustainability issues emphasize companies to assume a leadership position in sustainability (Moehler et al. 2018). Traditional leadership styles, effective in previous business paradigms, now fall short to meet the requirements of contemporary firms (Mabey et al. 2012; Siddiqui & Iqbal et al. 2023). Hence, it becomes essential to approach leadership behaviors through the lens of sustainable leadership (Su et al. 2020). Sustainable leadership, abbreviated as SusL, involves making long term decisions, fostering systemic innovation, nurturing a talented and devoted staff, and prioritize the provision of top-notch products with an emphasis to enhance overall value creation.

While the importance of SusL in the realm of business administration is growing, the comprehension of SusL approach for sustainable performance is still emerging. Iqbal, Ahmad, and Halim (2020) have called for further exploration on the link between sustainable leadership and sustainable performance (hereafter SusP). Scolars like Baird et al. (2023) claimed that existing research mainly centered on assessing the influence of SusL styles on specific firm outcomes. However, there exist a significant research gaps in exploring the effects of SusL on broader organizational achievements, such as sustainable firm performance. The authors suggested that forthcoming efforts ought to fill this gap by investigating the yet-to-be-explored impacts of SusL on a broader scope of firm outcomes. The extant literature raised queries about the pragmatic approach employed in studying the direct correlation between SusL and SusP in various investigations (Iqbal et al. 2020; Shaukat & Alam 2023; Iqbal, Ahmad & Li 2021). They argue that findings from studies examining the direct link between SusL and SusP consistently demonstrated significant consistency, whether the results were significant, non-significant, or impartial. This uniformity is ascribed to the perspective effect of additional intermediary factors, which many studies have overlooked. Therefore, this endeavor integrates sustainable project management (hereafter SuPM) as a novel mediating variable to form a connection between the relationship of SusL and SusP.

Various research gaps linked with the roles of SusL, SuPM, and SusP have been identified in the extant literature. First, despite the increasing concerns about sustainable leadership, the effective application of SusL remains notably underdeveloped (Shamim et al. 2019). Project management specialists have yet to fully utilize SusL advantages to enhance the sustainable performance of their

organizations (Shaukat et al. 2022). Second, exploring the direct association between SusL and SusP could be enhanced by considering the incorporation of a mediating mechanism. Prior research highlighted the overlooked role of sustainable project management as a viable mediator (e.g. Dubois & Silvius 2020; Shaukat et al. 2022). Third, sustainable project management presents as a novel-perspective in the domain of corporate governance. Scholars like Shaukat et al. (2022) argue that SuPM substantially impact to both project performance and organizational success. The scholars further claim that SusL practices function as a motivating factor for the operative execution of sustainable project management philosophies. Similarly Dubois and Silvius (2020) suggested to incorporate SuPM into upcoming research frameworks presents an intriguing opportunity to assess sustainability. Fourth, in the context of developing countries, Small and Medium Sized Enterprises (SMEs) in the manufacturing sector play a vital position to achieve Sustainable Development Goals. These SME firms facilitate significantly by creating career openings, uplifting poverty rates, promoting systematic innovation, cultivating environmentally sustainable enterprises, and diminishing income inequalities (Littlewood & Holt 2018). On the other hand, Iqbal, Ahmad, and Ahmad (2018) emphasize the lack of empirical evidence to measure sustainable performance in SMEs, underscore the urgent need to address sustainability within these firms.

The current study contribution is grounded in four fundamental propositions. At first, we integrate concepts from the Resource Based View (RBV) to improve the theoretical underpinnings of the research. Through the utilization of these distinct streams of knowledge, the current study provides a comprehensive perspective on how sustainable leadership practices influence sustainable performance. By leveraging on this unique knowledge source, the present research provides a comprehensive viewpoint of how sustainable leadership practices influences sustainable performance. This integration heightens the overall comprehension of the influence of sustainable leadership. Second, our research highlighted the mediating role of sustainable project management. This nuanced investigation goes beyond the mere establishment of direct relations and delves into the mechanisms through which SusL influences SusP. This contribution magnifies the literature by given that insights into the underlying dynamics that firms leverage to upsurge their sustainability efforts. Likewise, our research specific emphasis on Small and Medium Sized

Enterprises (SMEs) is of particular significance. The present study offers practical recommendations by addressing the distinct challenges and benefits that SME firms face in the realm of sustainable leadership and performance which make it valuable for this vibrant sector.

