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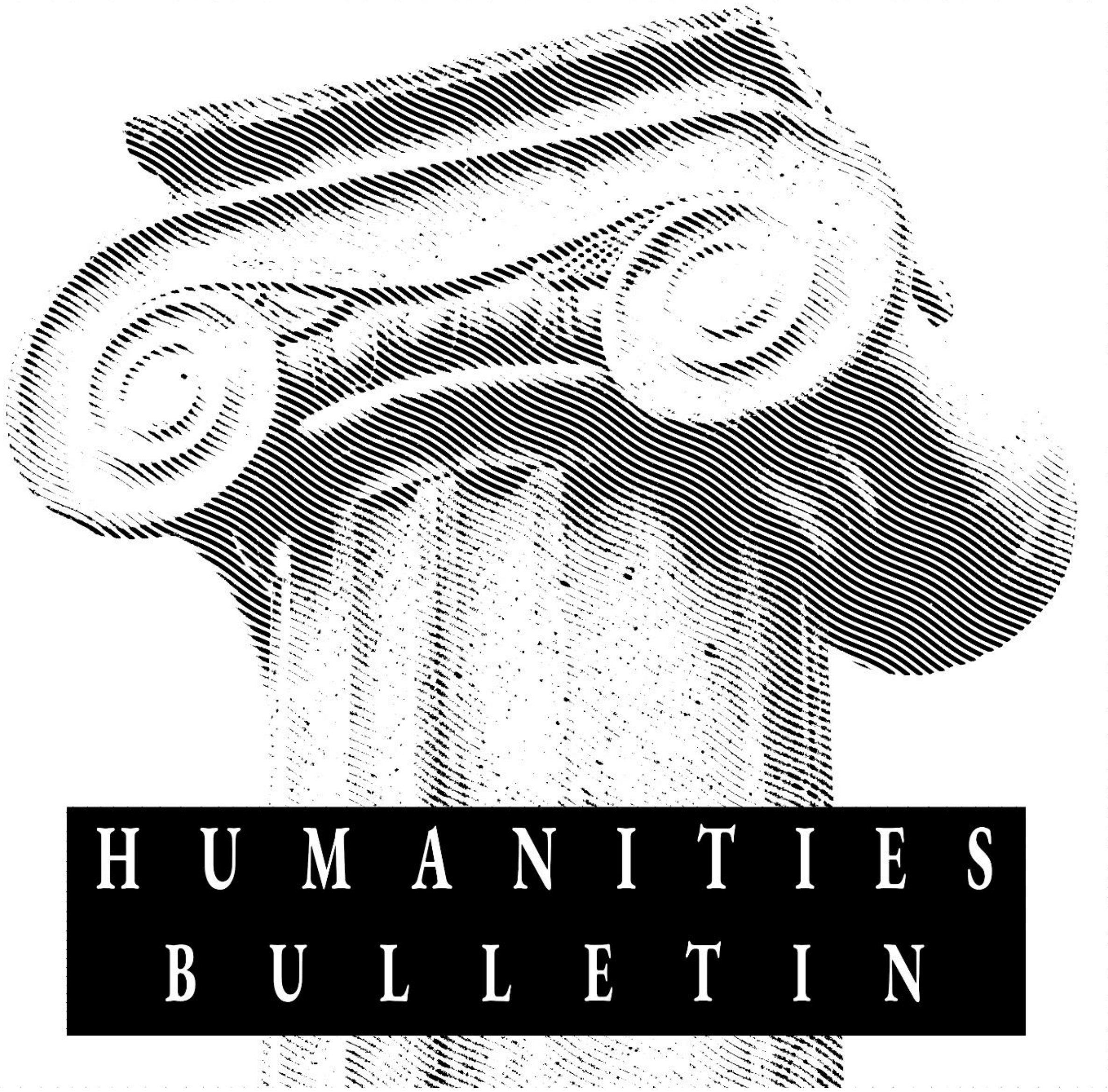
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Metaethics of the Duty to Die

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Abstract:

This paper straightforwardly addresses one of the strongest, from an ethical perspective, objections presented to the duty to die, the one concerned with the lack of a normative theory to support it, offered by Seay in his paper *Can there be a "duty to die" without a normative theory?* The aim of the paper is to provide strong metaethical grounds to support the duty to die without the need of a moral normative theory. First, the definition and main argument for the duty to die will be presented. Second, Seay's objection will be described and clearly explained. Third, our metaphysical assumptions and a preliminary metaethical discussion will be offered to situate and understand the context. Finally, we will show how the duty to die can be integrated within the metaethical approach previously presented, defending that there is no need of a normative theory to provide good justification and strong ethical grounds for the duty to die, because they will have already been provided by our metaethical argument.

Keywords: duty to die; metaethics; intuitionism; principlism; Wide Reflective Equilibrium; bioethics

Introduction

This paper straightforwardly addresses one of the strongest, from an ethical perspective, objections presented to the duty to die[1], the one concerned with the lack of a normative theory to support it, offered by Seay (2002) in his paper *Can there be a "duty to die" without a normative theory?* The aim of the paper is to provide strong metaethical grounds to support the duty to die without the need of a moral normative theory. First, the definition and main argument for the duty to die will be presented. Second, Seay's objection will be described and clearly explained. Third, our metaphysical assumptions and a preliminary metaethical discussion will be offered to situate and understand the context. Finally, we will show how the duty to die can be integrated within the metaethical approach previously presented, defending that there is no need of a normative theory to provide good justification and strong ethical grounds for the duty to die, because they will have already been provided by our metaethical argument.

1. The duty to die

1.1. Definition

The notion of the duty to die was first suggested by Lamm (1997) with the intention to focus our attention on the concentration of health resources in a ridiculously small proportion of the population: the sickest 5%. The extended understanding of death as a right to which we are all entitled, concealing its true nature as an event that will irremediably occur to us, conveys the belief that no delimitation of health care should be stablished, that a person has the right to use as many resources as necessary before her life ends. However, this concentration of expenditures on the dying process implies an unjust distributin of resources amidst other population groups who might benefit more from them. It is imperative, then, as a society, to acknowledge how important the just distribution of healthcare resources throughout a person's lifespan is. Understanding dying as a duty means to comprehend that we cannot bankrupt the next generation by the disproportionate allocation of resources in our dying bodies.

After the Lamm's brief presentation of the duty to die as an ethical quandary, John Hardwig (1990, 1997b, 1997a, 2000, 2013) is its main advocate, and the first to present a compelling argument to support its existence, as we will see in next subsection. Now, we must explain what the duty to die exactly is, how it must be understood, and clarify the concept's demarcations to comprehend what is implied by it[2]. First, the duty to die has to be read as a pretheoretical notion, interchangeable with the terms "responsibility" and/or "obligation". By that, Hardwig intends to remain aside from the metaethical and theoretical questions that the notion "duty" could arise, furtherly clarifying in a footnote (1997b, 42) that his choice comes from the familiarity of the term after Lamm's paper. Second, the underlying idea of Hardwig's duty to die is our moral responsibility to alleviate one's loved ones and family members suffering by the acceptance of our own death:

> But I cannot imagine it would be morally permissible for me to ruin the rest of my partner's life to sustain mine or to cut off my sons' careers, impoverish them, or compromise the quality of their children's lives simply because I want to live a little longer. This is what leads me to belief in a duty to die. (Hardwig, 1997b, 38)

Finally, the duty to die is a *prima facie* duty[3], that is, other existing personal responsibilities could outweigh one's duty to die. The duty to die should always consider other family members' opinions and interests, but it must remain a personal responsibility, where the person autonomously ponders all the relevant elements and make a final decision.

1.2. Main argument

The argument to defend the duty to die was presented and defended by Hardwig on his paper *Is there a duty to die?* (1997b), although Hardwig's first mention of such a duty appeared as part of an Ethics anthology on a chapter titled *Dying at the right time: reflections on (un)assisted suicide* (1997a). Despite it being presented in those articles, it will be laid out here by the usage of bullet points, for the sake of clarity and a better understanding, as Hardwig himself did years later in another paper (2013). The argument rests on three main premises, from which the existence of a duty to die will be deduced. Those premises are:

I. *Our medical decisions do not exclusively affect ourselves but have a direct impact on the lives of those we love, which will affect them in important and long-lasting ways.*

That is especially true in societies[4] where medical treatment costs are sometimes too high, economically speaking, to be afforded, with no further significant impact on the lives of those taking care of the expenses[5]. However, in societies where health care is of a public nature and all the treatment costs are covered, the emotional and physical burdens imposed in some cases by certain illnesses shall be considered weighty enough to contemplate the possibility of the existence of a duty to die[6].

II. *Medical decisions must be made considering what is best for all concerned, that is, the patient cannot, and should not, only measure their own interests and well-being when deciding for the treatment course to follow. Again, the interests of family and loved ones must be considered.*

Modest as it might seem, premise II involves a significant shift from the predominant approach to bioethics, which is a patient-centred one. In this case, patient-centred bioethics should be abandoned, moving to a family-centred one. Similarly, this change would require the redefinition of the concept of autonomy, which has a central role in Bioethics. Those issues were previously addressed by Hardwig in a paper considering the family role in medicine (1990). In there, he questions the extent to which the family interests can and should be sacrificed when making medical decisions. There is a paradox and an anomaly in medical decision-making, he states, because the process excludes those around us (family and loved ones) from the consequences of our actions/decisions about treatment or other medical procedures. That is of foremost importance because an understanding of bioethics so centred on the patient forgets about the family dynamics, where sometimes the weakest member is not the patient, thus not the one most in need of protection.

As a result, the notion of autonomy needs rethinking, since patients also have moral responsibilities towards others; without question, the right course of action to take might not always be the one that promotes the patient's own interests. However, autonomy is understood in biomedical ethics contexts as having two essential conditions, liberty and agency, which acknowledges the value and decision-making rights of individuals. Similarly, when speaking about autonomous choices in bioethics, what is implied is the patient's competence and informed consent (Beauchamp & Childress, 2009, 101–140). Autonomy is understood as a *prima facie* principle which plays an important role to define and comprehend the rest of the bioethical principles (Beauchamp & Childress, 2009, 101–114; Gillon, 2003). Hence, what would be necessary is not so much a complete redefinition of the notion of autonomy, but the inclusion of the family interests when patients consider all the treatment options available. For, the autonomy of all members of the family, and especially those whose autonomy would be significantly compromised, must be considered. The most significant consequence of those changes would be the increased weight that fairness and justice have in medical ethics. Equality must be the guiding principle when weighing interests; medical and non-medical, personal, and family members' interests must be similarly considered, and balanced when they conflict.

Despite the radical appearance of this shift, we consider that it is simply a specification and an amend to the notion of autonomy as currently considered in Bioethics, which would not necessarily have a significant impact, nor will it create the need of redefinition, on the concept of autonomy. We do not believe, as Hardwig does, that a complete change into family-centred bioethics is necessary. Autonomy will retain its relevance within biomedical ethics, but it is important to remember that, as a *prima facie* principle, there might be situations where it could be outweighed. To conclude, ideally, on a day-to-day basis, patients would consider their family and loved ones′ perspectives and would together decide what the best course of action to follow is.

We arrive at our third premise:

III. *The elderly also has responsibilities to their loved ones, among which the protection of the well-being of the family must be included. It is important to note that those responsibilities and obligations remain despite their illnesses. Counterintuitive as it might seem, moral agency cannot be obliterated by chronic illness and/or debility.*

It would be inadequate to deduce from this premise that duties of care are removed completely from discussion. Loving relationships are a two-way street where reciprocal care and responsibilities arise. This third premise attempts to highlight an often oversight perspective. Indeed, the moral duties of an ill person vary significantly when they are sick, some of them might totally disappear; but new ones could also arise and need to be addressed with caution.

Once we accept the already presented premises, the rest of the argument goes as follows:

IV. *Some burdens are too great to legitimately expect, ask, or even allow others in one's family to bear.*

V. *In some cases, there is no way to go on living without imposing those burdens upon others.*

VI. *In those cases, we still have a duty to try to protect our family and loved ones from those burdens. That duty might sometimes be a duty to die, for death would be the only, more appropriate, and/or morally preferable, option at hand to avoid imposing unnecessarily onerous emotional, physical, or financial burdens on a person's loved ones.*

It is important to note that the relevant philosophical issue here is not the number or percentage of cases where a duty to die may arise. It is enough for the sake of the argument to find at least few situations, regardless of how seldom they might be, where the duty to die can be clearly defended. However, to appreciate the surprisingly common and familiar character of cases where a duty to die might arise, consider Hardwig's example:

> An 87-year-old woman was dying of congestive heart failure. Her APACHE score predicted that she had less than a 50 percent chance to live for another six months. She was lucid, assertive, and terrified of death. She very much wanted to live and kept opting for rehospitalization and the most aggressive life-prolonging treatment possible. That treatment successfully prolonged her life (though with increasing

> debility) for nearly two years. Her 55-year-old daughter was her only remaining family, her caregiver, and the main source of her financial support. The daughter duly cared for her mother. But before her mother died, her illness had cost the daughter all of her savings, her home, her job, and her career (1997b, 37).

The question now is: what is the greater burden/evil? On one side, the mother is solely giving up a 50% chance of another six months of life; whereas her daughter, on the other side, has compromised and lost everything, savings, home, and career, at age 55. More cases like this one could be created, where the person bearing the greatest burden could be undoubtedly pointed to. The truly relevant issue lying here to defend that there exists a duty to die is the consideration of the moral importance of the daughter's burdens to bear in her mother's final decision (Hardwig, 1997b, 37–38). Death, or ending one's own life, is not always the greatest burden; moreover, it is sometimes preferable to a life full of pain and suffering. When we add to this consideration the idea of a family-centred bioethics, advocated for by Hardwig, we can clearly elucidate the main motivation he has to defend the existence of a duty to die.

2. Need of a normative theory?

A major objection to Hardwig´s argument defending the duty to die points to the lack of a normative theory which could provide ethical support of his claim. For Seay (2002), Hardwig would need such normative theory to protect his argument from objections that might be offered against it; however, it seems that Hardwig rejects any kind of normative ethical theory because it would depersonalise relationships. It is important to recall the relevance that family and loving relationships have in the advocacy for a duty to die. For, they are precisely those types of relationships which are situated at the core of Hardwig's argument and provide the ethical foundation and justification of the duty to die: dying so others we love might live better lives, free of the burdens that our staying alive would impose upon them.

What are, then, the consequences of missing a normative ethical theory? Seay (2002) argues that Hardwig's argument thus lack the capacity to offer a proper moral justification of his claim. Moral justification, Seay follows, consists in offering reasons to support our conclusions in arguments about the right thing to do. For reasons of logical consistency similar judgments need to be made about similar cases, and to do that we need normative and evaluative principles that make our moral reasoning possible. Otherwise, we would be lost without the guidance of a theory which could help us apply the same principles to similar specific situations:

> The point of normative and evaluative principles in ethics, after all, is to allow us to pick out morally relevant common features of actions, agents, and their contexts, so that—for reasons of logical consistency—similar judgments will be made about similar cases. That is what moral justification is, and it is in this way that we give reasons to support our conclusions in arguments about the right thing to do in a given case. Without arguments, there is no moral reasoning (Seay, 2002, 271).

More specifically, in the medical care context, those universalistic principles are required to provide solutions in concrete clinical cases.

This absence of a normative theory takes us to two critiques Hardwig (1990) seems unable to accommodate in his defence of a family-based model of bioethics. First, how can we defend personal rights in a family-centred model when interests conflict within the family? Hardwig has no alternatives to defend his argument from objections of this sort. For, family interests could sometimes impose themselves over the patient's medical decision, even if the latter is to be generally accepted as the right thing to do. Seay (2002, 269) presents the example of a 16-year-old girl within an ultra-catholic family who is secretly pregnant and wants to abort. In a family-centred model, the girl's decision would be stopped and her right to privacy violated, for the family would need to be informed and their interests considered prior to reaching any agreement regarding the medical alternatives and final decision. This case is a clear situation where the patient's autonomy would be left unconsidered because of the potential detriment to their family. Secondly, and furthermore, physicians must never permit patients to make decisions autonomously because the interests of any family member involved should be equally considered and they would be violated in cases of exclusive patients' decisions. That would imply a return to a doctor's paternalistic attitude towards patients and could involve a violation of their fiduciary duty to their patients, which would ultimately make people lose trust on their physicians and withhold information from them.

3. Metaethical preliminary reflection

Following Seay's requirement quoted above, the main objective of this section is to offer a metaethical foundation for the duty to die. The only purpose is to find justifiable grounds for the duty to die to be properly supported and well-founded. The intention is to show how the duty to die might appear in a variety of moral situations where action is required, and thorough consideration is needed, before offering a final response to the quandary posed by that specific situation. To provide further moral justification, principles will be necessary. The metaethical debate about moral properties is far from concluded, consensus has not been reached regarding the "nature" of moral properties, whether they aim to describe the world, thus could be true or false, and neither about the means there are available for us to gain knowledge of those moral properties[7]. As a preliminary discussion, the metaphysical assumptions my argumentation will rest upon must be clearly stated.

3.1. Moral cognitivism

When debating about the origins[8] of moral beliefs, there are at least three predominant options available, based on the answer they provide to the question: "do moral judgements express moral beliefs?". First, reason can be the origin of our moral beliefs, implying that empirical or rational intuitions are appropriate means of justifying our moral beliefs. This position is called "cognitivism", it defends that ethical claims can be true or false, and it implies that ethical language aims to describe the world. On the opposite side, as a second possible answer, non-cognitivism argues that ethical claims/judgements, do not express a cognitive mental state, but simply state a personal attitude or feeling towards a specific situation or action. As a result, ethical claims cannot, and do not, aim to describe the world, nor can they be true or false. Accordingly, moral judgements would simply serve as a guide of action based on what we feel compelled to do or sanction in determined circumstances. There is yet a third and final alternative, moral relativism and the acceptance of the absence to find any possible form of justification for our moral judgements. On this view, society is the unique source of moral judgements, so morality is the equivalent of a record of different codes of behaviour that diverse groups of people have accepted and shared throughout history.

Inversely to the exposition order offered in the paragraph above, I will briefly try to show the flaws of the last two approaches and, consequently, the strengths of the cognitivist view that I will adopt as a metaethical support for the duty to die and its relevance in the field of bioethics. There are three quick arguments that clearly demonstrate the strengths of moral cognitivism, while exposing the deficiencies of the other two options[9]. First, the possibility of being mistaken about morality is widely intuitively accepted. That is, persons usually fail when judging a given situation, maybe because they have not been aware of all the morally relevant features of it or due to a lack of development on their moral character. For example, we could initially judge as wrong the act of stealing, but later, when a thorough insight has been obtained (i.e., about the fact that such person needs the stolen money to buy food for their children), change our judgement to the acceptance and moral justifiability of the action itself. In a second instance, and maybe more controversial, morality feels like a demand from outside. When behaving in a morally sanctionable way or weighing the alternatives before choosing a specific course of action, we feel compelled to do the right thing, or at least avoid doing the clearly wrong alternative. The "demand" to choose correctly, to do the right thing, feels weighty every time we face a situation with moral features. Finally, the idea of moral progress also supports cognitivism, for the possibility to offer justification of our moral claims appealing to something "real", to a property our actions have, together with the possibility of them being validated with the way the world is, is only plausible and arguable under cognitivism; because mistakes in moral reasoning would be thus explained by an erroneous attempt to identify those properties when justifying our claims and judgements. For these reasons, moral cognitivism will be accepted and assumed in the following.

3.2. Moral intuition, foundationalism, and Wide Reflective Equilibrium

Within metaethical cognitivist discussion, the duty to die can be understood as a moral intuition when a person encounters a situation where letting themselves die or actively hastening their deaths is morally required and the morally right thing to do. By moral intuition I mean "a pre-theoretical ethical belief or attitude, where this may include anything from a pre-cognitive "gut reaction" on the one hand, to a considered ethical judgement on the other" (Lillehammer 2011, 185). That definition includes the idea that moral intuitions need not be the result of inferential reasoning; however, it is important to add that moral intuitions do not need to be reached immediately, like sensitive perception (McMahan 2013, 104–105); that is, they might be acknowledged after a period of reflection. This epistemological conception of the moral duty to die is compatible with Hardwig's personal understanding of the notion[10]. However, this understanding of moral intuition does not suffice as a valid form of moral justification on its own, it needs a more robust ethical structure to support it.

Our metaethical approach here follows McMahan (2013), for although intuitions are discovered first, when we encounter an ethical situation which needs solving, they take us to general moral principles which will furtherly help us justify those initial intuitions. The main idea is that intuitions are a reliable guide for moral knowledge, they are epistemically intelligible; but further reflection in search of moral justification will take us to moral principles. Are principles morally required? Yes, in two separate ways. First, in the sense we have just stated, because they are the foundations of morality, since they serve as moral justification of our intuitions, as it was previously indicated, which are nevertheless reliable sources of moral knowledge. Principles help us identify the morally salient features of the moral problems we have intuitions about, facilitating the appropriate moral approach and examination of them. But there is still a second way in which principles are needed: they provide/enhance intuitions with higher credibility. For, in that way the latter can be subsumed under plausible moral principles also applicable to other similar situations. In this sense, our claim is principlist, because accordance to principles will serve as a criterion of justifiability, and as a source of epistemological robustness. To the defence of principles as the foundation of moral justification, we must add a coherentist methodology. The coherence method adopted here is Wide Reflective Equilibrium (WRE), which requires principles to be tested for coherence and consistency with other intuitions and principles (Rawls 1975). The methodological requirement of WRE helps to show that our intuitions are presumptively credible not because they have some special property, but due to the good evidence that if they survive in a state of wide reflective equilibrium they are not relying in ethically irrelevant claims/principles/intuitions, for the latter would have exposed and eliminated discreditable criteria of assessment (Lillehammer 2011, 188–189). Finally, it is important to specify the three main commitments that, following Nichols (2012), WRE has. First, universal revisability. Every considered moral judgement, principle, or background theory in WRE is subject to constant scrutiny and possible rejection. It is important, having reached that point, to anticipate an objection regarding the viability of our version of WRE with an intuitionist foundation, for it could be objected that if intuitions can be revised, they are not self-evident. However, we shall bear in mind, before presenting such concern, that the self-evidence of moral intuitions does not entail infallibility, incorrigibility, or indubitability. Second, restricted epistemic priority, that is, cases, principles, and background theories have all the same epistemic status/preference. Third, and last, the method of coherence, where holism is the methodology of discovery in bioethics, thus no linear (bottom-up or top-down) model of moral beliefs discovery would be appropriate to describe what we do in the field of bioethics.

3.3. Possible objections

a) Ethical particularism

The first objection to our metaethical considerations previously explained could be observed in ethical particularism, which postulates the non-existence of moral principles (Dancy 1983). Its most imminent consequence for our purposes is the impossibility to appeal to bioethical principles to justify and ground the notion of the duty to die. For particularism, morality must be approached on a case-by-case basis, where specific moral features of a concrete scenario cannot be extrapolated to others, independently of how similar the two could be. For, moral properties can make a difference in some cases but be completely irrelevant in other. Thus, the rightness, or wrongness, of individual acts can be discerned without the need to appeal to moral principles. The particularist alternative is to consider the specificities of a case, identifying the salient moral aspects of it, and judging them accordingly. In Dancy's words: "we discern directly that individual acts are right without needing any detour through principles." (1983 543)

There are three problems pointed by particularism to be wrong about the defence and necessity of moral principles to justify our morality. Firstly, there is a problem of consistency, for conflicts of duties seems unsolvable. Retaining clashing principles appears impossible after disagreements over which one must prevail in a determined moral quandary. How could a moral subject keep both and apply them in a different situation once the conflict has been elucidated? The second problem concerns the epistemology of moral principles; in other words, the means to acquire knowledge of those principles. For particularists, moral principles are not self-evident and cannot be proved so[11]. And, finally, there is the difficulty to account for the moral relevance of principles in distinct situations: "why should we admit that if a property 'makes a difference' in a particular case, then it generally 'makes a difference'?" (Dancy 1983, 534)

However, the possibility to offer a robust moral justification without pointing to principles into which our claims can be grounded, even if they simply serve as an initial guideline, seems difficult. To begin with, it is simply not the way we behave and operate in our moral life. The identification of morally relevant and salient features of specific situations is not enough to justify our moral actions, for it would be empty without the justificatory power of principles. The epistemological strength of our argumentation would be severely weakened if there is nothing else to tie our moral justification to than the identified features; it could perfectly be the case that we misinterpreted the scenario and, with it, the morally significant elements to be considered. Thus, how could anyone rest assured that the chosen features serve as justification if there is nothing else to appeal to than themselves? Principles provide us with a starting point from which we can begin reasoning and seeking moral justification in diverse situations, "playing" with different arguments, previously employed with success, which seems initially applicable to new scenarios. That is not to say, as considered by Dancy, that we are truly switching arguments in a strict sense, for it is not the case that we take a moral argument and apply it, without further consideration, to a new situation with similar but not identical relevant moral features. What we in fact do when we reason ethically is to flexibly apply principles we have learned from previous experience to new circumstances. Those principles are admittedly quite elastic and might perfectly adapt to a variety of cases, as if they were a regular sock which can fit three consecutive foot sizes. Continuing with the sock analogy, the fact that our principles sometimes fit quite tightly does not mean that they are the wrong match for our moral situation, it might just be that we have encountered a quite rare scenario (or just an unusual foot size for our socks). So, it would be a mistake to think that in such situation any piece of cloth would be completely useless; for it could be simply the case that we misinterpreted the moral relevant characteristic of the situation and we are truly dealing with a hand instead of a foot, thus we would need a glove or, in a more appropriate moral terminology, another principle under which the scenario could be subsumed.

Similarly, as an answer to Dancy's questions previously offered, Hooker (2000 7–11) points to some possible counterexamples to particularism, where moral properties that "make a difference" in a determined situation also "make a difference" in general; in other words, there are moral properties that are always on the same side of the moral problem. Amidst the examples offered that can be place on the side of rightness we find seeking non-sadistic pleasure, benefiting others, and promoting justice. Examples of properties that count always on the wrongness side are promise-breaking and stealing. Those considerations need to be taken cautiously, for they are just understood as general moral pluses or minuses in specific situations. That means that, for example, even when promoting non-sadistic pleasure is always a moral plus, there could be a situation where it could be outweighed by opposing moral minuses, such as promise breaking. There are situations where moral pluses are not justified or opposite ones where moral minuses are justified. Imagine that someone needs to steal a drug to save a close friend's life. Stealing in that case is morally right and justifiable when weighing other relevant features, but that does not make stealing in general neutral, much less a moral plus to extrapolate to other circumstances. Moral cases like that help us fine-tune our principles.

There is still a final argument against particularism offered again by Hooker, who indicates the absence of any predictability in particularism. A particularist defence of moral justification makes impossible to predict how others will behave in the future. There could be no sureness that a particularist would not attack us, rob us, or break their promises to us. Trust seems impossible. Appeals to principles as a means of justification gives morality with the share commitment needed to provide people with the assurance that nobody will attack them, rob them... Widespread acceptance of particularism would have bad net effects on human well-being. To conclude, "the overall plausibility of a moral view is seriously impaired if it denies that one of the points of morality is to increase the probability of conformity with certain mutually beneficial practices." (Hooker 2000, 22)

b) A critique of Reflective Equilibrium

The second set of objections worth mentioning and considering focuses on Reflective Equilibrium, on its wide version, as an appropriate methodology for bioethics. In fact, this criticism questions the viability of Wide Reflective Equilibrium (WRE) and the idea that coherence could provide sufficient justificatory power for our moral claims and principles. On that line of argumentation, Arras (2007) also points to some concerns linked to the one just mentioned, which are more likely to appear in the field of bioethics. First, he questions whether WRE is truly practicable, for there are, on his view, justification difficulties due to the need to constantly check our moral beliefs with the entire network of beliefs. Closely related to this, as a direct consequence, WRE would not provide a precise guide for action, which is imperiously necessary in current bioethical decisions. The endless enterprise of checking our moral beliefs against the rest of cases, principles, and background theories, to reach an equilibria situation seems inadequate to proceed in healthcare settings where time is a crucial factor making medical decisions. Secondly, and going back to the problem of the justificatory power of WRE, Arras criticises the absence of epistemologically privileged moral beliefs and principles in WRE, which does inevitably convey that anything is equally susceptible of being expelled from the equilibrium. Moreover, coherence between elements in reflective equilibrium on its own is not sufficient to provide justification for our judgements. This is the result of a wrong analogy with the scientific methodology, where observation statements provide "datum" for further theorising in physical sciences, guaranteeing a sufficiently stable support in which justification can be firmly grounded. Besides that, the scientific model also provides mutually supporting beliefs or "credibility transfers" across disciplines, raising the epistemological status of the whole set of beliefs (Arras, 2007 51; 57–62). Hence, coherence alone is unable to provide justification for our moral beliefs.

It is now time to clarify the misunderstandings that led to the previously offered objections and, also, to offer counterarguments in defence of a more precise comprehension of WRE, its possibilities, and limitations. First, regarding the lack of practicability of WRE, it is important to note that equilibria shall not be understood as a final reachable stage where all of our moral judgements, principles, and background theories do harmoniously cohere. As Nichols emphasises, the method of WRE is never finished, nobody will ever be in that state, which means that we should never stop to employ the methodology and to subject our moral beliefs to scrutiny and revision: "all we can do is to use our best judgement in determining when we have subjected our beliefs to enough scrutiny to be able to justifiably use them as the basis for moral action" (Nichols 2012, 334). Second, in relation to the justificatory power of WRE, an initial misunderstanding on Arras's side needs to be clarified, which is the same that Nichols unveils in Strong's (2010) argument against WRE as a valid methodology in bioethics. The confusion rests on an inappropriate conception of WRE, for both Arras and Strong consider that the methodology of WRE entails coherentism for epistemic justification. However, the role coherence plays in the above defended version of WRE is methodological, and it does not play a justificatory role as well in our belief system, but merely contributes to it. Coherence is necessary for justification, but not sufficient. What coherence can do is to elevate the epistemic credentials of a moral belief. The foundationalist WRE, together with the intuitionist nuances that have been specified and defended before in section 4.2., avoids the criticism relative to the lack of justificatory power of reflective equilibrium by presenting a set of reliable principles that will be called upon when justification for particular cases is needed. Moral intuitions could serve as the *observation statements* we find in sciences, providing support and epistemological justification to our claims, which will later be included in reflective equilibrium to be finally evaluated against previously accepted moral statements.

4. Metaethics of the duty to die

How, thus, is the duty to die to be metaethically supported in this approach? As stated above, the duty to die could be considered a moral intuition; that is, specific morally salient features can be identified in a situation where a person might have the responsibility to end their life as a way of preventing becoming a burden for their family and loved ones. The frequency of such duty is irrelevant for the purposes of moral justification, for, even if seldom, the duty to die might appear and thus deserves moral consideration. However, it might be the case that the duty to end one´s life before one would have otherwise initially thought is more common than usually believed. Even when Hardwig (1997a, 1997b) first presented his advocacy for the duty to die in a medical care context, the USA´s one, where most services respond to the economic interests of private companies, i.e., a private medical insurance scenery, morally similar situations could be encountered in public healthcare contexts, where resources are nevertheless scarce and a just distribution of them could never suffice to cover everyone´s needs[12]. To conclude, the identification of the duty to die with a moral intuition seems appropriate, for it does have its own specific and characteristic moral features. Situations where we might have responsibilities to those we love are often experienced by anyone with sufficiently strong affective bonds. Truth be told, those duties are not always equally demanding from us, but it is not difficult to picture a scenario where the circumstances could be so extreme that require from us to give up some of our lifetime, even more in situations where the end is inevitably near (e.g., terminal illness with a prognosis of two months of life) to ensure a better life for those we care about and love.

To avoid any possible confusion or misunderstanding of the moral advocacy of the duty to die, it must be clear that even though the socioeconomic circumstances of countries/nations is a crucial factor which will determine the possibilities that such duty arises, a lack of funding in healthcare institutions, where they are supported with taxpayers' money, could be never justified by the existence of such a duty. For, the duty to die is a personal one, so political ineptitude, when distributing resources and giving public institutions their due importance for the general interest and citizens' wellbeing, should never be evoked as a counterargument to justify that the duty to die is more common than it truly is. In other words, the fact that the duty to die arises in socioeconomic and political contexts where resources are inevitably scarce and a just distribution of them is difficult is just that, a factual determinant, therefore it could not be appealed to as a moral argument, or else a fallacy would appear.

Returning to previous metaethical reflections, once we have stablished, and argued for, the duty to die as a moral intuition, accordance to moral bioethical principles should be proven to provide our intuition with a more robust moral justification. In the field of bioethics, principlism is embodied in Beauchamp's and Childress' (2009) theory of the four ethical principles to justify medical practices, which also employs WRE as a method to integrate those principles and provide them with greater coherence, and thus epistemological strength. Within that bioethical framework, the duty to die as a moral intuition can be subsumed under the principles of beneficence and justice; however, there might happen to be extraordinary circumstances which could make appealing to the principle of non-maleficence necessary[13].

The principle of beneficence is rooted in the idea that morality shall not merely consist in avoiding to harm others, but also taking positive steps to help them. As a principle, it focuses on the moral obligation to act for the benefit of others. Regardless of who the "other" is, the duty to die rests precisely on that assumption: that is, sometimes it is our moral duty, or responsibility, to weigh all possible available alternatives, considering other people's interests and wellbeing as well as our own, when making medical decisions. It could be argued that moral obligations emerging from beneficence would be extremely demanding, thus beneficence requests would be rendered as ideals that cannot be enforced. However, there are a number of prima facie rules of obligation, or duties, justifiable from bioethical principles that serve as a support to morally defend the duty to die. Beauchamp and Childress (2009 204) mention some of them: a) protect and defend the rights of others; b) prevent harm from occurring to others; and c) remove conditions that will cause harm to others. Presumably, nobody would deny that situations are far more common than initially thought where a terminal illness with a death prognosis could endanger other family members' or loved ones' chances to have access to education or would suppose a great burden due to the care needed, putting at risk their life goals and/or projects. That is not to say that everyone should have to do it, nor that a third-party could occasionally enforce it, for the duty to die must be understood as a *prima facie* moral obligation that must be weighed against other salient moral features in each specific case, which could perfectly leave it off the ethical considerations to consider before making any important medical decision. On the other side, it does not mean that situations where the duty to die is unavoidable, from a moral perspective, could be encountered. I would like to emphasise that what seems troublesome for most people when faced with the possibility of having a duty to die is not at all different from the fear of dying itself, regardless of the means employed or the reasons to do it. I do not intend to deny the extremely arduous process that the acceptance of the duty to die might be, coming to terms with the idea that one is going to die would likely make us all cling to life and seek any possible reason to stay around for a little longer. But it would be morally irresponsible and unjustifiable to let our fear ruin our loved ones' lives. If we focus on the beneficence rule c) stated above, we could easily picture a situation where our staying alive for a couple of months more, when already suffering from a terminal illness that would nevertheless end our life within that period, became the removable condition that could prevent harm of others[14]. It is also important to pinpoint the distinctive character of the bonds created with our family and loved ones, for they generate specific benevolence, creating a more demanding moral behaviour towards them.

Focusing now to the principle of justice, it normally addresses bioethical problems concerning the distribution of scarce resources in the context of limited funding and expensive treatments and medical technologies. So, the term justice is commonly associated to its societal perspective, for when talking about distributive justice we refer to "the fair, equitable, and appropriate distribution of benefit and burdens determined by norms that structure the terms of social cooperation" (Beauchamp & Childress 2009, 250). Thus, it might appear to be a decision which must be determined on a political/social level, not on a personal one. Justice is concerned, in the biomedical discussion, with the equal treatment of persons attending to their material differences, in an effort to guarantee the same opportunities to access medical services. Societies are morally obliged to treat every citizen in the same way, protecting everyone´s right to healthcare, and assuring a decent minimum of services which cover their fundamental needs. How is the duty to die then related in any significant way to the principle of justice, where they appear to be implemented at different tiers, individual and societal, respectively? Well, let me show it with an example. A person has a remaining period of between two to three weeks left before a terminal disease ends their life. The technologies and treatment necessary to maintaining that person's life during that period amounts to a sum of money that could be redistributed to significantly improve the chances of life of other patients. Provided that such redistribution of the saved resources be possible, should the referred person desperately cling to life or accept its end therefore saving others? Trying to escape one's responsibilities towards others in a situation like the one presented seems unfair, unjust, to those in need of those medical resources. Especially so in cases where one has accepted their death, left everyone settled and has provided for their loved ones; once again, one's incapability to come to terms with and accept death cannot be sustained as a morally sufficient reason to stay alive. Just to clarify, it is enough to defend the argument for the duty to die to accept that there could be some cases where this *prima facie* duty would arise, even when in most other situations there would be heavier moral considerations which would tip the scales in favour of staying alive.

Conclusion

Notwithstanding the relatively limited metaethical considerations, for implications have not been thoroughly discussed and some assumptions have been made, this paper offers a valuable insight into the possibility of a moral justification of the duty to die. Similarly, the argument presented satisfactorily solves Seay's objection that pointed to the necessity of a normative theory to support the duty to die.

The paper defends that the duty to die can be understood as a moral intuition arising in specific medical context where a person might have to acknowledge it to avoid becoming a financial and/or emotional burden for their family or to society by making an unfair use of scarce resources. As a moral intuition, its moral characteristic features are first identified in a given scenario to be later on supported by strongest biomedical principles. In the case of the duty to die, those principles are beneficence, for the person who has a duty to die must consider the wellbeing of others whose lives could be ruined if the patient fails to recognise her duty; and the principle of justice, for healthcare resources must be justly distributed amidst all members of society to guarantee equal access to health opportunities, thus the duty to die can require that a person stops employing medical resources that could be better use to save others' lives.

The metaethical approach of the duty to die offered in this paper makes a substantial contribution to the discussion, for it provides a more robust ethical ground where the duty to die can be established. The scope of our metaethical reflection is limited to the assumption of moral cognitivism as the preferred alternative to support our arguments, but it nevertheless points to the possibility to justify and argues for the existence of a duty to die within a strong, well established ethical paradigm.

Endnotes:

1. The idea of the duty to die was first philosophically defended by John Hardwig (1997b, 1997a). And although there has been more discussion on the topic, it focuses on practical bioethical problems. Cf. (Battin 1994; Buchanan 1984; Daniels 2008; Ehman 2000).
2. It is important to emphasise that the purpose of this sections is merely to offer a sufficient explanation of the notion, which are enough to acquiesce to its bioethical interest.
3. Cf. (Menzel 2000).
4. Take as a paradigmatic example the US private health care insurance context.
5. Cf. (Rehmann-Sutter 2019; Winter & Parks 2012).
6. The expression of a wish to die for reasons including the avoidance to become a burden for loved ones and family members is common also in countries with public healthcare systems. Cf. (Pivodic et al. 2013).
7. Authors, as Robert L. Holmes, question the relevance of metaethics, normative, and applied ethics for what he calls "substantive morality", understood as "the ongoing process of making moral judgements that all of us engage in during the course of living", in (1990 145).
8. It is important to specify that the word "origins" here means the justificational source of our beliefs, and not a mere causal initial relation.
9. The arguments are so quickly exposed for the sake of brevity. They just intend to show the plausibility of moral cognitivism as a sufficiently robust theory to ground the further practical ethical claim of the existence of a duty to die.
10. See (Hardwig 1990, 1997b, 1997a, 2000, 2009).
11. We have already argued for the self-evident character of moral intuitions, such as the duty to die, so discussion will not be furtherly offered here.
12. See (Battin 2005, Chapter 14) Cf. also Hardwig's later considerations regarding the likelihood of a duty to die in Europe (2013).
13. There are so few cases that it is not even worthy to mention and seriously consider them. For moral

obligations subsumed under the principle of non-maleficence are stated negatively, as prohibitions of actions, and must be impartially applied.

14. That is precisely what Hardwig tries to show on his work advocating for the duty to die. Cf. (Hardwig 1997b, 1997a, 2000, 2009).

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Liberation of Language and Suspension of Subject in T.W. Adorno's *Notes to Literature*

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Abstract:

This article aims to explore the connection between freedom and language in T.W. Adorno's *Notes to Literature*, presenting freedom as a liberation of our way of thinking that has the potential to arrive at an unrestrained interpretation of art and representation of the intellectual experience. I also attempt to show some of Adorno's insights into language and freedom in *The Essay as a Form* and their role in his essays about Valéry and Proust. Namely I focus on the problematics of the suspension of the subject of the artist within the production of the work of art. Through showing the connection between Adorno's insights into problematics of language, freedom and suspension of subject I hope to contribute to the explication of one of the constructive steps of Adorno's philosophy.