Literature review

Sustainable leadership

In the literature, the notion "sustainable leadership" often employed interchangeably with phrases like "sustainability leadership", "environmental leadership", "honeybee leadership" and "green management", all aimed to discover the correlation between leadership practices and sustainable outcomes (Shaukat & Alam 2023). SusL strongly emphasized to improve the stakeholders' well-being while also ensure the firm long term perspective (McCann & Holt 2010). SusL promotes the core characteristic of sustainability through individual, corporate, and society spheres (Pearse & Dimovski 2015). Likewise, SusL prioritized competency development, viable revolution, and enduring advantages, advancing beyond immediate advantages to deliver substantial value to achieve SDGs (Hallinger & Suriyankietkaew 2018). The implementation of SusL traits, which encompasses valuing the workforce, foster a shared vision, emphasize on social concerns, and maintain progressive employees relationships, has a positive impact to drive operational efficiency (Suriyankietkaew & Avery 2016).

Sustainable leadership and sustainable firm performance

The existing body of research highlights the impact of SusL on SusP. For instance, Moehler et al. (2018) suggested that in order to meet stakeholder demands and achieve sustainable results, firms must adopt SusL practices that bring results with superior ecological, economic and social concerns. In the same way, Avery and Bergsteiner (2010) argued that SusL is a core component to produce high-quality products that contribute to enhanced firm performance. Sustainable leader plays a critical role to shape organization culture, improve workforce enactment, and restructure the organization to realize viable results (Ferdig 2007).

This research applies Resource Based View (RBV) to examine the influence of SusL on SusP. According to RBV, organizations possess a unique array of resources that are essential to attain strategic objectives and serve as the foundation of organizational effectiveness (Barney

1991). Companies utilize leader as a form of human capital resources, characterized by knowledge, irreplaceability, and uniqueness (Harris & McMahan 2015). Building upon RBV principles, Iqbal and Ahmad (2020) stressed that SusL practices are distinctive, evolving, sophisticated, irreplaceable and valuable, enabling firms to establish a competitive advantage over competitors in the market. Enhanced SusL practices empower firms with superior potential to augment sustainable benefits (Pearse & Dimovski 2015). Based on preceding discussion, following proposition was developed:

Proposition 1: Sustainable leadership has a positive impact on sustainable performance.

Sustainable leadership and sustainable project management

The extant body of literature shed light on the intricate relationship between SusL and SuPM. Notable studies provide valuable insights into this connotation. For example, Nartgün, Limon, and Dilekçi (2020) conducted an in-depth investigation into the impact of sustainable leadership within the project based environment. The outcomes revealed a compelling association, highlighting the substantial contribution of SusL to the enhancement of project management effectiveness and the overall performance. Moreover, scholars like, Zulkiffli and Latiffi, (2016) carried out a comprehensive literature review on SusL applications by encompassing various industries, and their research underlined the critical role of SusL. Furthermore, Shaukat and Alam (2023) found that SusL undertakes a substantial responsibility, mainly concern with the implementation of socially conscious, environmentally sustainable, and economically viable project management practices, which together represent the three fundamental pillars of SuPM. This methodology leads to grasp sustainable outcomes and highlight the indispensable position of SusL in contemporary project management. In addition, a growing body of evidence suggested that SusL unveils a remarkable capability to manage sustainable project management practices with superior efficiency and effectiveness (Shaukat & Alam 2023). This implies that those firms who embrace SusL values are well equipped to steer the complexities of contemporary project management while fostering sustainability and underline the critical consequence of this leadership approach.

Therefore, we proposed the following proposition:

Proposition 2: Sustainable leadership has a positive effect on sustainable project management.

Sustainable project management and sustainable performance

The extant body of literature carried to the forefront, the complex relationship between SuPM implementation and the overarching SusP concept. Noteworthy research within this realm delved into the numerous dimensions of this connotation and shed light on its complexities and implications. For example, scholars like Silvius and Schipper (2014) made a substantial contribution by establishing a comprehensive theoretical model to delve into a dynamic relationship between SuPM and performance, grounded in specific sustainability criteria. This framework further provide a structured methodology to gain insights into how the different dimensions of SuPM can exert an influence on the individual criteria that collectively shape sustainable performance. In essence, their research findings offered a distinct roadmap to discern the complex interplay between SuPM and the multifaceted facets of SusP. Furthermore, Carvalho and Rabechini (2017) undertook a noteworthy research endeavor, wherein they established a structured research model explicitly developed to analyze the link between sustainability within the realm of project management and the overarching project success concept. Their research consequences lighten a compelling association and showcasing the positive impact of SuPM on various dimensions of project success. This underscores the critical importance of sustainability in project management and also highlights how adopting SuPM principles lead to improved sustainable performance on multiple fronts. Besides, the empirical insights offered by Martens and Carvalho (2016) adds further depth to our understanding of the practical implementation of SuPM practices. Through the consideration of a various arrangement of case studies, their findings revealed numerous important observations. These comprised the application of standard project management methodologies, the incorporation of sustainability concerns throughout various project stages, and the commitment to continuous improvement in these areas. Such observations assist to underscore benefits and the widespread adoption of SuPM practices in contemporary business settings to enhance firm's SusP.

Based on above discussion we developed following proposition:

Proposition 3: Sustainable project management has a positive impact on sustainable performance.

Mediating role of sustainable project management

Sustainable project management encompasses the planning and controlling of project processes, taking into account social, ecological and economic considerations throughout the project-life-cycle. The objective is to assistance stakeholders while confirming transparency and fostering active stakeholder involvement. (Silvius & Schipper, 2014). In the extant literature various scholars emphasize the significance of SuPM implementation. For example, Zulkiffli and Latiffi (2016) conducted a theoretical analysis of SusL in construction and other industrial projects, while Shaukat and Alam, (2023) concentrated on SME manufacturing enterprises. Both studies concluded that SusL takes the responsibility to incorporate socially responsible, environmentally conscious, and economically viable project management practices. Furthermore, SusL has the capability to manage sustainable project management practices with greater proficiency and effectiveness (Shaukat et al. 2022). The extant body of literature underscored that SuPM positively acted as a mediator in the association between SusL and SusP. For example, Goedknegt (2013) stressed that leaders wield significant impact over the implementation of SuPM practices. Similarly, Ullah et al. (2020) contended that the effective adoption and implementation of SuPM can be accomplished by leveraging the abilities and leadership qualities, leading to substantial improvements in performance-driven results. Silvius and Schipper (2014) stated that the application of SuPM required methodical and well-balanced arrangements among varied viewpoints on performance and development. They also argued that leaders play a pivotal and important role in evaluating sustainability.

The intervening function of SuPM in the association between SusL and SusP can be explained through the lens of the Resource Based View (RBV). RBV posits that organizations possess a unique set of resources that serve as the foundation of strategic management and the primary driver of success (Barney 1991). Similarly, RBV emphasizes that companies aim to outdo each other by leveraging dynamic assets and competencies (Ayuso & Navarrete-Báez 2018). Drawing from RBV, it is posited that the evolving and indispensable nature of SuPM implementing competence equips an organization to attain competitive advantage over its peers (Larsson & Larsson 2020). SuPM is viewed as

a unique asset for firms to facilitate and streamline project life cycle stages effectively (Silvius & Schipper 2014). Organizations equipped with enhanced SuPM implementation knowledge will have greater capabilities compared to those that adopt SuPM practices in a fragmented or sporadic manner (Larsson & Larsson 2020). Building upon RBV, the current study argues that SusL help in improving SuPM practices, ultimately lead to improve sustainable performance.

Derived from these premises, the study puts forward the following proposition:

Proposition 4: Sustainable project management mediates the relationship between SusL and SusP.