Keywords: Theodor W. Adorno, Jean Paul Valéry, Marcel Proust, freedom, language, subject of intellectual experience

Introduction

Language and freedom are matters that generally stand at the center of T.W. Adorno's philosophical attention. While the problematics of the second has been widely elaborated by both him and secondary literature, the first remains unclear. Adorno has never developed or presented a coherent theory of language and his remarks on this topic remain fragmentary. Nevertheless, it was a crucial topic for him. In his early short text *Thesis on the Language of Philosopher,* he even states that "all philosophical critique is possible nowadays as a critique of language." (Adorno, 2016, 38) Though it is disputable, whether he actually follows through with this statement and whether his whole work can be perceived purely as a critique of language. It might be better to adopt a more cautious approach and understand Adorno's work mainly as the critique of thinking that is inevitably bound to language. Philosophical thinking, according to him, necessarily has to operate with concepts. (Adorno, 2008, 192) What exactly is to be understood under "concepts" (*Begriffe*) and whether they fully overlap with terms, words, or categories Adorno does not tell, no matter that all of these concepts are frequently used by him (Müller, Gillespie, 2009, 93). He understands concept as a "function of thinking" or a "thought", a certain entity whose properties are partly bound to the characteristics of the subject matter it belongs to. (Adorno, 2004, 135, 136)

Adorno claims that the subject matter of thought cannot be fully evaporated into a concept, nevertheless at the same time, the concept carries something non-conceptual of the subject matter in itself. Philosophical language whose constitutive elements are concepts can therefore point beyond itself. Philosophizing is dependent on language despite not definitely being reducible to language in a strict sense. Simply put, we can understand language in Adorno's work as a mode of expression through concepts, whatever they exactly are. Our use of language informs the way we think and vice versa – therefore, when Adorno talks about ways of thinking, he primarily talks about a wide sense of textuality, in the meaning of every aspect that makes text a text, and representation within concepts. (Comp. Richter, 2010, 2) I will not attempt to reconstruct Adorno's philosophy of language and make this problem clear as it is a topic too dense to be captured within the few thousand words of this article; instead, I will take several insights that are directly linked to language and try to make sense of them within the scope of their selected use in Adorno's essays.

My aim in this article is not to provide an exhaustive reconstruction of the whole problematics of language and freedom within *Notes to Literature*.[1] I rather want to support the general claim of many Adornian scholars that Adorno's negative notions are in the end not solely negative but also constructive on one specific example. In order to do so, I will take a closer look at the constructive element of Adorno's notion of freedom in his approach to language and show how Adorno's expressions follow his own methodology in selected essays of *Notes to Literature*. I will employ some of the points about the nature of liberated language in *The Essay as Form* and connect them with insights from two other essays of Adorno's – namely the *Artist as Deputy* and *Short Commentaries on Proust*. The goal of this endeavor is to explore the potential of Adorno's own method, once he takes the constructive steps using the liberated language. I want to show what Adorno achieves by employing his method, and also inquire whether this employment of his method can retrospectively shed light on aspects of his attitude towards language.

In the first part of this article, I describe Adorno's approach to freedom and I do so only briefly as his conception of freedom, as I have mentioned in the beginning, has been already widely described both by himself and by secondary literature.[2] Simply put, Adorno makes sense of freedom negatively and understands the meaning of freedom as a liberation from ideological restraints that we internalize in the late-capitalist situation. Throughout the essays of *Notes to Literature,* this concept of freedom is mostly developed within the scope of Adorno's insights into language (or if you wish, the ways in which we can philosophize). Freedom is here approached mainly as a sort of a tendency of a philosopher to liberate himself of intellectual prejudices and fossilized ways of thinking that block alternative reflection on art and reality in general. I will connect Adorno's vision with four main points he makes about the philosophical language of the essay – namely the non-fixed nature of the meaning of a concept, the refusal of reduction of thoughts to principles, implications regarding the inability of language to capture the totality of reality and Adorno's idea of how to approach the complicity and multilayeredness of objects through the language. I will also try to link the thoughts about freedom and language to some of

Adorno's notions about the tasks of philosophy throughout his body of works beginning with the *Dialectic of Enlightenment* and ending with *Aesthetic Theory* and intertwine the contents of these tasks as they answer the question for the motivations of Adorno's project.

In the second part, I will introduce the concept of suspension of a subject as it appeared throughout Adorno's essays *Artist as Deputy* and *Short Commentaries on Proust*. I will present it in order to provide an example of Adorno's implementation of his own method. My aim is to describe this phenomenon as it is mediated by Adorno through the interpretation of the short prosaic work of Paul Valéry *Degas Dance Painting* and the interpretation of short passages from Marcel Proust's *In Search for a Lost Time.*

From that, I will conclude that the way Adorno presents the idea of suspension of subject, which is loosely dispersed over the aforementioned essays and may not catch the reader's eye at first, is presented exactly in accordance with his idea of mediation of the important insights into art that the essay is supposed to accomplish. Adorno's insights derived from interpretation of Valéry and Proust can also help to retrospectively shed light on the role of subjectivity of the essayist. I will show that the essayist is truly free at the very moment when he neglects his subjective input and that this retrospectively helps to explain both the methodology presented in *The Essay as Form* and the link between individuality, subjectivity, freedom, and language. I will also claim that Adorno achieves insights into the process of creation of artwork (and essay) by means of following his own methodology and that he could not reach these insights without it. I will therefore suggest that it can serve as an example of one of the possible constructive outcomes of Adorno's idea of essayistic method par excellence.

1. Liberation of language

In the final notes in *Dialectic of Enlightenment* Adorno and Horkheimer talk about philosophy as "not a synthesis, a basic science, or an overarching science but an effort to resist suggestion, a determination to protect intellectual and actual freedom" (Adorno, Horkheimer, 2002, 202), putting the problematics of freedom at the center of philosophy's attention. This effort of philosophy once practiced by Adorno takes a negative course as he considers it to be the only way in which to approach the concept of freedom, criticizing mostly Kant's way of thinking about the autonomy of reason in his third antinomy. Philosophy ought to forget thinking about freedom and unfreedom in absolute terms and grounding freedom in human nature. Statements such as "either there is a will or there is not; either the will is free, or it is not free" are the results of us being "trained to equate philosophical thinking with logical thinking." (Adorno, 2006, 190) What is needed then is a negative dialectical turn, a recognition that this sort of approach is not necessary. The will can never be absolutely free or unfree. Reason has to always struggle with its own heteronomy – or at least it has to do so after it realizes this heteronomy. Therefore "freedom itself and unfreedom are so entangled that unfreedom is not just an impediment to freedom but a premise of its concept." (Adorno, 2004, 285) Freedom and unfreedom cannot be thought of as mutually exclusive opposites, especially after recognizing that both concepts lack any kind of firm ontological grounding. Adorno points out that "in ourselves, by introspection, we discover neither positive freedom nor a positive unfreedom. We conceive both in their relation to extramental things: freedom as a polemical counter-image to the suffering brought on by social coercion; unfreedom as that coercion's image." (Adorno, 2004, 223) Freedom therefore can and should be thought of solely in terms of the liberation of the individual from coercion imposed on him. The late-capitalist ideology, according to Adorno, mostly exhorts the individuals to pay all of their attention and direct all their energy into the management of their life within the institutionalized frames of society in which they live. Philosophy's task is to try to help people to liberate themselves from the idea that this is the only right way of thinking, acting and living. Therefore Adorno can state that "philosophy's freedom is nothing but the ability to help its unfreedom to express itself." (Adorno, 2008, 190)

The problem of freedom is closely linked with and developed within Adorno's insights on language in several aspects. First, Adorno points out that "we cannot formulate and define the concept of freedom once and for all, as philosophers have almost invariably done, so as to be able to confront the changing events of history with this immutable concept. The concept of freedom is itself the product of history and has altered with history." (Adorno, 2006, 180) In Adorno's view of language, this applies to all concepts. They are not "fixed χωρίς, in isolation from the object, but thrown in with them, abandoning the delusion that concepts that had been created for themselves also existed intrinsically in themselves." (Adorno, 2008, 192) No concept has eternal fixed meaning, and in order to approach the problematics of freedom, it is crucial to recognize that this observation applies to its concept as well – the connotations of the concept of freedom as well as problems that people have to face when it comes to dealing with the notion of freedom change throughout the course of history. Adorno marks as the current problem of western society the one of liberation from ideological constraints. The everchanging nature of concepts is also the reason why essayistic writing refuses to define them, despite traditional philosophy's insistence.

Second, freedom is not only to be understood solely as a tendency to liberate one's spirit from the socially imposed coercion of late-capitalist ideology, but also as a tendency to liberate our use of concepts from established ways of thinking that block the alternative display of reality. In the *Notes to Literature* Adorno approaches the problem of freedom specifically along the question of how one is to strive for a mode of philosophizing that would not be constrained by unconscious intellectual prejudices caused by the traditional philosophy and ideological bias. When it comes concretely to the unfreedom of language, the concern of the philosopher is to recognize premises and rules of thinking that he might be taking for granted while there is no necessity to do so. After reflecting on them he is to get rid of them and exercise philosophical expression that is liberated from them. Liberation of language, therefore, as it was already mentioned, is closely linked to liberation of thoughts.

In terms of the language of the essay, there are three more important interconnected areas in which language has to liberate itself from the prevailing methodological tendencies of philosophical expression – these three areas and the two previously mentioned points, constitute the central methodological features of liberated language of essay.

The essay does not reduce its observations to a principle. Adorno points out that "the specific moments are not to be simply derived from the whole, nor vice versa." (Adorno, 1991, 14) The essayist is not supposed to look for rules and patterns of the objects of his essay. In other words, he should not attempt to paint a bigger picture and framework of things he writes about; instead, he should approach his object so closely "that the object becomes dissociated into the moments in which it has its life instead of being a mere object." (Adorno, 1991, 14) Only then can some of the specific organic everchanging aspects of the object have a chance to get mediated within concepts.

The bigger picture can also not be sketched because language cannot claim the ability to capture the totality of reality. The essay does not identify the order of things with the order of ideas, in other words, it reflects that not everything in the world is thinkable and therefore directly expressible with concepts. On the contrary, what the essay strives to capture, is beyond words, and without understanding that, it can never even attempt to do it. Adorno locates this unsayable in the realm of what was considered "transient and ephemeral" since the times of Plato and challenges the traditional notion that it would not be worthy of philosophizing. (Adorno, 1991, 10) This realization then becomes one of the main aspects that philosophy has to bear in mind and integrate into its method – for instance within the already mentioned reflection of the non-fixed meaning of its concepts.

The last important aspect of philosophical writing Adorno strives for consists in denouncing the third cartesian rule of conducting the thoughts "in such an order that, by commencing with objects the simplest and easiest to know, I might ascend by little and little, and, as it were, step by step, to the knowledge of the more complex." (Descartes, 1951, 15) The essay does not proceed from the simplest to the most complex. Adorno believes that in philosophical prose, language from its very beginning has to be as multi-layered as its object. The object is complex non-systematic and everchanging, so the thought that is trying to capture it has to accept the game and try to express the object by likening itself to it. The essay "thinks in fragments, just as reality is fragmentary, and finds its unity in and through the breaks and not by glossing over them." (Adorno, 1991, 16) Adorno's texts, therefore, accent the partial insights instead of total ones because totality cannot be expressed through language directly and systematically.

All of this necessarily results in a use of language that cannot be systematic, simple, and straightforward. Adorno's prose is therefore not very reader-friendly. (Comp. Plass, 2007, 1-6) His texts are very often less organized than it might seem to be necessary, they are dense, and Adorno uses numerous foreign terms in them. Many insights that he has tend to emerge only briefly and instantly vanish again, just to appear again dozens of pages later in a different context, described in different words, without a thorough explanation. However, the non-organization and density of Adorno's texts are way more necessary than they may seem. The possible insights and experiences of truth are dispersed and appear in fissures of reality and philosophical insights (at least the kind of philosophical insights that Adorno follows) have to happen through the expression of what the essayist peeked in fragmentary fissures and have to be also presented analogously to them. Adorno's style of expression nevertheless undergoes changes throughout his essays, depending on the work of art he is interpreting at the moment.

The relationship between language and freedom is mutually supportive – a liberated language enables unrestricted thinking about freedom; however, not only about it. Once all the artificial walls built up throughout the history of philosophy are torn down, the thinker becomes able to reach something of immense significance: he "makes himself into an arena of intellectual experience [*geistige Erfahrung*], without unravelling it." (Adorno, 1991, 13) Intellectual experience presents the center of Adorno's philosophical attention, as he considers the philosopher's task as an effort to "transcend the concept through the concept itself, without yielding to the delusion that he already has possession of the matter to which the concept refers." (Adorno, 2008, 188) Intellectual experience mediates the non-conceptual. Concepts can refer to intellectual experience, however, since its nature is non-conceptual, they can never express it directly. What philosophers should strive for is to "assemble concepts in such a way that their constellation might shed light on the non-conceptual." (Adorno, 2008, 192) This additionally serves as an answer to the question of how to make oneself an "arena" of intellectual experience. The philosopher should, guided by this specific philosophical intuition, assemble the fragmentary material in the moment when he encounters its fragments in the cracks. Once he follows the previously listed methodological insights, he might have a chance to succeed.[3]

Adorno specifies this task of philosophy in his later *Aesthetic Theory*. There he states that "[...] art requires philosophy, which interprets it in order to say what it is unable to say, whereas art is only able to say it by not saying it" (Adorno, 2002, 72) and points out that interpretation of art is a possible way to accomplish the task of representation of the non-conceptual – the same non-conceptual carried within a concept that was mentioned in the introduction of this article and in the last paragraph. However, the task articulated in *Aesthetic Theory* can be adopted by philosophy only if it takes seriously the earlier one from the *Dialectic of Enlightenment* – true interpretation of art is possible only if it is merged with the struggle for liberation. These three mentioned tasks of philosophy, namely struggle for the liberation of the individual, mediation of the non-conceptual, and interpretation of art, therefore, fit together like pieces of a puzzle and function in a mutually reinforcing manner. Language has to be liberated in order to attempt to display the non-conceptual and this non-conceptual can be displayed by philosophical interpretation of art.[4] Interpretation of art then becomes the subject of the essay. Adorno assumes all of these tasks of philosophy as his own in the *Notes to Literature* where he imposes them as the aim of the essayistic form and makes several attempts to realize them in practice.

2. Applications of unrestrained thinking in Adorno's essays: insights about suspension of the subject of the artist

Adorno's method separated from the rest of his *oeuvre* provokes to be rejected. *The Essay as*

Form in itself may not be truly persuasive because it is not, and it is also not meant to be, the best example of the essayistic form. It remains mainly a methodological text that does not prove itself through its own form, nor presents exhaustive scholarly arguments to support its thesis or any kind of fixed criteria to be followed. Nevertheless, the fact that Adorno renounces presenting arguments and criteria is not a scheme through which he would attempt to insure the irrefutability of his conception through its unprovability. Assessment of the worthiness of Adorno's insights into essayistic form simply requires inquiry into the works that directly follow Adorno's methodology; in other words, to recognize the potential of the essayistic method we have to turn our attention directly to Adorno's essays about art to see how the method proceeds in practice and how does it develop itself within them. The display of the application of the essayistic method, of course, still cannot and does not want to serve as an argument in a classical sense that would aim to prove the validity of Adorno's thesis; it rather attempts to show how (and that) the thoughts of *The Essay as Form* further develop and to inquire how may Adorno, in the end, create a constellation that would shed light on the non-conceptual.

I will try to show an example of the application of Adorno's essayistic conception in his reflection of two of the great authors he interprets in his essays, namely Paul Valéry and Marcel Proust. The choice might seem a bit surprising considering that Valéry regarded himself to be Proust's antithesis. However, Adorno highly valued both Proust's and Valéry's work and believed that something in their works can be brought to convergence. Both of their names emerge throughout his texts repeatedly and their thoughts and observations mix with Adorno's. In his essays about Proust and Valéry, Adorno tries to present the insights that he believes both of the authors had but could not present entirely directly. He shows these intentions through a multitude of their appearances while, faithful to the methodology of *The Essay as Form*, weaving his own thoughts, Proust's, and Valéry's together like threads of carpet. (Comp. Adorno, 1991, 13) In this fashion, he strives for a fragmentary revelation of their experiential content.

2.1. Valéry: putting the subject aside in order to mediate the true content of art

According to Adorno "great insights into art come about either in utter detachment, deduced from a concept undisturbed by so-called *connoisseurship*, as in Kant or Hegel, or in absolute proximity, the attitude of the person behind the scenes, who is not an audience but rather follows the work of art from the point of view of how it is made, of technique." (Adorno, 1991, 100) Valéry, as an excellent poet, who is known to have spent several hours every day writing down his reflections on art, is one of the best possible examples of the latter case. From Adorno's remarks, it becomes apparent that it is one of the main reasons why Valéry is regarded so highly by him. It is because Valéry's immediate closeness to the artistic production in combination with his highly developed reflective skills allows the explications of the finest aesthetic insights.

Valéry is trying "to carry out the spiritual process that is strictly immanent in the work of art itself" (Adorno, 1991, 101) – this is, as it was mentioned, is a part of one of the main tasks of philosophy, and Adorno's aim is to illustrate Valéry's effort because Valéry still "does not philosophize about art but breaks through the blindness of the artefact in the windowless [...] activity of form-giving." (Adorno, 1991, 100) Therefore the interpretation of his work and the representation of what we can glimpse in it is still a task of a philosopher. According to Adorno "it is the moment that is obscure in literary works, not what is though t in them, that necessitates recourse to philosophy." (Adorno, 1992, 112) Philosophical interpretation is separated from art. The essay is not art, even though it may resemble it through the fact that it "works emphatically at the form of its presentation." (Adorno, 1991, 18) This presentation, as it has to respect its object, may resemble this object, although it can never directly replicate it. Direct imitation of art by philosophy and any aspiration of philosophy to become a work of art is, in Adorno's words, "doomed from the outset." (Adorno, 2008, 188) Thoughts in the essay can and should weave themselves together with the experiential content of art, however, their possible resemblance does not imply their identity. The neglect of the subjectivity of the author of either essay or work of art indeed is one of the features that inform essayistic form as much as the artistic one and it is something that essayistic and artistic form share, although it does not render them as identical.

Valéry's short prose *Degas Dance Drawing* which he wrote as a tribute after the death of his good friend, is a remarkable short text that seems to present loose associations of Valéry's thoughts about Degas and the meaning of his work. While interpreting this text, Adorno abstains from sharing his own thoughts on Degas' work and focuses solely on Valéry's insights. Valéry generally weaves his thoughts around Degas in the spirit of respect for his technical abilities and life driven by the necessity of training his artistic craftsmanship. Great works of art require, according to both Adorno and Valéry, all artistic faculties constantly trained and developed. No great work of art happens without years of training in artistic craftsmanship. This dedication of an artist to his own work goes so far that the subject of the artist has to be, in a way, put aside. His feelings and personality are not the subject matter of his art – great art is not at all meant to be an expression of the self of the artist. According to Adorno, Valéry "knows better than anyone that it is only the least part of his work that, belongs' to the artist; that in actuality the process of artistic production, and with it, the unfolding of the truth contained in the work of art, has the strict form of lawfulness wrested from the subject matter itself." (Adorno, 1991, 104; comp. Adorno, 1992, 110) If something universal is to be revealed in the work of art, the work of art has to stand for far more than an expression of artist's individual feelings. Adorno points out that what Valéry "demands of the artist, technical self-restriction, subjection to the subject matter, is aimed not at limitation but at expansion. The artist who is the bearer of the work of art is not individual who produces it; rather, through his work [...] he becomes the representative of the total social subject." (Adorno, 1991, 107)

This thought goes beyond the idea of an artist as a servant to society. Adorno, interpreting Valéry, says that "by submitting to the requirements of the work of art, [artist] eliminates from it everything that could be due simply to the contingency of his individuation." (Adorno, 1991, 107)

According to Adorno, it is derived rather from Valéry's reflection on the process of creation of the work of art and the experience of unfolding the meaning that can be revealed in the course of the creation of the work of art itself and which transcends the artist himself. If something more than the artist himself is supposed to appear in his work of art, the artist has to renounce his own self to his work.

2.2. Proust: the discovery of irrational universality through the loss of one's own critical distance

The insights grown from the interpretation of Valéry reappear in Adorno's reflections on Proust that were published five years later. However, the problematics of loss of subject is approached here in a completely different manner, namely in the form of defense of Proust's snobbism in Adorno's *Short Commentaries on Proust.* The absence of direct critical distance throughout Proust's representation of French aristocracy at the turn of the century is reflected by Adorno as one of Proust's major strengths. According to Adorno "only someone who has succumbed to social relationships in his own way instead of denying them with the resentment of one who has been excluded can reflect them back". (Adorno, 1991, 180) Proust, therefore, manages to become "a critic of society, against his will and hence all the more authentically." (Adorno, 1991, 176) This factor in combination with Proust's dense texture allows him to bring forth the experience of something general in reality as though some reference to it "had been interspersed throughout existence, chaotic, mocking, haunting in its dissociated fragments." (Adorno, 1991, 181) Thanks to his immediate closeness to what he depicts, Proust's work gets far beyond the point of individuation and becomes capable to depict something that Adorno marks as irrational universality. According to him, Proust manages to arrive at a representation of something that no scientific method could ever capture. He manages to portray "a life bereft of meaning, a life the subject can no longer shape into a cosmos." (Adorno, 1991, 181) The meaninglessness of life that Proust lives and depicts carries within itself a necessity of contingency – a necessity of absence of meaning that from its nature eludes all coherent systematic representation. For Adorno, it is Proust's mastery of presentation that captures this important element of reality and proves its relevance at the same time. Proust's subjective force is so powerful that it turns his subjective insights of something that is uncapturable for science into objectivity. In other words, Proust, whom Adorno does not hesitate to label a narcissistic reactionary, has to lose himself in the society that he depicts, in order to capture it as his object. For that, he also needs to capture it with a supreme mastery that no one after him can successfully replicate. The combination of these two elements is then what makes the *Recherche* a masterpiece.

The way Adorno interprets Proust and even Proust's language alone corresponds with Adorno's insights into the liberated language of an essay in one crucial aspect. To explicate this point, the form of short commentaries instead of a general interpretation of Proust's *Recherche* is needed. Adorno defends this form in the introduction of his essay on Proust, claiming that only in this way he can "hope through immersion in fragments to illuminate something of the work's substance, which derives its unforgettable quality solely from the colouring of the here and now." (Adorno, 1991, 175) Both Adorno's and Proust's insights and observations emerge and vanish in multiple places, drawing themselves near to the way it occurs in Proust's novel itself where the "the whole, resistant to abstract outlines, crystallizes out of intertwined individual presentations." (Adorno, 1991, 174) Adorno thus tries to recreate the multi-layered nature of Proust's work in order to mediate the experience indirectly presented in it. When he writes about Proust though, he does not completely abandon his own style in order to try to resemble the Proustian language. Remaining faithful to his own method in this manner while approaching Proust's work might be the path to create a constellation of concepts in order to represent the non-conceptual experiential content hidden beyond his words. Through that the form of short commentaries also serves to accentuate the partial at the expense of the total - Adorno explicitly renounces the creation of a grand survey because he wants to show the same experience emerging throughout Proust's oeuvre in a multitude of different contexts. After all, the *Short Commentaries on Proust,* published in 1958, were being written around the same time as *The Essay as a Form,* which was being written between the years 1954-1958. It is reasonable to believe that reading Proust and his way of mediating the experience of irrational universality found in the middle of decaying French aristocracy inspired Adorno's method – it can also serve as an excellent example of weaving the thoughts of the interpreted work of art with essayist's.

Proust's extreme expression of subjectivity may seem to stand in an opposition to Valéry's depiction of loss of subject – maybe it is also among the reasons why Valéry considered himself to be Proust's antithesis. However, Adorno sees Valéry and Proust arriving at the same point, just from different – and not entirely opposite – directions. Proust has to get lost in the society he depicts in order to reach and mediate the irrational truth hidden in it and he manages to arrive at the mediation of the universal experience on the basis of his exceptional craftsmanship. Yet, he loses himself in his subject matter; and he does it in a way that is not at all similar to Degas' or Valéry's approaches because instead of leaving his subjectivity aside, he drowns it in what he depicts. Adorno observes that the specific ways how the loss of a subject may occur can show themselves in different facets; we may assume that due to their possible unrepeatability, the forms of the loss of the subject even have to differ and they can then take the shape of emerging fragments of the truth of art spread throughout a multitude of oeuvres. This truth does not claim eternal validity, and it is subject to possible transformations within a changing historical context. All this is to be captured by the unrestrained language of the essay.

Conclusion

In the famous last paragraph of *Minima Moralia* Adorno says that responsible philosophical perspectives have to be gained "entirely from felt contact with their objects." (Adorno, 2005, 146) Proust and Valéry both succeed in it, nevertheless, they set off from different starting points. While Proust gains the perspectives from being an integral part of the very society that he depicts and that he adores, Valéry understands art through being an artist himself. Valéry reflects the creation of work of art from immediate closeness and therefore can experience and later mediate the necessity of loss of the subject of the artist; however, he does not lose himself in the same way as Adorno describes Proust's loss of his own self. Adorno sets himself the task of creating a space in which they can meet, and he manages to reinforce his point by connecting Proust's representations with Valéry's seemingly opposite insights into the nature of the relationship between the artist and work of art, convinced that their insights, abrupt and irrefutable, were driven by the same kind of pain. (Comp. Adorno, 1991, 144) This attempt by Adorno leads to a mutual reinforcement of his, Valéry's, and Proust's ideas and arrives at a depiction of several aspects of authentic artistic creation.

The loss of the artist's subject reflects itself in the demand Adorno places on the language of the essay and it can also help to decipher the role of the essayist's subjectivity, which is rather loosely hinted at than fully explicated in *The Essay as Form*. Once the work of art is a medium of the non-conceptual and the essay interprets it to make this non-conceptual present, it follows that also the essayist has to give up expressing his pure subjectivity in order to make himself an arena of intellectual experience. The essayist uses "concepts to pry open the aspect of its objects that cannot be accommodated by concepts, the aspect that reveals, through the contradictions in which concepts become entangled, that the net of their objectivity is merely subjective arrangement." (Adorno, 1991, 23) In order to do this, it follows that the "subjective arrangement" of the essayist has to be put aside. The thinker should become the means of the presentation of the experiential content. For that, his own subjectivity has to take a step back. The mediated content transcends the thinker as much as it transcends the artist who created its representation. The task of the essayist is to recognize the unsayable that is encapsulated in the work of art and represent it through the constellation of his concepts. The interpretation of art therefore again should not have much in common with the philosopher's subjective motives.

From that again follows more general question of the difference between art and essay and whether there indeed is a strict difference between them. But again, the essay is not an art form; it is Adorno's proposal of a new philosophical form, free from the binding laws of traditional philosophy that have been inspired by science. Essay is also "distinguished from art by its medium, concepts, and by its claim to a truth devoid of aesthetic semblance". (Adorno, 1991, 5) Adorno points out that the similarity between essay and art rises mostly from the fact that essay "can hardly speak of aesthetic matters unaesthetically, devoid of resemblance to the subject matter, without falling into philistinism and losing touch with the object a priori." (Adorno, 1991, 5) Essay, unlike traditional philosophy, therefore, takes partial inspiration from art as its methodology and art as its subject require it. Through that, it can show the full potential of artistic expression neglected by science. The scientific method cannot display the non-conceptual, while art can, however, not completely conceptually, and philosophical essay shall attempt to do so through concepts without being a kind of poetic construction of thoughts; instead, essay is to become a proper interpretation of art revealing its non-conceptual content. (Comp. Adorno, 2004, 109) That nevertheless does not specify much clearer the difference between the language of art and language of essay. Language of art is expressive, while language of philosophical essay is conceptual, nevertheless the philosophical language cannot not resemble the expressive language of art – after all, no language can also probably completely avoid being expressive. In the end, concepts have to be expressive, once their constellation is to result into presentation (*Darstellung)* of the non-conceptual. The difference between essay and art thus lies in Adorno's unspecified term of concept, mentioned in the introduction of this article and the difference between language of art and language of essay remains not fully specified, yet existing.

The neglection of the subject is linked with freedom in the sense that the neglection of the subject of the essayist is a part of his liberation of language that enables the display of the non-conceptual. That might seem like a surprising conclusion since neglection of one's subjectivity does not probably intuitively correspond with the exercising of freedom. It should be also considered that the individuality is of utter importance for Adorno, not only because of his opposition to Nazi and Stalinist ideologies that lead to oppression of the individual but also because he believes that Kant's idea of pure reason does not do justice to the individual; the universality of pure reason according to Adorno, in the end, implies substitutability of the subject. In contrast, for Adorno, as Susan Buck-Morss formulates it, the subject of the intellectual experience is "the empirically existing, material and transitory human being – not merely mind but a sentient human body." (Buck-Morss, 1977, 83) It may therefore seem strange that Adorno, on the one hand, demands the negation of the subjectivity of the essayist and, on the other, campaigns for the importance and uniqueness of the individual. However, for Adorno, there is no direct proportion between the loss of subjectivity within essayistic expression and the threat to individuality, rather the opposite. The role of subjectivity, as we have seen in a different way in the case of Proust, is hardly that simple and straightforward. Freedom includes the capacity of neglecting one's own subjective bias – and only someone who is truly free and an independent individuum can manage this.

While Adorno tries to recover the intellectual experience in the described way, he follows his own maxims. He accents the partial to the total, refrains from presenting overarching principles of his insights, does not have a claim on capturing the totality, and, as I have tried to show throughout the article, he weaves his thoughts with the thoughts of the art he talks about on multiple levels. Adorno strives to shed light on the unsayable – in this context from the perspective of its revelation within the process of creation of the work of art - and to create a texture that shows several fragmental insights into a phenomenon that eludes concepts; both by hinting to its existence through Valéry's insights and by praising the way of how Proust unfolds it in the artistic form of his *Recherche*.

At the same time, Adorno reflects that what he is trying to describe is everchanging, nevertheless, he points out that it is capturable within great works of art in some of its moments and tries to bring our attention to these moments. As a result of the essayistic method and nature of what is depicted by it, the essay cannot even claim to do more than provide these individual insights such as the one displayed in this article. In general, it is important to understand that Adorno's insights also never claim to be final and absolute. His truths are not eternal because no such thing as eternal truth can be approached by philosophy. Philosophy as Adorno suggests shall approach the everchanging. Through that, Adorno's thinking also can manage to avoid the danger of becoming another ideology and fossilized way of thinking. Adorno's thinking cannot present this irrational universality at the scarcely accessible layer of reality coherently nor can his insights have eternal validity. Instead, Adorno presents a method of how to spot accidental moments of the non-conceptual. Beyond that, however, he provides us with an idea of its existence as something beyond any possible coherent thought construction and invites us to take a peek at some of its moments.

An essay cannot approach that which escapes systematic thinking if it strictly follows the rules of systematic thinking. The truth is to be found in one of the biggest weaknesses of Adorno's way of thinking, namely in its "mobility" and "lack of solidity." (Adorno, 1991, 20) This mobility and lack of solidity of the essayistic form shall enable it to arrive at a piece of knowledge that remains inaccessible to the traditional philosophical method. Insights into what eludes systematicity and coherence are simply possible only at the edge where the coherence of the language falls apart. The necessity of liberation of fossilized traditional ways of thinking that try to hold the language systematically together is therefore rather implicit than explicit, however, it remains a necessary prerequisite that enables the constructive step of Adorno's philosophy.[5]

Endnotes:

1. For a general hermeneutic interpretation of *Notes to Literature* see Norbert Bolz, G*eschichtsphilosophie des Ästhetischen: hermeneutische Rekonstruktion der "Noten zur Literatur" Th. W. Adornos.* 1976.
2. See e.g. O'Connor, Brian. "Freedom within nature: Adorno on the idea of reason's autonomy". Boyle, Nicholas and Liz Disley. *The Impact of Idealism: The Legacy of Post-Kantian German Thought. Volume 1: Philosophy and Natural Sciences.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013: 208-231. Or Jütten, Timo. "Adorno on Kant, Freedom and Determinism". *European Journal of Philosophy 20,* no. 4 (December 2012): 548-74.
3. For details of the problematics of intellectual experience and the non-conceptual, see Foster, Roger. *Adorno: Recovery of Experience*. New York: State University of New York Press, 2007.
4. This list of the tasks of philosophy is only partial - Adorno imposes also other tasks on philosophy and suggests other ways to represent the non-conceptual as well (e.g. thorough critique of traditional philosophy). Nevertheless, I believe that these three tasks mentioned above are central for Adorno's essayistic work, and therefore it is good to keep especially these in mind when interpreting *Notes to Literature.*
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The Mind of the Minimal Bodies, According to Spinoza

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Abstract:

Starting from the well-known parallelism between bodies and minds in Spinoza's ontology, according to which to each body a mind should correspond, and given the supposition – in Spinoza's philosophy of physics – of very simple bodies (the "minimal bodies"), the paper faces the question of which kind of mind Spinoza could have thought these minimal body should have. It finally comes to the conclusion that the mind of the minimal bodies is the perception of the bounces and strokes of such a body against other bodies.

Keywords: Spinoza, mind(s), simple, minimal, body

1. The question

Did Baruch Spinoza, in the philosophy of physics exposed in his *Ethics*, hold atomistic positions? in the axioms 1 and 2 of the part 2 of the *Ethica more geometrico demonstrata*, he proposes the hypothesis that the bodily universe is composed by "absolutely simple bodies" or "most simple bodies" (*corpora simplicissima*) "those which are distinguished from one another solely by motion-and-rest, quickness and slowness".[1]

That Spinoza held atomistic positions is *not* an indisputable claim: the usage of the superlative form of the adjective, either meant in its "relative" meaning ("the most simple bodies among all") or in its "absolute" one ("bodies that are simple at a maximum degree") seems to convoy exactly this idea, that atoms are a reality. But the majority of the interpreters feels that the best way to deal with the doctrine of the "simplest bodies" is trying to reconcile the statement I just quoted with the anti-atomistic stance which is usually ascribed to Spinoza, on the basis of his rejection of atomism in *PPC* 2P 5 *Dem.*[2]

Now, it seems to me that the argument for the rejection of atoms given in *PPC* can just provide a rejection of the impossibility to infinitely divide an abstract extension; this argument turns into a rejection of atomism only if we assume that the physical properties of extension are exactly the same of its geometrical properties, i.e. if we assume that whichever operation we can carry out about its geometrical properties (e.g. an infinite division of its magnitudes) must be possible also about its physical properties: which is something the *PPC* clearly assume, but which is nowhere upheld in the *Ethics*.

In the first part of the paper, in a provisional way, I will take Spinoza's statements in the *Ethics* at their face value: taken in this way, these statements seem to imply an atomistic position. Later on, I will qualify this position, trying to provide an idea which could, perhaps, reconcile the atomistic and the anti-atomistic interpretations.

If we ascribe to Spinoza atomistic positions in physics, a question arises.

Due to the overall mind-body parallelism that Spinoza postulates in this same part 2, some modes of the mental attribute should correspond also to those modes of the Substance's bodily attribute that are the "simple bodies": otherwise said, to each simple body should correspond an idea, which would be the mind of that simple body.

What the mind of such a "simple body" should be? And what could it think?[3]

2. The animation of the atoms: misunderstanding Leucippus and Democritus

Democritus does not endow his atoms with any kind of soul or mind.[4] He has a materialistic theory about mental phenomena: the soul is a particular kind of body, which is composed of atoms that differ from the atoms that compose the visible body – atoms whose *material* and *bodily* properties would explain the properties that *seem* to radically distinguish the soul from the visible body: according to Democritus, the souls of the living bodies differ from their visible bodies not because they are not bodily, but because they have bodily properties that are different from those of the visible bodies; so that people came to believe that they are not bodily (DK68 A1, 84, 16-17 = P6, P10, P15 Laks-Most). Consequently, as Leucippus had already thought (DK67 A30), mental and intellectual acts are conceived as motions of these atoms and therefore as alterations (*heteroiṓseis*, ἑτεροιώσεις) that intervene in the particular set of atoms that is the soul.[5]

But we also have testimonies that seem to misunderstand (and sometimes clearly misunderstand) Leucippus' and Democritus' ideas, and state or can be meant as if they stated that the atomists endowed each atom with a soul.

It is interesting to read a sentence by Macrobius (DK68 A103 = Macr. *In Somnium Scipionis* 1.14, 19[6]) that says that, according to Democritus, soul is "spiritum insertum atomis hac facilitate motus ut corpus illi omne sit pervium" ("a spirit internal to the atoms, endowed whit such an easiness of motion that the whole body is accessible to it", trans. of my own). The easiest interpretation is that soul is a material spirit (composed of atoms), whose easiness to motion makes it possible to it to penetrate the whole of the living body, and is therefore "among the atoms" ("internus atomis") of this same living body. But the phrasing "internus atomis" is ambiguous and can be easily misunderstood in the sense that this spirit is "into the atoms", thus giving to ingenuous readers the impression that, according to Macrobius, Democritus stated that atoms, or at least some atoms, have a soul inside of them.

Sometimes the ascription of panpsychism to Democritus is explicit: Aetius says that, according to Democritus, corpses "have some share in heat and sensation"[7] (DK68 A117, 111, 28 = Aetius 4.4, 7 = D140 Laks-Most); Alexander of Aphrodisias is clear-cut, affirming that "corpses perceive, as Democritus thought" (DK68 A117, 111, 29-30[8] = Alex, *Top.* 21, 21). Aetius even comes to the most general conclusion: "Democritus says that all things have a share in a certain kind of soul" (DK68 A117 = D140 Laks-Most). And Albertus Magnus puts Democritus among those who think that also the elements have a soul.[9] The fact that this kind of soul, in Albertus' opinion, probably had nothing to do with sense-perception or mind or even sensation, can be easily concealed by Alexander's testimony (*loc. cit.*), who explicitly describes this animation of inorganic stuff as a kind of sensation.

We can conclude that, even if Democritus never endowed atoms with a mind, a reader that, in the XVII century, when the ordered collections of fragments and testimonies did not exist, read randomly the scarce sources at his disposal, could have more than one element for the conclusion that Democritus held such a doctrine.

The same cannot be said about Epicurus: Epicurus' position, as described by Lucretius, is unmistakable on this point: atoms are just portions of matter in motion, and soul and mind are just properties of some sets of atoms.[10] Even if atoms are endowed with an inherent, irreducible tendency to swerve (*DRN* 2.216-220), and even if this tendency is (according to Lucretius) the factor that should disrupt all deterministic accounts of the mind, thus allowing some room for the existence of free will (*DRN* 2.251-260; cfr. Purinton 1999, 272-273), this inherent tendency to swerve is not described by Lucretius as a mental property in itself.

3. The transmission of the idea of the animation of the atoms from Democritus to Spinoza: Bruno and his readers in England

What matters for us are not the possible sources of Spinoza's atomism (atomism had many upholders at the beginning of modern age); what we are interested in, are the sources that could have been the trait-d'union for the transmission of the far more specific and peculiar idea that atoms have a soul and a mind.

A name we can easily think about is Bruno, whose pantheism and panpsychism, coupled with an atomistic vision of physical reality, could well bring to the idea that atoms can be ensouled. But the idea of the animation of the atoms in the early modern age had more than just one upholder (two names can be mentioned as instances of this position: Daniel Sennert[11] and Nicholas Hill[12]), and Spinoza could have been inspired from any one of them. As far as Bruno himself is concerned, he had proposed, in the *De minimo*, the coexistence of a corpuscular material reality and of a world-soul; according to him, every particle of matter is ensouled by the world-soul: otherwise said, he did not endow each atom with its own soul; rather, he stated that each material atom is "connected" to the world-soul[13].

The idea that Spinoza could have read one of the sources about Democritus that we saw before, getting some inspiration from them, and the idea that he could have been touched by the diffusion of Bruno's ideas, can be meant as alternative options as well as complementary ones.

4. The animation of atoms in Spinoza's library

As it is obvious, the presence of an author in another author's library is not a proof of the fact that the second author read the first one; the absence of a book from the same library is not a proof of the fact that the owner of the library could not have read the book by borrowing it from another library; most of all, this absence does not prove that the second author could not have heard about the ideas of the first author. But the presence or absence of a book in the library of the second author, with or without the proof that the book had been read, is anyway significant. Never Spinoza quotes Bruno.[14]

We have the catalogue of Spinoza's library:[15] in this catalogue there is no trace of Bruno. Is the absence of books by Bruno in Spinoza's library due to Schuller's move of removing some books from the stock, just after Spinoza's death?[16] We cannot say.

If we now turn to ancient atomism, we can see that in Spinoza's library there is a book by Aristotle, classified as "Aristoteles, 1548 vol. 2" (Offenberg 1973, 318); this book was traditionally identified with the 1548 Latin translation of the *Politics* by Juan Ginés de Sepúlveda;[17] since Aristotle never speaks about atomism in the *Politics*, and since Sepúlveda translated also the *De anima*, but this translation was not published in 1548, we should have concluded that Spinoza had no text by Aristotle in which Aristotle discussed atomism. But Aristotle's book in Spinoza's library has now been identified with Aristotle's *Opera Omnia* published at Basel by Johannes Oporinus[18], and it is now clear that Spinoza had the whole *corpus* of Aristotle in Latin translation at hand.

Regarding Macrobius and Aetius, who, as far as we know, are the only sources that could have suggested the possibility that Democritus had held the theory of the animation of the atoms, there is no trace of them in Spinoza's library. And, after all, if Spinoza read Aristotle's account of Democritus' physic, he could clearly realize that Democritus and Leucippus denied animation to atoms.

In the end, we must admit that we cannot be sure that Spinoza had any *direct* knowledge of authors that had held the animation of the atoms. The only thing we can postulate, are the (remote) possibility that members of Hill's entourage had diffused the ideas of Bruno in the Netherland, and the possibility that Spinoza had had some works by Bruno at hand during his life, that were removed from his library by his friends just after his death.