RBV's lens accentuates the role of SuPM as a pivotal resource and suggests that SusL significantly enriches the implementation of SuPM practices. Consequently, this interplay between SusL and SuPM bears a direct impact to augment a firm's sustainable performance, aligning with RBV's emphasis on leveraging unique resources for competitive advantage (Barney 1991).

Conclusion

The present study has been planned to scrutinize the relationship amongst SusL, SuPM and SusP. From Resource Based View (RBV) a research framework was developed to establish the association between the proposed concepts.

This study deepens our understanding of the correlation between sustainable leadership and sustainable performance. This endeavor further acknowledged the intermediary function of SuPM in the link among SusL and SusP. As a result, four propositions regarding the potential impact of sustainable project management on sustainable performance have emerged from this study. Moreover, the conceptualization of sustainable performance serves as a fundamental starting point and provides a substantial guide for upcoming quantitative research endeavors. This theoretical contribution suggested that researchers conducting quantitative investigations on proposed framework should examine the reliability and validity of these propositions.

The extant literature highlighted the positive association between SusL and SusP, yet there exists an empirical unaddressed gap between these elements (Pearse & Dimovski 2015). Scholars like Iqbal et al. (2020) call for empirical investigation in the association between SusL and SusP. Hence, this study aims to bridge this gap by proposing that

sustainable project management acts as the missing intermediary variable between SusL and SusP. While past research primarily focused on conceptually developing sustainable project management, empirical evidence remains scarce (Dubois & Silvius 2020). Sustainable project management offers a new perspective within the realm of corporate setups. Shaukat et al. (2022) stated that SuPM substantially supplement towards firm performance and effectiveness. The authors recommended to explore the interrelationship between SusL, SuPM and firm outcomes.

This research incorporated crucial factors including sustainable leadership, performance, and sustainable project management. These factors have demonstrated a substantial elevation in the sustainability of firm performance. This endeavor stands as an early initiative aimed to form the proposed framework that interlinks SusL with SusP utilizing SuPM as a mediator. This highlights the diverse influence of SusL to navigate sustainability in SMEs, and stress the integration of SusL application within these enterprises to enhance inclusive performance and overarching sustainability goals.

Finally, this study's conceptual framework forms the foundation for conducting quantitative studies based on the extant theoretical support. Regarding the Resource Based View-RBV viewpoint, this study enriches existing literature by showcasing how sustainable project management serves as a mediator amid to SusL and SusP relationship. In doing so, the present study addresses the research gap identified by (Dubois & Silvius 2020; Shaukat et al. 2022; Siddiqui & Iqbal et al. 2023). Ultimately, this study distinguished a notable research gap in the sustainability literature and established a solid foundation for future research by presenting a comprehensive conceptual framework and research propositions.

Research implications

The current research contributes to the theoretical landscape significantly. Within the domain of the Resource Based View, this research explore the connections between sustainable leadership (SusL) and its profound impact on sustainable project management (SuPM) and sustainable performance (SusP) within the perspective of Small and Medium Sized Enterprises (SMEs). This in-depth analysis sheds light on the pivotal function of SusL, and allow for a deeper understanding of leadership attributes, especially within technology oriented environments. It delves into existing literature that underlines

SusL's distinctive focus on sustainable project management practices, emphasize to cultivate highly skilled and dedicated employees, the delivery of superior products, and the fortification of the firms future sustainability. This comprehensive understanding not only adds depth to the present body of leadership-theories but also underscores how sustainability-focused leadership styles significantly influence and enhance overall firm performance, effectiveness and longevity.

Practically, the implications of this research endeavor hold substantial value for SMEs. The research provides practitioners and leaders within SMEs firm with a more profound insight into the attributes defining SuPM, thus elucidate the crucial role that SuPM plays in bridging the gap between SusL and SusP. For practitioners operating within SMEs, this endeavor serves as a practical guide and provide a roadmap to know how their leaders effect the overall efficiency of their firms. By grasping the essence of sustainable leadership (SusL), project managers will able to improve their strategies, make more informed decisions, and ultimately make substantial contributions to the productivity and success of their respective organizations. Additionally, the current study offer significant insights for human resource departments in SMEs. They provide a framework to rationalize recruitment processes and identify and foster leaders who exhibit necessary sustainable leadership traits. Identifying the potential impact of these leaders on sustainable performance within SMEs firm context, human resource practitioners can prioritize the development and advancement of sustainable leadership attributes. Eventually, this study assists as a practical compass to SMEs, offer practical recommendations to elevate managerial decision-making, fortify organizational sustainability, and foster overall effectiveness in the quest of sustainability.