But it is surely open the possibility that Spinoza had got some ideas about the possibility of conjoining the theory of universal animation with atomistic physical theory from what he could read in Aristotle about Plato's *Timeus*. Moreover, it is very interesting to find in the catalogue of Spinoza's library the entry "Salustius" (Pozzi 2015, 200); we cannot know if this "Salustius" was the Roman historian of the I century BC or the Neoplatonic philosopher of the IV century AD, the author of the treatise *De diis et mundo*: if this would be the case, we can surely notice that the Neoplatonic Salustius speaks about the animation of matter at chapter 7.6 of his treatise (Salustio, 2000).

Let us now go directly to Spinoza's doctrine about the simplest bodies.

5. Some ontological issues about the simplest bodies

Prop. 1.12 of the *Ethics* states that no attribute of the Substance can imply that the

Substance is divisible;[19] this statement is repeated in 1.13.[20] The scholium to prop. 15 states that the infinite Substance that is God is truly conceived as undivided and indivisible by the intellect, and that also its attribute "extension" is undivided and indivisible, but our imagination can divide extension in parts to facilitate our cognitive grasp of it (Spinoza 1925, II, 38, 5-12). Can we assume, therefore, that the simplest bodies are (just as whichever other way of dividing the Substance) just a fiction that imagination builds to facilitate our grasp of the attribute "extension"?

Not necessarily.

Spinoza does not believe in the existence of void. So, the whole extension is for him an infinite whole without gaps:[21] and this is what Spinoza means when he affirms that the extension of the Substance is indivisible. But this fact does not deny that in such a continuum could be in principle anyway possible to find parts, that would be defined by their distinctive patterns of motion,[22] and parts of parts, till we come to the minimal parts (also these, in their turn, defined by their patterns of motion), that are the simplest bodies.[23]

And here we come to the main question: which kind of simplicity we are dealing here with? If extension is continuous, what prevents these "simplest bodies" from being divisible? If we accept that the criterion for the identity and unity of a body is the fact that its motion should be described as a unitary motion, the best interpretation is probably the one which sees the simplest bodies as bodies whose motion is simple: minimal bodies should be conceived as bodies whose distinctive feature is the absolute simplicity of their motion, without any other hypothesis about their other features

We thus come to a conclusion very close to that of Adler: simple bodies are simple "not in the sense of "indivisible bodies" but rather as "unanalysable bodies" – that is, bodies that are conceptually simple" (Adler 1996, 255);[24] *prima facie*, this interpretation seems perfect, since it reconciles the apparent atomism of this part of the *Ethica* with the general ascription of a belief in continuity of body to Spinoza. Later on, Adler specifies the claim, saying that the condition for being a simple body, in Spinoza's thought, is that "there is no physical object that can be described in fewer terms" (Adler 1996, 262). Adler denies that Spinoza's simplest bodies should be conceived as atoms, since atoms are indivisible, while Spinoza's simplest bodies (in Adler interpretation) are divisible, but they are not divisible into bodies whose patterns of motion are simpler than the pattern of motion of the body we have divided: rather, the new patterns of motion will be identical to the original one.[25] On this point, I cannot agree with Adler, since the whole idea seems utterly contradictory: I cannot conceive how, if we split one single simplest body, the two bodies we obtain (which should differ in their motion, if they have to be two) can have a motion which is identical to the original one: two motions that are both identical to a third one must also be identical to each other.

Finally, I cannot see how axiom 2 of part 2,[26] with its tentative reduction of the interactions among bodies to "strokes" and "bounces", very close to ancient descriptions of the strokes among atoms (e.g. in Lucretius' poem), could be reconciled with a theory of matter as continuous. If

Spinoza held that body is continuous, why he describes it in terms that, in the minds of the readers of his time, clearly raised, if conjoined to the mention of "simplest body", Lucretian soundings?

The idea I maintain is that simplest bodies are, according to Spinoza, the bodies whose motion is simplest; but I think it should be added that this definition necessarily entails that such bodies must also be indivisible.

All in all, it seems that, at least in this point of the *Ethica*, Spinoza really held that extension is composed by unanalysable and indivisible bodies. The point on which Spinoza greatly departs from classical Atomism is the fact that these bodies are not defined in terms of size or shape, but in terms of patterns of motion.[27]

Notice that this solution could well bring with itself a powerful source of doubt: could the minimal bodies be conceived as bodies without any extension, in the same way as the geometrical point can compose a line or a surface or a volume without having themselves any extension? (We are, after all, here, in the age of the discovery of the infinitesimal in mathematics.) This solution would resolve a lot of exegetical enigmas:[28] but it seems (at least to me) really too audacious to be upheld here.

What I maintain is just that Spinoza conceived the minimal bodies as bodies whose motions are indivisible and unanalysable, without any other adjunctive hypothesis about their eventual other features, save the consequences of this definition (*Eth.* 2.13, scholium, Spinoza (1925), II, 124, 21).

6. The dependence of the simple bodies on God

As is well known, according to Spinoza, all particular items are modes of the divine attributes (*Eth.* pars 1, def. 5 and prop. 15-16 and 28 with demonstration and scholium): the simple bodies must be conceived as modes of the attribute "extension" and their minds as modes of the attribute "thought". Notwithstanding our hesitation to credit Spinoza with the idea that simple body have minds, it seems to me that Spinoza's overall mind-body parallelism, if taken seriously, inescapably brings to this conclusion. We could avoid this conclusion only if we had evidence that Spinoza did not took the mind-body parallelism as a universally valid fundamental point of his own philosophy.

What Spinoza says about the general dependence of the particulars on God will automatically hold also for simple bodies, and it is worth remembering it here.[29]

Particulars have essences that do not imply existence: the only thing whose essence implies existence, and which exists only in virtue of its own nature, is divine Substance (*Eth.* 1.24). Particulars exist until their existence is implied by the Substance (*ibid.*). Moreover, God is the cause of the essences of the particulars as far as the particulars are modes of the divine Substance (*Eth.* 1.25). The Substance's Self-causation coincides with the Substance's causation of the particulars (1.25, scholium). The conclusion is set in the corollary to prop. 1.25: particulars are affections of God's attributes, and modes of these same attributes.

Each one of God's attributes expresses itself in an infinite and uninterrupted chain of causes that necessarily links the particulars, i.e. the single modes, to each other (props. 1.28-29 and 33).

7. The mind-body relation: resume

A single item, as a body or a mind is, according to Spinoza, a single determination (a single mode or a single set of modes) of the attribute "extension", i.e. a single determination of God as an extended thing (*Eth.* 2, def. 1). Bodies and minds have duration: once they have begun to exist, they indefinitely continue to exist, until some external causes eliminate their existence (2, def. 5: Spinoza 1925, II, 100, 8-13). The single finite modes or the single finite sets of modes that have a determinate existence are called "single items" (i.e. particulars or individuals) and they are the objects we experience in our everyday life, e.g. my table, the dog which is now barking in my courtyard, myself. Many individuals that concur in performing a single action are considered, in the measure in which they concur to that act, as parts of one single thing (2, def. 7: Spinoza 1925, II, 100, 15-17).

Since thought and extension are essential attributes of God (2, props. 1-2: God is a thinking thing and God is an extended thing), each single mode of the Substance and each single set of modes of the Substance will always participate both in the attribute "extension" and in the attribute "thought". Among the attribute "thought" and the attribute "extension" there is a complete parallelism: to each mode of extension always corresponds a mode of thought which is the idea of that mode of extension, and the causal order among the single modes of extension is perfectly mirrored by the order among the corresponding ideas (2, prop. 7: Spinoza 1925, II, 108, 22). This happens because, exactly as thought and extension cannot exist as independent items, but only as attributes of God (i.e. as God considered in one way or in the other), so the single particular things that are in God have a mental side and an extended side, while always remaining the same identical single things (2, prop. 7, scholium).

8. The relation among thought and extension in the case of simple bodies. The mind of the simplest body

Here we come to our main point: given this resume about the thought-extension relation in general,[30] what should we think about the thought-extension relation in the case of simple bodies? Prop. 2.11 states that the mind of a man is the idea of the body of that man in God, i.e. the idea that God has of that part of Itself which is the body of that man.

In scholium to prop. 13, Spinoza extends this conception to *all* bodies:

> Nam ea, quae hucusque ostendimus, admodum communia sunt nec magis ad homines quam ad reliqua individua pertinent, quae omnia, quamvis diversis gradibus, animata tamen sunt. Nam cujuscunque rei datur necessario in Deo idea etc. (*Eth.* 2.13, scholium, Spinoza (1925), II, 124, 21 – p. 126, 3).

> For what we have so far demonstrated is of quite general application, and applies to men no more than to other individuals, which are all animate, albeit in different degrees. For there is necessarily in God an idea of each thing whatever etc.

All things, in different degrees, are animated; all bodies have a mind. Therefore, also simple bodies must have their minds. The mind of a simple body will be the idea of that body in God. Let us ask themselves: which is Spinoza's characterization of the simplest bodies?

The lemma 1 to axiom 2 of the part 2 affirms that bodies differ among them on account of motion and stillness, speed and slowness (Spinoza 1925, 128, 1-2). Simple bodies are specifically those bodies in which this characterization is most immediate: they differ among them *only* on account of their motion and stillness, speed and slowness.[31] Does this mean that they cannot differ by size, weight and shape? In this case, since composed bodies can clearly differ by size, weight and shape we have the proof that by "simple bodies" we must mean uncomposed bodies, (cfr. part 3, props. 6-7) – of whichever kind they could be. Their *conatus*, i.e. their momentum to perpetuate their existences, which constitutes their essence, will therefore be completely described in terms of motion and stillness, speed and slowness. Such bodies switch from stillness to motion, from motion to stillness, from one kind of motion to another, because they have been struck by other bodies, that were in motion, and which had been struck in their turn by still other bodies, *et sic in infinitum* (part 2, axiom 2 of the second set of axioms, lemma 3, plus axiom 2 of the third set of axioms). This model, which is clearly conceived to describe a physical world made up by rigid and discrete bodies in rectilinear movement, that bump among them and bounce, will apply in the most straightforward way to simple bodies.[32]

The idea in God of some single simple body, i.e. the mind of that simple body, will be God's perception (which must obviously be adequate) of what characterizes that body, i.e. of its motion. Spinoza is very careful in telling us that the mind of a body (*alias* the idea that God has of that body) not necessarily coincides with the actual cognition that that mind has of its own body; if the two things would always coincide, each mind should always have an adequate cognition of its own body, as God has. What happens, instead, is that the mind of that body knows its own body, and notices its existence, in an inadequate manner: only by noticing the affections of the body, i.e. only by noticing its interaction with other bodies.[33]

If, then, the simple bodies are characterized only by motion and stillness, speed and slowness, and their interactions with other bodies are just the strokes that cause the changes of their motions, what we must conclude is that the only items that the (obviously simple) mind of the simple body perceives are the strokes with other bodies.

9. Paralipomena

If my hypotheses are right, the simplest cognitive acts in Spinoza's system (the cognitive acts of simple bodies) have intentional objects that are radically different from the cognitive acts that all previous theories of knowledge postulated to be the simplest ones. For Plato, Aristotle, Middle-Ages Scholasticism, the simplest sense-perceptions have as their objects the *qualia* of the five senses.[34] According to Aristotle, and to the whole Aristotelean tradition, the sense-perception of movement is a derived and elaborated kind of sense-perception, whose relation to the simple *qualia* of the five senses is object of detailed analyses.[35]

In the case of Spinoza, instead, it seems that we must conclude that the exercise of sense-perception which is most simple in nature is the sense-perception of a strike, i.e. of a movement of a body against another body: a position that, as far as I know, has no match in previous scientific or philosophical theories. This is a very good example of how Spinoza, by apparently borrowing main theoretical elements of the previous thinkers, subverts them, by inserting them in his own system – an insertion which leads to an overall reinterpretation.

Endnotes:

1. "Quae scilicet solo motu et quiete, celeritate et tarditate ab invicem distinguuntur", (Spinoza 1925, 132, 2-3). Unless otherwise stated, all translations of passages by Spinoza are drawn from Spinoza (2002). In part II of the *Ethica* there are three couples of axioms 1-2: I refer here to the third couple.
2. "Propositio V. *Nullae dantur Atomi.* Demostratio. Atomi sunt partes materiae indivisibiles ex suâ naturâ (per Def. 3.): sed cùm natura materiae consistat in extensione (per Prop. 2. hujus), quae naturâ suâ, quantumvis parva, est divisibilis (per Ax. 9. & Def. 7), ergo pars materiae, quantumvis parva, naturâ suâ est divisibilis, h.e. nullae dantur Atomi, sive partes materiae naturâ suâ indivisibiles, q.e.d." "Proposition V. *There is no place for the atoms*. Demonstration. Atoms are parts of matter that are indivisible by their own nature (Def. 3): but, given that the nature of matter consists in extension (Prop. 2 of this part), which, by its own nature, is divisible at whichever level of quantity (Ax. 9 and Def. 7), then whichever part of matter, however small, is divisible by its own nature. So, in no place there are atoms, i.e. parts of matter that are indivisible by thier own nature" (trans. of my own). On Spinoza's early rejection of atomism, cfr. Rice (1971). At pp. 647-648 Rice provides an account of the simple bodies that tries to reconcile infinite divisibility of matter with the assumption of simple bodies: "What then are the corpora simplicissima if not atoms? It seems to me that Spinoza merely intends this term to refer to bodies with a sufficiently small quantity of motion and rest to be distinguishable from composite bodies. This means that the corpora simplicissima are divisible, and it also makes the distinction between complex and simple bodies one which is relative to the purposes at hand: what counts as a simple body might not so count in every conceivable situation". I will return on this point later.
3. Notice that a correspondent (although very different) problem would also arise if we ascribe to Spinoza the idea of continuous divisibility of matter. The question is thus equally interesting also if we do not assume that Spinoza, in physics, was an atomist.
4. According to a critical *vulgata* created by Aristotle (*de An.* 1.2, 404a27 ff.), the philosophers we call "Pre-Socratics" (among which is arbitrarily included Democritus) did not distinguish among the soul conceived as life-principle and the soul as cognitive principle, and conflated the two: according to the Pre-Socratics (Democritus included), to have a soul (according to this *vulgata*) would be to have a principle of cognition and intentional motion, which is what nowadays we call a "mind". Save for some exceptions (e.g. the Milesians and the Orphics), I think that this characterization of the Pre-Socratic psychologies, albeit extremely vague, grasps an important point, and I think that it is particularly fit for Democritus: this is the reason why, when I will speak about Democritus, I will take for granted that "soul", in his doctrine, is synonymous to what we use to call "mind".
5. Cfr. DK67 A28, *passim* = D132, D136 Laks-Most (pp. 193-194) = Arist. *De an.* 1.2, 404a1 ff. and 405a5 ff. (the soul is composed of fiery atoms); DK 68 A106, p. 110, ll. 4-5 = Arist. *Resp.* 4, 472a3-4

(*idem*) = R29a-b Laks-Most; DK A108 = Lucr. *De re. na.* 3.370-373 = R91 Laks-Most (the atoms of the soul are into the visible body, juxtaposed to the visible body's atoms).

6. I could find no match, for this DK testimony, in Laks-Most (2016).
7. Transl. by Laks-Most (2016).
8. Transl. of my own. The Laks-Most edition preserves only the first part of DK68 A117, which is a testimony by Aetius: they eliminate the second part, by Alexander, which contains our passage.
9. DK68 A164 = Albert. Magn. *De lapid.* 1.1, 4 (no match in Laks-Most (2016)): "D. autem et quidam alii elementa tum dicunt habere animas et ipsas esse causas generationis lapidum, propter quod dicit animam esse in lapide sicut in quolibet alio semine generandae rei" ("Democritus and some other thinkers say that also the elements have souls, and that these souls are the causes of the generation of minerals; and on this account he says that soul is in the stone as in whatever other seed of the things that are generated", trans. of my own). We can notice that "elementa" is here ambiguous, and can refer both to Aristotle's simple bodies (whose existence was postulated by the scholastic philosophy of Albertus' time) and to Democritus' atoms.
10. There is debate about the nature of the relationship of mental properties to material properties in Epicurus' theory. O'Keefe (2002, 160) argues (in a convincing manner, it seems to me) in favour of the reductionist account: "the mind is a real thing, but it is nothing above and beyond the atoms that constitute it". See also T. O'Keefe (2005, 73).
11. Daniel Sennert (1572-1637), professor in medicine at the University of Heidelberg. On his works, cfr. Hirai, 2012.
12. "A scholar in St. John's College, Oxford, he took his degree in Arts in 1592" (Massa, 1977, 227).
13. On Bruno's atomism, cfr. Banchetti-Robino (2018).
14. Levy affirms that the resemblance between the two pantheisms can be explained only by postulating that Spinoza had read Bruno ("L'influence de G. Bruno sur Spinoza est une conjecture, bien sûr, mais d'un très haut degré de probabilité. Elle dérive tout d'abord de la ressemblance théorique concernant le panthéisme. Mais nulle part Spinoza ne mentionne Bruno, ni dans ses livres ni dans ses lettres", 1987, 68). In order to get an idea of the degree of arbitrariness of this kind of assessments about the reciprocal resemblances of two systems, in the cases in which we lack both testimonies about their reciprocal influx and a detailed analysis of the technicalities these systems do or do not share, it will suffice to see that another scholar, Pearson, speaking about the same data at Levy's disposal, classify them as just a sign of a "superficial resemblance between Giordano Bruno and Spinoza" (1883, 342).
15. Offenberg, (1973, 309-321), Pozzi (2015).
16. According to Pozzi 2015, 147, Spinoza's friend Schuller removed some books from the stock, right after the death of the philosopher. If this move was dictated by prudence, it is possible that, among the books that Schuller had to take away, there could be also titles by Bruno.
17. *Aristotelis de Republica libri VIII. Interprete & enarratore Io. Genesio Sepulueda Cordubensi. Ad Philippum Hispaniarum Principem*: cfr. Green 1940, 339-342.
18. Cfr. Pozzi, 2015, 163. Manzini (2009, 9-12) too identifies this book with the complete works of Aristotle. Manzini's identification of the specific edition of Aristotle that Spinoza had in his possession is grounded on an *erratum* in a quote of Aristotle by Spinoza, that can be explained only if we assume that Spinoza was reading that specific edition of Aristotle, in which this *erratum* occurred.
19. "No atribute of substance can be truly conceived from which it would follow that substance can be divided" ("Nullum substantiae attributum potest vere concipi, ex quo sequatur substantiam posse dividi").
20. "Absolutely infinite substance is indivisible" ("Substantia absolute infinita est indivisibilis").
21. "Since therefore there is no vacum in Nature (of which more elsewhere) and all its parts must so harmonize that there is no vacuum, it also follows that the parts cannot be distinct in reality; that is, corporeal substance, insofar as it is substance, cannot be divided" ("Cum igitur vacuum in natura non

detur (de quo alias), sed omnes partes ita concurrere debent, ne detur vacuum, sequitur hinc etiam easdem non posse realiter dinstingui, hoc est substantiam corpoream, quatenus substantia est, non posse dividi" (Spinoza 1925, II, 38, 2-5).

22. Many individuals that concur in performing a single action are considered as parts of one single thing (Spinoza 1925, II, def. 7). This single point had already found an upholder in Adler (1996, 255): "the *ratio motus and quietis* is not to be understood as a quantitative ratio. Rather, the word 'ratio' is best translated here as 'pattern' or 'configuration'".
23. On some interesting issues that can be raised about the relevance of Spinoza's concept of "pattern of motion", cfr. Lachtermann (1977).
24. Adler's position seems to be the same as Rice's (1971).
25. Thus interpreted, Spinoza's concept of "simplest body" turns out to be very similar to Aristotle's notion of "physical element" (cfr. Arist. *Metaph* 5.3, 1014a26-34, a passage Adler explicitly quotes: 1996, 263). The resemblance must be obviously meant as significative only at a very abstract level, since the kind of simplicity Aristotle and Spinoza endow their respective simple bodies with are very different from each other.
26. "When a moving body collides with a body at rest and is unable to cause it to move, it is reflected so as to continue its motion, and the angle between the line of motion of the reflection and the plane of the body at rest with which it has collided is equal to the angle between the line of incidence of motion and the said plane. So far we have been discussing the simplest bodies, those which are distinguished from one another solely by motion-and-rest, quickness and slowness" ("Cum corpus motum alteri quiescenti, quod dimovere nequit, impingit, *reflectitur*, ut moveri pergat, *et angulus lineae motus reflectionis cum plano corporis quiescentis*, cui impegit, aequalis erit angulo, quem *linea motus incidentiae* cum eodem plano efficit. Atque haec de corporibus simplicissimis, quae scilicet solo motu et quiete, celeritate et tarditate ab invicem distinguuntur", Spinoza (1925, II, 130, l. 19 – 132, l. 3, italics of my own).
27. The great accomplishment of Laveran (2015), in my opinion, has been the construal of a sound argument against an interpretation of Spinoza's minimal bodies in terms of an atomism where atoms are defined in terms of indivisibility of matter, of body or of extension; this is the kind of atomism Spinoza explicitly rejects in *PPC* 2P 5 *Dem.* (*loc. cit.*) and still rejects in the *Ethica*, a fact which explains why he never calls "atoms" the minimal bodies: any usage of the word "atom" would have convoyed the undesired suggestion that minimal bodies should be conceived as Democritus and Epicurus did.
28. Among the other difficulties, it would also resolve the difficulty about why Spinoza never mentions weight, shape, or size among the features of the simple bodies: cfr. Spinoza 1925, II, 132, 2-3.
29. "That which constitutes the actual being of the human mind is basically nothing else but the idea of an individual actually existing being" ("quod actuale mentis humanae esse constituit, nihil aliud est quam idea rei alicujus singularis actu existentis", Spinoza 1925, II, 120, 7-8); now, which is the actually existing thing whose idea constitutes the human mind? It is human body: cfr. prop. 12 and expecially prop. 13: 'The object of the idea constituting the human mind is the body' ("Objectum ideae humanam mentem constituentis est corpus", 124, l. 3).
30. I assume that the topic of thought-extension relation in Spinoza is a too wide and too much debated topic to be discussed here.
31. Cfr. the sentence (which I already mentioned in n. 1) "which are distinguished from one another solely by motion-and-rest, quickness and slowness" ("corporibus simplicissimis, *quae scilicet solo* motu et quiete, celeritate et tarditate ab invicem distinguuntur", II, 132, 2-3, italics of my own), which seems to be meant as a definition: while for other bodies, whose complex structure allows the insurgence of many other properties, also other ways of characterization are possible, in the case of simple bodies the only distinctive properties are motion and stillness, speed and slowness.
32. It seems to me that the model Spinoza had in mind was that of the uniform rectilinear movement. Messeri (1984, 776) suggests that each simple body could be characterized by its own determinate

pattern of vibratory motion, and that Spinoza could have chosen the pendulum-model due to its interest in Huygens physic. But Messeri (1984, 777) is ready to underline that an oscillatory motion cannot be simple (it is always the product of at least two forces) and that both Huygens and Spinoza knew it. Messeri's conclusion is therefore aporetic.

33. This is explicitly said about human mind in prop. 2.19 (cfr. the demonstration, too).
34. As far as Plato is concerned, cfr. *Tht.* 184c-185e; for Aristotle, cfr. *de An.* 2.6-12.
35. Cfr. *de sensu et sensibilibus* 6-7. On this Aristotelean doctrine, cfr. Block (1988), Brunschwig (1991), Brunschwig (1996), Frede (1992), Modrak (1981).

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Satans in the Bud: Symbolist Laughter in Fyodor Sologub's *A Petty Demon*

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Abstract:

Fyodor Sologub was the pen-name for the poet and prose writer Fyodor Teternikov (1863-1927), a self-styled "decadent" who became a leading figure in the Russian Symbolist movement. Sologub's second novel *A Petty Demon* created a sensation when it appeared in 1907. It has since defied the best efforts of critics to classify it as either "decadent" or "symbolist." This study of laughter in the novel shows how Sologub draws from both Baudelaire's "symbolist" and Nietzsche's "decadent" theories of laughter to make a highly original contribution to the novel form, arguably the most successful "symbolist novel" in the Russian tradition. It is also a superb expression of its *Zeitgeist*, reflecting an era much like our own, in which laughter attracted a great deal of philosophical attention.

Keywords: decadence, novel, laughter, Russian literature, Sologub, Symbolism

I

Fyodor Sologub was the pen-name of Fyodor Kuz'mich Teternikov (1863-1927), a complex, cipher-like man who went from humble origins to a leading role in the Russian Symbolist movement. Teternikov was born into the Saint Petersburg servant class and spent his entire life as a gymnasium teacher, migrating through the northwestern provinces of Russia before returning to his native city. There he settled down at the Andreevsky Academy for Boys, where he taught mathematics and rose to the level of inspector of schools. Until late in his life he lived on the academy grounds with his mother and sister, and later his wife, the ill-fated translator and prose writer Anastassiya Chebotarevskaya.[1] The two hosted literary Sundays in the salon style of the time. Teternikov meanwhile under his pseudonym produced striking work in numerous genres, including one fixture of the Russian classics shelf, the novel *Melkij bes* (1907) – variously translated into English as *A Petty, A Little*, or *A Shabby Demon*.

As a young writer, Sologub first came to prominence in the Petersburg journal *Severnyi Vestnik* [*Northern Herald*], where he worked among others with the celebrated literary couple Dmitry Merezhkovsky and Zinaida Gippius. The *Vestnik* published his early poetry and prose, and in 1895 his debut novel *Tjazhelie sny* [*Bad Dreams*]. Although not an unqualified success, the novel was quickly identified with the work of European "decadents" like J.K. Huysmans or Oscar Wilde, whose world-weariness bordering on the pathological was a touchstone of the *fin de siècle*: a fascination with sickness and death; an attraction to the ethereal, the otherworldly, the exotic; a preference for art and culture over nature, and for fantasy over reality. Sologub differed from these writers because he focused on childhood and adolescence, a reflection of his career as a pedagogue.[2] This drew attention to a scandalous feature of his work: his preoccupation with corporal punishment, frequently eroticized. His subsequent reputation as a "Russian Marquis de Sade" was in fact undeserved – as would be obvious to anyone who had actually read de Sade.[3] Yet it stuck with him throughout his career, and Sologub himself insisted on the "decadent" label. As late as 1922, one of his contemporaries called him "the only consistent decadent" in Russian literature.[4] Sologub's second novel *Melkij bes* took ten years to write and another five to publish but created a sensation when it appeared in book form in 1907. The novel ran through multiple editions and made its author, if not exactly rich and famous, then comfortable and rather notorious. It also made a critical splash, drawing the attention of a circle of tastemakers whose opinions about it were conflicting and passionate. Andrey Bely wrote poignantly in a private letter to Sologub of how he had struggled to absorb the novel, praising him for his "enormous talent" and "unanalyzable charm," his ability to penetrate the reader "like contraband," while confessing that he himself served "other gods."[5] Zinaida Gippius, who belonged to the circle around *Voprosy Zhizni* [Questions of Life], a short-lived religious-philosophical journal that had serialized early chapters of the novel, reviewed the book from an Orthodox perspective. She called on readers to shed tears of repentance for its grotesque protagonist, Ardolon Peredonov.[6] The fictional Peredonov meanwhile, a vulgar, sadistic gymnasium teacher with a fixation on becoming an inspector of schools, soon inspired an abstract noun – *peredonovschina* – which is still used in the Russian language to designate a particularly grotesque form of pettiness.[7] The character also inspired a great deal of titillated speculation, with many readers not unreasonably assuming that he must be a self-portrait of the author. The opinion became so quickly entrenched that Sologub felt obliged to refute it as early as his preface to the second edition, insisting in highly defensive terms that the novel was not a self-portrait, but a carefully polished mirror held up to its readers. This did little to endear him to his readers.[8] Later critics puzzled over whether to classify the novel as primarily "decadent" or primarily "symbolist," one of them throwing up her hands in defeat and declaring that "one cannot call *The Petty Demon* either a decadent or a symbolist novel."[9]

The critical bewilderment over *Melkij bes* reflects its place as a literary-historical outlier. The terms "symbolism" and "decadence" were twin-births of mid-19th century European criticism, largely conjoined until Jean Moreas published his 1886 "Symbolist Manifesto" as a defense against accusations of decadence. The dominant narrative of Russian literary history requires another twenty years for the Symbolist movement to express itself in Russia in a fully authentic way. This occurred around the revolutionary year 1905, when the larger trend imported from Europe received an articulation in journals like *Voprosy zhizny* (or its parent *Novyi put'*) that was conscious of itself as distinctively Russian – influenced not only by the national literature and the Orthodox Church, but by intervening philosophical developments and the political tone of that year.[10] Thus, *Melkij bes*, initially composed from 1892 to 1902, published partially in 1905 and fully in 1907, appeared as a self-styled "decadent" work at just the moment that a high-minded Russian Symbolism – as articulated for example by Gippius – had presumably outgrown decadence.[11]

Aesthetically, the novel is difficult to place because Symbolist theory in Russia was almost exclusively the bailiwick of poets. Sologub was a poet, as were Bely, Gippius, Merezhkovsky, and virtually all the illuminati of the Russian Silver Age: Annensky, Balmont, Blok, Bruisov, and so on. These poets like their European counterparts idealized the manipulation of symbols into something more than the *mere* use of symbolism. They compared themsleves to theurgists or priests, esoteric figures conjuring reified insights or moods, revelations of another world, as William Butler Yeats once put it, "too subtle for the intellect."[12] Moreas – also a poet – expressed it in his "Manifesto" thus:

> ... le caractère essentiel de l'art symbolique consiste à ne jamais aller jusqu'à la concentration de l'Idée en soi. Ainsi, dans cet art, les tableaux de la nature, les actions des humains, tous les phénomènes concrets ne sauraient se manifester eux-mêmes; ce sont là des apparences sensibles destinées à représenter leurs affinités ésotériques avec des Idées primordiales.

> ... the essential character of symbolist art consists in never going so far as a concentration on the ideal as such. Hence, in this art, scenes from nature, human activities, all concrete phenomena cannot manifest themselves as themselves; they are sensibly perceptible appearances, intended to represent their esoteric affinities with the primordial ideals.[13]

The Symbolist Manifesto contained an implicit challenge to prose writers as well as to poets, taken up not in Russia not long after Sologub by other poets-turned-novelists, chief among them Andrei Bely. Yet the list of "Symbolist novels" never grew particularly long. The ghostly apparitions of the Symbolists could more readily haunt a novella like Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*, or a lyrical short-form like the Baudelarian prose-poem or Joycean epiphany. The prevailing winds within Modernist theory gave the very term "Symbolist novel" the ring of an oxymoron. The sheer scope of the novel, its episodic structure, its multiplicity of characters and situations, its polyphony and heteroglossia – above all its parodic and satirical tone, its "carnivalization" of human life, in Mikhail Bakhtin's formulation – all seemed in direct opposition to the Symbolists' hermetic ideal. The novel wears a comic mask. It affirms the domestic and quotidian, the democratic and the down-to-earth, and thus derives its aesthetic power, not from a "high" culture of esoteric ideals, but on the contrary from a "low" culture that either ignores these ideals or if anything makes a travesty of them. The novel celebrates "human activities ... as themselves." It has evolved from – and thus reflects and participates in – what Bakhtin called "the common people's creative culture of laughter."[14]

Among the Russian Symbolists, it may have been Aleksandr Blok who most clearly intuited how Sologub produced "high" Symbolist effects within a presumably "low" comic genre – and precisely through laughter. A great admirer of Sologub the poet, with whom he was often compared, Blok praised the novel in a review published in 1907. There he pointed out a powerful Symbolist aesthetic in the way the novel uses certain scenes to prepare for moments of symbolic disclosure. Periodically, as though a curtain has been raised, the text offers horrifying glimpses of reality, a reality that Blok called, using emphatic italics, *chudovischnoe zhizni* [the monstrosity of life]:

> Задача показать читателю нечто чудовищно-нелепое, так, однако, чтобы его можно было рассматривать беспрепятственно, как животное в клетке. Животное это – человеческая пошлость, а клетка – прием стилизации, симметрии. В симметричных и стилизованных формах мы наблюдаем нечто безóбразное и бесформенное само по себе. Оттого оно веет на нас чем-то потусторонним, ирреальным – и за ним мы видим небытие, дьявольский лик, хаос преисподней.
>
> The task is to show the reader something monstrously absurd, but in such a way that it can be examined without interference, like an animal in a cage. This animal is human vulgarity [*poshlost'*], while the cage is the device of stylization and symmetry. In symmetrical and stylized forms, we observe something that is imageless and formless in itself. That is why it howls at us in an otherworldly and unreal way – and beyond it we see non-existence, a diabolic countenance, the chaos of hell.

Such moments impressed Blok so strongly that he associated them not only with the "low" realm of hell, but in the very next sentence with "the highest reality disclosed, a moment that flares up and imprints itself more clearly than anything else on the memory, just as in life we remember best those wild, ardent minutes, whether good or evil, from which the head spun and ached."[15]

It is rather astonishing that there are no high-profile studies of laughter in *A Petty Demon* – in the first place because the novel is held in such esteem by such sophisticated critics. It is the more surprising because the representation of laughter is ubiquitous in the text – and not only the *representation*. The novel itself is uproariously funny. It is also the product of an era in which laughter commanded a great deal of philosophical attention. The French philosopher Henri Bergson published his influential series of essays on laughter in 1900 – later collecting them into book-form as *Le Rire*. Freud came out with *Der Witz und seine Beziehung zum Unbewussten* in 1905, the same year that *Melkij bes* was originally serialized.[16] Although Sologub was notoriously reticent on his creative process and influences, there can be no doubt that these and other thinkers were being read and discussed in his Petersburg milieu.[17] This essay however will limit itself to showing his affinities with two 19th century theorists of laughter: Charles Baudelaire and Friedrich Nietzsche. The demonstration is worth carrying out if only to rescue Sologub's novel from the Russian-studies ghetto to which it is usually consigned. It is important to emphasize that *A Petty Demon* could not be more thoroughly Russian. At the same time, the "petty" can be shown to originate in Nietzsche, the "demon" in Baudelaire. Sologub's attempt at a "Symbolist novel" is in fact among the most sophisticated comic novels of its time, vastly underappreciated, although in the best traditions of both Russian and European literature. It is difficult to name another work that has more to say about the status and function of laughter in our own time.

II

Perhaps scholarship has neglected laughter in *Melkij bes* precisely because the topic is dauntingly large. Laughter is represented so frequently and prominently from the first page to the last that it becomes something more than just a theme. It achieves a saturation effect. This occurs on the macro-level of the text within two separate but related plot-lines that converge on an apocalyptic revelation. The main plot-line follows Peredonov's misadventures as he strives for his coveted inspectorship – a satire of provincial careerism familiar to readers of Russian literature from Gogol's *Dead Souls*, or to take a more contemporary example, from Chekhov's short story "The Man in the Case." This main plot-line is set up not only as satire, but specifically as farce. Peredonov's manipulative girlfriend Varvara, with whom he is cohabiting, falsely claims to be the "protégé" of a local princess with the power to promote him to inspector. Varvara forges letters from the princess pressuring him to get married. Once Peredonov has been duped into marrying Varvara, he waits in vain for his inspectorship, while frustration and paranoia take hold, personified in the form of a supernatural dust-demon called the *Nedotykomka* – its name derived from the Russian roots *nedo* and *tykhii*, meaning something like "unquietable" or "not to be quieted." As Peredonov descends into madness, the narrative style departs increasingly from the conventions of satirical realism, moving the main plot toward convergence with a subplot at the novel's crisis.

The subplot begins in Chapter 14 – not long after the introduction of the *Nedotykomka* – and follows the love affair between two young people: Ludmila Rutilova and Sasha Pylnikov. The former is a hedonistic young woman in her twenties, a prospective bride for Peredonov and thus rival to Varvara. The latter is one of Peredonov's gymnasium students, a shy, gentle, pubescent boy around whom mean-spirited rumors are swirling: that he is not a boy at all, but a girl in disguise. The petty Peredonov becomes aware of these rumors and obsessively pursues them. This subplot also has earmarks of farce, with the difference that the two young lovers – in contrast to virtually every other character in the novel – are at least initially *not* grotesque. Rather than caricatures, Lumila and Sasha come across as fully rounded and conflicted human beings, and their budding relationship, though shot through with laughter, is treated with a poignant sincerity. The increasingly intense and unstable conflict between innocence and experience is a typically Sologubian conceit, and the source of the novel's emotional suspense.

On the micro-level, we can illustrate how laughter saturates the text by opening the book at random to any chapter – and almost to any page. The first chapter is most efficient however insofar as it introduces the main characters and themes. In keeping with what Blok called "the device of stylization and symmetry," this chapter is divided into two scenes in which Peredonov interacts first with men and then with women. The masculine scene is set in a churchyard after a holiday mass, with a tone of foreboding struck at the end of the opening paragraph. The sentence fragment is worth noticing:

> … казалось, что в этом городе живут мирно и дружно. И даже весело. Но все это только казалось (I, 9).

> … it appeared that in this town they lived peacefully and amiably. *And even merrily*. But all of this was only an appearance.[18]

The narrative wastes no time in introducing the "merrily." As Peredonov mingles with his male co-parishioners outside the church, he boasts that he is sure to win his inspectorship as soon as he marries Varvara. One of the company shows mock surprise that he could legally marry his "sister" (*sestra)*, a word-choice that sparks an explosion of laughter in the other men (I, 9). Peredonov hotly defends himself by insisting that Varvara is not his "sister" but his "second cousin." The translation is inadequate however, because the exact term in Russian is *troiurodnaia sestra*, which literally means "threefold-related sister." On a realistic level, this is the moment of diegetic laughter that launches the farcical plot. On a symbolic level, however, it acquires an extra meaning from the religious setting. The joke evokes Old Testament sister-wife motifs, as in the story of Abraham and Sarah. Peredonov's defense suggests the Trinity – *Troitsa* in Russian. These are the verbal hints or traces that Moreas meant by *apparences sensibles*, impossible to detect on first reading, but increasingly observable on subsequent readings. Their symbolic implication is that Peredonov and Varvara are mythic doubles, like twin brother and sister, two sides of the same petty coin. They are also, as the narrative will later reveal, "threefold related."

Laughter floods the text from this moment on. Peredonov recounts a visit he has made to Varvara's all-powerful princess, which inspires a skeptical guffaw from his friend Rutilov (I, 10). When Rutilov offers to set him up one of his own three sisters instead – that is, Ludmila – Peredonov's response is to burst into laughter. He then abruptly stops, convinced that Varvara would denounce him to the princess. Here we have the first indication of his paranoia, which becomes increasingly reflected in an inability to laugh (I, 11). The masculine scene ends as Peredonov indulges an immodest thought at the expense of the three Rutilov sisters – a trio of Fates, as the narrative increasingly hints, characterized by the tag *veselye, nasmeshlivye* [merry and mocking] (I, 12).

The chapter then segues into a second, symmetrically constructed scene in which Peredonov is lured into his neighbor Vershina's garden. Here the farcical marriage plot is developed from a feminine perspective. Like Rutilov, the Circe-like Vershina is attempting to marry Peredonov off – in this case to her lodger Marta. Religion is once again significant: the first moment of diegetic laughter occurs when Vershina mocks the Polish Catholic Marta for attending an Orthodox mass, implying that she only goes to there on the look-out for a husband (I, 13). Vershina then laughingly recounts the story of one of her own hapless suitors, while the brow-beaten Marta laughs along, "like well-mannered children laugh." Peredonov, after some consideration, joins in, while the narrator explains, in a nice piece of character drawing, that this lack of spontaneity is typical of him (I, 15). Peredonov responds with a story about his battle-ax landlady, whom he intends to bilk out of a month's rent, guffawing at the prospect (I 16). Marta's adolescent brother Vladya enters – one of the novel's ever-present gymnasium boys – and whispers and laughs with his sister. Peredonov takes offence and demands an explanation. The narrator remarks: "Whenever someone laughed in front of him, and he did not know what they were laughing about, he always assumed that they were laughing about him" (I, 18). Peredonov is mollified by the other characters, but takes revenge by making jokes at the gymnasium pupil's expense. The chapter ends as it began: Vershina bursts into laughter at Peredonov's insistence that his girlfriend Varvara – who is clearly pushing fifty – is not yet thirty years old (I, 20).

This analysis of even a single chapter supports an observation from the critical tradition that *Melkij bes* is a "pattern novel." Like other works of Symbolist prose, it develops a symphonic structure of variations on a theme, holding the reader's attention not so much through character development as through hypnotically-repeated patterns of images and events. The novel's epigraph, for example, taken from one of Sologub's lyric poems ("I wished to burn her, the wicked witch"), is continually broken down and reassembled on variations of ego, desire, fire, femininity, wickedness, and sorcery – patterns that reach a manic crescendo at the end.[19]

The patterning of laughter is just as relentlessly complex. It echoes through the text in multiple contexts in various qualities and quantities. A parade of secondary characters is represented as tittering, giggling, or laughing almost constantly – their hilarity abstracted and personified in the form of the supernatural *Nedotykomka*. Peredonov's classroom *riots* with laughter, a constant source of complaint for his headmaster. And as we have noted, Peredonov's descent into madness is measured by his growing inability to laugh and his paranoid obsession with the laughter around him – laughter that becomes increasingly intense and meaningful as the plot-lines converge toward a crisis.[20]

III

The farcical elements of *Melikij bes* remind us that the novel's appeal went far beyond sophisticates like Bely or Blok. It was also a popular success. We need to keep an eye on this fact precisely because the laughter we're concerned with is symbolic: that is, it exists both on the diegetic, systemic level of the text and on the non-diegetic, extra-systemic level of the reader, and the interplay between these levels, their momentary unity and/or disunity, is significant aesthetically.[21]

One can state this more plainly. Every parent of an infant knows that laughter comes spontaneously to the human species – and moreover is thoroughly contagious. Few aspects of human existence bind us together so deeply. We experience a kind of *communion* in laughter, as something above, below, or beyond communication, that is, *mere* communication. Yet how often does the grotesque laughter in *Melkij bes* invite us to commune with its characters? Is there any point in the chapter summarized above at which a reasonably dignified reader would partake in the mirth? Or is it not more likely that this merry riot of vulgarity – as it mutates through drunken orgies, the torture of animals, the belittling of pupils and servants, and so on – will provoke an indecisive, then a fascinated horror, something like what Blok called *chudovischnoe zhizni*?