Limitation and future motivation

The present study acknowledges its limitations, foremost among them being the dearth of quantitative insights regarding the relationship among SusL, SuPM and SusP within the scope of this study. It is imperative to note that this framework was meticulously crafted through an integrated literature review, operating independently of any prescribed methodology or standardized procedure, as emphasized by (Jesson et al. 2011). However, considering the paramount importance of this research domain, there exists a pressing need for further systematic literature reviews that could potentially yield additional

nuanced insights into the intricacies of the proposed relationship. In addition, future research that addresses the propositions outlined in this study will not only enrich theoretical understanding of sustainable development but also provide guidance in the formulation of policies and practices conducive to fostering SuPM and driving superior sustainable performance within the economy. Evidently, the imperative nature of future studies lies in the mobilization of these propositions, leveraging suitable indicators to comprehensively explore the multifaceted dynamics of sustainable project management (SuPM) and its consequential impact on sustainable performance (Wahab & Shaukat, 2023; Siddiqui & Qureshi et al., 2024).

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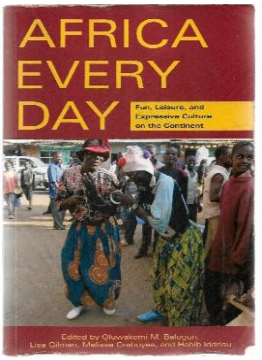
BOOK REVIEW



Recreation and socialization as metaphors in *Africa Every Day: Fun, Leisure, and Expressive Culture on the Continent*

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Oluwakemi M. Balogun et al. *Africa Every Day: Fun, Leisure, and Expressive Culture on the Continent*. 2019. Athens, OH: Ohio University Press. Pp. 371.

In twenty-nine chapters written by thirty-six authors, this book discusses select examples of the audience (rites of passage, theatrical performances, marriage ceremonies, sports) and non-audience (livelihoods, leisure, socializing, and friendship) orientated performances and everyday life activities respectively, from parts of Africa, grouped within seven parts.

In Part One, "Celebrations and Rites of Passage", Erin Nourse in the beginning essay 'Hosting a First Haircutting in Diégo Suarez, Madagascar', describes *aqiqah* (a Malagasy Muslim baby welcoming ceremony) as a rite of passage and a symbolic cleansing, which purges any acquired negative influence from conception to birth, as an occasion of communal togetherness, solidarity, and conviviality. Nourse discusses how cosmopolitan environment influences propels

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the evolution of *aqiqah*. In the next chapter, '*Ekún-ìyàwó*: an African Bridal Shower in Yoruba land', Abiola V. Ayodukun and Osuolale J. Ayodokun describe *ekún-ìyàwó* (a passage rite marking a transition from spinsterhood to wifehood among the Nigerian Yoruba) as a ceremony for socializing and merriment. They explained how factors/forces such as individualism, syncretism, lack of language competencies, and encumbering modernist religious doctrines propel the evolutionary trends in *ekún-ìyàwó*'s planning and performance process, even though *ekún-ìyàwó* purpose remains consistent. In Chapter 3, 'Funeral Swag: A Celebration of Death in Urban Zambia', Prince F. M. Lamba highlights the metamorphosis of urban Zambian funerals from somber to sites of 'funeral swag' defined by flamboyant socializing, merriment, elaborate spending, and decoration. 'Funeral swag', Lamba notes is a new and evolving socio-cultural phenomenon, which portrays an evolving worldview that is relegating Zambian traditional myths and beliefs about death and funerals. In Chapter 4, 'Beyond Religion: Food, Decoration, and Songs of Egyptian Feasts', Hadeer Aboelnagah, highlights how religious occasions (Ramadan, Eid al-Fitr, Christmas, Palm Sunday, and Shan al-Nassem), celebrated as periodic rituals, provide atmosphere and opportunity for conviviality, festive gatherings, massive homecoming, reconnections with friends and relatives, and celebration of creative arts (songs, painting, interior and exterior decoration, and dancing). In Chapter 5, 'New Year's Eve in Niamey, Niger', the last in 'part one', Scott M. Youngstedt discusses how New Year's Eve in Niamey has transformed into an annual commemoration. He highlights its observation as a youth-driven night of heavy merriment, conviviality, and festivity, and the factors behind its beginning in 2005 and the opposition from the elderly, which has not whittled its growing appeal.