And yet – the book is funny. It is undeniably funny. Stubbornly so. Its sense of humor comes from a fully recognizable comic tradition. Favorably-minded early reviewers made flattering comparisons to Gogol, Goncharov, and Saltykov-Schedrin, even as Sologub's Symbolist ambitions went completely over their heads.[22] A showcase example is the homage to Gogol that begins in Chapter 8. Here Peredonov, feeling persecuted by real and imaginary rumors, decides to make the rounds of various provincial officials – each of whom makes a tip of the hat to *Dead Soul*s. At the top of the list is the mayor of Peredonov's particular provincial hell, whose Gogolian surname Skuchaev evokes a Dickensian "Mr. Dull" or "Mr. Borus." The term used for "mayor" is *gorodskoi golova*, which – with a switch of grammatical gender – means literally "city head." The reception room of the "city head" is filled with rock-hard couches and chairs, wryly compared by the narrator to "toys magnified many times," and extremely uncomfortable to sit on, although for that very reason praised by the local archbishop as *dushespasitel'nyi* [soul-saving]. The innuendo that saving one's soul means punishing one's behind rings all the more absurd in the universe of "the Russian Marquis de Sade" (VIII, 78).

Peredonov's ignorance and contempt for learning, and his desire to conform at all costs, are by this point well-established in the narrative. The scene thus implies that the city head's judgment stands in for the block-headed judgment of the town. As a born politician, eager to please a constituent, Skuchaev tries so valiantly to make sense of his visitor's paranoid rambling that he ends up mistaking it for bookish abstraction:

> Беда с этими учеными, – думал он – не поймешь, чего он хочет. В книгах-то эму все ясно, ученому человеку, а вот из книги нос вытащит, так и завязнет и других завязит (VIII, 81).

> The problem with these scholars – he thought – is that you can't catch what the guy wants. In those books of his everything's clear to him, this scholarly guy, but *viola* he pulls his nose out of a book, and gets all tangled up, and gets others all tangled up too.

This theme of the idiot mistaken for a scholar is picked up and run with through the next few chapters. On Peredonov's visit to the bellowing public prosecutor Avinovitsky, for example, the aspiring school inspector thoroughly confuses Alexander Herzen with Adam Mickiewicz, only to arrive at the prudent conclusion: Мне нельзя запрещенные книги читать. Я и не читаю никогда. Я – патриот. (IX, 90). [I'm not allowed to read forbidden books. I never even read at all. I'm a patriot]. In the next chapter he confesses to the Marshal of Nobility that in his youth he supported a Constitution for Russia – as did we all! – but that it was a Constitution without a Parliament. The Marshal, true to his progressive leanings, considers this an intriguing possibility, until Peredonov clarifies: а теперь я ничего [but now I'm for nothing] (X, 93). The satire is thoroughly Russian, yet translates delightfully into any culture of self-censoring conformity.

It is worth pointing out that Peredonov and the other grotesques are funniest when they take themselves seriously. This is epitomized in the farcical episode in Chapter 15 that functions as a cap-stone to the series of visits. Here Peredonov accompanies his masculine side-kick Volodin to the home of the well-read Nadezhda Adamenko. The sheep-like Volodin makes another example of "stylization and symmetry": along with Varvara and the *Nedotykomka*, he is one of three characters in Peredonov's intimate circle. The extreme seriousness with which he bleats out a marriage proposal to Nadezhda sets off convulsions of laughter in the lady and her younger brother – another of the novel's ubiquitous boys – made all the more unbearable by their attempts to suppress it (XV, 141-145). This scene can take even the wariest reader off guard: it is virtually impossible to read *without* laughing. As Nadezhda and her brother vainly struggle to suppress their laughter, readers can find themselves in almost painful communion. Meanwhile, *Russian* readers can hardly miss the fact that Nadezhda's first name "Hope" and last name "Adamenko" gesture symbolically toward "the hope of mankind." Coming on the heels of the homage to Gogol, this is as close as Sologub ever comes to a whole-hearted affirmation of "the common people's creative culture of laughter."

The main thing to emphasize here is that we read about laughter in the novel, and we laugh ourselves, but not always at the same time – in fact, very *rarely* at the same time – and the tension this creates between text and reader generates a pattern of symbolic effects. The pattern moreover is fluid, not fixed. It depends not only on the reader's subjective sense of humor, but also on a deepening aesthetic engagement with the text. In this sense, the treatment of laughter is fully consistent with Moreas' injunction on "the essential character of symbolist art." The novel offers no fixed ideal of laughter or the laughable *as such* – only constantly shifting traces or hints of some "primordial ideal" that the laughter invokes.

IV

We can now turn to the philosophies of laughter that were current in Sologub's milieu. The definitive statement on laughter among the French Symbolists was not surprisingly an essay on *Satanic* laughter: Charles Baudelaire's *De l'essence du rire et généralement du comique dans les arts plastiques* [On the Essence of Laughter and More Especially of the Comic in the Plastic Arts]. Published in 1855, some thirty years prior to the Manifesto, but only two years before its author's seminal verse collection *Les Fleurs du Mal*, the essay looks at Romantic themes through the eyes of a free-thinking Catholic. Although its emphasis is on the "plastic," or visual, rather than on the verbal arts, it is clear from even a cursory reading that it profoundly influenced Sologub's novel.

The title in French is rather misleading, because the topic is not so much laughter *per se* as caricature – or more specifically, the relationship between laughter and the grotesque. Baudelaire begins by distinguishing two types of caricature, the first of which is journalistic and ephemeral, but the second of which "contains an element of the mysterious, the durable, the eternal which commends it to the attention of artists." The applicability of this claim to *Melkij bes* is impossible to overlook:

> That beauty – a word which it is difficult to define – should find a place in works designed to display to human beings their own moral and physical ugliness, is something curious and worthy of careful study. Nor is it less curious that the lamentable spectacle thus offered to mortals should excite in them the deathless and incorrigible spirit of mirth. This it is that forms the real subject of the present article.[23]

Baudelaire's argument rests on the premise that "the wise man never laughs but he trembles," meaning that the true Christian "in whom the spirit of The Lord is active" is acutely aware of the common origin of both laughter and tears in the Fall of Man (112). From this premise, he derives the following propositions:

> Laughter is satanic, and, therefore, profoundly human. It is born of man's conception of his own superiority. Since it is essentially human, it is also essentially contradictory, that is to say it is at once a sign of infinite grandeur and of infinite wretchedness: of infinite wretchedness by comparison with the absolute Being who exists as an idea in Man's mind; of an infinite grandeur by comparison with the animals. It is from the perpetual shock produced by these two infinites that laughter proceeds (117).

As a theorist of laughter, Baudelaire can be placed among those who privilege a psychological over a social perspective. He believes like Freud for example – but not like Bergson – that "the sense of the comic, the ability to laugh, is in him who laughs, and not at all in the object which excites laughter." It is therefore impossible to laugh at our own folly, unless – like a philosopher – we develop a detachment that allows us "rapidly to become two persons at one and the same time." By contrast, "the most comic of animals are also the most serious, as, for example, monkeys and parrots" (117-18). Or sheep – like Peredonov's Volodin.

However, Baudelaire's theory is most relevant to Sologub's artistic universe at the moment it makes a distinction between the convulsive, self-contradictory laughter of adults and the unified, intuitive laughter of children. His thoughts on this head could be cut-and-pasted into any introduction to *A Petty Demon*:

> The laughter of a child is like a flower's expanding bud. It is the joy of receiving, the joy of breathing, the joy of gazing, of living, of growing. It is a vegetable joy. For this reason, there is more in it of the smile than of the laugh; it is analogous to the wagging of a dog's tail, or to the purring of a cat. Be it noticed, however, that, if the laughter of children differs from these purely animal expressions of contentment, the reason is that it is not wholly devoid of ambition, a form of ambition suited to young creatures in the process of growing up, in other words, to Satans in the bud (120).

Baudelaire's claim about "Satans in the bud" leads directly to his aesthetic conclusion: "From the point of view of art, the comic is an imitation, whereas the grotesque is a creation."

What he means by this is that laughter inspired by the comic (or as he later defines it, by the garden-variety "significantly comic") arises from our feeling of superiority over other human beings – a natural feeling that art merely imitates. By contrast, the laughter inspired by the grotesque (or as he later defines it, by the "absolutely comic") arises from our feeling of superiority over nature itself – a feeling that art (re-)creates. Both types of laughter are Satanic, but the one is merely natural, while the other is, in a primordial sense, *super*-natural:

> … laughter provoked by the grotesque has in it something profound, axiomatic and primitive, which more closely relates it to innocence and to absolute joy than does the laughter occasioned by the comedy of manners. There is between these two forms of laughter […] the same difference that is to be found between literature with a social purpose and Art for Art's sake; and this gives to the grotesque a proportionate superiority to the merely comic (121).

It helps to remember at this point that the Greek roots *sym* + *bolein* mean literally "to hold or join together." The "absolutely comic" is in Baudelaire's words "much closer to nature" – more primordial, more child-like, more innocent – and thus "has a *unity* which must be grasped by intuition." Symbolist laughter is correspondingly immediate. There is something esoteric, something reified about it, which makes it "the perquisite only of superior artists, they alone being capable of absorbing and digesting any absolute idea" (122).

V

It is clear then that Sologub's sensibility in this novel can be traced to Baudelaire and his epigones – no surprise for a Symbolist poet. But Baudelaire's thought on laughter fails to account for that fluid pattern of symbolic effects described above: the tension between text and reader that occurs when laughter itself becomes grotesque. In other words, while Baudelaire explains the difference in quality between "significant" and "absolute" laughter – and suggests that a "superior artist" can exploit this difference symbolically – he stops short of examining the *culture* of laughter as such. Here it is useful to consider Nietzsche, the foremost European philosopher of "decadence," whose work was at the peak of its popularity and influence in Russia at the time that *Melkij bes* was being written.[24]

A self-styled "immoralist" and "psychologist," Nietzsche developed a rigorous course in skepticism directed at the philosophical conditions of modernity – above all at Christian idealism. Sologub was an admirer. We know from an essay by his wife that he was enamored of *Also Sprach Zarathustra*.[25] He must have also been aware of the philosopher Lev Shestov, some of whose writings on Nietzsche and Russian literature appeared in the same journal *Voprosy zhizni* that published early chapters of *Melkij bes*.[26] In this, Sologub exemplifies a fundamental difference between the French and Russian generations of Symbolists: the latter came strongly under the influence of Nietzsche's radical pessimism. Nietzsche's pessimism was not however stereotypically Teutonic, that is, humorless. On the contrary, Nietzsche assigns an extremely high value to human laughter – so high, as one commentator put it, "that with certain qualifications Nietzsche's thought may be said to comprise not a tragic but a 'comic' philosophy."[27]

Nietzsche's thought on laughter begins from his distinction in *The Birth of Tragedy* between the "healthy" Apollonian and Dionysian laughter of early Greek tragedy and the "decadent" laughter of later Greek comedy under the influence of Socratic rationalism.[28] The extension of this claim through Platonism into Christianity leads to the contrast in his mature thought between two kinds of laughter in the modern world: "the laughter of the height" and "the laughter of the herd" – or to put it more politely, of the multitude. The distinction receives its most extended treatment in *Die fröhliche Wissenschaft* (1882) – known in Russian as *Veselaia nauka* – where Nietzsche imagines a "joyful wisdom" that will someday unify laughter and knowledge. Although Sologub was almost certainly acquainted with this book, we can stick to illustrative passages from *Also Sprach Zarathustra*, given that Nietzsche as a non-systematic philosopher made the same distinction in multiple contexts.

In the preface to this book "for everyone and no one," Nietzsche's spokesman Zarathustra descends from a mountaintop to preach his doctrine of the *Übermensch* – the man "Over Man" – only to be greeted by the derisive laughter of the townspeople in a marketplace. They ask him to make them into the Last or Ultimate Man instead – the nihilistic end-point of decadence – one standard unit in an immense, indistinguishable "herd." Struck into silence, Zarathustra abandons the marketplace to deliver a series of discourses to the solitary individual, asking in one of them: "Who among you can at the same time laugh and be exalted?" The symbolic answer: "He who climbs upon the highest mountain laughs at all tragedies, real or imaginary."[29]

Probably Nietzsche's best-known treatment of laughter, in *Zarathustra* or in any other book, is the parable of the shepherd locked in combat with a serpent that has crawled into his mouth and down his throat. Unable to dislodge the serpent, Zarathustra calls out for the shepherd to bite off its head:

> The shepherd [...] bit as my cry had advised him; he bit with a good bite! He spat far away the snake's head – and sprang up.
>
> No longer a shepherd, no longer a man – a transformed being, surrounded with light, laughing! Never yet on earth had a man laughed as he laughed (180).

This laughter according to Zarathustra is "no human laughter," for it makes life and death both equally endurable. As the symbolism rather heavy-handedly suggests, the shepherd merits this exalted laughter by finding the courage to cut through conventional morality and to speak and act freely on his own terms. His laughter is not *a*-moral however. It rather expresses a higher moral truth that opposite values, like good and evil, pleasure and pain, life and death, are not mutually exclusive, but bound together in the human condition. Nietzche contrasts it throughout his work to the laughter of the Ultimate Man, the social conformist, for whom life is a labyrinth of thwarted desires. The difference between this "laughter of height" and the "laughter of the herd," to paraphrase one commentator, is the difference between the playful laughter of lovers in bed and the prurient laughter of a dirty joke, or between the innocent laughter of a child with a toy and the bullying laughter of one child taunting another who does not fit in.[30]

We do not read far in *Melkij bes* before encountering just such a moral distinction. Sologub's most intimate prose is devoted to the relationship between Sasha and Ludmila that begins in Chapter 14. This chapter ends with a Symbolist prose-poem of the highest order: Ludmila's sequence of "African dreams." The adult Ludmila dreams that she is lying in an overheated chamber and that her legs are a tree trunk scaled by a serpent with Sasha's face. Her dream then changes to the shore of a lake on a sultry evening, where she is lying naked with a golden crown on her head, while a regal white swan – also with Sasha's face – approaches and overpowers her.

> Потом приснилась Людмиле великолепная палата с низкими, грузными сводами, – и толпились в ней нагие, сильные, прекрасные отроки, – а краше всех был Саша. Она сидела высоко, и нагие отроки перед нею поочередно бичевали друг друга. И когда положили на пол Сашу, головою к Людмиле, и бичевали его, а он звонко смеялся и плакал, – она хохотала, как иногда хохочут во сне, когда вдруг усиленно забьется сердце, – смеются долго, неудержимо, смехом самозабвения и смерти (XIV, 138)

> Then Ludmila dreamed of a magnificent tent with narrow, sturdy arches – and jostling into it were naked, strong, beautiful pubescent boys – and the most beautiful among them was Sasha. She sat on high, and the naked boys in front of her took turns whipping each other. And when they lay Sasha on the ground, with his head toward Ludmila, and lashed him, while he laughed resoundingly and wept – she laughed, as you sometimes laugh in dreams, when the heart suddenly begins to beat intensely – and you laugh long, unbearably, the laughter of self-forgetfulness and death.

Along with the sheer verbal beauty of the passage – its Symbolist imagery of serpent and swan, beloved of Yeats among many others – we can enumerate multiple Nietzschean motifs: Ludmila's laughter is Dionysian; it comes from above; it is mixed with tears; it is ecstatic; it is an erotic confusion of life and death, pleasure and pain; it is an ego-destroying, orgasmic laughter in communion with Sasha himself. On awakening, Ludmila is convinced that she has fallen passionately in love with the boy, and laments the moral conventions that prevent her from beholding his nakedness in waking life:

> Точно стыдно иметь тело, – думала Людмила, – что даже мальчишки прячут его.

> "It's like it's shameful to have a body," thought Ludmila, "that even little boys hide it" (XIV, 138).

Ludmila's sincerity of feeling at this moment contrasts so sharply with the novel's grotesque *peredonovschina* that it is impossible not to assign it a higher moral value. But because Ludmila is a grown woman, a member of the adult community, it is equally impossible to ignore her defiance of moral convention. As she pursues an ever more intimate relationship with the pubescent Sasha, this *aporia* generates suspense: how can such a higher morality be sustained?

It is worth going back to Baudelaire for a moment and his laughter of "Satans in the bud." Ludmila in her innocent erotic play with Sasha creates a world of sensual pleasure and beauty around him. She draws in her two sisters, swearing them to secrecy. At the same time, the petty Peredonov becomes increasingly aggressive in his efforts to unmask his sensitive and delicate pupil – whom he now senses is a rival. Peredonov represents herd morality at its most grotesque. As he makes a show of piety in church, he feels the laughter of the Fate-like Rutilov sisters bearing down upon him like a supernatural force:

> Смех – тихий смешок, хихиканье да шептанье девиц Рутиловых звучали в ушах у Передонова, разрастаясь порою до пределов необычайных – точно прямо в уши ему смеялись лукавые девы, чтобы рассмешить – и погубить ему.

> Laughter – the quiet chuckling, giggling, and whispering of the Rutilov girls rang in Peredonov's ears, increasing at times to uncommon extremes – as if the deceitful maidens laughed directly into his ear, in order to laugh him to pieces – to annihilate him (XXII, 201).

This is the annihilation to which the plot-lines converge. The climax of the novel takes place at a community masquerade ball, where prizes are awarded for best costumes. Spurred on by Ludmila, who wants to make a mockery of Peredonov, the sisters dress Sasha as a Japanese geisha and enter him into the contest. They are acting in this sense like Baudelaire's "superior artists." Their understanding of the laughable, which began in a natural sense of superiority over the likes of Peredonov, has now passed beyond this into a sense of superiority – through art – over nature itself. At the same time, in their contempt for the "herd" at the masquerade ball, they are storming a Nietzschean height, a vantage-point from which it is possible "to laugh at all tragedies, real or imaginary."

Sasha is a pawn in this adult game. What he intuits as the masquerade approaches is that Ludmila and her sisters are *ambitious* – and ambitious for something that nature cannot sustain. At one point, in another of Blok's "devices of stylization and symmetry," he has a vision that complements Ludmila's "African dream." It shows remarkable insight into the psychology of adolescence:

> Хотелось что-то сделать ей, милое или больное, нежное или стыдное, – но что? Целовать ее ноги? Или бить ее, долго, сильно, длинными гибкими ветвями? Чтобы она смеялась от радости или кричала от боли? И то, и другое, может быть, желанно ей, но мало. Что же ей надо? [...] в чем же это таинство плоти? И как принести свою кровь и свое тело в сладостную жертву ее желаниям, своему стыду? (XXVI, 248)

> He felt like doing something to her, gentle or painful, tender or shameful – but what? Kiss her feet? Or whip her, long and hard, with long supple switches? So that she laughed with joy or cried out in pain? Both of those things, it may be, were desired by her, but that was not enough. What then did she need? [...] what then *was* this mystery of the flesh? And how was he to bring his own blood and his own body into sweet sacrifice to her desires, and to his own shame?

The answer comes at the climax of the novel. For our purposes here, it is enough to say that the moral *aporia* is turned on its head. This is because, as the sisters mock Peredonov's obsession with Sasha, they also play into the ugly rumors about Sasha that are circulating in the community. They bring him to the masquerade ball as the girl he is rumored to be – literally as their work of art – like a lamb to sacrifice, or like the letter "S" that turns "laughter" into "slaughter." The supernatural laughter to which the sisters aspire, which mocks all tragedies real or imaginary, which simultaneously echoes back to the innocent unity of childhood and forward to "self-forgetfulness and death" – which laughs Peredonov to pieces – also threatens the innocent Sasha with destruction. The novel's emotional suspense is no longer generated by the Nietzschean question: how can a higher morality be sustained? Rather by the question: Who will be sacrificed for it?

An act of sacrificial violence culminates the novel. It is announced by a breath-taking example of "stylization and symmetry," a final moment of diegetic laughter that bookends the entire text. Peredonov, Volodin, and Varvara get dangerously drunk at the masquerade ball. As the *Nedotykomka* swirls through the crowd, the amiably stupid, sheep-like Volodin spars with Varvara over a play on words: whether they are drinking *vtroem* or *vdoem* – as a trio or a pair. Varvara solves the problem with a verbal-mathematical pun. She points out that the three of them together constitute both a trio *and* a pair, because, according to a proverb that she has quoted since snaring Peredonov in marriage:

> Муж да жена – одна сатана, – сказала Варвара и захохотала (XXXII, 287).
>
> Man and wife make a single Satan – said Varvara and burst into laughter.

This final explosion of Satanic laughter makes explicit the symbolism that was merely implicit in the novel's original deployment of diegetic laughter, when Peredonov calls Varvara his "*troiurodnaia sestra*." It is an omega-laugh connecting to this alpha-laugh, closing a full circle of symbolic meaning. It is a moment of disclosure – equal parts ludicrous and terrifying – that "flares up and imprints itself more than anything else on the memory," a head-spinning plunge into utter depravity that is also esoteric, hieratic, high Symbolist art.

VI

Sologub as both pedagogue and artist seems to have been acutely aware of the process through which "Satans in the bud" blossom into adult forms. Here we have only considered his affinities with Baudelaire and Nietzsche. His remarkable parallels with his contemporaries Bergson and Freud could make the topic of another essay. It remains for Russian specialists to look at how his treatment of laughter resonates with other writers in his context – whether humorists like Saltykov-Schedrin or philosphers like Lev Shestov.

One can however draw conclusions. Sologub's technique is undeniably Symbolist in the spirit of the 1886 Manifesto. He deploys symbols like a theurgist or priest – a magician even – fluttering a veil before us in which sparkling stars of laughter are stitched "in stylized and symmetrical forms." The laughter that the text *re-presents* comes in constant collision with the laughter it *presents* – that is, evokes – sometimes winking on both planes at once. There is a sense of the "accidental" to this, like the clashing of ringlets made by droplets on a pond, such that every reader and every reading is unique.[31] Some moments are more or less "objectively" funny. Yet because the novel offers no fixed ideal of laughter or the laughable, we open ourselves to its most vivid symbolic effects by putting aside both cultural tradition and generic preconceptions – and letting our laughter just *happen*. The novel is Symbolist insofar as it is fiendishly prolific in putting a culture of depraved laughter into the service of "primordial ideals." It is decadent insofar as it enacts the reverse: it forces us to participate in that depravity to point that – like the tangled scholar Peredonov – we are hopelessly implicated in it. The novel shows no contradiction between "symbolism" and "decadence." In effect, it restores their original unity.

The French philosopher Georges Bataille, whose hyperbolic thoughts on laughter owe an obvious debt to both Baudelaire and Nietzsche, conceived of the phenomenon as a spiritual economy of revelation and concealment. Laughter is the sudden consolidation of one's own being at the pinnacle of the pyramid of being, the momentary attainment of absolute sovereignty at the expense of an inferior other – one of those grotesque figures who, like Peredonov and his circle, founder on their finitude. But the laughter of the sovereign being, to be truly sovereign, must participate in the other's fall. Laughter renders sovereignty finite – so that finitude, conversely, is sovereign – and presents us with the nothing and nowhere of being, meaningless, yet laughable, because the presence of an absence, as Bataille concludes with truly Gallic aplomb, is "impossible, and yet there."[32]

This mutual cancellation of the sublime and the pathetic recalls Blok's vision of non-existence behind the novel's otherworldly and unreal howls – "a diabolic countenance" that, impossibly, could only be his own.[33] Sologub's challenge to his most attentive readers comes down to this: that in using laughter to display *chudovischnoe zhizni*, "like an animal in a cage," he puts his readers on display as well. We would be well-advised to check our smiles in his polished mirror, in our media-saturated 21st century, rollicking from pinnacle to base with laughter.

Endnotes:

1. Chebotarevskaya was a feminist activist and literary figure of interest in her own right. She supported the February Revolution in 1917 but strongly opposed the October Revolution and committed suicide in 1921 after a struggle for permission to emigrate with her husband.
2. The most extended discussion of Sologub's children in English is by Rabinowitz (Columbus, 1980).
3. Sologub's reputation for sadism largely came out of his conservative position on corporal punishment in schools, which was raging in Russian educational circles at the time. See Pavlova, M.M. (Moscow, 2007), who reprints an article by Sologbub "O telesnikh nakazaniakh," pp. 468- 475. Flagellation was a well-established theme in 19th century literature, beginning at least with Rousseau, and exemplified among self-styled decadents by Swinburne. But Sologub's treatment of the theme had little in common with either Rousseau or Swinburne – and even less with de Sade.
4. Chulkov (1922), p. 53. Sologub's vast output of lyric poems divided the universe into a sordid here-

and-now called "life," governed by the evil principle of the Sun, and a divine otherworld of "death," the realm of the Devil, the true god of beauty and imagination. An exemplar is the verse cycle "Zvezda Mair" [The Star Mair], in which an imaginary star of truth and beauty is counterposed to our own.

5. Dated 30 April 1908, the letter can be read online at http://www.fsologub.ru/, where there is an interesting footnote on its origin. See also Bely's review of Sologub's story collection *Istlevaiushchie lichiny* [Decaying Masks], which is included in Chebotarevskaya, ed. (St. Petersburg, 2002), 149-152.
6. Gippius, Zinaida. "Slezinka Peredonova." In Chebotarevskaya, ed. (2002), 111-122. The review originally appeared in 1908 in the journal *Rech'* [Speech].
7. We could use a word like this in English. The 2019 "Sharpiegate" scandal is an example of *peredonovschina* that could have been lifted directly from the novel. It is also an excellent illustration of what Baudelaire meant by "the absolutely comic."
8. Some readers, to be sure, were influenced by personal antipathy. Sologub's own Stendahlian metaphor suggests that he identified as a realist. There is however a tendency in Symbolism toward what Diana Greene calls "the perfect understanding between the author-narrator and his creation." Think Joseph Conrad and Charles Marlow, for example, or James Joyce and Gabriel Conroy. But for this Sologub's first novel makes a better illustration.
9. Greene (Columbus, 1985), 112-113. An overview of scholarship on *A Petty Demon* can be found in the excellent critical edition edited by M.M. Pavlova (St. Petersburg, 2004), 720-21. Miroslav Drozda's Russian language analysis was an important source for this article. There are many useful analyses in English, not cited in this essay, including those by Judith Mills (on critical contexts), Harriet Hustis (on language), and Linda J. Ivanits (on the grotesque).
10. See for example Pyman (Cambridge, 1994).
11. Sologub himself wrestled with the historical "telescoping" that often occurs when Western ideas are imported into Russia. In an unpublished essay from 1894, "Ne postydno li byt' dekadentom?" [Is it not shameful to be a decadent?], he attempted to reconcile two views among critics "acquainted with the most recent idealistic endeavors, here with us and in Europe":

   > [...] the first is that all (or many) great poetic works have been symbolic, according to the very nature of art, which is always idealistic; the second is that decadence has only recently appeared, an ugly, temporary phenomenon, already past its bloom, grotesque in all respects, diametrically opposed to symbolism. The Russian literati who adhere to the new tendency do not, apparently, have anything against being recognized as symbolists – while reviewers stubbornly accuse them of decadence as of something artless and, if you will, contemptible.

   Sologub goes on to argue that "a great illness of the spirit" is necessary for the insights of symbolism: "and since any suffering that is inconceivable to the crowd is despised and ridiculed by it, then this suffering also received the contemptible moniker decadence." It is significant that Gippius in her review gestured at a similar "illness of the spirit." Sologub's essay is reprinted in Pavlova (Moskva, 2007), 494-501.
12. Yeats (London, 1980). Yeats discovered the "symbolical" in these exquisite lines by Robert Burns: "The white moon is setting behind the white wave, / And Time is setting with me, O!" As for prose, he believed that any symbol could evoke the power of surrounding symbols "as a sword-blade may flicker with the light of burning towers."
13. Translation mine. The original text is widely available online.
14. Bakhtin (Austin, 1981), 20. Bakhtin argues that the parodic-travestying literature from which our modern novelistic discourse has evolved

   > introduces the permanent corrective of laughter, of a critique on the one-sided seriousness of the lofty, direct word, the corrective of reality that is always richer, more fundamental and most

> importantly *too contradictory and heteroglot* to be fit into a high and straightforward genre. The high genres are monotonic, while the "fourth drama" and genres akin to it retain the ancient binary tone of the word (55).

15. Blok (Moscow, 2003). There is an untranslatable word-play in the phrase "something that is imageless and formless." The word for "imageless" – *bezóbraznoe* – is only one stressed syllable away from a synonym for "vulgarity" [*poshlost'*] – *bezobráznoe*.
16. Theories of laughter can be divided into social or psychological. Bergson exemplifies the former. For Bergson "any arrangement of acts and events is comic which gives us, in a single combination, the illusion of life and the distinct impression of a mechanical arrangement." Laughter thus serves to punish behavior that is dangerously mechanical or automatic:

    > The rigid, the ready-made, the mechanical, in contrast with the supple, the ever-changing and the living, absent-mindedness in contrast with attention, in a word, automatism in contrast with free activity, such are the defects that laughter singles out and would fain correct.

    Freud by contrast elaborated what is still the best known psychological theory. Freud saw laughter as a sudden discharge of mental energy, a cognitive "short-circuit" that allows us to re-live the euphoria of childhood, "a bygone time in which we were wont to defray our psychic work with scant expenditure." Both theories apply to *A Petty Demon*. Peredonov and his circle are fully aware of the punitive power of laughter – on both the giving and receiving ends. Peredonov himself is repeatedly compared to "a dancing doll," while a minor character named Tishkov, for example, is called "a cleverly-devised annoyance machine."
17. Despite its provincial setting, Sologub's novel is a quintessential product of Petersburg – Russia's sophisticated "window on the West." The author hinted at this in his preface to the 1913 seventh edition, where he imagined a dialogue between his "Russian self" and his "Parisian soul." His contemporaries called him the "Northern Sphinx" in allusion to the famous statuary on Vasilievsky Island, where his Andreevsky Academy was located.
18. Translation and emphasis mine. Chapter and page numbers are taken from Sologub (Moscow, 2007), the most recent popular edition of the novel in Russian.
19. The analysis here is indebted to Greene (1985), 69. Compare also Rosenthal and Foley (1982), 43-55.
20. See Roustang (1987) for a discussion of how paranoia and laughter are inversely related in psychology.
21. My understanding of the systemic and the extra-systemic is indebted to Lotman (Ann Arbor, 1977). See also footnote 31 below.
22. There are abundant examples in Chebotarevskaya, ed. (Petersburg, 2002). Typical among them is an admiring but thoroughly bewildered review by A. Izmailov, pp. 446-461.
23. Baudelaire (New York, 1956), 110. All subsequent quotations and their page numbers are taken from this English translation.
24. The most comprehensive study of Nietzsche in Russian culture is by Clowes (DeKalb, 1988).
25. Chebotarevskaya (1908), 83. Cited among others in Rosenthal and Foley (1982).
26. See Clowes (DeKalb, 1988).
27. Gunter (1968), 493. My choice of examples from *Zarathustra* is also influenced by Lippit (1992), who develops many of the same arguments.28. Gunter (1968), 494.
29. Nietzsche (London, 1969), 68. This is the classic English translation by R.J. Hollingdale. All subsequent quotations and their page numbers are taken from it. Interestingly, this particular passage comes from the discourse entitled "Of Reading and Writing."
30. Gunter (1968), 504.

31. Compare for example Lotman (1977), 59. "Literature imitates reality; it creates a model of the extra-systemic out of its own inherently systemic material. In order to appear 'accidental,' an element in a work of art must belong to at least two systems and must be located at their intersection. That aspect of the system which is systemic from the point of view of one structure will appear 'accidental' when viewed from the vantage of the other."
32. Bataille (Paris, 1970). See also Borch-Jakobsen (1987).
33. Blok's 1910 lecture "On the Present State of Russian Symbolism" is shot through with metaphors borrowed from *Melkij bes* – some of which strikingly support this observation. Describing the discovery of a Baudelarian "magic world filled with correspondences," Blok compared the symbolist poet to a possessor of esoteric knowledge, a theurgist who stands at the threshold of a vast revelation. As purple-violent worlds of imagination open up to him, the poet discovers he is no longer alone, but instead is filled with demon-doubles, "which the caprice of his evil creative will forms into constantly changing groups of conspirators":

> With the help of these conspirators he conceals at every moment some part of his soul from himself. Thanks to this network of deceit … he is able to forge a weapon out of each of the demons …; they plunder the violet worlds and, obedient to his will, fetch him the most precious things … What has been created in such a way – through the spells cast by the artist and the *petty demons* [my emphasis] who serve every artist – has neither beginning nor end, is neither living nor dead. … This is the creation of art.

The lecture was addressed to a Petersburg audience of poetic initiates who could presumably appreciate obscurities like "purple-violet worlds." It nonetheless beautifully formulates the Symbolist's self-conception as a mediator between two halves of a dualistic universe – and in language alluding directly to Sologub. The lecture is translated in Blok (London, 1980), 149-50.

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Empire, Identity, and Masculinity in Thomas Young's Nineteenth-Century British Handbook of the Mosquito Shore

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Abstract:

This essay contextualizes Thomas Young's *Narrative of a Residence on the Mosquito Shore* (1842) within the overall production of travel narratives to the Americas, the intellection of race, and the construction of British identity and masculinity during the first half of the nineteenth century. It analyzes the author's representation of the Honduran climate, terrain, and raw materials, as well as the "customs and manners" of its Mosquito-Sambo population. It also sheds light on how the Mosquito-Sambos organized themselves socially and politically and utilized their "exceptional" status bequeathed to them by the British Crown to distinguish themselves from other indigenous peoples. In doing so, they complicated the era's ethnoracial ideas and conventions. Lastly, this article argues that Young's narrative provides an insight into bourgeois values and masculine sensibility. Through the description and differentiation of the "other," we are provided with a nuanced image of a middle-class British subject.

Keywords: Masculinity, Bourgeois Class, British Empire, Identity, Nineteenth-century Travel Literature, Honduran Mosquito Coast.

In the 1830s, a group of speculators who formed the British Central American Land Company obtained a grant to develop and carry out a profitable system of emigration to the Mosquito Shore region of Honduras. To accomplish this objective, the associates of this society appointed a British man by the name of Thomas Young as deputy superintendent. As part of this post, Young traveled in 1839 with a group of men from Gravesend, England, to Black River, which was about eighty miles inland, to form a settlement and establish trade relations with the people of the recently-independent state of Honduras with the end goal of encouraging British immigration to the area. This was not the first time British entrepreneurs and surveyors attempted to establish colonies in Black River – efforts were previously made in the mid and late eighteenth century – but the limited success achieved was the same. Nevertheless, Young did produce a written account of his expedition; a text he, in his preface to his readers, described as a sort of handbook of a rugged terrain that is largely unknown and that he wished had existed because it would have saved him from much "trouble, loss of time, and disappointment."[1]

This article seeks to contextualize Thomas Young's *Narrative of a Residence on the Mosquito*

Shore (1842) within the overall production of travel narratives to the Americas, the construction of race, and the conceptualization of British identity and masculinity during the early Victorian Period. It examines the author's representation of the Honduran climate, landscape, and production, as well as the "customs and manners" of its Mosquito-Sambo population. It also sheds light on how this ethnic group organized itself socially and politically and utilized its "exceptional" status bequeathed to them by the British Crown to distinguish themselves from other indigenous populations. In doing so, they complicated the era's ethnoracial ideas and conventions. Lastly, this essay argues that Young's narrative provides an insight into bourgeois values and masculine sensibility. Through the description and differentiation of the "other," we are provided with a nuanced image of a middle-class British subject.

Imperialist Travel and Discourses of Masculinity in Nineteenth-Century Great Britain

By the nineteenth century, Britain was a preeminent imperialist and industrialized nation. It had expanded its influence and borders to parts of Africa, Asia, and Oceania and had established itself as a prominent commercial and trading nation (Bridges 2002, 54-55). In the metropolis, there were numerous enhancements in transport infrastructure, technological and scientific innovation, and an expansion in the production of goods through the factory systems (Mangan 1989, 2). These advancements also resulted in the rise of the middle class, increased literacy, and a growing number of men joining the professions of business administration, diplomacy, trade, medicine, scientific innovation, surveyorship, and professional writing, among others (Tosh 2007, 12). These "new" bourgeois men were part of the individuals who traveled and migrated, on a short-term or a long-standing basis, in a professional capacity to the empire's colonies or territories it had economic interests in or were "informally" part of the British Empire. Monetary gain and political prowess were the main impetus for travel, but many men and women also ventured out beyond the metropolis in search of adventure, leisure, or knowledge (Watts 2009, 775-776).

Britain's expanding empire and engagement with other peoples and cultures also brought about the production and wide circulation of numerous travelogues. These travel narratives varied to an extent in form, purpose, and scope, but those commissioned by the government or investment and trading companies were, for the most part, required to not only be "more precise and scientific but also more obviously utilitarian, [and] more explicitly concerned with issues of trade, diplomacy, and prestige" (Youngs 2013, 55). That is not to say that many of the letters, diaries, and reports written during and after the travels ended did not include personal anecdotes and entertaining as well as "exotic" details, which they did to appeal to a broader general audience. Still, much of the booster literature focused on attracting settlers to the newly colonized or acquired areas (Youngs 2013, 59). In other words, despite claims to objective and value-free texts, most nineteenth-century travel narratives are hybrid works, a mixture of information that falls between factual or scientific and more literary in tone (Mills 1993, 84-85).

Knowingly or unintentionally, travelers were complicit with imperialism. Men and women embodied and legitimated the growing empire through the successes they claimed to have had in acquiring tangible profits, contributing to society's commercial and intellectual needs, or spreading the Protestant Christian faith. All of these actions were considered expressions of the superiority of the British Empire and its people (Thompson 2011, 174-175). Although not always included in the historiography of empire and industry, definitions of masculinity (and femininity) were also being constructed, debated, and reflected as Britain expanded its borders. As John Tosh indicates, much has been written about the construction of masculinity in the home or public sphere, but it is often compartmentalized and not always tied to empire-building and economic expansion (2005b, 330-331). This approach is limiting because empire provided a space for asserting masculine energies, carrying-out episodes of heroic adventuring, and establishing gendered identity.

As denoted above, this was a period of transformation and advancement, but with it also came heightened anxieties about changes in the codes and discourses on masculinity. This was particularly an issue for the rising bourgeois class that had eclipsed the aristocratic class but had to adapt to differing masculine expectations. It is important to note that masculinity was not a consistent, static, or uniform concept that permeated all classes or the different professions that made up the bourgeoisie. Nevertheless, specific characteristics and values constituted a "hegemonic" form of middle-class masculinity and were undoubtedly tied to the ideal male imperial subject (Tosh 2005a, 41-44). These qualities included bravery, earnestness, loyalty, temperance, and protective nature toward the weak (Cohen 2005, 326; Linsley 2013, 2). In addition, the new man was expected to have the self-discipline to achieve a balance between two extreme behaviors: the "imagined self-indulgent lassitude" associated with the aristocrats "and the lustful abandon of the working classes" (Dorré 2006, 24). But how were those masculine codes learned and maintained? Force and education were utilized, but so was textual and visual culture, which flourished in popular forms, including travel literature. Within these narratives, masculinity was represented and reified by British "imperial paragons and heroes" and the imagined unequal and hierarchical relationships between them and the overseas lands and peoples (Tosh 2005a, 50). In essence, many of these representations of masculinity not only resonated with masculine aspirations but also upheld their relevance and legitimacy.

Thomas Young and His Handbook of the Mosquito Coast

In many respects, Thomas Young presented himself as a model man in his report of the two years he spent on the Mosquito Shore and surrounding areas of Honduras from 1839 to 1841. Young commenced his *Narrative of a Residence on the Mosquito Shore* by informing the reader of the purpose of his voyage: to travel as an agent for the British Central American Land Company, a private land development firm, to Black River, where he was to form a settlement, establish amicable relations with its people, and open trade with the citizens of Honduras (2017 [1842], 1). In this capacity, and because of it, Young claimed to have adhered to the facts and recorded his observations in a measured, direct, and (primarily) simple manner. To ensure that he could obtain accurate information, he even learned the Mosquito language, which facilitated his communication with the natives and resulted in the production of a "Mosquitian-English" glossary.[2] From his point of departure in Gravesend, England, to the Cape of Gracias Dios on board a brig, to his voyage on a schooner down Black River and to Trujillo, to his excursions to the interior of the country and the Bay Islands via canoe, and his return home via Belize and the United Staes, Young provided a series of details on the landscape and local people. Also, to appease his employers, he explained the economic opportunities that the soil and raw materials could bring to investors and immigrants who had the sufficient means and perseverance to overcome the difficulties the region may pose. Young's claim to the truth was in line with the conventions of travel narratives classified as factual or scientific, as well as his auto-representation as a superior bourgeois gentleman.

But, there were other reasons, which had to do with outside pressures and a series of unfortunate experiences that Britishmen had on the Mosquito Coast the two decades before his arrival. As many of the newspapers of the time reported, there was doubt among the British public as to the land orders that the directors of the British Central American Land Company were granting to investors and the claims to a healthy and fertile environment because numerous men had previously fallen prey to the dishonesty of Scottish general Gregor MacGregor in the 1820s and 1830s. McGregor had lured many to the area under the pretense that the then leader of the Mosquito-sambos had accorded him the territory of *Poyais*, which was nothing but a fictional developed colony.[3] In the end, all lost their capital and many of the men their lives as well. Young was well-aware of the information on the prior perils on the Mosquito Shore that circulated in Britain. Nevertheless, while remaining steadfast in not distorting or exaggerating the truth so as not to compromise "his authoritative narrational position" (Mills 2005, 93), Young produced a narrative that reflected many of the tropes of adventure, the discovery of exotic and economically significant flora and fauna, and episodes of overcoming (and dominating) nature (Frawley 1994, 28).

The journey to Honduras was fraught with obstacles and a largely impenetrable terrain. Young's difficulties began before he even reached the Mosquito Coast as he and the crew had to deal with thunderstorms, extreme waves, and gales that almost carried away one of the men and filled the cabin with water while they were in it. As Young indicated, "The conflict of the elements, and the efforts of man to combat them —the pitching and rolling of a small brig, now on the top of a high wave, and now sunk in the abyss– the orders and responses of the captain and crew in a storm, will create feelings not easily forgotten" (2017 [1842], 4). He knew the voyage would not be easy, and many hardships lay ahead. However, in this incident and others in which he battled with nature, Young emphasized his stoicism and his ability to remain disciplined and agreeable in temperament. The experience where perhaps these qualities are most apparent is one where he, his guide, a Scotsman who had settled in the Bay Islands, and two other travelers got lost in the mangrove swamplands off the shores of the island of Bonacca. Young explained how in one of the many failed attempts to reach Black River:

> We struck into a new pass, and after three hours travelling through numerous thickets and the foul drawback grass, which lacerated us severely, we were astounded to hear that our guide had lost his way; yet the stalwart Scotchman kept stalking on with one arm in a sling, and his feet dripping with blood, cutting away with his machete in the direction he thought would lead us to the lagoon, in which was our dorey, but all to no purpose. Our spirits were, however, kept up by constantly meeting with gulleys of water, at which we stopped and drank greedily, first bathing our temples and wrists. At any other time, when not suffering from intense pain, toilworn, and feverish, I should have been enchanted with the many beautiful scenes. Numerous tall and commanding trees, full of orchidaceous plants, bearing lovely and splendid flowers of hues the most varied and singular, and many other fine specimens of a smaller kind were continually seen. Day advanced, and we were still wandering without any prospect of finding our way, so completely bewildered was our poor guide. At length, we reached a matted mangrove thicket, and after cutting a pass with our machetes for upwards of a mile, sometimes crawling on our hands and knees on the dank and fetid swamp; at other times over the huge roots of the mangrove, which impeded our progress by their vast size, and their being twisted together in so many fantastical shapes… or tall tiger grass, six, seven, and eight feet in height (2017 [1842], 44).

The description above clearly shows how the landscape impeded their progress and threatened their health and well-being, as illustrated by the references to the "feet dripping with blood," "intense pain," fever, and overall wear and tear of their bodies. Also, the fortitude and stalwartness that both Young and the Scotsman showed reflected their "masculine" nature and, as representatives of the British Empire, that of the empire as well (Linsley 2013, 2; Woollacott 2006, 59). The use of machetes to cut through the mangroves is reminiscent of a chivalrous knight using his sword to overcome his enemy or even himself (Cohen 2005, 320-322).

Nevertheless, according to Young, the natural world is not only something to overcome but also to contemplate, respect, and appreciate for its beauty and grandeur. That is why, following his departure from Bonacca, Young included in his narrative other examples of how in awe he was of the grand terrains and climatic hazards he experienced despite the dangers they undoubtedly posed. For instance, during one of his temporary stays at a Sambo settlement near Black River during the latter part of 1840, Young described how for two days straight, the strong winds and "heavy torrents of rain" had damaged most of the dwellings and put in jeopardy both the abode he was in, and his life as well. Nevertheless, Young survived because he and others could secure protective shelter. As a conclusion to this episode, he articulated that he "sat listening to the raging elements, and the lashing and roaring of the sea on the beach [and conveyed to the reader how] … the thunder and lightning, in some seasons, during six or eight weeks of the year, in July and August, is awfully grand, and in the pine ridges, it is said to be terrific (Young 2017 [1842], 90). Young's battle with, and admiration for nature, are evident in his words. Still, it is also important to note that his descriptions, including the human-like qualities he attributed to the elements, are quite literary, which reflect an innate sensibility and a propensity for literature. Young never claimed to want to entertain his readers, be a naturalist, or show his penchant for poetry, but it is evident in his writing and allusion to Lord Byron's "The Island" and "Hailing a

Portuguese Man of War" by an anonymous US-New England author as well as the works by naturalist Sir Hans Slone (2017 [1842], 5-8).

Behaviors, Customs, and Nature of the Mosquito-Sambos

The Mosquito-Sambos are a racially mixed ethnic group that has dwelt on the seacoast of Honduras for close to four centuries. They are the descendants of enslaved Africans that escaped from a shipwrecked ship in the seventeenth century and intermarried with various Amerindian groups (Young 2017 [1842], 71-72). Since then, the Mosquito-Sambos continued to racially mix with other runaway enslaved peoples, privateers, British traders, and intermittent laborers (Jiménez-Moreno 1978, 21; Argueta 2002, 416). Despite a high level of miscegenation and contact with numerous peoples, the Mosquito-Sambos was primarily an autonomous group, although they did maintain economic and political ties with the British. The relationship between them resulted in the Mosquito-Sambos adopting some of the British customs and a quasi-monarchy-influenced system of government led by a king and a series of "appointed chiefs, such as generals, admirals, colonels, and captains" (Young 2017 [1842], 71).[4] According to Young,

> The [Mosquito] men are in general tall and athletic, with a very pleasing expression of features, but they are abominably lazy, subsisting by hunting and fishing and the produce of their plantations, which the women attend to. It is not always they can be moved from their apathy, even by the inducement of liquor or Osnaburg [fabric]… The women are very good looking, with large black eyes; generally well shaped, with small feet and ankles. Many of their young girls, from thirteen to about eighteen, are, I may say, beautiful. Their dress is simply a tournou [breechcloth], which they fasten round their hips; they have also a piece of Osnaburg or print round their bodies, and hanging down as low as their knees; the legs and the body from the waist upwards being bare, except on the occasion of their festivals, when they fasten more print higher up the bosom…To describe the dress of the men is impossible, the variations are so numerous; some having nothing but a tournou, others black hats (pieces of some gaudy ribbon being tied round them) and checked shirts; others again, wear Osnaburg frocks and red caps; indeed, the more connection they have with the English, the more varied becomes their costume; although the intercourse with white people does not at all times tend to increase their morality (2017 [1842], 28-29).

As an observer and someone aware of his reader's desires for wanting to know and "vicariously experience the lifestyle" (Wernecke 2013, 12) of the "exotic" other, Young's details of the Mosquito-Sambos' physical features and character are expected. Yet, these "ethnographic manners-and-customs description[s]" (Pratt 1985, 132) also reveal much about British bourgeois values and gender codes because they are not solely constructed by ideal examples but also images of what they are not; masculinity and morality are defined against images of "unmanliness" and decadence (Dowling 2016, 2-3). Drunkenness and indolence, in particular, serve this purpose as they are two of the vices that the middle-class sought to distance themselves most by the 1840s. In doing so, the bourgeoisie hoped to further distinguish themselves from the uncouthness of the lower class and debauchery of the aristocracy (Davidoff 1987, 400-401). In addition, the fact that Mosquito women performed arduous agricultural labor emasculates them and feminizes the men in the process. In the eyes of any respectable British man or lady, this would be an aberration and the opposite of the traditional gender roles delineated in the ideology of separate spheres (Woollacott 2006, 138).[5] Overall, the Mosquito-Sambos are represented as inferior and immoral because the men did not conform to British standards of restraint and hard work and the women to modesty and, to a certain extent, delicacy.

Young also emphasized the notion of the ills of excess in his depiction of the Mosquito men's attempts at imitating the English way of boxing and their inhumane approach to taming their horses. After a few days on Cape Gracias a Dios, Young indicated that he was an eyewitness to how men would try to settle their dispute by engaging in ridiculous and over-the-top fist fights. The Mosquito-Sambos claimed to be boxing or fighting in the "English fashion," but Young made it a point to refute their statements as "most absurd… as they [had] no idea of guarding or stopping but receive[d] and exchange[d] blow for blow until one declared himself beaten" (2017 [1842], 33). Boxing was a popular sport in England, across all classes, and it was undoubtedly an avenue to express masculine prowess, but by the nineteenth century, the violence that was once celebrated was seen as excessive and loutish behavior. That is not to say that boxing was no longer practiced, but a more restrained and regularized sport was considered the most appropriate form. Of course, boxing was furthered "civilized" or subject to stricter rules with the introduction of the Queensbury Rules in the mid-1860s (Dunning 2005, 57-59).

Like boxing, horses and horse care have been part of British life and culture for centuries and were topics of debate among the middle class during the nineteenth century. Consequently, it is not surprising that Young spent a great deal demonstrating how the Mosquito-Sambos' method of taming their horses was not only incorrect but brutal at times. For the British, horses (and their treatment) were important because the experiences and attitudes individuals had towards them reflected, to an extent, the understanding of themselves and their desires to control nature (Dorré 2006, 5-6). Furthermore, the horse was traditionally seen as a symbol of male strength and distinction and "a site where masculine and [middle] class authority might be either produced or discredited" (Dorré 2006, 10). This is especially the case through the practice of horse-breaking as it was perceived as articulating "the dominant concerns of the emerging middle-classes intent on securing an ideology of gender difference, a tractable workforce, as well as a position of moral, economical, and political superiority" (Dorré 2006, 69). The middle class advocated for a civilized approach to the domestication of horses and society; unfortunately, Young did not see this practice among the Mosquito-Sambos.

> The manner of taming horses is very singular: when a horse is to be tamed, a native fastens a long rope to its head, and takes hold of the other end; it is then driven into shallow water, about up to a man's loins; when

> this is effected another advances cautiously towards the horse, and endeavours to leap on his back, in which he is assisted by the person at the end of the rope, and who, with such purchase, pulls vigorously, and turns the horse round to facilitate his companion's attempts; but as the snorting and maddened creature plunges and rears, the native with the stealthiness and activity of a cat jumps on its bare back, and instantly commences beating the horse's head with his open hands, first on one side, then on the other; in vain the horse endeavours to rid himself of his rider; the native with the rope pulls, and the one on his back beats him, till at last his strength and spirit give way, and he becomes completely subdued. So severe is the lesson, however, that sometimes a horse will lie on the beach exhausted, and at the sound of the human voice will tremble violently. Sometimes the rider gets thrown, but as he only falls into the water, it is of no consequence; he again leaps on the horse's back and renews the battle; it is rarely that more than one lesson is required to completely master and break the proud spirit of the before untamed horse. Many of the native horses, by taming, become dull and require to be flogged into exertion; on the contrary, I have known others to be fast and free from vice or tricks of any sort. Most of the horses at the Cape are disfigured by having their ears completely eaten away, or so much so, as to drop, which destroys their beauty; this is done by a species of insect called a tick, the natives being too indolent to relieve the poor horses from them. Horses are often bitten at night by bats, which cause bad sores (Young 2017 [1842], 20-21).

In the account above, there is a vivid display of uncontrolled, excessive, and almost animalistic domestication of the horses by the natives. Young even made it a point to compare the Mosquito-Sambos to cats and indicated that their tactics were ineffective because they left the animals listless and subject to more violence. Moreover, the men did not seem to concern themselves with the health or well-being of horses as they did nothing to protect them from ticks or bats that disfigured them and did away with their beauty.

Although Young underlined the Mosquito-Sambos' propensity for dissipation and ultimately contended that they would not endure nor learn to take full advantage of the natural resources that the regions offered "without the skill and perseverance of the white man" (2017 [1842], 16), he did provide some examples of their more redeeming qualities. First, Young expressed his astonishment at the skill and strength the Mosquito men showed at fishing despite their inadequate equipment (2017 [1842], 22).[6] He was also pleasantly surprised to see how most of the Mosquito-Sambos spoke the English language intelligibly and how all, including Robert Charles, the king of the Mosquitos, welcomed him and his fellow companions. King Charles made a favorable impression on him when Young first met him and presented him with his credentials because the king "was dressed in the uniform of a post captain in the British navy, and his deportment was very quiet and reserved, although he seemed amused when any favourite subject was started" (2017 [1842], 25). In essence, the king demonstrated a behavior closer to British ideals and sought to emulate the English tribunal structure. As Young revealed, an "amusing" jury trial

> commenced before three magistrates and the king; all the white people at the Cape, and several natives attended. The king was dressed in his plain clothes but had his naval sword and hat with him; he listened

> attentively and repeatedly testified his pleasure at having the prisoner tried in the English fashion. A jury having been formed, and a person well acquainted with the language appointed as interpreter, several witnesses fully proved that the prisoner had maliciously shot Lyndia, the king's aunt. He said nothing in his defense; he was, therefore, after a patient investigation in the open air, under some cocoa-nut trees, unanimously found guilty by the jury, and sentenced to be hanged. To this sentence, the natives around showed no symptom of dissent or dissatisfaction... [Nevertheless, at the time of the hanging] the cries and wailings of the women and children collected together were heart-rending; some would throw themselves franticly on the sand before the prisoner's feet, their bodies streaming with blood; others would vent the most piercing shrieks, while some would moan and cry in a piteous manner; indeed, I scarcely ever felt so completely saddened... At length arriving at the place of execution, the cord was adjusted, and he was launched into eternity. The dreadful scene was at last terminated; the signal gun fired from the brig, and the flag lowered half-mast high; the king causing it to be proclaimed that any of his people who did wrong should be hung (2017 [1842], 26-28).

The description of the trial is significant for numerous reasons. First, it clearly showed the British' influence on the Mosquito-Sambos. It also provided the reader with one of the few instances in which Young was not stoic or measured with his emotions but rather showed great empathy for the suffering of the women; what he observed was "heart-rending" and "dreadful." While it may seem that Young's behavior is out of character or even "divorced from the dominant code of masculinity," it is essential to consider that it was more acceptable to demonstrate emotion during the first half of the nineteenth century than it was in the latter decades (Tosh 2005a, 49). Moreover, Young's reactions are justified because lynching, capital punishment in general, was seen as extreme, inhumane, and no longer a common practice in Britain during that period.

Rituals, Symbols, and Identity in the Mosquito Kingdom

As previously mentioned, the Mosquito-Sambos adopted many British customs, including military clothing and symbols and a monarchy-influenced organization system. But what was the significance of these traditions for the Mosquito-Sambos despite Young's assessment as simple imitations of the "superior" British race? Why were they exercised and maintained for centuries? The Mosquito peoples established a form of hegemony over the territory and other coastal groups during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries through the adoption and resignation of symbolic British royal regalia and titles. In addition, the social-political structure, as well as relations of power of the Mosquito-Sambos, was constructed, strengthened, and perpetuated through ritualistic symbolization and emblems of authority such as clothing, coins, canes, and military titles. In other words, objects and practices that were once seen as English were embedded with new meanings and became essential markers of Mosquito culture, identity, and everyday life. This can be seen first and foremost in the ceremony surrounding the crowning of Robert Charles, the then King of the Mosquito-Sambos. On August 9, 1856, the *Bell's Weekly Messenger* published one of the most detailed accounts of the coronation that occurred in 1824.[7] The anonymous writer stated that,

> [On] the day of the coronation, the king [was]dressed in the uniform of [a] British major, and attended by his chiefs, who wore military coats and sailor trousers. [When] they arrived at the Court House [in] Belize, the principal persons of the were there [to] meet them. When the procession was formed, the whole [assemblage] proceeded to the Church, the elected king horseback, [with] a British officer riding on each side of his majesty, and the Indian chiefs following, in pairs, [on] foot. [Once] arrived [at] the church, his majesty was seated on a chair. The English coronation service was then read [by] the chaplain of the colony. During the ceremony, his Majesty... admir[ed] his 'new and gorgeous' garments [a silver gilt crown, a sword, and [a] scepter]. The anointing afforded him [a] particular pleasure...When the ceremony of the coronation was finished, the ships in the harbour fired a colossal salute, and all bystanders shouted Long live King Robert! (1856, n.p.)

This eyewitness description of how Robert Charles Frederick was presented with royal ceremonial regalia and declared the 9th king of the Mosquito Nation shows the significance of this rite for the continuation of a monarchy-influenced system of organization and order in general. In this coronation, one can observe how social relations between Mosquito-Sambos and other ethnic groups "are displayed and renewed and the hierarchical forms underlying social relations confirmed and strengthened by ritual" (Dirks 1994, 483). Furthermore, Robert Charles' authority over others is legitimated by the scepter, sword, and other symbols of power he is given as king. That is why even Young recognized the respect the Mosquito-Sambos showed for their king's authority when he indicated that the men would follow the orders of the king or his representatives if they showed them "one of his tokens, either a silver medal, formerly presented to his deceased brother George Frederic by the English, or a gold-headed stick, a sword, or something known to belong to the king. These tokens the natives never disavowed" (2017 [1842], 12-13)

Like a ritual, clothing is also an essential part of identity. As scholars have demonstrated, "clothing is a palpable, immediate, and intimate form of [both] material culture [and material capital] ... [it is] a marker of identity, and a vehicle" for socio-political and cultural expression (Shukla 2015, 10). Military uniforms, in particular, serve as a form of totem that certifies legitimacy and "helps [to ensure] that organizational goals will be attained, and orders priorities of group and status demands for the individual (Joseph & Alex 719). Thus, it is not surprising that adopting British military clothing and titles by the Mosquito-Sambos became crucial in establishing their symbolic and literal hegemony on the Mosquito Coast. Although the use of military attire and leadership designations were initially foreign-imposed, the Mosquito-Sambos knew that British culture "had gained considerable prestige on the coast" and, as a result, their costumes and titles were considered "anything but absurd by the people themselves" (Olien 1985, 123). Nevertheless, it is important to underline that the Mosquito-Sambos' actions cannot and should not be reduced to emulation or as an indication of British control over them because it takes away their agency and erroneously presupposes that Mosquito culture and identity are simply the end products of recycled European traditions.

Conclusions

Thomas Young could never fully carry out his mission to form a permanent settlement on the Mosquito Coast that would draw British immigrants to the area or establish trading relations with the Spanish in Honduras. Nonetheless, his two-year voyage resulted in a written travel account titled *Narrative of a Residence on the Mosquito Shore*, published in 1842 by Smith, Elder & Company. Excerpts from his manuscript —mainly scenes of adventures and survival and customs and origins of the native peoples— were also printed in numerous British newspapers during the mid and late 1840s.[8] As expected, many of the reviewers praised Young for a travelogue they considered to be not only objective and helpful but also a candid representation of Honduras' challenging climate and geography. Indeed, Young's work appealed to a series of readers because it contained many of the traditional tropes and conventions of travel literature written by men during the Early Victorian Era. But as demonstrated in this essay, his travel manuscript also provided a space where British identity and bourgeois masculinity were constructed and debated by employing a language of difference and hierarchy when describing the native peoples. Overall, this examination of Thomas Young's *Narrative of a Residence on the Mosquito Shore* shows the value of a transnational approach to the study of nineteenth-century British identities and masculinities and the undeniable correlation between empire, identity, and travel.

Endnotes:

1. See preface to his travel narrative. All citations of his work will come from the republication of the 1842 edition by Leopold Publishing in 2017.
2. Young included a copy of the "Mosquitian" vocabulary he had acquired during his travels in Honduras and provided English translations of all words on pages 170-172 of his travelogue.
3. Many of the doubts surrounding the British Central American Land Company's land grants and business ventures on the Mosquito Coast in the aftermath of Macgregor's fictional Poyais territory and defrauding actions were included in the November 6, 1840, edition of the *Welshman*, the August 21, 1841, publication of the *Saint James Chronicle*, and November 5, 1841, edition of the *Evening Mail*. All newspapers were accessed from the British Newspaper Archive, www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk.
4. For a more detailed discussion and analysis of the Mosquito system of government, see Olien's "The Miskito Kings and the Line of Succession" and Offen's "The Sambo and Tawira Miskitu."
5. See Leonore Davidoff and Catherine Hall, *Family Fortunes: Men and Women of the English Middle Class, 1780-1850*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987) for a detailed explanation of the doctrine of separate spheres.
6. The inclusion of fishing accounts should come as no surprise, as it was an activity where masculinity was constructed and debated by the different British classes. See "The Other Side of the Coin" by Mangan and Mackenzie.
7. For a complete account of the coronation, see "A Mosquito Coronation" in *Bell's Weekly Messenger*. www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk.
8. Among the newspapers where excerpts of Young's narrative appeared were the *Jeer Examiner*, *Naval and Military Gazette*, and *Morning Chronicle*. All newspapers were accessed from the British Newspaper Archive, www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk.

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Fecal Realities and the Making of a Worlded Self: Rigoberta Menchú, Jamaica Kincaid, and Slavenka Drakulić

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Abstract:

In Rigoberta Menchú's testimonial, *I Rigoberta Menchú* (1983), the essays collected under Slavenka Drakulić's title, *Cafe Europa* (1996), and Jamaica Kincaid's generically undefinable narrative, *A Small Place* (1988), relationships to bodily waste are showcased as part and parcel of processes of self-making in relation to the making of national/colonial imaginaries. Such processes involve not just insular practices of individual cultivation but also the material conditions of the world that impact, in a Foucauldian sense, the artistry involved in enacting the care of the self in relation to other people and other times. The concluding argument is that the making of the narrative self, as a carefully "worlded" entity, emerges in Menchú, Kincaid, and Drakulić as a continually shifting work in the art of a nonfictional search for the conditions under which diverse realities and their accompanying truths come to be spoken. It is in the distances that separate different truths, and through the bending of genres like the testimonial and the personal essay that the nonfictional self *becomes* rather than *is,* both in relation to the expose of its most intimate bodily needs and in relation to what that expose leads to: the visceral encounter with its most unknowable others.

Keywords: Care of the Self, Global South, Politics of Excrement, Postcolonialism, Nonfiction

> There are no toilets in the finca. There was only this place up in the hills where everybody went. There were about four hundred of us living there and everybody went to this same place. It was the toilet for all those people. We had to take it in turns. When one lot of people came back, another lot would go. There were lots of flies on all that filth up there.
>
> Rigoberta Menchú, *I, Rigoberta Menchú*

> The streets were covered with mud and were so slippery that it was dangerous to walk there. It appears under the asphalt, through the holes and cracks – brownish, sticky, greasy, just like shit.
>
> Slavenka Drakulić, *Café Europa*

> You must not wonder what exactly happened to the contents of your lavatory when you flushed it. You must not wonder where your bathwater went when you pulled out the stopper.

> You must not wonder what happened when you brushed your teeth. Oh, it might all end up in the water you are thinking of taking a swim in; the contents of your lavatory might, just might, graze gently against your ankle as you wade carefree in the water, for you see, in Antigua, there is no proper sewage-disposal system.
>
> Jamaica Kincaid, *A Small Place*

The enduring preoccupation with excrement—as metaphor, as matter to be sanitized and managed, as trope, as sensuous substance with color, odor, texture, and consistency—is not limited to the three nonfictional texts I focus on in this essay. Scattered across a range of recent and contemporary narratives from the Global South, it appears for instance in the Zimbabwean Tsitsi Dangarembga's 1988 debut novel, *Nervous Conditions*, in the much-acclaimed 2008 British-Indian film, *Slumdog Millionaire,* in the Nigerian author Chimamanda Adichie's 2003 novel, *Purple Hibiscus,* and in more recent works of nonfiction like the Indian-American author, Amitava Kumar's *A Matter of Rats: A Short Biography of Patna* (2013) and the Indian journalist, Aman Sethi's *A Free Man: A True Story of Life and Death in Delhi* (2012). Scholars of Postcolonialism and of the Global South have not missed the abundance of scatological rhetoric and references to excrement in the corpora of authors who were writing under conditions of colonialism and/or in their aftermath. Drawing on the work of Jacques Derrida, Roland Barthes and Jed Esty, Mari Lathers, for instance, points out in her essay titled, "Towards an Excremental Posthumanism", that in the colonial era, the problem of human waste was deflected onto the bodies of "filthy" natives and/or it was medically managed in laboratories as a means of preventing disease and then rendered sterile in the language of scientific reports where it embedded itself in the halo of *The Word* (Lathers 2006, 417-436). The desired effect was to rid civilized cultures of the stench of shit such that the colonizer could transcend not just the foul bodies of natives, but even his own corporeal substantiality. Writers responding to such colonial practices of domination thus often did so by displacing fecal references back onto their colonizers (or ex-colonizers) and/or onto indigenous compradors, while those writing in the shadow of the failures of newly independent nation-states saw the continuing presence of shit in public spaces of the postcolony as a sign of the fracture between elite national collectivities and openly "defecating groups" subaltern to their interests.

Relying on these observations as also channeling them in a somewhat different direction, I choose to reflect on how in the works of the nonfiction writers I consider, relationships to bodily waste are part and parcel of processes of self-making in relation to "others" just as they are of the material realities that both constrain and stimulate the artistry involved in enacting those processes. The Foucauldian care of the self which influences my reflections on the practices of self-making as an art form will resonate with those heterogenous and not-always-completely-knowable real conditions in the world which the texts I read attempt to engage with and probe for their diverse realities. As Philip Lopate notes in "Facts have Implications: or, is Nonfiction Really Fiction", "nonfiction, including personal essays, has a relationship to factual reality and self-testimony that makes it fundamentally different from fiction" (Lopate 2013, 78). In other words, particularly in the way Rigoberta Menchú stretches the boundaries of the testimonial to include the stories of others in *I, Rigoberta Menchú* and the means Jamaica Kincaid and Slavenka Drakulić employ to navigate transactions between the first, second, and third-person pronouns in their respective (personal) essays, these texts become the most appropriate platform for my elaborations about the making of a self, embedded in the most material of her realities, and keenly aware that others inhabit their own distinct realities. The texts I explore show that even though they might be indiscernible in their variety, diverse realities can be identified as the grounds for shaping varied ways of knowing and distinct rules of conduct associated with the cultures and histories of groups and individuals attuned in different manners to what Edward Said has called worldliness—the flawed condition of humans variously shaped by their power/powerlessness, positions, and interests in a world bearing imprints of other peoples and other times.

In the testimonial of the Guatemalan, Rigoberta Menchú (*I, Rigoberta Menchú: an Indian Woman in Guatemala*, 1983), the counter-travel narrative of the Antiguan Jamaica Kincaid (*A Small Place,* 1988), and the collection of essays by the Croatian Slavenka Drakulić (*Café Europa: Life after Communism*, 1996) it is the fleshly reality of feces—accessible to *all* the senses rather than removed from them—that is paramount to the authors' self-compositions in relation to the varied realities of "others".[1] These could be others with whom they share the most intimate of mundane experiences or others from whom their lives are profoundly alienated. In Rigoberta Menchú's case, for instance, having to defecate in the wild, and share a "toilet" with four hundred other workers on a coffee plantation is an intimate affair she shares with people she barely knows. However, it is ignominious insofar as it is filthy and attracts flies, not because the experience of co-existing with others in what, to more privileged defecators, should be a private space, is unknown to the severely impoverished Mayan communities of Guatemala on behalf of whom Menchú claims to speak. For example, Menchú tells us that "Most children" in these communities "*know* when their parents are having relations", and in doing so, draws attention to the material realities of cramped spaces as the breeding ground for certain kinds of knowing (Menchú 2009, 70; emphasis mine). Recognizing such relationality, Menchú also understands why it is not until later in her life, when she is working as a maid in the capital city, that she comes to *know* that "with rich people [...] even their toilets shine" (Menchú 2009, 111). What is left unsaid (but nonetheless implied) in Menchú's new knowledge resulting from her new reality is that despite her mistress thinking her to be "dirty", it is she who is responsible for the cleanliness of the latter's lavatory. The quiet irony is razor-sharp, for while the mistress probably does not know the first thing about how to realize the spotless toilet she demands of her maid, Menchú too, having never known a toilet either at home or on the plantation where she worked, is compromised in relation to this demand. Until "the *other* girl" teaches her how to make toilets shine (Menchú 2009, 111; emphasis mine). On the ladder of relayed subalternity, this other servant girl's minimally superior position is established not only because she knows how to clean, but by the fact that she *is* clean—that is, she speaks Spanish, unlike Menchú at the time, and wears *ladino* clothes.[2] However, as they work together, Menchú and the other girl become close, and it is notable that for Menchú that closeness is sealed, not in her naming of the girl (which she does not do), but in the reality of shared food. With her "privileged" access to the masters' leftovers, the other girl gives some to Menchú and this moment becomes especially poignant in light of what the latter says to her amaneunsis, Elisabeth Burgos-Debray: "we only trust people who eat what we eat" (Menchú 2009, xvii). Presumably if one eats what the other eats, then one also evacuates from one's body what the other does, and so to come back to Menchú's experiences on the plantation—where she and the other workers eat the same food and are asked to share the experience of filth when they defecate in groups—one can assume that they too are to be underlined by trust.

In a different move that apparently turns the tables on this idea that food habits could be a ground for self and other meeting, Jamaica Kincaid in *A Small Place* warns precisely about the suspect (and therefore, *un-trustworthy*) nature of food for a tourist to Antigua. Repeatedly and relentlessly hitting notes of accusation in its second-person address to Euro-Americans who vacation on Kincaid's native island only to perpetuate colonial-style exploitation, *A Small Place* reminds tourists that the nice fresh lobster from the clear waters of the island and the "delicious, locally grown food"—staples of touristy plans for holidaying—are precursors to what one might imagine are the-not-so-glistening contents of a glistening hotel lavatory (Kincaid 1988, 13). The nonfiction makes clear that bodily waste may be rendered invisible for a tourist to Antigua, but being aware of the lack of a proper sewage system on the island, Kincaid is in a position to caution that waste from the tourist's toilet probably touches him at his most credulous moment as he happily splashes about in the Caribbean Sea. In a familiar, yet still stylistically breathtaking anticolonial posture, the problem of bodily waste is here displaced onto the "ugly" Anglo-American tourist, with Kincaid purposefully crafting a technique to speak back to the tourist's habitual objectification of native bodies. Blinded as he is—albeit for the most part in innocent naivete—by the dazzle of imperial lights, the tourist does not know where the feces of Antigua's shiniest lavatories go, in the same way as he does not stop to think that the "local" food he is craving probably came off a plane from Miami. "It was grown dirt-cheap", Kincaid tells us, in someplace like Antigua, then went to Miami, and came back nicely plumped up in a healthy first-world price-tag (Kincaid 1988, 14). In this scenario, food cannot in any meaningful way be shared between the western self and native others just as fecal realities are more real (in the sense of being more apprehensible to the senses) for the latter than the former: thus, the distrust between them.

The tourist may be unseeing of such distinctions in lived conditions, but the Antiguan state machinery is not, so it comes as no surprise that Kincaid's fiery accusations do not leave unscathed the latter's failure to provide its people with a proper sewage system or rid them of exploitative market practices involving basic necessities like food. *A Small Place* clearly indicts, in one fell swoop, both the autonomous government of Antigua as well as the Euro-American tourist industry and its continuing imperialist adventures, but Kincaid's rhetoric importantly establishes that the two are not identical. She reserves for the tourist on the one hand, a loudly accusatory second person pronoun that is not afraid to aggressively point to him as ugly in mind and body, and at the same time turn around with bitter sarcasm to show that in his everyday life, he is not in fact ugly, but intensely ordinary in a way that it takes everything out of him, taxes him so much that he is driven to become the ugly tourist.[3] For the self-governing apparatus of Antigua, on the other hand, Kincaid usually maintains a third person pronoun ("the government") in which anger at corrupt politicians mingles with an acute awareness of how complicit comprador classes come to be, and how they crisscross the lives of other Antiguans who repeatedly bring them to power and continue to docilely bear their brunt.

In "Ideological Crossings: 'you' and the pragmatics of negation in Jamaica Kincaid's *A Small Place",* Sandrine Sorlin has written searchingly about how Kincaid's use of the second person pronoun interpellates the reader, narratively locking her into a class of white, North American or European tourists who exploit native Antiguans and take pleasure in the appropriation of their lives (Sorlin 2014, 11-25). Both Sorlin and Jane King (in "*A Small Place* Writes Back") argue that Kincaid identifies with neither the native Antiguan nor the white tourist, and while Sorlin is gentler in her analysis, King's reading seethes at the author's proclivity for a rhetorical position from which she can easily "despise both" (King 2002, 895). According to King, Kincaid's view is that the tourist is of course an "ugly human being," but led by elite Antiguan politicians and government officials (who are despicable for their corruption), post-independence citizen-subjects are so completely customized by the event of tourism that they too are willing to make the degradation and humiliation of their banal lives into tourist attractions in themselves (Kincaid 1988, 14). Simply put, for Kincaid in King's view, one group is to be abhorred for its ugliness, another for its corruption, and still another for its passivity. The question then becomes: if she does not identify with any one of these repugnant collectivities, why does Kincaid need to assert early on in *A Small Place*, and with a good degree of enunciative force, that she is Antiguan: "We Antiguans, for I am one [...]" (Kincaid 1988, 8)? Why, when addressing the tourist and telling him that local Antiguans do not like him, does she add in italics that they do not like her either? Would not the syntactical arrangement of "They do not like you. *They do not like me*!", and in particular, the italicization of the second sentence suggest that Kincaid is surprised and agitated at the idea that Antiguans do not like her and the tourist in the same way (Kincaid 1988, 17)? Is there a continuum between you and me, or between I and we that cannot be denied? The answers to these questions are not simple and the complexities they bring with them have to do with the unsteady realities of Kincaid's positioning vis-a-vis groups she may have been a part of, or, could potentially be a part of. After speaking of "We Antiguans", the author has to awkwardly pause and script herself in as an "I" who is part of the collective, as if she is not sure whether as an expatriate, she will be perceived as Antiguan. Contrastingly, when she is writing about her childhood and past in

Antigua, Kincaid does not have to qualify the relationship between the "we" and the "I" ("Since *we* were ruled by the English, *we* also had their laws"), perhaps because a migratory rupture has not yet torn her from her native land and peoples (Kincaid 1988, 25). Similarly, the slippage between the "you" and "me" in the adult Kincaid's context is a loaded one, because the condemnation that is directed against "you, the tourist" (who Kincaid well may be seen as) in *A Small Place* also points at certain moments in the text to "you" the English colonizer who has formatively shaped Kincaid's meeting with the world, the language she is forced to use to interact with it, and even perhaps her cognition of what she understands to be the truth of Antigua's present.

The Interstitial "I"

In *Slow Violence and the Environmentalism of the Poor*, Rob Nixon presents a sentient analysis of Kincaid's torn locations as a colonized subject and as an expatriate Antiguan who lives and works in the United States. The extract is worth quoting at length not only for its pained tone, but also for its attention to what happens to the authority to represent truth and reality in the case of such tautly rent writers:

> When you have ascended economically as a black woman or man into the middle classes, where do you stand in relation to those whose plight you depict [...]? Where do you belong in the historically sanitized, colonially hued inter-national marketplace in environmental relaxation? In writing about tourism, poverty, and clashing cultures of nature, Kincaid [...] attempt[s] to negotiate, through memoir and polemic, the minefields of race, class, and gender that confront [her] on entering a realm of nature industry tourism clearly not designed for [her] yet to which [she] can afford class access [...].The public role such figures assume is often animated both by an expressive anger and by the fear that their novel, precarious privilege is temporary or illusory—that one misstep may plunge them back into a viscerally remembered familial indigence (Nixon 2011, 26).

Nixon's observations would suggest that Kincaid's forceful rhetoric of anger in *A Small Place* may be fueled by a fear of the first-person pronoun collapsing into a third-person collective with which it no longer identifies, and indeed, such a claim is somewhat evidenced by the numbers the text throws up. That is to say, it is not coincidental that the phrase "We Antiguans" occurs *only once* in the entirety of the essay, a fact perhaps pointing toward the author's discomfort with situating herself in what she sees as a national tableau of passive and/or corrupt selfhood. I maintain however that this discomfort is two-pronged rather than bearing in only one direction as Nixon seems to imply, for it is only in being so that it morphs into the stronger emotion of fear that he detects. Kincaid may have been discomforted by the "I/me" coinciding with the "we" of her native Antigua, but she becomes *frightened* by the idea that the "I" could just as easily collapse into the "you" that is the English colonizer she has been shaped by, and more importantly, into the "you" that is the Euro-American visitor to the island. After all, in an interview with Allan Vorda soon after the publication of *A Small Place,* our author does let slip the following sentiment, in regard directly to the British colonizers no doubt, but with undertones that bring Kincaid herself into the fray: "I wish everyone would stay where they come from because when *we* go to other places, *you* eventually exploit" (Vorda/Kincaid 1996, 67). Despite the often-unguarded practice of conversation during interview processes, the sliding of the third person into the second person pronoun in Kincaid's statement cannot go unremarked. On one hand, this could be construed as the interviewee including herself in a "we" that has gone to other places, and at the same time distinguishing herself from the "you" that exploits. On the other, it could be that Kincaid's stumble from the "we" to the "you" marks her fear of becoming herself exploitative, or worse still, of being condemned as such. This was a problem not unknown to her after the publication of *A Small Place*, for which Kincaid drew as much praise as ire, the latter coming largely from critics who were convinced that it was from the position of a metropolitan migrant (an American who cannot understand the realities and truths of native Antiguan lives), that Kincaid had turned vituperative against the Antiguan state and its peoples.

I am by no means one of those critics. What I sense in *A Small Place* is the persistent pain of the postcolonial writer without a home, and the relentless agitation that is born of occupying a liminal space between indigent/passive native and exploitative migrant. This agitation that becomes a full-fledged fear when the displaced subject perpetually teeters on the brink of being captured by, and boxed into, either category is also paradoxically a mindset in which the native-turned-expatriate subject finds her keen critical temper, which is all she has in place of the comfort of a home. It is in understanding this remarkably fraught positioning that I can see how, like Kincaid, Slavenka Drakulić, in crafting personal essays on the lives of Croatians after Communism becomes trapped in a pronominal quagmire of "I"s, "they"s and "we"s: is Drakulić, a reputed author married to a rich Swede and privileged enough to divide her time between Sweden and Croatia, being patronizing in referring to her countrymen as "they" who have failed to imagine themselves as individuals, or is the "I" of *Cafe Europa* part of a collective "we", comprising all those children of the post-Communist world who will always, as she puts it somewhat snidely, need a "daddy" to rule them (Drakulić 1996, 107)? Is there a "you" that for Drakulić mediates the relationality between the first and third person pronouns but is elided somewhat in her writing? Before going into the specifics of that matter however, it would be important to elaborate how *Café Europa* inserts its author's processes of self-making as textual-grammatical practice into this particular essay's discussion of the linkage between self-cultivation and fecal realities by narrativizing Croatians after Communism as people who cannot rid themselves of the pestilence of "shitty" slime-like mud.

With the color, texture and consistency of "greasy shit", the mucous substance cleaves obdurately to the everyday lives of Croatians who have made their homes even in the most allegedly disciplined of urban formations, away from all that they thought was associated with their origin in the countryside:

> You might associate mud with rural areas, but in Eastern European cities, it returns to haunt you, the ghost of your peasant origins [...]. As I approached the market, I felt as if I were plunged into some

> kind of primordial soup, dragged back to the origins of life, dissolving into basic elements, so primeval did that mud look to me, so omnipresent, so inevitable (Drakulić 1996, 199).

What Drakulić goes on to document is the haphazard emergence of cities in Eastern European countries that were once overwhelmingly peasant. The frenzied push in these contexts was toward accelerated industrialization, a "giant leap from feudalism to communism", and dizzyingly quick expansion plans which drew on largely unprepared labor from the countryside (Drakulić 1996, 36). Farmhands with little to no experience in construction, built houses that were prone to collapse, and laid down streets that heaved and cracked. The problem was only exacerbated by the fact that these very farmhands who were responsible for the construction stole building materials, which they could not otherwise access because they were either too expensive, or simply not available, and which they needed to patch together their own decrepit abodes. Despite these hazardous conditions, a migrant worker and his family felt lucky to move into a severely cramped apartment on the eighth floor of a skyscraper because they believed there, they could make themselves anew at a distance from the reality of "the stench, the poverty of Grandma's [village] house, the mud at its threshold, the outdoor toilet" (Drakulić 1996, 200).