The second Part, "Socializing and Friendship", includes: Chapter 6, 'Tank Park's Children: Recreational Activities of Namibian Children in Oranjemund during the 1980s', by Martha Ndakalako-Bannikov, which is a recollection of her delightful leisure moments with her childhood friends playing at the 'Tank Park' in Oranjemund in 1980s. Her recollection includes childhood pranks, improvised games, and the nostalgia that intermittently emerges as they grow and disperse. Chapter 7, 'Have You Been to All the Mall?' by Deborah Durham presents big modern shopping malls in Malawi's Gaborone as sites where residents seek tourist-like feeling and atmosphere, through in-shop sight-seeing, catching crowd warmth and spontaneity, and enjoy

seeing people and being seen. The malls provide residents the opportunity to make friends, appreciate trends in fashion, and exchange stress and boredom with momentary warmth and positive distractions. In Chapter 8, 'Sociality, Money, and the Making of Masculine Privilege in Nigerian Sports Clubs', Daniel Jordan Smith evaluates sports clubs as attractive class-defined arenas for social bonding, the building of politically and economically valuable social networks by Nigerian elite men in urban areas. He relates how these clubs are leisure sites where tacit displays of influence, affluence, and status remain obvious. In Chapter 9, 'Let's Turn it Up: Effervescent Night Life in Nigeria', the last chapter in Part 2, Omotoyosi Babalola analyses 'to turn it up' as a colloquial suggestion of drawing quality time, in loud music in Night Clubs and leisure/hang-out spots, mostly at weekends, after a week's work, mostly by the young working class. This adventure includes enjoying a variety of food, dancing, listening to music, and seeing people in their colorful and varied night groove attire for purposes of putting aside worries and work until the next working week.

In Chapter 10, 'Young Love: Dancing by the Light of the Moon in Tanzania', the first in Part 3 "Love, Sex, and Marriage", Dorothy L. Hodgson relates how youths in a remote Maasai community in dry Rift Valley of Tanzania engage in moonlight dance for leisure and love, which prepares them for cultural initiation and wedding. She examines how these celebrations provide opportunities for familial reunion and communal merriment. In Chapter 11, 'Love, Play, and Sex: Polyamony and the Hidden Pleasure of Everyday Life in Kaoko, Northwest Namibia', Steven van Wolputte discusses *okuyepisa*, a 'wife-sharing' or 'wife-swapping' culture among Namibian Himba tribe. He discusses the Church, government officials, and NGO's description of *Okuyepisa* as disadvantageous and harmful to Himba women and girls, who embrace the tradition of choosing sex and marriage partners from their cross-cousins, and how both marriage and sex involve a multilevel friendliness. He highlights Himba women's view on 'wife-inheritance' as a way of securing a widow's livelihood and engagement in polyamorous sexual relationships as beneficial to people's beauty and moral standing. Chapter 12, the last in Part 3, titled 'Love in and after War: Courtship (*Cuna*) in Rural Acoliland, Northern Uganda' by Lara Rosenoff Gauvin relates an account of *cuna* in postwar and post-displacement rural Acoliland, Northern Uganda, gathered through face-to-face interactions with Acoli individuals in Padibe Internally

Displaced Persons (IDP) camp, between 2006 and 2008. She highlights the negative impact of civil war displacement and the context of sustained moralization by 'born-again churches' in IDP camps to the Acoli peoples' culture (*tekwaro*), particularly the *cuna* practice. Gauvin touches on how *cuna* influences intergenerational adherence with *tekwaro* by assessing the patterns of Acoli youths' engagement in *cuna* in contemporary post-displacement and post-conflict Uganda.