The mud lingers in the new urban formations, however—as an obstacle against precisely that new self-cultivation that attempts to detach itself from the reality of its past. It is to be found everywhere in the cities Drakulić reflects on; it appears from under the asphalt in the fissures of streets, it fleshes out streetcar tracks, it spews from gutters that are access points to drains, and it even follows posh humans up elevators and onto the carpets in their homes. When it seems to have dried, it is still always there, lurking to make a comeback. Mud is a migrant to cities from the agrarian world in the same way Kincaid and Drakulić are from places native to them, and just as the Kincaids and Drakulićs of the globe are thorny reminders for the metropolis of how it has come to be and on whose labors and lives it continues to ride, so too mud reminds Eastern Europeans who move from the country to the city, of their beginnings, of their parents who were born to grandparents who still live in their village homes. But is this elaborate attention to the prevalence and relevance of mud on the part of Drakulić peculiar only to urban formations in Eastern Europe and to the peoples they have come to house?

In speaking of the intractability of mud for the urban Croatian, Drakulić moves through the first person, second person and third person pronouns within the space of a mere three paragraphs—"*I* felt I was plunged into some kind of primordial soup [...]. When the mud comes out it follows *you* to your house [...] the soil is what *we* want to forget" (Drakulić 1996, 199-200). Commenting on her stylistic adventures such as they are, Rob Nixon argues in "Non-fiction Booms, North and South: A Transatlantic Perspective", that like other post-communist citizens, Drakulić found herself "in the early to mid 1990s in a state of pronominal transition. What would the relationship between 'we' and 'I' become? How—politically, emotionally, imaginatively—would new-found freedoms recast the way citizens felt about selfhood [...]?" (Nixon 2012, 37). These queries are significant to our author's highly ambivalent relation to communist rule in her native home, but it is also the case that in contextualizing her particular situation, Nixon elides the possibility that the "we" that Drakulić tells us wants to forget its past, addresses humankind itself, rather than Eastern Europeans alone. After all, if mud is a reminder of an agrarian past, then that past is the past of historical man and one that has only recently been dislodged (and still only marginally) by a present in which, according to a 2018 United Nations Report, fifty-five percent of the world's population is now urban (https://www.un.org/development/desa/en/news/population/2018-revision-of-world-urbanization-prospects.html). Moreover, to come back to a continuing thread, mud for Drakulić has the somatic substance of "shit", which despite its best efforts as we have seen, the politest human body cannot transcend, and so both shit and mud are always *there* to remind the anonymous Everyman of his corporality/agrarian origins. Yet, at the same time, in a world where power relations are transparently spatialized, human excrement/mud is more "real" in some places than in others, and as such, it is offensive to people like Kincaid and Drakulić, who may be muddy reminders in the centers of empire of where the metropolis draws its life-blood from, but who are in turn reminded by mud/shit of the material realities they themselves come from.

If the age-old struggle between nature and culture (mud/shit versus shiny toilets/streets that brook no shit and no mud) cannot be restricted to particular peoples, one might argue that a Communist history can, and while this argument may be factually accurate, it does not prevent parts of the world with no past of Communist regimes from being haunted in the contemporary context by what Jacques Derrida calls the spectres of Marx. Published a few years prior to Drakulić's *Café Europa*, Derrida's *Spectres of Marx* (1993) draws attention to the aftermath of the fall of the Berlin Wall and the celebratory triumphalism that greeted what was considered the end of Communism and ideology. "At a time when some have the audacity to neo-evangelise in the name of the ideal of a liberal democracy that has finally realised itself as the ideal of human history: never have violence, inequality, exclusion, famine, and thus economic oppression affected as many human beings in the history of the earth and of humanity" says Derrida, as he goes on to see Marx's radical critique spectrally hovering over the whole of the earth, asking for human responsibility in the face of "innumerable sites of suffering" (Derrida 1994, 106). If embedded in this theorization, Slavenka Drakulić's mud would not only be a reminder of its peasant past but would also stand in for the residual effects of the Communist era clinging to the Croatian national populace like the primal, somatic substantiality of shit which the human body cannot overcome. But more importantly in this context, mud/shit can be understood as spectral in the specifically Derridean sense, the specter being both a sign of what has been and of what is to come in the wake of an unthinking and too hasty embrace of the ideals of Western liberal democracy and the flash of commodities flooding newly opened capitalist markets. This is why mud emerges in urban Croatia, through the crevices of industrialized infrastructures haphazardly put together, in the holes and cracks that appear as a nation "leap-frogs" into a new ideology, and as that ideology begins to buckle—despite its promises and even perhaps, best intentions—under the pressures of the countless "men, women and children [being] subjugated, starved or exterminated on the earth" (Derrida 1994, 106).[4] Slavenka Drakulić's arguably shaky position vis-a-vis her communist past itself instantiates such a reading. It seems without a doubt, at first, that she is one of the triumphalists of the post-communist world—she expresses a visceral disgust at the thought of a gathering of "comrades", she hates the "we" and the "us" that stubbornly affix themselves to "the people of ex-communist countries" (Drakulić 1996, 2), and she sings praises of a capitalist system in which the "chance to make money, a chance those people never had before, is indeed a condition to developing the first-person singular" (Drakulić 1996, 4). More dramatically, in "On Bad Teeth", one of the essays in Drakulić's volume, the author notices upon her return to Croatia from a short trip to the United States that her friends, relatives, acquaintances and neighbors *all* had bad teeth, indeed the *whole nation* had bad teeth. For Drakulić, the reality of their bad teeth is a symptom not just of political and economic failure at the level of the state (bad dentists and bad food cause bad teeth), but more importantly, of a failure of its citizens to imagine themselves as individuals who need to take care of themselves and their bodies, especially as compared to Americans who have a "national obsession with health in general" (Drakulić 1996, 127). She even goes so far as to associate the "stinking, decrepit toilets throughout the communist world" with the idea of collective responsibility (ascribed to communism), and therefore with the attitude that no one person should be responsible for their hygiene because everyone is responsible (Drakulić 1996, 34). Democracy is about demanding toilet paper, Drakulić suggests in no uncertain terms.

Leapfrogging from "We" to "I"

Doubts about Slavenka Drakulić's position vis-a-vis the truth of the Communist regime begin to emerge however when for all her animus, she cannot help but admit to its achievements:

> You are not starving any longer, your children go to school and have proper shoes, and everyone has electricity nowadays. No more tuberculosis or epidemics of other terrible diseases! [...] And communism has brought you all that. It was true: the majority of our people lived in even poorer conditions before communism, and they still remember that (Drakulić 1996, 30).

Part of this extract in which Drakulić employs the second-person pronoun to describe "the people" may well be laced with irony, the use of the "you" implying an authoritarian communist state speaking to its citizens and impressing on them the many advantages it has brought with it. But Drakulić does seem to admit sincerely that what that state said was not inaccurate, even though it translated into a population led to believe that in the face of such benevolences it could not ask for more. The apparent infallibility of Drakulić's armor against communism thus appears to crack rather early in *Café Europa* and there continue to be similar instances later on, when our author argues that what peoples of the ex-communist world miss most in the new order is a climate of protections. They used to have a predictable paradigm of "jobs, pensions, social and medical security, maternity leave, sick leave", and in the absence of that paradigm, they ruthlessly grab what they can, while they can (Drakulić 1996, 67). This sensibility on Drakulić's part becomes more apprehensible in her more recent collections tellingly named *A Guided Tour through the Museum of Communism: Fables from a Mouse, a Parrot, a Bear, a Cat, a Mole, a Pig, a Dog, & a Raven* (2011) and *Café Europa Revisited: How to Survive Post-Communism* (2021), the first title indicating that communism has indeed calcified into a museum-piece and the second demonstrating that her 1996 work on life after communism needs revisiting. More openly cognizant in these texts of the reality of violences being borne by people who now live in the cold embrace of the economic and political system that replaced communism, Drakulić emphasizes that the new order requires strategies even for bare survival. If communism had cured its peoples of starvation, tuberculosis and other deadly epidemics, then in the post-communist era, those very peoples are being forced to live with the fatalities of ethnic and religious warfares, immigrant crises, techno-financialized terror attacks, burdens of debt both individually and nationally untenable, and widespread, hidden unemployment.[5] In *Café Europa,* Drakulić is apprehensive of the possibility of such conditions, but perhaps still somewhat naively enamored of the promises of a western liberal democratic order and its capitalist markets, she is unable to grasp them in a visceral way. The holes and cracks in the streets of Eastern European cities, which bear mud as a reminder of both the peasant beginnings of Eastern Europeans (and humankind itself) as well as a metaphor for their communist past clinging to them, are also the holes and cracks in the cognitive lens of Slavenka Drakulić, laden with the weight of the past, attempting to navigate an emergent order and all the while anticipating a still unborn future whose dangers are increasingly discernible.

There is a startling similarity in the doubtful claims to representational authority in Kincaid's declaration, "*We* Antiguans, for *I* am one" and a line on the very first page of Slavenka Drakulić's *Café Europa*:

> Clearly, in the context of this book, "we" and "us" mean the people of ex-communist countries, *and as I am one of them* I believe that I can justify using the first-person plural to describe our common experience (Drakulić 1996, 1).

However, for the careful listener, these lines ring loud not only in relation to Jamaica Kincaid's work, but also in relation to the main axes of the controversy stirred by the anthropologist David Stoll in his response to *I, Rigoberta Menchú* and Menchú's own response to his reading of her use of the first-person pronoun. To counter Stoll's much spoken-of accusation that her testimonial inaccurately depicts others' experiences as her own, Menchú has had no trouble acknowledging that she did indeed insert into what she presented as her own narrative the experiences of *other* people. However, she also added that such implants only lent themselves to her conviction that the possessive pronoun in her reference at the beginning of her narrative to "*my* life" (which is what her narrative is about) cannot be disentangled from the noun attached to the possessive pronoun in *my people,* a phrase that appears in the same expository sentence:

> My name is Rigoberta Menchú. I am twenty-three years old. This is my testimony. I didn't learn it from a book and I didn't learn it alone. I'd like to stress that it's not only *my* life, it's also the testimony of my people (Menchú 1984, 1).[6]

The way in which Menchú, in the very first lines of her account, displaces the singularity of the I/my regime onto a collectivity of people marks the inalienable relationality between the self and others in her world. It also instantiates the many you's we have so far encountered in other texts as centripetal (rather than centrifugal) forces with regards to the formation of the "I" and the "we". Given the Foucauldian thread that animates my reflections on the art of self-making in relation to "others", it is perhaps pertinent to note here that when Michel Foucault talks about the ancient care of the self, he emphasizes that "it constituted, not an exercise in solitude, but a true social practice" (Foucault 1986, 51). In Foucault's study, the socialization of the self was not dependent only on singular sites of authority involving "schools, lectures, and professionals of spiritual direction"; rather, for the plurality of its strengths, it drew from a plethora of "customary relations of kinship, friendship and obligation", a bundle of you's that in their meeting with the "I" pave the way for what Foucault suggests is the warmth of the "we" (Foucault 1986, 52-53). This is why leapfrogging, or vaulting from the "we" to the "I" or the "I" to the "we" is untenable. It must be grounded in an affinity, even if ad hoc and fleeting, with the "you". Rigoberta Menchú's "I" encounters the "you" of David Stoll's accusations and from there reaffirms her connection with the "we" of her people, just as Jamaica Kincaid's "I" brushes up against the "you" that was the British colonizer of Antigua in shaping her response to the "we" of contemporary, Antiguan national collectivities, and Slavenka Drakulić's lolloping from the "we" to the "I" in the space of just a few lines (as quoted above) is mediated by a "you" which remains unacknowledged for the most part of *Café Europa*, but is nonetheless as mired in the same mud as the collective and individual selves of post-communist Croatia.

All of these narratives work through some form of relationality between the first, second, and third person pronouns, no matter how strained or tender. Most strongly perhaps of all three writers, Slavenka Drakulić speaks of her n*eed* for others. She writes with pained eloquence about her friends in Croatia who believe that in marrying a rich Swede, Drakulić has escaped being relentlessly battered by the host of misfortunes they are subject to everyday. They therefore do not feel they owe her anything (even their friendship), and only get in touch with her when they find themselves in a position where they have to ask for her aid. Otherwise, it is she, who ostensibly inoculated against *need* and distress by the rosy reality of her life in the west, is expected to establish and nurture communication. What they do not understand is that "I *do* need them", Drakulić writes at the end of an essay titled, "To Have and To Have Not", weighed down as she is by the burden not so much of the need itself but of the secret it is to her friends and of her incapacity to persuade them differently (Drakulić 1996, 45). The sheer force of her need for her friends, no matter how secretive, is a product of what Drakulić perceives as their shared time together and the commonality of their experiences in that shared time. However, given that her friends think she is no longer part of what they see as the misery of their lives, that need has to be stifled on Drakulić's part, for otherwise it may be construed as disingenuous or worse still, condescending. In contrast, the need for and toward others is something to be proudly flagged in collectivities such as Menchú's which insist that neither is the "I" to be crushed under the weight of the "we", nor can it be disentangled from the "we". In a text like *A Small Place* though, the matter is more complicated. Kincaid stridently abnegates any need to identify with her "national family" ("Antiguans") just as she does her need for her own immediate family (as is evidenced in some of her other works), but one could argue that it is precisely in the fact that her every rhetorical turn is directed loudly against those very people she denies, en masse, that Kincaid paradoxically demonstrates her promiscuous need for others.[7] As powerfully presented (or denied) as they are across several narratives, such base human needs for fellowship are felt in the viscera, or according to the *Oxford English Dictionary* etymology for the word, in the "bowels", "entrails" and "internal organs" of the human body.[8] Like the need to defecate that also emerges from those bodily parts, they must remain clandestine, except when it doesn't matter—to those, for instance, who do not feel compromised in the face of openness. For those to whom openness (of/about defecation) does matter, it is disturbing because it is a sign of making one's most intimate needs known and therefore it is a sign of vulnerability. The need to evacuate bodily waste is offensive not merely because it is related to that which must be hidden away, or alternatively, acknowledged only in relation to the foul bodies of natives and the rank spaces they inhabit, but because it is a reminder of that which cannot be transcended—like the need for others. I am certainly not in this context advocating for a continuation of the practice of openly defecating, nor am I denying the indignity of having to do so in a world where power lies in the ability to privatize and fortify spaces. What I am trying to forward however is a theorization of openness, not as a softened, fluffy, liberal mantra of inclusion and diversity, but as an orientation in and through which practices of self-cultivation become rigorous exercises in the kind of wordliness Edward Said advocates, ones that embed the self in its own material realities, and at the same time are open to the incommensurability of different ways of knowing and being, and the resulting indeterminacy in the making of the self in relation to her others.

Openness, in the way I would like to elaborate it, manifests in varied ways for the self, at different sites of truth and reality, and in distinct moments of cognition and re-cognition. In its openness, the self continually comes to be, or becomes, rather than *is*, and it gives itself both to sudden bursts of insurgent pasts and their realities, as also to the impossibility of any known or knowable referent toward which it deterministically bears. Such an orientation towards openness is often preceded by an unhealable sense of loss—in the case of our particular authors, Jamaica Kincaid's loss of what used to be her notion of a collective selfhood, Slavenka Drakulić's loss of her place in the safety of a homogenous collectivity, and Rigoberta Menchú's loss of the "we" in order to write to a western audience as the testifying "I". Deeply intimate losses as these are, they lead to no less psychologically overwrought a situation than the one brought on by the loss of feces from the child's body. But unlike in the Freudian schema where the child ideally learns to write himself into "learned" disciplinary structures, the losses these authors face involve "unlearning" what they know and becoming attentive to other ways of knowing and being, aware of their need for others who may seem alien to them. No matter how difficult it is to let go of what they have been taught about managed and manicured bodies, when our authors are able to speak transparently about not knowing how to clean a toilet because they have never known a toilet, when they suggest that thinking on the contents of one's lavatory is more important than being taught *not* to do so, when they are not afraid to confront the shit-like texture of mud and are led therefrom to an entanglement with human needs and histories that cannot be transcended, they come into contact with openness.

This contact zone is what enables an embrace of the elsewheres and others that in turn leads to worlding and cultivating the self as a creature materially grounded in its own reality, keen to the realities of others, and in that intersection, pitched toward myriad unpredicted and unpredictable possibilities. All the narratives that come into view in this essay are engaged in some way or another with history, be it the history of the Mayan in Guatemala, the history of communist Eastern Europe, or the history of colonial and postcolonial Antigua and its peoples. Yet, it is only when the authors embed their own processes of self-making in these histories that their texts become truly *historical* because the self as a continually unfolding textual process is worldly in Edward Said's humanistic sense of being aware of how its reality is intimately tied with the material conditions and rules of conduct in and of different worlds. In its nonfictional encounter with the cognitive practices of other peoples and other worlds, this self turns and turns in a widening gyre of its relations to others, and in doing so, it opens up its history to a future that may be unknowable but is nonetheless imaginable because it involves probing for their truths the realities of others. In this practice which evokes both the force of the imagination and the potency of diverse realities in the approach to the indeterminacy of the future emerges the cultivation of the self as a work in the art of nonfiction.

Endnotes:

1. For elaborations on how to think about the counter-travelogue form in Jamaica Kincaid's *A Small Place*, see Lesley Larkin, Janie Beriault, and Patrick Holland and Graham Huggan.
2. The translator of *I, Rigoberta* Menchu, Anne Wright says the following about the difficulty of translating a word such as *ladino.* "Although ladino ostensibly means a person of mixed race or a Spanish-speaking Indian, in this context it also implies someone who represents a system which oppresses the Indian–first under Spanish rule and then under the succession of brutal governments of the landed oligarchy. So a word like 'half-caste' would be inadequate. Hence Rigoberta's father's invention 'ladinizar' (to ladinize, or become like a ladino) which is a mixture of ladino and latinizar (to latinize), and has both racial and religious connotations" (viii).
3. For the remarkably compelling linkage between banality and evil, see Hannah Arendt.
4. "Leapfrogging" has emerged as an important conceptual frame for the international development community which sees it as pointing to the vertiginous changes in the past two decades or so, brought about by the digital revolution. These changes could ensure that less developed nations leapfrog traditional industry into contemporary industry. https://www.csis.org/analysis/need-leapfrog-strategy

accessed September 14, 2021. Slavenka Drakulić speaks of a similar vaulting when she writes about a "giant leap from feudalism to communism."

5. In *Spectres of Marx,* Jacques Derrida employs the term "underemployment" to indicate a condition that cannot anymore be attached to the old term "unemployment". I choose to stay with "hidden unemployment" which underlines Derrida's own point about suffering being more intensified as it is increasingly obscured.
6. For an elaboration of her position on the controversy surrounding *I, Rigoberta Menchú*, see Menchú's interview with Juan Jesus Aznarez.
7. For her familial relationships, see Jamaica Kincaid. *My Brother* and *The Autobiography of My Mother.*
8. See *Oxford English Dictionary*, Second Edition. Visceral, adj.

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Lack of Racial or Privilege Awareness in Dorothy Bryant's *Ella Price's Journal*

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Abstract:

The turbulent decades of the 1960s and 1970s included several movements, such as the Civil Rights Movement and the Women's Liberation Movement, and spawned a number of texts, such as Dorothy Bryant's *Ella Price's Journal* (1972), which discussed the lives and plights of women throughout America. As beneficial and impactful as these works are, some of them, including Bryant's novel, focus on white female protagonists, which, unfortunately, further emphasizes the idea that the Women's Liberation Movement of this time was dominated by white women and their personal causes rather than speaking for all women of different backgrounds, races, and classes. While Bryant wrote the novel during the 1960s, allowing her to reflect on and represent the struggles of all women, her focus remained solely on the troubles of a white, middle-class woman, Ella Price. Her novel offers little inclusion of other races, particularly awareness of ethnic women and their difficulties during this era. Instead, Bryant presents a female character that fails to recognize the role her race and heritage play in her life, as well as the privileges afforded her due to her whiteness.

Keywords: Dorothy Bryant, *Ella Price*, whiteness, racial privilege

During the tumultuous decades of the 1960s and 1970s, several movements, such as the Civil Rights Movement and the LGBT Movement, altered the culture of America. Another significant movement during that time was the Women's Liberation Movement, which brought women's rights and feminism to the forefront of political and social discussions. This era spawned a number of texts, such as Dorothy Bryant's *Ella Price's Journal* (1972), which discussed the lives and plights of women throughout America. As beneficial and impactful as these works are, some of them, including Bryant's novel, focus on white female protagonists, which, unfortunately, further emphasizes the idea that the Women's Liberation Movement of this time was dominated by white women and their personal causes rather than speaking for all women of different backgrounds, races, and classes. While Bryant wrote the novel during the 1960s, allowing her to reflect on and represent the struggles of all women, her focus remained solely on the troubles of a white, middle-class woman, Ella Price. Her novel offers little inclusion of other races, particularly awareness of ethnic women and their difficulties during this era. Instead, Bryant presents a female character that fails to recognize the role her race and heritage play her in life, as well as the privileges afforded her due to her whiteness.

Bryant's first novel, *Ella Price's Journal*, published in 1972, is a fictional journal of a 1960s suburban house wife who, after stepping outside her home and recognizing the realities of the world around her, begins to understand who she is and what she wants out of life; however, Ella eventually realizes that growth, as freeing as it may be, can be painful and come with harsh consequences. When it was first published, the work came out "to complete silence: no promotion, nothing but a few local reviews, and in a hard-cover edition costing more than the main audience for a 're-entry woman's novel' would pay" ("My Publisher/Myself" 1979, 36). Yet, the novel and others like it during this era introduced different issues, such as "Black Power, the movement against the war in Vietnam, and women's liberation" to women readers (Behrent 2019, 266). According to Megan Behrent, *Ella Price's Journal* "becomes a link to a broader political radicalization that was, at once, unfamiliar and deeply connected to the personal or individual radicalizations" (266) and acts as a foundational text of the Women's Liberation Movement.

Ella Price's Journal is part of women's fiction, literature typically written by women for women and usually focused on a central female character. In the 1800s, numerous women writers wrote about female character formation and individual self-development. Currently, the focus in feminist fiction and poetry remains "firmly fixed on individual self-transformation, on private coming to awareness, emotional experience, personal relations, subjective self-recognition and insight" (Baym 1993, xli). These works are distinctly intended for female readers, making the female protagonist even more crucial. Women readers should feel a connection between themselves and the main female characters as they deal with similar issues in life, such as love, identity, ageing, etc. Rebecca Vnuk and Nanette Donohue stress that "if the main character could easily be swapped out for a male character, then it is general fiction" (2013, viii) and not women's fiction, even if it does offer the same connection to female readers. Suzanne Ferriss and Mallory Young add that female protagonists are often flawed rather than perfect portraits of womanhood, which elicits "readers' compassion and identification" (2013, 4). Women's fiction is also character-driven and the emotions and relationships of the female protagonists are central aspects of the plot. Sarah Sceats claims that both historical and cultural influences impact character and plot development in women's fiction (2000, 3), and Helge Normann Nilsen adds to this idea, stating that female authors are typically influenced by the ideas and values of their times (1990, 26).

Whether the plot addresses the career and goals of a young woman or the journey of self-discovery by an older female protagonist, women's fiction showcases obstacles for women to overcome, allowing them to grow and develop their identities moving forward into their futures. In addition, women's texts "aim to forward the development, in young, female readers, of a specific kind of character" (Baym 1993, xix). The protagonists represent "instances of the character that the authors want their readers to become, while the grippingly affective reading experience is meant to initiate or further the resolve of readers to change themselves" (xix). By the end of these texts, a female character develops "a strong conviction of her own worth as a result of which she does ask much from herself" (19). She can "meet her own demands and, inevitably, the change in herself has changed the world's attitude toward her, so that much that was formerly denied her now comes to her unsought" (19). The characteristics and actions of these female protagonists often influence women readers. Linda Grasso emphasizes that women's texts, both early and contemporary fiction, open up possibilities, allowing female readers to reimagine new identities and new lives (2002, 158).

Because of its plot structure and focus, *Ella Price's Journal* also classifies as housewife fiction, a sub-genre of women's fiction. Many housewife fictional works share a straightforward plot format. At the beginning of the narrative, the female protagonist is "in a state of domesticity, but unconscious (or only vaguely conscious) of her own oppression within it" (Behrent 2019, 262). At the beginning of the novel, Ella's life focuses on her home and family; she has been living as a traditional wife and mother, taking care of the home and raising her child. The story is structured around "the protagonist's gradual recognition of the oppression as she is introduced (whether forcibly or by choice) to the world of the radical left, or the WLM (Women's Liberation Movement) outside of the home" (262). As the story develops, Ella becomes more conscious of her oppression because she begins attending classes at the local community college where she comes face to face with people and concepts that are different from who and what she has known. The main character's experience in "the radical milieu of 'the movement'" and her "ethnographic introduction to the other" transforms her and her consciousness, "leading to some form of breakdown or fragmentation from which a new self is reconstructed or reborn" (262-3). By the conclusion, Ella, finally seeing the reality of the world and her place in it, leaves her husband and daughter and moves forward with getting an abortion, so she will not be trapped in a life she no longer wants.

Few scholars or critics, in the 1970s or now, discuss *Ella Price's Journal*; however, those who do typically focus on Bryant's decision to frame the text as a journal. Megan Behrent argues that feminist authors, like Bryant, who wrote in the "form of first-person fictional narratives, charted women's progress from what [Betty] Friedan had dubbed, in 1963, the 'feminine mystique' into a new feminist consciousness" (261). When specifically referencing *Ella Price's Journal*, she stresses that the journal format and writing are "central to Ella's radicalization and feminist consciousness" (277). Alexa Mergen adds to this idea, stating that Ella Price "seeks wisdom and solace in books and legitimizes her life through oral and written stories" (1998, 95). Mergen also explains that using the format of a journal allows Bryant to "tie Price's development as a writer to her development as a person" (95). Martin Levin builds on this, stating that the structure allows Bryant to explore "some of the pitfalls of family life," while interposing "sharply-observed nuances of personality and a leavening pinch of irony" (1972, BR14).

In addition to the format of the novel, scholarship tends to address the characterization of Ella. Like many of Bryant's other female protagonists, according to Mergen, Ella Price embodies "the twin American ideals of education and freedom" (1998, 94). Behrent explains that the novel "sets out to trace the broader radicalization of a generation of women through the personal story of its protagonist, a literary 'everywoman' [. . .] whose story is anything but expectational" (2019, 263). She adds that between Ella Price's "sense that nothing *should* be troubling her and the deep, gnawing feeling that something *is* troubling her, [Ella] provides our first glimpse of Friedan's 'problem with no name'" (265), the unhappiness and unfulfillment of women in the 1950s and 1960s because of conventional gender roles. All Ella is, at the beginning of the novel, is a housewife; she takes care of the home, raises her child, and tends to her husband. She, as well as many women of that era, embodies Anne Sexton's description in her poem, "Housewife," that "some women marry houses" (Sexton 1999, 77). Ella's identity and self-worth do not go beyond the confines of her house and the gender specific role she plays within it.

Beyond these specific aspects, scholars and critics, in the few reviews and articles written, provide favorable reviews of the novel. Levin, overall, finds the work "fresh" and "engaging" (1972, BR14). However, when the novel was published in 1972, Library Journal found the book "quite predictable" (qtd. in Rogers 1997, 99). Behrent argues that *Ella Price's Journal* is "a prime example of the awakening-housewife genre of feminist literature" (2019, 263), and Mergen adds to this idea, explaining that, "through memorable characters and skillful writing, Bryant shows the value of stories, especially of those made marginal by gender, class, ethnicity or circumstance" (1998, 95). Barbara Horn stresses the significance of the novel, claiming it "addresses America's most subtle and overlooked instrument of control: social class" because it sets the novel on a community college campus, giving "the issue of class unusual clarity and visibility" (1997, 241). Dan Harkan, Ella's English professor, emphasizes that the college predominantly caters to working class students, "'asking to learn how to read and write better so that they can get a place in the system'" (*Ella Price's Journal* 1997, 97). These students start at the community college, hoping to move on to four-year universities, but according Harkan, "'it was all decided, a long time ago, who was getting a place and who wasn't'" (97). Most of the students fail to make it very far while at the community college; the dropout rate is "'like eighty percent'" (97). In addition, the community college's predominate clientele stresses the class divide between Ella and her middle-class status, who is able to attend school "'just to learn'" (65), and her classmates, who are "'going to spend the rest of their lives outside—outside the places where money is made and jobs are fairly easy'" (97).

While scholarship addresses the importance of the book for raising the consciousness of women and the structure of the text, no scholars discuss the lack of racial and privilege awareness, which is not surprising due to the invisible nature of whiteness. While race "may be a social constriction without biological validity," Linda Martin Alcoff stresses that it is "real and powerful enough to alter the fundamental shape of all our lives" (1998, 8). Ethnic women, in the real world and within literature, often grapple with hardships due to their race; they struggle with the hybrid nature of their backgrounds and prejudice based on their culture and appearance. At times, these obstacles even cause some ethnic individuals to "aspire to be white" (Planas 2020, 188), believing it will make their lives easier. Writers from ethnic groups struggle with being judged based on "appearances" (Gillan 1999, xvii) and affixed labels that always focus on their ethnicity; however, whiteness is seen as "generic" and usually "taken for granted" (McKibbin 2018, 97). White individuals have "no racial identity" (McDermott 2005, 245); they are typically viewed as "invisible" and regularly considered the privileged race. According to Monica McDermott and Frank L. Samson, white racial identity is traditionally privileged compared to other ethnicities due to "centuries of oppression of nonwhite groups" (245). The idea of a race being invisible proves detrimental in many ways. One main issue is that many white individuals fail to see "the connection between their opportunities in life and their racial identity" (248) because their race is invisible even to themselves, emphasizing their privilege. To be white is "to be class privileged" (Planas 2020, 186).

In a novel written by an ethnic writer, like Toni Morrison's *Jazz* or Diana Abu-Jaber's *Arabian Jazz*, the author provides her main character a path to understanding her place in the world through her own sense of who she is within a community. Examining or defining her ethnicity can provide the main character with different opportunities, new appreciation, or a fresh perspective, but this is not available to the white woman character who has no sense of where she comes from or, apparently, any interest in seeking such a connection to her "roots." By failing to make her white female character's ancestry or cultural background a crucial part of her identity, Bryant suggests that ethnicity is not essential to her or her work. Bryant was an American novelist, playwright, and feminist writer. Her writing is "experimental in form," "varied in point of view," and "eminently readable" and focuses on controversial issues, such AIDS, homophobia, and ageism (Horn 1997, 233). Her works utilize a variety of settings, both real and fantastical; however, the essential theme of her writing remains the same throughout all her texts: "the struggle of the human spirit to know and become itself" ("Dorothy Bryant: About the Author"). She was born in 1930 in San Francisco to Italian immigrant parents; yet, she was "reluctant to be limited as a writer by labels such as 'Italian American,' 'working-class,' 'Californian,' or 'feminist'" (Horn 1997, 233), an action that emphasizes a level of disregard for her own heritage and how it impacts her life. As seen throughout this essay, there is a continued disregard, intentional or not, for the significance of race and cultural background throughout the novel. How is Ella, or any other female character, expected to understand her own identity, especially as she ages and attempts to break free of gender norms, when she is unable or unwilling to take her own background or race into account?

Not surprisingly, Ella Price fails to recognize the importance that her heritage or her background plays in her life. She was "born in Nebraska" (*Ella Price's Journal* 1997, 12) and spent the first ten years of her life there. However, after moving to California, Ella implies that she never returns to her roots in Nebraska, and she has many relatives there that she has never seen. Since she moved to California at the age of ten, she would have memories from her time in Nebraska, but she shows no interest in understanding where she came from or the family she left behind. In addition, due to her mother's oppressive behavior, after marrying Joe, Ella only sees her parents from time to time, avoiding them as often as possible. According to Barbara Horn, journal writers "document their personal and social histories" and "keep in touch with 'the self'" (1997, 230); however, Ella fails to recognize or acknowledge the role her heritage and background play in her life.

Throughout the novel, while race and ancestry are often ignored by Ella, social class plays a significant role in her life. Janet Zandy defines class as "an experience of shared economic circumstances and shared social and cultural practices in relation to positions of power" (1996, 8). She further claims that "each of us is born into a family with a particular class identity and class history" (9), a "kind of inheritance we carry with us as individuals" (8). Don Slater adds that "it is partially through the use of goods and services that we formulate social identities and display these identities" (1997, 31). In addition, Annette Kuhn states that "class is something beneath your clothes, under your skin, in your reflexes, in your psyche, at the very core of your being" (1995, 98). Overall, class relations "determine life-chances" (Reay 2005, 924) and are "deeply embedded in everyday interactions, in institutional processes, in struggles over identity, validity, self-worth and integrity even when it is not acknowledged" (Payne 2005, 909).

After moving to California, both Ella and her parents continuously attempt to shed their "Okie" status and rid themselves of any stigma associated with their previous home. Even though she is from Nebraska, people they encounter in California, particularly her in-laws, continuously refer to Ella and her parents as Okies, emphasizing their perceived poor economic station and further smearing their whiteness because, at least to Ella's father, poorness equated with being on the same level as "'the niggers'" (*Ella Price's Journal* 1997, 47). They aim to better their class position by earning enough money to move away from the lower-class neighborhood, which Ella's father calls "'niggertown'" (47), into which they first move after relocating. According to Megan Behrent, for Ella and her parents, "civil rights pose a threat to the meager 'wages of whiteness' that separate them from the bottom rung of American class society in which poverty is associated with blackness" (2019, 266). Eventually, they open their own grocery store, allowing them to move up the class ladder and into an all-white neighborhood. As she grows up, Ella continues to want nothing to do with her "Okie" image and strives to separate herself from her history and her previously poor class status through every choice (marriage, children, home) she makes. However, throughout her life, even after marrying Joe and moving into a middle-class position, Ella struggles to rid her feelings pertaining to "'the big line between the kids who went to the ballet and the ones who didn't'" and the constant feeling that "'someone might come up to [her] at any moment and say,' Oh, no, you'll have to leave, you don't belong here" (*Ella Price's Journal* 1997, 62).

Even though social class appears important to her, Ella continues to disregard her background in several ways, one being her ties, or lack thereof, to any religion. Growing up, Ella's mother was extremely religious; she went to church frequently and regularly talked about sin with Ella. However, Ella willingly disconnects from this aspect of her upbringing at the age of sixteen when she "suddenly stopped believing in God," and she "never went to church again" after she married Joe (47). Ella's marriage to Joe does nothing to bring her closer to her religious upbringing. Joe's family is Catholic, but Ella chooses to not take up her husband's Catholic beliefs. Ella never appears to feel guilty about the conscious decision to not remain religious like her own mother or in-laws even though it further disconnects her from her background and upbringing. Her disregard for religion is further emphasized when she decides that she wants to have an abortion; no religious ties stop her from making that decision.

Ella's lack of understanding when it comes to the role her whiteness plays in her life is further seen during her time at the community college. Ella feels as if her age makes her invisible on the junior college campus because she is surrounded by so many people younger than she is. However, she fails to realize that she is already invisible because she is white. While she may be older and at a different place in her life compared to her younger peers, there is no question that she is accepted at the college. While ethnic individuals must be very conscious of where they are "allowed" and welcomed, white people, like Ella, can easily slip in and out of spaces without concerns about safety, acceptance, etc. She moves around campus, goes from class to class, and finds a place to sit in the cafeteria without any issues. On the other hand, the African American students spend most of their time sitting separately in the cafeteria, isolating themselves from other students of different races and backgrounds, and they "'don't go to class much'" (63), where they likely feel out of place at times. This invisibility is also seen when Ella goes to the anti-war march where she "was completely anonymous" and did not worry about "being seen by [her] family or neighbors" (125). In addition, Ella must observe and, at times, interact with individuals at the community college that are different than she is. While this experience helps enlighten her, and she may even share a sense of alienation with them, she fails to fully grasp their struggles in life. As she becomes more aware, she still does not fully understand or think about what people of color are going through; instead, she remains focused on herself and her concerns.

Ella's inability to acknowledge the role that her heritage plays in her life aids in her inability to recognize the privileges associated with her whiteness. According to Linda Martin Alcoff, part of white privilege has been "whites' ability to ignore the ways white racial identity has benefitted them" (1998, 8). Ella and her family "settled" (*Ella Price's Journal* 1997, 13) for a "nice home" (18) in a middle-class neighborhood called Hillside Estates. While it may not be the wealthiest area in town, their ability to own property there speaks to their comfortable class status. Ella and Joe, her husband, may see their home as less than ideal; however, many other individuals, particularly ethnic people, have traditionally been kept from purchasing homes in such a nice neighborhood. Joe works for the City Purchasing Department and "makes a good living" (12), allowing them their nice home and a number of luxuries, like trips, nice cars, and color TVs. On occasion, Ella will take on a temporary office job to help pay for these indulgences. However, it is not necessary for her to do it on a regular basis. In reality, if her husband did not have such extravagant tastes or want to show off, Ella's temporary jobs would not be needed at all. In addition, Ella and Joe are financially comfortable to host parties and gatherings, like Lulu's, their daughter's, fifteenth birthday, where "over fifty young people came" (14). Instead of having to work, like many ethnic women, even married ones, she has free time to socialize, to play bridge, and to enjoy pre-dinner martinis on a regular basis with her husband. Also, later in the novel, when she begins to regress into her old close-minded ways, Ella is able to see a psychiatrist. While he proves to be useless, she is still able to seek help for her mental health. Even when she is in need of an abortion, she can gain access to one. Her class or race does not stop her from getting what she wants.

Ella's lack of privilege awareness is also present in her education. At 35 years old, she is able to return to school at Bay Junior College without real concerns about money. Many people, especially ethnic individuals, would likely not be able to afford college, even community college. Based on a family conversation, it appears that Ella is able to go to school by "wasting the taxpayers' money" (17); whether that is true or whether Joe is paying her tuition, Ella is not kept from returning to her education because of money issues. More so, she is also able to take any classes she wants, such as English, Social Science, and Psychology. Her focus is not to use these classes to get a job or further a career, something that would likely be essential for minorities. At one point, when she is frustrated with her English class and professor, she even stresses that she "didn't *have* to take this class" (21). On the other hand, Professor Harkan attempts to aid his other students, even when they do not want to listen, and make their time in his class beneficial by "'tell[ing] them the truth [. . .] the way it is'" (97) because he knows that "'the only way these kids are going to come alive is to know the truth, to see where they are'" (98).

Besides her aim to shed her poor class status, Ella's other main focus is dealing with ageing. According to Robert Butler, just as sexism and racism are based on gender and ethnicity, ageism is "a form of systematic stereotyping and discrimination against people simply because they are old" (*The Longevity Revolution* 2009, 40). Ageism allows younger generations to see older people as "different" from themselves; thus, they "subtly cease to identify with [their] elders as human beings" (40). In addition, Butler adds that the tragedy of old age is "not that each of us must grow old and die, but that the process of doing so has been made unnecessarily and at times excruciatingly painful, humiliating, debilitating, and isolating" (*Why Survive* 1975, 2-3). Paul Kleyman adds that "age continues as one of the last areas of openly uttered bias across the American cultural spectrum" (2017, 42), and Harry Moody explains that ageing is "a threat to our sense of ourselves" (2017, 95).

Ageism is especially challenging for women, who are judged more by their physical appearances; the loss of their attractiveness reinforces their subordinate roles in a patriarchal society. Yi-chin Shih explains that ageing is "socially and culturally constructed, instead of biological in nature," which causes women to suffer more from the conspiracy of ageism (2018, 200). The fear associated with ageing is ever-present and used to keep women subordinate in society (201). Barbara Barnett argues that women learn that "their value lies in their physical appearance (i.e., their attractiveness to men)" (2006, 88), meaning that old age diminishes their worth. In a patriarchal culture, ageing makes women unbeautiful. For older women, the standards of youthful beauty are unrealistic to meet, guaranteeing "insecurity and subordination to patriarchal authority" (88). Sima Aghazadeh adds that middle or old age for women is "the phase of losing the admiring gaze of others" (2016, 23), which is the main indicator of femininity in Western culture.

While the invisibly associated with her whiteness does not bother her, the invisibility caused by Ella's age and ageing does concern her. Due to her age, she learns that "no one has any 'use' for [her], no one has any plan for [her], no one has taken account of [her] presence because [she is] invisible" (*Ella Price's Journal* 1997, 121). As she gets older, she becomes more concerned with ageing and how that impacts her looks; Ella's "biggest problem" is "finding time to go to the beauty parlor" (26) because, according to her, after reaching thirty, "a woman's got to do something if men are going to notice her at all" (37). More so, Ella has the money to work on combating her age; she gets her hair done and dresses nicely. According to her, she has "always taken pains to make up carefully and keep [her] hair pretty" (23-4) because she takes "pride in [her] appearance" (24).

At first, Ella's return to school seems to be an escape from suburban boredom. Her white and middle-class status allows her to go to school and to gain enlightenment about the status of women in literature and thereby in the world. This is important because Ella becomes more socially aware; however, her social awareness seems limited to the bubble of her own existence as a middle-class housewife. Even though she begins to question her role as a housewife and as Joe's partner in marriage, she continues to focus on herself and how she is impacted. Her awareness does not extend to how her privilege as a white woman affects the lives of others. Rather, she utilizes the changes that others have fought for to benefit herself. For example, the work and struggle of women who fought to make abortion legal allow her to have an abortion when she finds herself pregnant and is not willing to have a second child. Behrent explains that this moment stresses that Ella's journey has "only begun and there is a sense of hope for the emergence of a new woman, a new self, and a new world" (2019, 270), but Ella's journey is still marked by the limitations of what she learns about herself even at a time when she is beginning to gain awareness.