Chapter 13, 'Where are all the Women who Used to be Good Athletes in their School Days', by Jacqueline-Bethel Tchouta Mougoué, the first chapter in Part 4 "Sports and Leisure", reflects on the evolution of English-speaking Cameroonian women's involvement in formally organized sports and informal exercise from the 1960s to 1970s. Mougoué highlights how sports, gender, and leisure co-relate in the focused region at the time under review, and how sports is a factor propelling a change in patterns of women's social acceptance. In Chapter 14, 'We are Building the New Nigeria: Lagos Boys' Clubs, Leisure, 1945-60', Michael Gennaro discusses the evolution of the Boys' Club in post-world War II Nigeria, primarily focusing on Lagos Boys' Club and its expansion beyond Lagos. He relates how the Boys' Club served as a reformation forum where delinquents and wayward youths find opportunities to re-tool their lives through sports and wholesome friendships. Chapter 15, 'Leisure, Resistance, and Identity Formation among People with Disabilities (PWD) in Ghana' by Issahaku Adama and Akwasi Kumi-Kyerewe looks at the utilization of leisure spaces in Ghana by PWD as a changing social dynamics and challenge to subsisting negative socio-cultural stereotypes. The authors relate the positives of communal leisure participation amongst PWD and non-PWD as a cohesion-hosting platform, which enhances the livelihood of PWD amidst entrenched marginalization and exclusion. In Chapter 16, 'Bit and Beats from Senegalese wrestling', Cheikh Tidiane Lo, presents wrestling as a popular leisure in Senegalese urban culture, the difference, and the intersection between amateur and professional wrestling in Dakar. In highlighting the gender dimension, Lo focuses on the celebration of masculinity and the importance of women singers during contests.

In Chapter 17, 'Sheng: Expressivity, Creativity, and Rebellion in Nairobi' by Mokaya Bosire, first in Part 5, "Performance, Language, and Creativity" explores the use of *sheng* (a distinct urban vernacular in Nairobi) as a voice for Kenyan urban youth, as manifested in *genge* (Kenyan hip-hop) and poetry. From a linguistic perspective, Bosire

examines the evolution of *sheng*, its reception, appeal, and functionality. Chapter 18, 'The Journal Rappé: Educating the Youth through Senegalese Hip-hop', by Maya Angela Smith describes 'The Journal Rappé' as that which represents a critical space in continuing a hip-hop legacy of civic engagement, using humor to offer different perspectives on how to address issues such as political corruption, poverty, and unemployment. Smith examines how Senegalese hip-hop artists Xuman and Keyti utilize music to relay important information to a traditionally underserved market, the significance of multilingualism in conveying their message, and their interest in challenging the dominant misery narrative about Africa. He describes hip-hop and 'the Journal Rappé' as innovative methods of knowledge production made possible by new technologies, which in turn give the audience access to information they might not themselves have, through a nuanced depiction of Senegalese life. In Chapter 19, 'Teeth Appear Themselves: Laughter and Humor in East Africa' Alex Perullo and James Nindi, relate the place of humor as an important form of social engagement in all human communities and how comedy is an integral part of life in Eastern Africa. They highlight how people use humor to relieve the pressures of everyday life, to communicate and connect with those who hold similar views, particularly, how humor helps urban dwellers in Tanzania to endure difficult and uncomfortable bus rides. They also touch on how the comical films of Tanzania's foremost comedian represent a medium of entertainment in buses, at home, and in public film-viewing houses. They discussed polemics of humor, culture-specific semiotic denotations, urban dress anomalies, sexuality, marriages, and labor in Majuto's comedy films. In Chapter 20, 'Chilimika: Dancing in the New Year in the Nkhata Bay District of Malawi', Lisa Gilman examines the relevance of Malawian *chilimika* (dance of the Tonga people), the evolutionary tendencies in costumes, steps, songs, and its relocation from its traditional roots to other places for other spectators. Gilman discusses how *chilimika* represents fun and liveliness, and how it provides an opportunity to celebrate the entering of a New Year. She advocates the need for government to assist in promoting and preserving *chilimika*. In Chapter 21, 'Portrait of a Playful Man: Mustafa, Master of Mapiko', Paolo Israel discusses the evolution of Mozambican *mapiko* masquerading (a dance) through the life story of one of its practitioners. Israel looks at the communal conviviality and entertainment, and how the period of freedom fight threatened the culture and its resurrection.