Ella also never appears to feel guilt or remorse for some of her actions and decisions; she never seems worried about potential consequences, which would likely stop other women, especially ethnic women, who have too many responsibilities to risk poor behavior and choices. When she has an affair with her professor, Ella appears to feel no guilt. Even when she brings her lover to her own house, she does not seem concerned with the possibility of getting caught or what that could mean for her safe and comfortable lifestyle. Her only priority is to not get pregnant, so while she does have a regular doctor, to avoid suspension, she decides to go to Planned Parenthood. Other women, particularly ethnic women, often do not have regular doctors; they have to use Planned Parenthood. When Ella visits the clinic for contraceptive information prior to starting her affair, she comes face to face with these other women, poorer and of different races, who do not have the same privileges or options as she does. However, the experience does little to enlighten Ella to her privilege. When Ella does get pregnant with her husband's child, she fails to consider or worry about financial issues or logistics. More so, she does not consider the realities of her situation or her finances when she leaves her husband and her home; she is able to go stay with her friend who offers to help her. She is able to get an abortion, and she never seems to worry about what will happen next.

As alarming as thoughts or comments about suicide can be, someone like Ella, who has an overall stable home and family life, has less to worry about than others of different races or class status if she made the decision to end her life. At times, Ella mentions suicide, in general and as something that she is considering for herself. While Ella's mental state is concerning based on her comments, the harsh reality is that, if she did kill herself, her family would not be too seriously affected. Yes, they would likely be upset and grieve her, but her family would not be losing a provider. Their lives and family structure would not be affected. This appears true when Ella leaves her husband and daughter near the end of the novel. She feels "'this is the best way. [. . .] For [her] to leave. The house, that life, even [her] daughter—none of that has anything to do with [her]'" (*Ella Price's Journal* 1997, 225). She is not worried about money or what will happen next, and she shows no concern for what will happen to her husband or daughter; she knows that they will be fine without her.

Ella's privilege is best demonstrated by her behavior and attitude toward others, especially those of different races. Prior to her awakening, Ella stresses her lack of understanding of the real world and her privilege when she explains that she is "sick of Negros and Mexicans and this group and that group who are always yelling. They're not the only ones suffering" (32). Ella fails to recognize her hypocrisy. While she is aware that only her professor is likely to read her journal, she has no problem complaining about her life, which seems idealistic compared to others of different races and classes; her "woe is me" attitude further emphasizes her inability to see her own privilege. Ella is able to live a "clean and respectable" life, "what you call middle-class" (20). She claims that "there's nothing immoral about enjoying [luxuries] instead of agonizing about all the people who don't have them" (23). Unfortunately, she does not stop there. Instead, she further emphasizes her privilege, stating "maybe if those people had worked as hard as my husband, instead of collecting the taxpayers' money to support their illegitimate babies, they'd have [luxuries] too" (23). Ella appears blind to the irony of what she is saying. It is okay for her to waste the taxpayers' money by going to community college with no intention of doing anything with that education, but it is not right for ethnic individuals who actually need assistance to utilize it.

Even after she becomes more socially aware, Ella still focuses more on her own issues and problems, negating any progress she makes and further emphasizing her privilege. While she feels that she spent the first half of her life being dictated to by other people, like her parents and Joe, Ella acknowledges that the second half of her life, now that she has become more enlightened, offers her a "form of freedom" (121), allowing her to do with it what she will. In addition, sometimes, Ella feels "awfully bitter about being a woman" (75). Being white, her focus can be on her gender and the limitations associated with it. Yet, ethnic women are held back for being a woman and women of color, something that Ella does not even think about. Also, towards the end of the novel, Ella realizes that she was "seeing [her]self and [her] problems and [her] needs in terms of men" (208). She recognizes that she needs to make a change and that she is "not defined by [her] relation" (208) to the men, her husband and her professor, in her life. While this feminist step forward for Ella is significant, Ella still feels comfortable to move forward in her life without the support of a man. Even when she attempts to be helpful by volunteering to help her friend's women's group send Christmas cards to prisoners, her motives are selfish; she wants to keep her mind off her upcoming abortion. Overall, at the end of the novel, Ella feels optimism rather than fear with the idea of starting anew. She wants to find "something like that feeling [she] had when [she] was in love, that first week, when [she] was high and the world came alive and belonged to [her], and [she] belonged to it" (226-7). Because of her class and race, she can do this; she can have this opportunity.

Dorothy Bryant is not alone in her disregard, intentional or not, of her female protagonist's heritage or privilege. Many white female writers, even contemporary ones, fail to fully recognize the role that race and privilege play in their construction and characterization of their white women characters. This detachment begs the question: why? Likely, there is no easy or quick answer for this question, and the reasons may differ from author to author. Alcoff stresses that everyone "needs to feel a connection to community, to a history, and to a human project larger than his or her own" (1998, 8). Without this connection, she claims "we are bereft of a concern for the future or an investment in the fate of our community" (8). One possible reason for this issue is that facing the privilege connected with their race and the inequality other races deal with just might be more than some white female characters and the white women writers who created them are ready to acknowledge because it could severely alter how they perceive themselves or because they have no idea how to work towards fixing the issue. While genealogy tests, like AncestryDNA, and television shows, such as *Who Do You Think You Are* and *Finding Your Roots*, appear to be growing more and more popular, many white Americans seem to be reluctant to find out about their past because, in a number of cases, they are forced to face harsh realities about their ancestors; for example, a number of white people have slave holders as past relatives. In addition, some of these white female writers just may not recognize the significance that being white plays in their lives, so it is not surprising that it would not play a role in the lives or their characters; unfortunately, this perpetuates the "invisible" nature of whiteness and further emphasizes the divide between races. When specifically addressing *Ella Price's Journal*, it is important to acknowledge the significant role it played during the Women's Liberation Movement and its consciousness-raising content that likely aided many women in better understanding themselves and their place in society. However, as powerful as this text is, *Ella Price's Journal* neglects to define its main character, Ella, as someone with a history that began long before the novel opens in the early 1970s. Ella is just another white woman with no sense of how her being white influences her life and her ability to make choices.

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Blood-free Memory: Reconciliation and Social Transformation in Ayathurai Santhan's Post-Civil Conflict Fiction

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Abstract:

Ayathurai Santhan is a Sri Lankan Tamil writer who experienced and survived multiple conflicts targeting the country's Tamil community, including a twenty six year war that ended in 2009. His writing is anchored on conflict memory and read as re-visitations, re-imaginings, and as efforts of working-through traumatic pasts with an aim at reconciliation for Sri Lankan society. In doing so, Santhan proposes an approach to conflict memory that radically deviates from the mainstream practice among Sri Lankan writers who, as a rule, bank on overly-disturbing, graphic images of violence in representing political conflict. To the contrary, Santhan's fiction is arranged on a new imagination focused on shared differences, unexpected solidarities, and grey zones that prevail at times of conflict: an arrangement which the discussion identifies as "blood-free memory". In an effort that draws on alternative approaches for commemoration in a time of transition, the paper also localizes Santhan's "blood-free memory" within the larger post-war context in Sri Lanka where Tamil memory in the former war-areas continues to be under strict surveillance of the state.

Keywords: Sri Lankan Literature, Conflict Memory, Anti-Tamil Violence, Post-war Sri Lanka, South Asian Writing, Transformative Imaginations

Santhan's fiction and the representation of conflict

Ayathurai Santhan is, at present, the only English language novelist resident in Jaffna, in Sri Lanka's Tamil-majority northern peninsula which was a contested territory of civil conflict between 1983 and 2009. The war, fought between the Sri Lankan state and the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), ended in the total defeat of the dissenters in May 2009. Resident in Jaffna throughout the two and a half decades of the conflict – and, before the war, having experienced anti-Tamil riots in the majority-Sinhalese areas (or, the South)[1] – Santhan witnessed political violence at first hand on numerous occasions (Sivapalan 2017, 25). His creative work, which includes the three novels Santhan wrote in English during the first post-war decade – *The Whirlwind* (2010), *Rails Run Parallel* (2015) and *Every Journey Ends* (2018) – bring on retrospective imaginations and memories of conflict he witnessed in both the North and the South, and have earned critical attention for dealing with compelling issues of "identity and territory", "mobility", and "rootedness" (Sivapalan 2017, 25). Collectively, the novels constitute what the writer proposes to be the first instalments of a narrative compendium through which he wishes to arrange for posterity personal and community memories of conflict as he experienced them over three decades (Santhan, personal communication in January 2020).

In keeping with this design, Santhan published *The Whirlwind* in 2010, which is set against the military siege of a small Tamil village in Jaffna by Indian Peace Keeping Force (IPKF) soldiers who were stationed in the North and the East in July 1987. That year, J.R. Jayewardene and Rajiv Gandhi, the heads of state of the two neighbouring countries, signed a treaty that employed Indian soldiers in Sri Lanka to maintain a ceasefire of the four year old war. This occupation has gone down in history as a violent one with locals being harassed and killed in the hundreds (Sivapalan 2017, 33) while, starting from October 1987, the IPKF sustained heavy damages in conflicts with the LTTE[2]. *The Whirlwind* was followed in 2015 by *Rails Run Parallel*, which Santhan partly-based on personal memories and shared anxieties during the anti-Tamil violence in Colombo in July 1977. Of his post-war compendium in English, *Every Journey Ends* is formally the more ambitious work in its employment of multiple narrative frames in a storyline split between 1980s Sri Lanka, India, and the Soviet Union, and the use of memory spread across two continents. Of significance to the present examination, the novel draws on conflict immediately after the July 1983 anti-Tamil riots where mobs operating under the knowledge of Sinhalese politicians (Hoole et al. 343) orchestrated violence killing an estimated 2000 (Thambiah 1992, 71) to 3000 (McGowan 1993, 97) persons, and leaving between 50,000 (Sivanayagam 2005, 270) and 80,000 to 100,000 (Thambiah 1992, 71) as refugees in the capital city of Colombo itself. Violence spread for a full five days amidst government negligence and inaction which exacerbated hostilities between the Tamil militant groups in the North and the state militaries, subsequently drawing the country into the path of a long war.

Since Sri Lanka's independence from Great Britain in 1948, anti-Tamil sentiments have played a definitive role in the mobilization and expression of the country's Sinhalese nationalist politics where efforts to exclude and erase Tamils from the historical consciousness of people gained new force. This exclusion, as Karthigesu Sivathamby explains, was sustained by "an intellectual decision" that was "taken almost unanimously" by politically-motivated archaeologists and historians who presented Tamils "at least in historical researches, as a damaging force" (Sivathamby 2005, 76). Strands of this brand of nationalism to engineer the new country as a Sinhalese-Buddhist nation are visible as early as the 1930s and 1940s. For instance, in 1944, Junius Jayewardene moved the State Assembly (albeit unsuccessfully) to recognize Sinhalese as the sole language of state (Theva Rajan 1995, 27). Four decades later, under Jayewardene's watch as the country's inaugural executive president, anti-Tamil mob violence was unleashed in 1977, 1981 and 1983. In 1956, Solomon Bandaranaike, motivated his successful election campaign on a "Sinhala Only" slogan and won in a landslide to herald, as S.K Sitrampalam contends, a decade where "Sri Lankan nationalism came to be identified with Sinhala Buddhist nationalism" (Sitrampalam 2009, 8). Even as the proposed languages act bill was debated in parliament, peaceful protests staged by Tamils were attacked by supporters of the Sinhalese-nationalist camp. Concurrent attacks in the provinces, such as in the Gal Oya development scheme in the Eastern Province, resulted in "over a hundred Tamils [being] massacred and hundreds more [being] driven into hiding" (Manor 1989, 261-262). While, later, Bandaranaike had misgivings about the policy he had championed, "Sinhala Only"[3] prevailed till 1987, while agreements between Sinhalese and Tamil statesmen to place the two languages on an equal footing were pressured from being implemented by protesting Sinhalese nationalists in 1957 and 1965 (Ghosh 1999, 35-37).

With the "language question" persisting, alienation among the Tamil youth grew in the 1960s and 1970s. Furthermore, controversial state policy such as the standardization of university entrance to a regional quota system adopted in 1974 (Thambiah 1992, 66) left an impact on northern Tamil youth who normally demonstrated a high success rate in university entrance; and for whom education was the pathway to the higher rungs of society. "Sinhala Only" and the subsequent alienation it caused among Tamils were at the heart of the generation in which Santhan grew up in the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s, where an acute sense of political and cultural subordination took root in that community. It set the stage for militant groups to emerge in the North in the 1970s and for counter-state movement to prosper. Commenting on this shift of the North towards armed militancy, K.M. de Silva has noted that Tamil youth of the 1960s and 1970s increasingly felt as being "victims of deliberately devised policies of discrimination" (De Silva 1986, 243), which affected a vast area in Tamil life including "religion, culture, literature, and the arts" (Sivathamby 2005, 25). As Sivathamby aptly sums up, "when parliaments could not resolve [the crisis facing the youth] the militants took over" (Sivathamby 2005, 25). In the two and a half decades from 1956 to 1983 mob riots and violence targeting Tamils became frequent and took place in 1956, 1958, 1977, 1981, and 1983: a destructive wave which, as dramatist Ernest McIntyre articulates in his play *Rasanayagam's Last Riot* (1993), had become normalized in the people's consciousness in the South (McIntyre 1993).

In narrative representations of anti-Tamil violence, creative practitioners have often centred their focus on the Black July riots to which I drew attention earlier. Such representations occupy a wide spectrum in fiction, life writing, film, and poetry from composition born out of the shock of the event's immediate aftermath – of which, perhaps, Jean Arasanayagam's collection *Apocalypse '83* (1984) is the most widely-read publication – as well as from subsequent work that demonstrated attempts at working-through traumatic experience. Fiction such as A. Sivanandan's *When Memory Dies* (1998), Shyam Selvadurai's *Funny Boy* (1994), Manuka Wijesinghe's *Monsoons and Potholes* (2006), four novels by Roma Tearne written between 2006 and 2013 – *Mosquito*, *Bone China*, *Brixton Beach* and *The Swimmer* –, Shankari Chandran's *Song of the Sun God* (2016) and Visakesa Chandrasekaram's *Tigers Don't Confess* (2011), are among noted literary work in the literary mainstream that, in provocative terms, draw on the memory of violence against

Sri Lankan Tamils. Each of these writers render close examination to destructive mob activism, looting and arson of Tamil homes and businesses, and the rape of Tamil women while anchoring memory on bloodied images, physical traumas, impressions of ethnic-subordination (of the Tamil by the Sinhalese) and the bodily and mental violation of victims as standard narrative practice. The following extract from Nihal de Silva's *The Road from Elephant Pass* (2003) in which an LTTE woman activist named Kamala Velaithan recollects her family's experiences during the July 1983 riots presents a stock description commonly found in representations of anti-Tamil violence by Sri Lankan English writers:

> The mobs came along the railway track. Appa was not at home... They knew exactly where the Tamils lived because they came directly to our home. They were all young men carrying clubs and iron rods. They ordered my mother out of the house. She was carrying my little brother Ram. We had two tiny rooms on the first floor of our house. I was playing up there when they came. I hid when they started shouting at my mother.
>
> They did not steal anything. They simply collected all our possessions, clothes, TV and furniture and piled them in the centre of our hall. They threw all appa's books on top of the pile – and then they set fire to it all. (De Silva 2003, 103)

In a continuation of the above narrative, Kamala relates how her father's battered body – assaulted by the mob and left to die – was conveyed to the family on the same evening her house was set on fire. Her father didn't fully recover from his injuries and lived with health complications for the rest of his life (De Silva 2003, 104). Later, Kamala relocates to Jaffna with her family and, having come of age, enlists in the LTTE to avenge those who harmed her family and people. Recent novels such as Visakesa Chandrasekaram's *Tigers Don't Confess* (Chandrasekaram 2011, 214-217) and Shankari Chandran's *Song of the Sun God* (Chandran 2016, 144-146) present variations of the above pattern of violence to include in great detail descriptive passages of rape:

> The Black July came without any warning like an unexpected, mammoth bush fire. The Singhalese mobs swarmed into the streets from multiple directions calling for Tamils' blood. Nothing prepared Shalini's father for this carnage. He locked the doors of the shop and retreated upstairs to pray to his gods when the police refused to answer his phone calls. The mobs crumpled the heavy timber doors of the shop within minutes and broke in. one group stole every item they thought they could take with them... The other group climbed upstairs with sharp, big knives and swords looking for the head of the household. Shalini's mother jumped between the mob and her husband to save her man's life, so the gang leader flung his sword, cutting her throat instantly, opening a gushing, red blood spout. Then they stabbed Shalini's father. (Chandrasekaram 2011, 214)

The subject of this passage, Shalini, grows up to be a ruthless LTTE activist who is obsessed with revenge and driven by self-destructive impulses, and becomes a suicide-bomber. Like Kamala Velaithan, Shalini, too, joined the LTTE and nursed motives of revenge after she was "repeatedly raped by four men" while "she screamed, begging mercy" as an eight year old child (Chandrasekaram 2011, 215). Violations of the female body are described at great length in novels such as Shankari Chandran's *Song of the Sun God* where, being raped in an army camp, a childhood incident is triggered in a Tamil woman as she recalls her mother being similarly gang-raped by a group of Sinhalese men:

> The demon slapped her mother and threw her on the floor, like one of her dolls... He stood up and shook the bloodied snake that was attached to his body. "Get me the girl, she's quiet," he said, motioning to the others in the room. Someone reached towards [the girl]. [The girl] could see the hairs on the arm moving, black ants poised to bite her. "No, no!" Amma cried. She tried to stand but couldn't, collapsing towards the demon and holding onto his legs. "I'll be quiet, I'll be quiet, I promise."
> The demon kicked her away and all of his heads laughed at her, but Amma dragged herself back onto the bed. She unbuttoned her blouse with shaking hands and took off her bra. (Chandran 2016, 145)

In summary, mainstream creative practice in Sri Lankan English writing demonstrates conflict memories anchored on violent images, harrowing descriptions, detailed references to blood-letting and close examination of harmed bodies. In such representations the perpetration is pinned on a Sinhalese man or a mob of Sinhalese men. The victims of assault range from Tamil men and women to children whose harrowing fates at the hands of the mobs often shock audiences. While, at one level, such memories and impressions contribute to the discussion of keeping anti-Tamil violence, mob culture, and the apathy of ethno-nationalist extremes awake, they do not necessarily contribute to a transformative discussion aimed at reconciliation, solidarity and reach out across the divided society.

Blood-free memory in a universe of memory siege

Santhan's post-war fiction radically deviates from the narrative mainstream I drew attention to in the preceding section, and suggest a new opening and direction for conflict memory in terms of what I propose in this discussion as "blood-free memory": where, in representing conflict events, the writer renounces and replaces the almost clichéd and formulaic representations of trauma and violence (I have illustrated in Chandran, Chandrasekaram, and De Silva) with, among others, memories of unexpected solidarities between members across the social divide, grey zones of compassion, and passages that offer potential to dissipate ethnic division. These focuses, in turn, foster approaches to narrative that blurs or mutes the spectacle of violence in the backdrop while drawing to fore complexities and tensions men and women face as they reach out to one another despite surrounding shockwaves of upheaval to assist, provide assurance, and give encouragement with words and gestures.

The present examination is intent on identifying and conceptualizing Santhan's "blood-free" construction of memory and, more significantly, in examining its potential for Sri Lanka's post-conflict discourse which remains heavily militarized under the gaze of the state. In addition, the framing of peace through what Janel Smith identifies as “a development-security nexus” has led to the “militarisation of development” in the North and East and led to a construction of boundaries that (at least in the immediate post-conflict situation) tended to categorize society into “elements considered ‘good’ or ‘positive’ and those that are considered ‘bad’, ‘negative’, and/or ‘dangerous’” (Smith 2013, 363). Thirteen years after the war, ordinary men and women whose loved ones, neighbours, and friends and associates were lost to war continue to be blocked in giving expression to grief and in upholding the memory of the deceased (Centre for Policy Alternatives 2017; Journalists for Democracy 2021). The fear of the government in the spectacle and ritual aspects of commemorative practice seems to be the main point of contention between the state and the public. It is notable that the state/ military are tolerant of memorialization acts in the private domain. Their hostility has been more articulate in the realm of public memory and community remembrance. As an approach, Santhan’s framing of memory as “blood-free” – as will be explained in its due place – transcends the narrow delimits of political membership while, simultaneously, placing memory discourse on a “middle ground” that is receptive of the commonalities and solidarities of people (than on a search for victims and perpetrators). This approach can be argued to support post-conflict societies like Sri Lanka whose struggle to develop a national reconciliation framework is stilted at the level of policy; and which promotes re-visitations of conflict pasts with solidarity and empathy, and without blame-and-shame or apologies for historical guilt.

Complementing, perhaps, Sivathamby’s view of the matter, for Santhan, Sinhalese and Tamils are ethnic cousins estranged by the selectiveness of historians and divisions brought on by nationalist politics: at any event, two communities that were born of the same seed but were alienated from each other “in the way history was framed” (Santhan in a personal communication, January 2020). Unlike the vast majority of Sinhalese in the country’s South and Tamils in the North and East, Santhan has lived on both territories, formed meaningful relationships across borders, and shared in a deeper inter-national empathy: an aspect that has led critics such as Amirthanjali Sivapalan to identify the writer as a “trans-local” subject (Sivapalan 2017). Before the intensification of war which restricted Santhan to Jaffna, he had studied and worked in the capital, Colombo: a period of his life framed in several short stories published in Tamil, including “Oddumaa” (1972/2019). Having entered the Tamil literary sphere in the 1960s, Santhan strengthened his place in a linguistically-divided Sri Lanka in the early-1990s by beginning to compose in English. With the exception of *The Whirlwind* (which was published in Chennai), Santhan’s English fiction have been published by three leading firms in Maradana and Borella in Colombo: Godage, PawPrint, and Samayawardhana Publishers, who continue to act as Santhan’s publishers and agents. During the escalation of war, Santhan’s communications with the South seem to have been heavily disrupted (Santhan, *The Northern Front* 16-20), while the war’s end in 2009 made him return to familiar southern landscapes and relationships from long ago. *Rails Run Parallel*, *Every Journey Ends* and *Oddumaa and Other Stories* echo these relationships with the pre-conflict South.

In its overall frame, *Rails Run Parallel* is anchored on events between two anti-Tamil attacks in Colombo (in July 1977) and Jaffna (in June 1981) that are often downplayed – or even suppressed – in Sinhalese memory as "minor events". The 1977 attacks forced large numbers to leave the "Sinhalese areas" in the country and to flee north, which included large numbers of Sri Lanka's Malayha Tamils – or, "Tamils of Indian descent" – traditionally settled in the plantation districts in the country's central hills; who, in large numbers, migrated to rural areas of the Vanni, in the south-central Northern Province (Karunakaran 2016, 20; Sivanayagam 2005, 181). Commenting on the outbreak of violence in the interior of the country, S. Sivanayagam notes as follows:

> The line-rooms of the poor estate workers were set ablaze, making them flee by the thousands. Matale and Kandy were both badly affected. At Matale alone, more than 13,000 were made refugees, and about 7000 of them sought refuge at the Muthumari Amman temple. Unable to return to their line-rooms hundreds of them trekked to the Tamil areas in the north, to Mannar, Vavuniya, and Kilinochchi... Even ten days after the killings began, Jayewardene, then Prime Minister, desisted from declaring a state of emergency on the highly moralistic plea that it would be "contrary to democratic principles"! (Sivanayagam 2005, 181).

The novel's first movement draws on the fears of the Tamil society in Colombo in the 1970s and the complex mind set with which Tamils – as characterized in the autobiographical main character Sivan, his family, and friends – flee the capital in 1977 upon the risk of being attacked. Between the flight and the story's second movement set in 1979 there is a coda of two years. In 1979, Sivan had already returned to Colombo, resumed his job at his work place, and settled into familiar routine. The focus of the "1979 section" rests on a labour issue which Sivan undertakes on behalf of his trade union and resolves through successful negotiation. The fears and anxieties of 1977 seem to have completely disappeared as Sivan and fellow Sinhalese and Tamil workers stand together as belonging to the same working class to override enforced ethno-political differences. The novel concludes where, on his return bearing good news, Sivan is welcomed with camaraderie (Santhan 2015, 151-152). The rapport between this Tamil trade unionist and his Sinhalese comrades offer hope and possibility to a nation fractured with ethnic tensions: a fracture that would only further deepen over the next four years in time.

In the novel, unexpected solidarity is further demonstrated in a memorable passage where, at the wake of rioting, Sivan's family and that of a friend take a taxi cab to the Colombo railway station. In the deserted early-morning streets there are only a few vehicles about. The travellers are wary of waylaying gangs that looted and killed fleeing Tamil families. Adding to their anxiety, the cab driver appeared to bear "a typical ruffian-look with broad, dark sideburns and a moustache" (Santhan 2015, 27). The drive, as described in *Rails Run Parallel*, is a rehearsal of agitation and uncertainty presented in detail over five pages of text (Santhan 2015, 27-32). However, in the end, the driver proves himself to be a considerate and compassionate man who, after great hesitation, names and accepts a nominal fare while refusing extra money offered to him: "it's not fair for me to charge you anything extra, especially at a time like this," (Santhan 2015, 37) he claims. The driver further demonstrates an unexpected caring nature when Sivan injures his finger by accident:

> Without hesitation, he took his handkerchief out of his shirt pocket and ran towards the row of shops on the other side of the road… The driver returned with his handkerchief torn into strips and well soaked with water. Taking Sivan's hand he gently removed the bandage that Verni had used and replaced it with the wet strips of cloth. Sivan felt the sudden chill causing the pain to subside. (Santhan 2015, 36)

In this section of the novel, the outbreak of violence is notably mentioned in two instances: a relay of news (to Sivan) by a friend that Police shooting had killed "two or three people" following a clash in a carnival in Jaffna (Santhan 2015, 20) and, as the taxi cab drives past the makeshift camp set up at St. Peter's College, in a passing reference to refugee camps (Santhan 2015, 21). In stark contrast to the narrative mainstream I have referenced earlier in this examination, Santhan makes frequent uses of devices such as impressions of desertion, silence, and abandonment to evoke atmospheres of hostility and tension. For instance, while they walk about in search of a cab, Sivan and his friend Varathan see that "shops that were usually open at [that hour] remained close" and in kiosk shops that were open the "shutters weren't fully removed" (Santhan 2015, 17-18). A familiar "vegetarian restaurant patronized by Tamils" in the area remained "secured with planks and padlocks" (Santhan 2015, 19) while, being converted to a refugee camp, "the gates of the temple were closed" (Santhan 2015, 21).

As mentioned earlier, characterizations of the psychological impact of violence – such as how violence brings on personal tensions, collective anxieties and feelings of vulnerability – play a defining role in Santhan's characterization of conflict. In *Every Journey Ends*, he experiments with two timeframes which – in spatial terms – brings into conference different experiences in three different continents; that in Sri Lanka, India and the Soviet Union. In the novel's first section, the protagonist Murukan, a young Sri Lankan Tamil man (characteristically, an autobiographical representation), is a part of an international student delegate touring the Soviet Union in 1984. In historical terms, the story's setting has the added significance of its being a transitional year between the July 1983 riots and the outbreak of open war between the Sri Lankan state and the Tamil liberation groups. Friction brought on by the deteriorating atmosphere in Colombo is reflected on Murukan as he is almost denied permission to leave Sri Lanka – as implied, due to his being a Tamil – and, later, while in Russia, in his receiving (mis)information that homebound Tamils were being placed under arrest (Santhan 2018, 93). While Murukan is dismayed at being detained upon return, Aruni – a Sri Lankan Sinhalese on tour who, for the main part, is seen to be aloof and distant from Murukan – steps up and consoles her younger Tamil compatriot (Santhan 2018, 93). Complementing with the encounter with the taxi cab driver in *Rails Run Parallel*, Aruni's unexpected show of solidarity contributes to a grey zone of interaction which, in the context of the novel, undermines rigid boundaries proposed by ethnic division.

Extending its critique on ethnic stereotypes further, *Every Journey Ends* downplays the clichéd misinterpretation of conflict in Sri Lanka as being a clash between Sinhalese and Tamils, as much as its being a breakdown of the modern nation. This is effectively dramatized in situations such as where, at an airport terminal, Murukan converses with a group of Tamil boys leaving Sri Lanka in search of foreign jobs. Talk turns to the LTTE ambush of a military recce convoy in Jaffna in July 1983: the event that is believed to have triggered anti-Tamil rioting in Colombo. Santhan levers this conversation to articulate that the attack on the military was "not because they were Sinhalese" but "because they were soldiers", and that "a truly Sri Lankan army" should consist of at least three Tamils in every thirteen soldiers (Santhan 2018, 56). The emphasis on the civil conflict as a political issue – between that of Tamil nationalist rebels and the state as an institute – is an important distinction which most mainstream representations of the conflict fail (or neglect) to establish. While, from the 1950s, the debate on self-representation and self-determination has occupied the centre in Tamil rights forums, even as late as 2022 – a full thirteen years after the war – the devolution of police and land rights to the North and the East remains under dispute. In its historical place, the anxieties of young Tamil boys like those whom Murukan meets give voice to the dilemma of being second class citizens in one's own country, and to reflect "alienation from a political system" which "appeared to symbolize...the dominance of an unsympathetic majority" (De Silva 1986, 243).

Later on, while touring Leningrad, Murukan is captivated by the memorials in the Piskariovskoye cemetery which honour a commemorative space of the 900-day siege of that city by Germany during World War II. The detail with which Santhan frames this particular section of the novel reroutes to the writer's search for "blood-free" memory for evocative and powerful remembrance. In the cemetery, Murukan's attention is particularly drawn to the preserved remains of a child's diary (Tatyana's Diary) which – in a series of nine stand-alone lines written on nine sequential pages – records the deaths in her family during the siege of Leningrad (Santhan 2018, 56). The neatly arranged memorial tombs, as well as the solemn and quiet dignity offered to the dead, encourage readers to rethink the crisis of public memory and memorialization in post-war Sri Lanka where military/state surveillance continues to police performative memorial acts. While the state has allowed – and endorsed at the expense of its budget – memorials and commemorative events for military soldiers who died during the long war, ordinary men and women in the former war-zones have their right to mourn regularly obstructed under pretexts of national security. This censoring of public memory through the superimposition of "sanctioned monuments constructed by the victorious state" suggests, as Sasanka Perera has argued, the state's preoccupation in totally erasing a "violent past" (Perera 2016, 265). Control over public memory has violently obstructed community initiatives such as the war memorial at the Jaffna University (built in 2019) which was demolished at night in January 2021: an attempt seen as erasing memories "that expose the horrors unleashed on the community by Sinhala-Buddhist nationalism and its military apparatuses" (Bharathi 2021). Following local and international protest, the state later agreed to restore the demolished statue in its original place. While, on one hand, the continued post-conflict military presence in the North and its intimidation and surveillance have given cover to historical claims made by Sinhalese-Buddhist nationalism in the Jaffna peninsula (Dewasiri 2013, 5-9), the military has also led concentrated efforts to cleanse the land of its past dominated by the LTTE. The military-led demolition of over 20,400 memorial burial plots dedicated to slain LTTE activists in Visuvamadu, Uduppiddi, Kopai, Kodikamam, Mulliyavalai and Kanakapuram in 2009 and 2010 (Journalists for Democracy in Sri Lanka 2020) exemplify this approach by the state. On the demolition sites military camps were built.

The military has also erected "enormous and hyper-visible state memorials" in strategic locations of the Northern Province with the purpose "of broadcasting the formidable strength and success of the armed forces" and to "valorise martial values" (Seoighe 2016, 452). One particularly intimidating monument was designed as a larger-than-life cement wall that had been cracked by the impact of an assault shell. As sites of memory, places curated under state/military watch have been opened to tourists visiting the North from other parts of the country – predominantly from the Sinhalese South (Karunakaran 2016, 65-66) – to showcase the "defeat of terrorism" and to "[celebrate] the state's triumph over a formidable enemy" (Seoighe 2016, 457). Militarization is further perceived in a number of memoirs (predominantly published in Sinhalese) by military men who retired from service immediately after the war – among them Kamal Gunaratne's *Road to Nandikadal*, Boniface Perera's *Avi Bimaka Hadha Gaesma* and Sujith Edirisinghe's *Avi Bimaka Giniyama* – which courted popular appeal among Sinhalese readers. In contrast to memory projects enjoying state patronage and resources allocated by the military, efforts by the community – such as the Mullaivaikkal people's memorial adjacent to the site of the war's final battlefield – have been obstructed by authorities from being completed (Kent 2020). In its depiction of a child accompanying a man who carries a woman in his arms, this particular memorial initiated by the local church was designed to represent the survivors (and the perished) during the war's closing stages.

Writing conflict memory for post-war times

Since acts of remembrance cannot be postponed until the dawn of a utopia Santhan's approach to memory in his post-war fiction, at one level, is instructive of a creative negotiation with the state's machinery of suppression. The writer's intent to draft memory as "blood-free" impressions suggest a meditated choice for precarious times; and as an approach sensitive to the implications of having lived through and survived a conflict that had irrevocably transformed one's surroundings, way of life, and shared destiny with the community. However, a perceptible attempt to work-through traumatic pasts (than, for instance, to "act out" trauma) dominates Santhan's creative programme which merits our attention. As Ann Rigney argues, literary works have a fundamental role of "selecting certain memories and preparing them" for a society's "future cultural life" (Rigney 2004, 383). Santhan's vision of his country's future cultural life pushes past the preoccupation of "acting out" violent imaginaries found in the literary mainstream and selective blindness promoted by militarized post-war narratives accompanying memorials of the state. For Santhan, the path of working-through the country's conflict past lies in transcending memory divides and – with a mind to energize revision and re-imagination – in building proactive frames of inclusive solidarity.

The cultural vision with which Santhan looks on society is memorably captured in a reference to grafting found in "Oddumaa", a short story that was originally published in Tamil in 1972, and translated to English in 2019. It is set during 1967 and 1970, in pre-conflict Sri Lanka, and involves a love story between Sivan, a young Tamil student from Jaffna, and Chaturi, the daughter of his Sinhalese boarding house owner, Mr. Peiris. While having a casual conversation in the Peiris' garden, talk turns to a stunted mango sapling which Sivan predicts would bear a tasteless yield: "only the fruits of *oddumaa*, the grafted mango, will be tasty," Sivan tells Mr. Peiris. "The fruits of other trees won't be as tasty as the grafted one" (Santhan 2019, 33). In a later section of the story, Mr. Peiris echoes a comparable notion when he refers to the prospect of the country's future being "healthier and more intelligent" if races were to mix (Santhan 2019, 44). In these instances, words and phrases that insinuate abundance, taste, and wholesomeness are carefully selected to characterize a reconciled (utopian) nation. However, when Mr. Peiris learns that his daughter had an affair with Sivan, he vehemently opposes a prospective union between the two. Sivan's friend, Anandan, rationalizes the father's ire in the following terms:

> When he discussed racial harmony and mixed marriages with you, he must have been thinking of a mass social movement. But now, he considers the whole thing on a personal level and is afraid of acting unilaterally because he is afraid of social ostracisation. (Santhan 2019, 65)

"Oddumaa", referenced above, intersects *Rails Run Parallel* at two precise points when – while fleeing from the violence unfolding in Colombo – Sivan fleetingly wonders what would have happened had he been married to Chaturi instead of Verni, his spouse (Santhan 2015, 45), and, later, when he hears from a friend – though ten years too late – that Chaturi's parents had changed their minds in blocking the daughter from marrying Sivan (Santhan 2015, 154-155). Santhan's tendency to actively undermine the "demonized other" constructed and perpetuated by both the Sinhalese and Tamil nationalist discourses is borne on an internationalist sentiment that is equally cosmopolitan and tolerant. These qualities are visibly articulated in the concluding installment of *Rails Run Parallel* – particularly, in passages that undermine casteism in traditional Jaffna society (Santhan 2015, 142-143) – as they are in short stories such as "Times and Changes" where, returning to Colombo after being cut off for a decade due to the war, the story's main character, Sathi, notices palmyrah palms (typical of the Jaffna landscape) planted along the Galle Face turf: "Out of place, and spoiling the beauty, I think," Sathi remarks, "but, now I could see a little bit of Jaffna in the city centre of Colombo" (Santhan 2005, 17).

In a concluding note, it serves to observe that Santhan's "blood-free" memory challenges mainstream representations of conflict fuelled by violent imaginations which this discussion drew on at the outset. For instance, in the case of Chandran – a British-Australian of Sri Lankan heritage – evocations of rape borderline embellishment and sensationalism, in instances; and, in the detailed descriptions she presents for shock effect, violence is reenacted in voyeuristic overtones. Similarly, the rape of Shalini, a girl of eight, in Chandrasekaram's *Tigers Don't Confess* – and her enrollment with the LTTE to avenge her fate – adds to the suspense of the novel, but at the expense of reducing her narrative within a revenge formula and in making it overly preoccupied with the construction of Shalini as a sexually-alluring, desirable female assassin: a clichéd femme fatale. However, the motivations these writers (and others who have lived outside the war-affected areas) compose with – and the priorities with which they frame conflict – seems to differ from a writer of Santhan's experience. For Santhan, the memory of conflict, to use a phrase, is too nearer to home. His responses, therefore, are more immediately matters of survival and of continuing life.

Endnotes:

1. In this article the terms "North" and "East" have been used in an idiomatic sense to refer to the Tamil-dominated districts in the Northern and Eastern Provinces in Sri Lanka. The term "South" has been similarly used to indicate the Sinhalese-majority regions south of Vavuniya; and not, in particular, to mean the Southern Province of Sri Lanka.
2. For a comprehensive report of the Jaffna situation during the IPKF occupation, refer the following chapters in *Broken Palmyrah* by Rajan Hoole et al. (1990): "Post Accord: The Indian Summer" (143-185), "India's Role – An Overview" (195-208), "The War of October 1987" (210-278), and "No More Tears Sister – The Experience of Women" (305-325).
3. For a detailed study of Ceylon's National Language Act of 1956, refer *Tamil as Official Language: Retrospect and Prospect* by A. Theva Rajan (1995, 26-35, 36-51) and K.M de Silva's *Sri Lanka's Troubled Inheritance* (2007, 213-236).

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How Can You Eat at A Time Like This?: An Analysis of Poverty and Charity in Dickens's *A Christmas Carol*

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Abstract:

While poverty does not discriminate against race, age, gender, or religion; it does play a role in the separation of classes. In this paper, I will examine at length how Dickens takes his London reality of impoverishment and shapes it into a context for all to digest as a serious issue. I depict the importance of charity via characters in *A Christmas Carol* and expose the weaknesses of the social hierarchy that exists in this society. Impoverished people not only need the State's help to improve their unfortunate positions, but they also rely on the generosity of their fellow citizens, which, sadly, does not always happen. This novella, as a ghost story, illustrates the true horrors of classism, penury, and the social justification of immoral behaviors.

Keywords: Poverty, Charity, Charles Dickens, *A Christmas Carol,* Victorian Literature

The responsibility for the poor has been an ongoing dispute between those of upper and lower classes for centuries. And when I say dispute, I am referring solely on the discrepancies of facts that the two groups hold to be true. Nonetheless, the role of caretaker varies among everyone's perception; especially when trying to identify if poverty is a problem of the state or of the people of London. As poverty and class struggle becomes an unresolved issue, and thus continues to expand, Charles Dickens uses his books to hint at this looming threat and addresses the problem the poor are facing. While many believe the state should intervene and reduce the amount of poor people, others are convinced it is the role of a society to help their fellow citizens. In this paper, I will examine at length how Dickens takes his London reality of impoverishment and shapes it into a context for all to digest. *A Christmas Carol* places the problem more so on the individual and provides an effective solution by the end of the text, which demonstrates how those in the community can alter the problem; on the other hand, he also subtly demonstrates how the environment reflects the state, and if those in charge are not trying to improve the situations of the poor, the citizens will have little concern for them as well. However, I am convinced that Dickens composes *A Christmas Carol* in the attempt to express to the individual it is their role and duty to generously contribute to those around them for the betterment of humanity on the basis level, while the government should focus more on the larger picture and implement laws which will benefit all who are poverty-stricken. A solution to the problem always exists, but sometimes-willful blindness makes this difficult to acknowledge. The economic struggle limits the progression in life for multiple people, especially for the characters in Dickens's story, who are essentially people he has come across in his own life. While I argue that Dickens attributes the problem of poorness on both state and society, in *A Christmas Carol,* he concentrates more on the impact an individual can make via the character of Scrooge and how charity improves the life of those who need it through the image of Bob Cratchit.