In Chapter 22, 'Mobile Malawi and Everyday Handsets', the first in Part 6, "Technology and Media", John Fenn looks at how mobile handsets offer ready and reliable communication of extant values, practices, and creativity in Malawi. Fenn discusses how the ways users deploy mobile handsets have given rise to emergent cultural forms and habits that can augment and/or disrupt those already in place. He describes the mobile phone infrastructure in Malawi as that which influences everyday life in a range of ways and as a vehicle for creative expressions on the economic and socio-cultural landscape of Malawi. He touches on people's utilization of mobile phones in the documentation of cultural events, learning of forgotten songs, and communication of culturally framed information and knowledge. In Chapter 23, 'Meeting up at the Movies in Tanzania', Laura Fair through interviews, colonial and postcolonial government official documents, and cinema records, examines the factors that made cinema attendance in the 1950s and 1960s the most popular pastime in Tanzania. She highlights the creative ways Tanzanians engaged with global films, how young people utilized cinematic space for distinctly generational pleasures, and how cinemas figured into romantic relationships. In Chapter 24, 'Retelling the World in Swahili: Revisiting the Practice of Film Translation in Tanzania', Bright Englert with Nginjai Paul Moreto discuss the translation of film language, from English language to Swahili in Tanzania for use in video parlors that people visit for relaxation. The chapter also examines the evolution of film language translation and its impact in video parlor customer attraction. Chapter 25, 'The Listeners' City: Radio, Congolese Rumba, and the Appropriation of Urban Space in the Belgian Congo in the 1950s' (the last in Part 6), by Charlotte Grabli explores the history of radio as a social object related to music, place and territory, through archival research. The chapter looks at early colonial radio shows, and how listeners relate with the content and entertainment.

In Chapter 26, 'Mechanical Expression in a Broken World: Repair, Fun, and Everyday Life Tanzanian Garages', the first in Part 7, "Labor and Livelihoods", Joshua Grace examines the origins of (*buibu*) 'mute garages and mechanics' and why their practice help unsettle the conventional wisdom about technology in independent Tanzania. This chapter highlights Africans' ability to appropriate, modify, and express themselves mechanically through industrial products such as motor vehicles. In Chapter 27, 'Male Friendship and the Writing Life in Dar

des Salaam, Tanzania', Emily Callaci looks at the history of Swahili detective novellas from the 1970s, how these works creatively borrowed from James Bond, Bollywood, Spaghetti Westerns, and Kung Fu films to offer a glimpse into the imaginations of young Tanzanians of earlier decades. Looking at the authors, Callaci explores the shades and nuances of the bond and friendship they shared and how their friendship bolstered their shared network and attendant gains. In Chapter 28, 'Work and Happiness: Songs of Indigenous Ghanaian Fishermen', Eric Debrah Otchere discusses how the music that accompanies the Ghanaian canoe fishermen's work is of immeasurable value to their daily activities. Otchere elaborates on the poetic dimensions of the songs/music lyrics and their combination of linguistic and paralinguistic devices for social commentary, worldview projection, and leisure. Lastly, in Chapter 29, 'Leisure at the Edge of Legality: Cannabis in Twentieth-century Swaziland and South Africa', Bill McCoy discusses the sneaky growing of cannabis (*dagga*) in Mbuluzi Leprosy Hospital in Swaziland during the colonial era and its smuggling into South Africa. McCoy outlines the factors behind the cannabis cultivation in Swaziland, and the efforts of South African and Swazi governments to curtail the trade and consumption of cannabis, even though the usage of dagga during leisure and entertainment remains entrenched in both countries.

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