Dickens's *A Christmas Carol* as a ghost story emphasizes the horrors the poor endure, and he calls upon those who believe it is not their problem to fix it. As the economy and environment continues to flourish so should the people, all people, dwelling there. Historically, ghost stories were told as part of the Christmas festivities, family members would gather around and recite tales that they heard in the attempt to frighten and bond. And the fickleness of money is frightening enough, since financial destruction could strike anyone, and at a moment's notice, any family could be subjected to loss of their wealth. While there are actual ghosts in this novel, adding more of an eerie element, the ghosts appear as the less terrifying thing. Although, they do startle Scrooge upon their first encounter, what scares him the most is dying without making a positive change and leaving his mark within his community. The spirits reveal to him that without his generosity he would die alone and forgotten, like those who are neglected by the state and their neighbors. This ghost story provides listeners and readers with the perspective of what it is like being poor and as Scrooge floats around he personifies this class, because he is: invisible in a room full of people, does not consume the food at the feasts he appears at, and he does not partake in the happiness of those who are in the spaces of good shelter and great feelings. The ghosts make Scrooge into an outcast like many lower-class people. These are all aspects that the poor face daily and charity during the season of Christmas would change this routine for multiple families by providing them with a little more than what the state gives them. Mainly because those who considered themselves working-class did not reside in poor houses long. Henry Mayhew writes in *London Labour and the London Poor,* "My informant tells me that persons of this class (working class) seldom return to the workhouse after one night's shelter, and this is a conclusive proof that the regular workingman seldom passes into an habitual beggar. They are an entirely distinct class, having different habits, and indeed, different features, and I am assured that they are strictly honest" (Mayhew 1985, 374). Charity would not only benefit those who make it known that they need assistance, but also those whose pride will not let them beg or ask for help. When the state provides an individual with a resource to some it hinders their self-esteem, however, when a fellow neighbor shares their goods, it is seen as more brotherly and considerate of your associate. This is another example of how the state and society works hand in hand to contribute to those with little to no income. As Barbara Hanawalt states in *London's Poor*, "Charitable giving illustrates the spiritual bargain between the rich and poor in the salvation of the rich men's and women's souls and care for the poorer neighbors" (Hanawalt 2005, 1069).

In this text, charity is imperative in the economic sphere of survival and those who lack must depend on others' kindness to help them endure adversity. Poverty is the concern of the individual who passes by those in need on the streets and starve in the poorhouse, while the state regulates the laws to ensure proper housing, work, and food. Even though it lacks the compassion found within an attentive person, the state has more control to execute a more practical modification. Since poorhouses cannot operate without money the taxes citizens pay become necessary to guarantee its proper running, yet taxes are not enough as opposed to Scrooge's opinion. Scrooge states to the men asking for charity,

> 'I wish to be left alone,' said Scrooge. Since you ask me what I wish, gentlemen, that is my answer. I don't make merry myself at Christmas and I can't afford to make idle people merry. I help to support the establishments I have mentioned – they cost enough; and those who are badly off must go there (Dickens 2008, 14).

Here Scrooge talks about the tax money he gives to fund the prisons, Union workhouses, the Poor Law, and the Treadmill, which are all constructed by the state to eradicate some of the economic hardship; however, as the gentlemen communicate to Scrooge his small percentage is not enough. Scrooge, like many others in his community, feel as if it is not their responsibility to ease the sorrow of the less fortunate and that state subsidized assistance should suffice. This is not to say government instituted programs are wonderful, but rather their existence does solve some of the problems of hungry and shelter; and through my interpretation this is what Scrooge is hinting towards. Nonetheless, Dickens and others in his community would have been aware of the conditions of these state establishments. Many prisons were not funded sufficiently, meaning that the prisoners were placed in an even harsher environment than being a beggar on the street in some cases. Hanawalt writes, "Prisoners had to supply their own food and drink, as well as a mat for a bed and relief from fetters. Prison was an inhospitable place in which a prisoner might languish until a debt was paid or a person tried for a crime" (Hanawalt 2005, 1079). In other words, this thinking of those in need should rely more on the state's help than the help from a neighbor, becomes damaging. The State provides the occupants in the workhouses or prisons with the bare minimum, which means if an individual does not have it then it must come from the generosity of someone who has disposable income and a pure heart.

The individuals who believe that public assistance should only stem from those in authority, overlook the aspect of how each person assembles and make up the public. Completely removing poverty is a desirous aspiration, but majority of everyone is aware this will never happen, even in earlier London. Michael Katz writes in "Poorhouses and the Origins of the Public Old Age Home", "None of the poor law critics, it must be stressed, proposed to eliminate poverty. To most people of the time, the idea would have been preposterous. Even in America, the vast majority would have to scrabble hard for a living. Nor was the issue redistributing wealth" (Katz 1984, 114). Poor laws were mainly used to regulate the crisis of starvation, not to eradicate it, deprivation and the Christmas season epitomized the perfect time to implore the necessity of charity. While the holidays are times of good food and comfort to some, it reminds others of their hardships making it difficult to enjoy. It is strenuous to disregard that there are destitute beings in the world once an individual confronts the issue, which is what happens to the main character Scrooge. Scrooge represents the oppressor, visible through all aspects of time, via the identity of those who thrive on their greed and guilt. The wealthy can no longer ignore the cries of those beneath them and as the classes continues to widen, people must take on the responsibility to assure no one is forgotten. Ultimately, progression should not be limited to those who can afford it, but all individuals should have an equal opportunity and resources to adequate living. What I am saying here once again is that while poverty, fundamentally, may be the liability of the state, citizens and neighbors are at the foundation of support. The one cannot move without the other and I believe Dickens does a wonderful job in communicating this idea.

The complexity of this uncomfortable situation is that poverty lacks boundaries, not only are there men and women starving, but also their children. In the introduction to *A Christmas Carol and other Christmas Books* Robert Douglas-Fairhurst writes, "And how could Dickens' middle-class readers be brought to realize that Ignorance and Want – 'the meagre, ragged, scowling, wolfish' children who appear to Scrooge from beneath the robe of the Ghost of Christmas Present – were as much their responsibility as their own more pampered offspring?" (Dickens 2008, xvi). Those with money were not looked upon to completely rid their setting of famine and lack of resources, but they were expected to care. When readers first encounter Scrooge, he is more than just a grumpy, old man; he is inconsiderate and, for a lack of better words, disgusted by the less fortunate. As a man with money and the ability to share his wealth, when he chooses not to, we see how the individual transforms into the problem. This is meticulously depicted when the gentlemen collecting for charity petitions Scrooge's involvement,

> 'a few of us are endeavouring to raise a fund to buy the Poor some meat and drink and means of warmth. We choose this time, because it is a time, of all others, when Want is keenly felt, and Abundance rejoices. What shall I put you down for?' 'Nothing!' Scrooge replied (Dickens 2008, 14).

Scrooge's inability to recognize how his contempt towards the poor places them into more of a disadvantage during the Christmas season, which shapes this novel, because he is not the only character turning his back on his fellow brothers, he is a representation. It is during this time that people "want" more than normal, mainly because of the surplus of food that others acquire and throw away. If the poor were to go without food and shelter year-round, then it would be appropriate to accommodate their needs during the season of brotherly love. The gentlemen here are demonstrating a resolution to the problem. By going out and working on behalf of the poor they give a voice to the voiceless while making more people aware of the devastating reality of their own environment.

Christmas time is received in this novel as a time of merriment and abundance; therefore, this overflow of food and cheer motivates some to spread their excess to all who may require a little benevolence. The desire to want to share any extra nutrition should have been one that was quickly acted upon, considering that many of those who were hungry did in fact work, but they just did not make enough to buy meals for their family. As *The Song of the Lower Class* goes written by Ernest Jones, Chartist,

> We plough and sow – we're so very, very low,
> That we delve in the dirty clay,
> Till we bless the plain with the golden grain,
> And the vale with the fragrant hay.
> Our place we know, we're so very low,
> 'Tis down at the landlord's feet:
> We're not too low the bread to grow,
> But too low the bread to eat (Pritchard 2003, 146).

To start, Chartism was a working-class movement in Britain for political movement and Ernest Jones was labeled as a chartist. In the longer song of the lower class, it discusses many issues that the workers have to face, and jobs they have to complete but never benefit from. As described in a portion of this song, the unfairness of poverty is mainly divided between those with a title and those without one. Lower class individuals were often susceptible to ill treatment sim ply because they lacked a voice and representation. Food is an important aspect of survival and making sure neighboring families had enough nourishment was solved in *A Christmas Carol* via Scrooge sharing food and wealth with his own community. While Scrooge has the luxury to deny himself a proper meal, many others did not. Either they had to eat the gruel that was served to them in workhouses and prisons, or they had to stretch the small amount of edible consumption in their own home.

Scrooge embodies one aspect of a grudgingly society, there are multiple characters who portray a warm and gleeful side of gratitude, such as his nephew. His nephew represents the image of a person who is concerned about the wellbeing of others regardless of if he has a little or a lot to give. As he drops by to wish his uncle good wishes and extend his hospitality, readers recognize the juxtaposition within their family and the reflection it has on the environment. It is obvious that Scrooge has a negative depiction about the Christmas season, seeing as those he pays taxes to the State, which in return are supposed to take care of the criminals and the needy; yet, during this period he is requested to personally contribute to his money to those charities who are going beyond their duty as a citizen and showing amiable affection to all. However, his nephew displays little concern about the monetary value associated with Christmas or economic gain in general. He expresses his financial circumstances to his uncle,

> 'There are many things from which I might have derived good, by which I have not profited, I dare say,' returned the nephew. 'Christmas among the rest. But I am sure I have always thought of Christmas time, when it comes round – apart from the veneration due to its sacred name and origin, if anything belonging

> to it can be apart from that – as a good time; a kind, forgiving, charitable, pleasant time; the only time I know of, in the long calendar of the year, when men and women seem by one consent to open their shut-up hearts freely, and to think of people below them as if they really were fellow-passengers to the grave, and not another race of creature bound on other journeys' (Dickens 2008, 12).

Unconvinced by his nephew's speech, Scrooge does not see others on the street as his nephew does, but he views them as lazy for not being able to provide an ample amount of resources to ensure their progress in life. While Scrooge's nephew discusses how all should perceive the season of Christmas, Dickens subtly addresses what is wrong within his community. The solution to end poverty does not exist, yet for a split second, scarcity of food, warmth and shelter can fade via the participation of public serving and sharing. Nonetheless, Scrooge's nephew demonstrates an all too vivid picture of most of the society only being worried about his or herself, as they pass one another on the street and view them as strangers, rather than companions. Fred talks about how Christmas time is a period of pleasantry and good spirits, and he tries his best to illustrate this image to his uncle. He also brings out the fact that this is the only time of the year where men and women would opt to give more and receive in exchange. Even though, Fred does not benefit financially from his giving he obtains something better, which is the gratitude from other and the ability to share his kindness. This is even evident with his uncle; he continuously shows him love and concern and Scrooge does not reciprocate this until the end of the story.

Set during the season of feasts and consumption, eating was a way to share cheerfulness and appreciation. An excess amount of food would remain un-eaten, and the overflow would be wasted. However, everyone did not have this lavishness and their food meant more to them than gaiety. It solidified their dependence upon one another and strengthened their connection as shown by the narrator,

> Eked out by apple-sauce and mashed potatoes, it was a sufficient dinner for the whole family; indeed, as Mrs. Cratchit said with great delight (surveying one small atom of a bone upon the dish), they hadn't ate it all at last! Yet every one had had enough, and the youngest Cratchits in particular, were steeped in sage and onion to the eyebrows! (Dickens 2008, 51).

Food was a necessity, yet it did not come as easy to those as it did others. Some, like the Cratchits, had to work long hours and stretch food among a multitude of people, while wealthier people were able to squander their substances. James Henderson writes in "Political Economy is a Mere Skeleton Unless…", "Dickens opposed the Malthusian population doctrine claim that the population would soon outstrip the food supply. He (Dickens) sought to demonstrate that the problem was not an inadequate supply of food, but the way food was distributed among the people" (Henderson 2000, 144). Most of the time those who were hungry, were not victims of complete starvation, but they did fall casualty to not receiving enough to satisfy or sustain them. Dickens reveals this through the character of Tiny Tim, the small Cratchit boy who is weak physically, but maintains a strong spiritual mindset. While this family was happy to have enough food to feed everyone until they were content, it must be reminded that this was the Christmas season, and all families try to provide more food than usual during this time. Which is to say, having a surplus of food may not be the case for the Cratchits throughout the rest of the year. It is hard to imagine someone starving while food is being wasted at a Christmas dinner/party, but that was and is the reality of life. The workingman had to work to make a significant difference in his life and sometimes they were not as fortunate as Bob Cratchit. Bob is a character which people can find a piece of Dickens within, he makes the most of what he has and eventually it pays off.

Starvation was something many people faced and only through the state or consideration of another citizen would those who were hungry be fed. Tara Moore writes, "Starving Victorian could not hope to consume the standard Christmas fare unless they applied for charity. Some went to the workhouse, where, by the 1840s, the culture's sensitivity to Christmas benevolence had so softened the Guardians that they began providing just enough ritual food for a one-day 'feast'" (Moore 2008, 498). Food plays an important role for the Cratchits because it is the one thing that they have control over. But as Moore points out many people counted on charity to help them eat a decent meal, especially at Christmas. As stated before, those in need of an extra penny for a meal would not have been someone who did not work to try to increase their income. Some families were more well off than other families and at a season filled with festivities and gatherings a small paycheck just did not go very far; therefore, they required a little more assistance to satisfy their needs. Although, readers did not encounter any truly starving people in *A Christmas Carol*, Dickens does make it obvious that there are those who are in the community with empty bellies and their hand out.

As it seems that charity and poverty coincide with one another, this text draws the distinction between the two. The juggling of who is responsible for the poor is explained in a way that splits the accountability. While the State should ensure the conditions of the lower class are civilized, the individuals of the middle and higher class should also show interest in making sure these duties are fulfilled. The voice of the lower class is one that is not heard and/or not respected; on the other hand, the opinion of someone with status could disrupt the inequality. The Ghost of Christmas Present states, "'There are some upon this earth of yours,' returned the Spirit, 'who lay claim to know us, and who do their deeds of passion, pride, ill-will, hatred, envy, bigotry, and selfishness in our name, who are as strange to us and all our kith and kin, as if they had never lived. Remember that, and charge their doings on themselves, not us'" (Dickens 2008, 48). Charity and poverty are class struggles and it symbolizes Marx's idea of the bourgeoisie and the working class, simply put, those who have the money and work to give versus those who need the money and work to live. Charity is the additional aid in providing for inhabitants of the city through the humanity of their fellow residents. When the government neglects to make a positive change and when the poor cannot improve their situation, charity steps in as a spare means of support.

The idea of the poor improving their own lives is a view Dickens had and placed in Scrooge. Coming from a background of low income, Dickens transforms himself into financial prosperity;

therefore, he can consume mass amounts of wealth while others struggle, because they too had the same ability to change their fate as he did. While he personally sympathizes with the way the government fails to assist the poor, he demonstrates in this book that the poor must work hard to secure their own fate, i.e., the hardworking, unfortunate Bob Cratchit. Monroe Engel writes, "But charity seemed to Dickens far more certainly a boon for the giver than for the receiver. He believed in self-help and independence, and even perhaps in the salutary effect of work. He was a hard as well as vulnerable man who had pulled himself up with the aid of a great talent, to be sure, but also by terrible determination and labor; and he expected other people to exert themselves also" (Engels 1956, 962-963). It was up to the individual to go to work at the factory, endure the tough poor laws and eventually escape from the grasp of prosperity. Dickens uses his talent as a writer and turned that into a source of income and he believed every person had some sort of talent they could convert into currency. This explains Scrooge's disdain for helping those whom he believes does not even try to help themselves. His tax money that goes into keeping the jails and factories running seem to provide more assistance to the poor than anything, in his judgment, but this could not be more wrong. Dickens uses the cruelty of the jail to reflect the attitude of those who do not care, Scrooge shows no concern for those in government establishments and neither does those in leadership positions. Most prisons were run with a lack of quality, and it is because people, like Scrooge, did not worry about the people in them. Nevertheless, this paper will show how Dickens resembles the character of Cratchit more than Scrooge.

This brings us to the character of Bob Cratchit, the poor working man, who despite his situation continues to have a hopeful outlook on life. Although he and his family do not dwell in the poorhouse, their house can be classified as a poor house. Cratchit makes little to nearly not enough money to comfortably support all his children and his wife; however, this does not discourage them from living their life. The text states,

> They were not a handsome family; they were not well dressed; their shoes were far from being water-proof; their clothes were scanty; and Peter might have known, and very likely did, the inside of a pawnbroker's. But they were happy, grateful, pleased with one another, and contented with the time; and when they faded, and looked happier yet in the bright sprinklings of the Spirit's torch at parting (Dickens 2008, 54).

The narrator displays the financial weight that is on the Cratchit as the description of their clothes are told. Even though they were not living in a workhouse or on the street, they were still a family in need of a loving gesture. It is a painful situation to witness those who are barely making it, struggle to retain a positive perspective on life. But this is this the modesty that lies inside those who are in an unfavorable position. Bob would be one of the individuals who Mayhew talks about, that would not openly ask for charity even though he needed it, this highlights his dedication to make a change for himself. Bob Cratchit is like Charles Dickens in the mirroring of their persistence. Cratchit goes to work every day for a cruel man and does his job, he uses his meekness to counter the coldhearted Scrooge and eventually it pays off. Here we have a poor man that works hard and brings himself out of poverty, while Scrooge generously helps in financially, he also starts to earn a better wage that improves his family's condition. Scrooge states at the close of the text,

> 'A merrier Christmas, Bob, my good fellow, than I have given you for many a year! I'll raise your salary, and endeavour to assist your struggling family, and we will discuss your affairs this very afternoon, over a Christmas bowl of smoking bishop, *Bob!' (Dickens 2008, 83).

When the government neglects to improve the status of Cratchit's wellbeing, the kindness of Scrooge steps in and provides better working conditions and income to his employee. Scrooge makes it his duty to help Cratchit once he is confronted with the reality that poverty can affect the person right next to you. His personal experience of seeing someone suffer creates a reaction in him, which hopefully ignites inspiration within others who are faced with the decision to make a difference and not aid in the downfall of humanity. Alexander Welsh writes in *Satire and History: The City of Dickens*, "It has been argued that Dickens, vividly sensitive to class differences because of his own childhood, could not fully sympathize with the poor until he was sure that he could be no longer identified with them; alternatively, that he only gradually perfected a technique of symbolic implication that enabled him to deal imaginatively with the entire city" (Welsh 1968, 393). The anxiety that poverty could strike anyone is one that Dickens was aware of and while writing *A Christmas Carol* he makes sure to include this voice of uncertainty. This is what is horrifying, this is what makes the story uncanny. The ghostly fact remains that wages are intangible and while an individual may be at work one day, they could be in the workhouse the next. Life is constantly shifting for all and in a time where the city is experiencing modernization it was easy to fall behind, economically, and socially. Therefore, the character of Cratchit is similar to Dickens, they both know the experiences of hardships and they worked hard to place themselves in a better situation.

In his own experience, Dickens went from poverty to fortune through the skills of his writing. Familiar with the workhouses and prisons, Dickens writes to reform the very establishments that were a part of his childhood. He sees the tragedy around him and turns it into an art to be consumed by those who may not know the struggle he knew and that many other people went through. Ann Mackenzie writes in, *An Analysis of Environmental Issues in 19th Century England Using the Writings of Charles Dickens,* "At the time of this writing, Dickens became totally committed to sanitary conditions, especially among the poor. Since his childhood was marred with poverty after his father went to debtor's prison, he was dedicated to improving the conditions of the poor" (MacKenzie 2008, 202). Dickens knew first-hand about the tragedies that existed in his world and his novels make others aware of the problems as well. In his dedication to improving the lives of the poor, Dickens creates the model character Fred, Scrooge's nephew, who stands in the middle of both the poor and the state.

While Fred is not the wealthiest person in the story, he is not in an impoverished situation.

Fred is the citizen all people should strive to mirror, an individual who keeps good spirits and encourages others to do the same. This person in the middle is in the best position to lobby for the poor and be their voice to speak to the government. Fred creates a space for his uncle to realize how wonderful of a position he is through showing him his content with his own circumstances. Steven Marcus writes in *Homelessness and Dickens,* "We can also say that poverty, poor relief, pauperism, and homelessness were inseparably intertwined and were thought of throughout the period as central and indeed symbolic matters, that they were always surrounded with controversy, and that they were regarded regularly, but with fluctuating degrees of urgency, as leading phenomena in what was at the time considered the wealthiest society in the modern world" (Marcus 1991, 93). Dickens depicts Fred in an open environment where he could help those who are less fortunate them him and even though readers do not witness him giving to the poor, it is hard to speculate that he would not help those in need based off his personality. Besides the ghosts, Fred opens Scrooge's eyes to see the flaw in his thinking and shows him the rational side of giving.

Nonetheless on the opposite side of my argument Andrew Smith writes, "The tale suggests that Scrooge needs to develop a form of social conscience that is generated through a rediscovered compassion for others. However, society is not transformed in this moment but merely re-interpreted as a set of unresolved problems which compassion identifies but can only partially alleviate. To some degree that is to assert a commonplace criticism of Dickens; namely that he is better at identifying social problems than he is at formulating solutions to them" (Smith 2005, 40). As I do agree with Smith's analysis that compassion does not fix the entire problem, I do believe that Dickens does provide readers with a solution to the social problem in his text. This supports my claim that society must assist in providing for those who are hunger or homeless, but ultimately it is the state that must enforce laws that will guarantee the improvement on welfare. Dickens, in my opinion, does a wonderful and thorough job in illustrating how one person can begin to correct an issue and develop a lasting impact that builds up others. Although, Smith makes a very compelling argument there are many things I disagree with in his article as far as his view on the success Dickens achieves in combating the problem he introduces. Smith continues to write, "The tale suggests that Scrooge cannot provide the solution to the problem which he has helped to create. Charity is not the real answer" (Smith 2005, 43). Charity is not the only answer, but it is where the resolution starts. Scrooge recognizes his error and takes the right steps to change life for himself and those around him. Smith connects his study with Marxism and capitalism, this is a fine strategy seeing as though this text deals a lot with: the economy, those who have money, and those who do not.

Throughout this paper two types of people who use charity have been examined, those who are in a dire need and those who need just a little kindness to help. Although the state helps those in extreme cases, if one can call the government's intervention help and I would not label it as the best answer, those who require a small pick me up can benefit from their neighbors and fellow citizens' affection. Even though there were two types of charity, the poverty group was strategically left ambiguous for the most part to symbolize anyone could become part of this bracket. Scrooge travels in and out of time to view the different stages of economy that people can belong to and how they are affected. The ghosts of capitalism, to use Smith's ideas, allows Scrooge to see how children are affected through his own childhood, how those who are related to him are affected, and how men and women unconnected to him are also affected. Men, women, and children are all transformed in some way based off the decisions of the authority involving money, whether they are altered in a good or bad way mainly depends on the class they belong to. More than likely, those of lower classes will be exposed to harder times than the middle and higher classes, especially living in the city. It was easy to become a product of a failing society without the right guidance and support, and this could be from a knowledgeable neighbor or an involved community leader.

Towards the end of the novel readers receive relief from Scrooge's transformation from merciless to understanding. The ghosts physically remove him from his luxury and places him inside the harsh reality of his city, similarly to what Dickens does to his readers. In both situations the needs of a thriving society must be confronted and reformed. Charity will not solve the issue of poverty, but it does show that people care about the matter. Which is what Michael Grogan states in *Generosity and the Ghosts of Poor Laws Passed,* and I believe it is worth quoting at length, "Though proof of Scrooge's reform at the end of the narrative is in the pudding of material giving, nephew Fred's emphasis at the beginning is on a communal, consensual, 'free' opening of the heart, an expansion of the imagination to see those who are in reality 'below' as 'fellow', bound on the same journey. A society divided through 'the long calendar of the year' by class into racial strata is magically, at Christmas, made whole in the spirit of a giving that, outside the economic circle, profits no one but does everyone good" (Grogan 2004, 155). A weak society can only create a weak government, if those who are living side by side do not come together for a specific cause, then the government will overlook the wrongs as well. No one should be able to enjoy a feast, while there are those who are hungry. Dickens identifies the problem he saw growing in his community and he addresses it in his Christmas ghost story. Presenting it in a way that everyone could relate to it, he makes poverty accessible to everybody. A person does not have to be poor to understand the hardships that come along with being lower class. In a community all should be responsible for each other, as expressed in *A Christmas Carol.* If we expect the Government to function properly and work for the public, we must first hold ourselves accountable. Poverty and charity are both elements of the people and it is up to the public to make a difference and for the government to implement a change.

Charles Dickens composes a short narrative full of ghosts and regrets to be easily recited to family members during the season's gathering period. Although concise, this tale includes multiple call for actions on the theme of poverty and charity. One of the best ways for an individual to escape the narrow clutches of poverty is through receiving charity from the grace of someone who has it to give. As most people would disagree about the idea of charity being a reasonable solution to poverty, I would like to reiterate that this is where I believe the solution to the problem should start, in the homes of those who dwell in the city. For those in charge to care, other people must first show that they care and draw attention to things that are being neglected and mismanaged.

Both the city and the state must take on the responsibility of attending to the impoverished. As the city becomes more modernized the state should equip every community with the proper tools to compete, whether that is: decent education, appropriate nutrition, or suitable housing; nonetheless, it is up to everyone to advantage of the opportunities presented to them and to use them effectively. Scrooge, Fred, and Bob Cratchit all represent the same side of the coin, they are members of the community and despite their financial statuses it is up to them to demonstrate order and fellowship before asking the law to do so. *A Christmas Carol* should frighten anyone who reads it on the reality of capitalism and teach them that the actions of one individual can initiate a movement.

How Can You Eat at A Time Like This is meant to shed light on the changes Dickens is calling for in his own writing. Like Dickens, I point out the problem and then show the solution to help resolve the matter. Those of higher classes should help by reaching down to those below them in any way possible and bring them up to speed. By ensuring equality among all classes is what Dickens strives to achieve in his writing. Growing up he was no stranger to hard times and struggle, which makes this ghost story more relatable. Dickens has connections to both classes, the poor and the wealthy, and it shows how both rely on the other to thrive. Thrive in the sense, that their existence depends on the presence of the other, there is no upper class without the lower class and vice versa. Factors such as food and shelter should be rationed in a way that it supplies everyone's needs. Those with a surplus of food must retain an awareness that their over consumption could harm individuals who do not have anything to eat. Although, it is not their place to make sure everyone is well fed, they should try to make sure their neighbors have enough before overindulging.

A Christmas Carol is bigger than Christmas, because charity is what is most important during the season of giving. Poverty will not disappear overnight, but charity will help deplete the amount of people who are victims to it. The self-recognition that one person can make a difference is epitomized in Scrooge, and while the mean old man believes the poor should work hard to pull themselves out of despair, he soon realizes that he should provide assistance to their cause. If all people are at the bottom of the chain, then they must all link together to rise to the top, regardless of class and status. Change must start at a common place before those who lack commonality become emotionally invested, the community must recognize that they are one from various backgrounds and that the government has a duty to protect and serve them all.

Upon further investigation I would like to develop more this idea of charity and donations to the prisons. Dickens had a strong connection to prisons and workhouses, and I believe it is worth analyzing how money given from their community could better shape the state ran institution. Since he would not have been a stranger to the horrors that goes on inside of prisons and knew the reason many people went to debtor's prison; it would be interesting to incorporate more research into how prisons should belong more to the people and not the government, based on how they were so poorly run by those of authority. In Dickens's writing those things which he is passionate about is clearly stated and it would do justice to discuss the matter of prisons and the influence it has on the poor, children, and the economy. When a problem exists within a community it becomes the problem of the people, one way or another, all the citizens will be affected by their neglect to intervene on the behalf of those not able. In the attempt to provide a solution to the problem Dickens creates this story in such a way that all could envision themselves in this situation. The person in the next house could be struggling and the one way to help them out is through charity. The smallest acts of kindness should not go unnoticed, because at the end it is the person who least suspects that they can make a difference who does.

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The Otherness of the Familiar: Witchcraft, Land Use Policies, and Husbandry Manuals in Early Modern England

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Abstract:

Witchcraft familiars have a long and varied interpretive history. This article suggests the connection of the familiar tradition in England to two prevalent social developments during the period: changing land use policies and the development of husbandry manuals that emphasize how one ought to take care of a household. First, English land policies were undergoing significant change during this period as normal relations between farmers and lords had begun to change with the increased use of enclosures, engrossing, privatization, and mensuration of land. Land was becoming a resource that could be exactly measured, demarcated, plotted, mapped, and redistributed as the increasing number of surveyors, surveyor manuals, and calls by Elizabeth I to reorder and consolidate weights and measurements show. Second, good husbandry manuals proliferated from the early 1500s into the 1640s, which not only affirmed traditional hierarchies with nobility at the top, but also offered "sage" advice on proper gender roles to best manage a household to be economically viable. The English familiar tradition substantively violates both, and the familiar tradition can be explained through the lens of these dual social conflicts that play out in an "othered" space of witchcraft.

Keywords: familiars, witchcraft, land use, husbandry manuals, early modern magic

Situating the Familiar in the Critical Tradition

Early Modern witchcraft familiars—small, insignificant creatures that facilitate a pact with the devil—seem provincial compared to the nefarious participation of witches in grand covens, a practice articulated by Kramer & Sprenger of *Malleus Maleficarum* fame (Bergin, Broedel, Roberts, & Naphy 2004, 60; Mackay & Institoris 2009). But familiars, the intermediaries and low-level managers in the hierarchy of hell, form an important part of the witchcraft literature, and explanations as to their presence in the witchcraft tracts have varied, dating back as far as the Middle Ages (Kittredge 1972, 491).

These creatures could be imps, black dogs, cats, rats, or other suckling creatures that offered service for blood, deriving their powers from the devil while they corrupted would-be witches. Victoria Carr has even found evidence for familiars operating as ghosts within the literature (Carr 2019). Their provenance has remained a matter of deep speculation; their origins might be connected to animals traditionally used in folklore to threaten children into obeying parents (J. R. Porter & Russell 1978; Widdowson, Porter, & Russell 1978). Widdowson, in particular, noted how folkloric traditions of wild and domestic animals and "supernatural and mythological figures of fear and their apparent preponderance in the threats" could be read through the lens of psychoanalysis and even (Widdowson et al. 1978, 40). Other important work on familiars examines their role in animal/human relationships and as supernatural guardians (D'Aoust 2019; Parish 2019). And no discourse could leave off Keith Thomas, the titan of witchcraft studies, who includes research on the damage and indictments familiars caused (Thomas 1997, 446).

Even *The Bible* has been offered up as a possible source for these malevolent spirits in an exhaustive analysis that catalogues every known instance of animals or animal motifs in the text, yet "in the Old Testament, witchcraft and magic are viewed primarily as trafficking with supernatural beings and particularly with the departed: this latter practice is more frequently condemned than any other" (J. Porter 1978, 76).

Exciting interpretations of the role of the familiar by Willis in her landmark book articulate the malevolent nurture aspect of witches, as they cared for their familiars as they would pets or children, connecting the tradition with a corrupted form of maternal affection (Willis 1995); and Wilby clearly finds resonance of familiars with cunning folk (Wilby 2000), something altogether reminiscent of the shamanic tradition (Wilby 2005). Frances Dolan's seminal work provides a panoply of interpretative frameworks, especially in terms of violence and crime, as her investigations focused on domestic disputes, abuse, women as sexual agents, as well as the social tensions of witchcraft in plays like *The Tempest* or *The Witch of Edmonton* (Dolan 2016).

Most notably, Diane Purkiss argues that the scholarly tradition itself allows historians to exercise power and gain artificial acclaim by positing that witches were weak, old, and manipulated women: "Without apprehension of theory, academic historians of English witchcraft have created a narcissistic myth which shapes them as skeptical empiricists, confirming their academic identities" (Purkiss 1996, 60). The critical lens, cast toward academia itself, casts light on the power dynamics involved with any sort of historical research, yet the numerous interpretations offered over the years by researchers and scholars have shed light on the role of the familiar.

In the hopes of adding another interpretive lens to the scholarly conversation, this essay investigates two additional factors that appear deeply connected to the prevalence of witchcraft accusations with familiars in English cases, though Continental tracts may fall into the same paradigm as well. Their distinctive strangeness or "otherness"—limited in this investigation to English cases—can be attributed to two socio/cultural and economic phenomena during the period: 1) land use policies and dramatically changing village/land boundaries and the penchant for familiars to trespass these boundaries; 2) the rise of husbandry manuals that may be juxtaposed to images of the malevolent maternal and corrupted households through witches and their familiars.

A Representative Familiar Tract

The tracts themselves hold part of the answer. Joan Cunny of Stisted in the county of Essex was typical for an accused witch; arraigned in March of 1589 for various "devilish acts," including causing maleficium with her familiars, she was said to have contacted her creature on the tenanted land of John Wiseman outside of the village:

> two spirits did appear unto her within the said circle, in the similitude and likeness of two black frogs, and there demanded of her what she would have, being ready to do for her what she would desire, so that she would promise to give them her soul for their travail (Rosen 1991, 184).

A prototype of so many other lost souls, Cunny, a poor, elderly, irascible woman within the village, was refused alms and help by neighbors alike.

Just like her own social position, Cunny locates these familiars outside of her traditional structures and contracts with them, takes them home, hides them in her house, and begins caring for them—a motif that replicates the malevolent nurture paradigm (Willis 1995). But just as in many other cases, Cunny sends these familiars (Jack and Jill) into the community to conduct their mischief:

> …she sent them to milk Hurrell's beasts, which they did…she sent her said spirits to hurt the wife of John Sparrow the elder of Stisted, which they did, and also that where Master John Glascock of Stisted aforesaid had a great stack of logs in his yard, she by her said spirits did overthrow them….She going to Braintree market came to one Harry Finch's house to demand some drink; his wife being busy and a-brewing told her she had no leisure to give her any. Then Joan Cunny went away discontented, and at night Finch's wife was grievously taken in her head (Rosen 1991, 184-185).

Joan Cunny's case mirrors so many others of the time.

Her spirits affect maleficium only in certain areas—domestic ones that strike at the heart of managing one's household, lands, animals, and crops (Dolan 2016; Willis 1995). Moreover, Cunny sends her familiars throughout Stisted, which represents a fundamental—and unremarked—element in the critical literature: familiars are always on the move, trespassing on others' property.

Not everyone received Cunny's approbation as she never sent "her said spirits to Finch's wife, Devenish's wife, and Reynold Ferrer" (Rosen 1991, 185). Sending of spirits in the tracts is remarkably exact and specific as they violate spaces of specific people. Joan Cunny could easily have admitted to sending these spirits to other members of the community, but she forcefully states that she had nothing to do with the harm that these people suffered.

Cunny is not alone. Joan Upney of Dagenham, another accused witch in the same tract, placed her familiar spirits in specific locations in order to plague her enemies:

> She saith that one day she left a toad under the groundsill at Harold's house, and it pinched his wife and sucked her till she died....She saith that one day another toad went over her threshold as Richard Foster's wife was coming that way, and it went and pinched her and never returned again (Rosen 1991, 186).

Joan Upney goes so far as to place her familiars in the liminal spaces in her neighbor's yards, the threshold, instructing her familiars where and when to wait for their victims. Upney, Cunny, Elizabeth Bennett and scores of other accused witches from the tracts tell the same story: specific disruption of space and boundaries.

Familiars as Violators of Space and Disruptors of Good Husbandry

From 1550-1650, witchcraft trials were rampaging through parts of Continental Europe, chiefly Germany, with an inevitable focus on older women, crones, and a particularly gendered approach to the accusations (de Blecourt 2000; Kounine 2013; Rowlands 2001). The numbers of accused are startling, but so too is the difference in tenor of the cases, specifically in the role that space plays in the accusation process. Accused witches in Germany practiced their dark arts in covens or witches sabbaths (de Blecourt 2000) in something similar to the witches of MacBeth—lost on a misty heath in a barren wasteland far from civilization

The English witchcraft tracts seem particularly embroiled in the concept of space precisely because, I argue, land use was dramatically changing (in Europe, similar consolidation of agrarian landscapes was occurring, but perhaps not at the same rate) (Hoffmann 2017). The witches themselves remark on specific areas of mischief, but so to do the victims, who carefully explain where their livestock suffered, or where they first fell down in a palsy and began bleeding, or where the suspected witch entered their house. Unlike the witch coven of the *Malleus Malificarum* (Mackay & Institoris 2009) and the popular trope of accusations on the Continent, the accused witches (and their victims) are intimately familiar with specific domestic and agrarian space, down to the last coordinate where mischief was perpetrated.

The intense focus and violation of specific spaces of the village, the common areas, and land ownership are, I believe, deeply connected to the profound changes in land use and tenancy that were taking place in sixteenth-century England, which irrevocably altered the landscape of through revised leases, enclosing of common areas, and a rise of a landed middle class that the accused (older, cantankerous women) were not only failing to participate in, but were also impeding.

England underwent massive cultural change in the sixteenth century in nearly every aspect of society as traditional relations between lord and servant, man and women, and city and village were being recast into different molds throughout this century. And it is precisely during this high period of witchcraft accusations in England where land surveying and mensuration accelerated, where land became a commodity that could be specifically measured, marketed, sold, and enclosed, where manuals on the proper husbandry of property proliferated.

Mensuration in England

The Elizabethan period could easily be recast as the age of weights and measures, for a wholehearted attempt to quantify and secure the English measurement system, specifically during the sixteenth century, took place. Though reforms and attempted standardization of measurement scales had been attempted since the Anglo-Saxon period, these proved to be markedly ineffective since measurement systems varied from location to location. Indeed, from the Anglo-Saxon period until the late sixteenth century, England had at least two hundred different ways to measure weights (Zupko 1977).

Earlier, medieval forms of measurement depended on the location, the fertility of the land, the amount of rainfall and ultimately how hard the farmer worked. From Italy to England, traditional systems of measurement in which agricultural land was measured by the amount of a man's labor prevailed. What mattered, as Witold Kula has argued, was "the general emphasis on the relation of man to land. The fact that the principle of mensuration was based on this relation tells us that the input of labor needed to yield a harvest was of paramount importance" (Kula 1986, 30). Crop yield could vary significantly from year to year, and it remained notoriously difficult to truly measure a man's land.

This agrarian connection between social relations and land distribution remained relatively intact into the beginning of the sixteenth century, despite the attempts of various English governments to standardize weights and measures and the relationship of servant to lord had already been for centuries based on traditional and inherited values. A farmer's land was typically measured not by any "objective" standard of measurement (i.e., a geographical location to it with exact coordinates), but by how long it would take him to plough his field given a pair of decent oxen or by traditional agreements that approximated land boundaries (i.e., the field that stretches up to the forest). The lord, likewise, would heavily tax his underlings based on the same system.

Even the acre, a traditional standard of measurement derived from the amount of land a yoke of oxen could plough in one day, was set by law as the "common-field rectangular plot of four by forty perches or rods" (Zupko 1977, 184). But this standard was seldom if ever followed since perches, the common measurement of land fixed by law at 16.5 feet, could vary in practical circumstances between twelve and twenty-four feet. Local variations in land measurement were ubiquitous, which might have been due to the differing inherited systems from the Romans, Saxon farmers, and post Norman conquest.

The entrenched "medieval" mode of measuring property had created inconsistent land measurements in rural areas and closely reflected the ties and boundaries of local communities:

> Units such as ploughlands and dayworks could reinforce existing appreciation of rates of labor and sizes of landholdings within a community.... In *The Surveyor in Foure bookes*, it confirms the importance of such perceptions when he writes that the surveyor may often have to resort to questioning a tenant about his lands 'as he esteemeth them'. Thus 'if he know not what acres they containe (as most tenants will seem ignorant thereof) let him expresse of his Meadow how many

daies mowing, of his Arable how many daies plowing, and of his Pasture how many Beast-gates, and the like (Zupko 1977, 184-185).

The physical layout of property and the relatively imprecise methods of measuring the land were a distinct part of the social construction of rural areas. Until the sixteenth century, a farmer seldom knew with certainty how much land he had; he only knew how long it would take to plough, seed, and harvest it, a usage of land reflecting social custom and vague agreement.

But social custom does not always represent the best way to conduct business. Real change in these systems of measurement began to creep into English society when the Tudor government commenced a set of standards in 1497, which have been painstakingly refashioned and scanned (Shields 2021). During Henry VII's reign, he attempted to pass metrological uniformity laws to curtail the rampant fraud due to inconsistent measuring standards. However, this effort failed due to lack of uniform enforcement or consistent reform of the law codes. Henry VII took a haphazard approach to reform, hoping that if some standards were set in London, they would likewise be followed in rural districts.

But fail it did. After a period of attempted reform, Tudor officials concluded that only "a massive assault on local customs could eradicate the innumerable variations and the resultant fraudulent weighing and measuring practices" (Zupko 1977, 74). In this botched attempt, Parliament ordered the construction of standards of weight, length, and capacity, which were stored in the Treasury and supervised by the commissioners of assize, but even these standards proved to be inconsistent and were thus scrapped (Kisch 1965).

The problem with this attempt was not primarily that the weights that the monetary and measurement commission cast were faulty, but the commission met heavy resistance from local communities who resisted reform while the government in 1491 lacked sufficient infrastructure to affect real change as more officials would have been required to control the rural districts in England just to ensure proper conformity to the new standards. The Tudor reform movement was doomed to failure before it began.

The next major effort for changing weights and measures occurred during the reign of Elizabeth, precisely during the period of greatest witchcraft "activity". Begun in 1558 and strongly supported by Elizabeth once she came to power, a new measurement system was devised. By 1574 the Crown had realized, just as its' predecessors had, that divergent standards throughout the countryside formed an obstacle to state-sponsored changes. Where Henry VII's England could not logistically or bureaucratically handle the task of reforming agrarian practice, Elizabeth's government attacked it with full force.

By 1574 Elizabeth had created a panel to oversee the divergent sets of standards, to remedy this costly situation, and to determine a proper system of measurement and weights that all could agree upon. Composed of a jury of nine merchants and twelve goldsmiths—all London residents—the panel determined the weight and measurement systems to be used throughout England. Royal edicts left no system unaltered and basically revised—in totum—the units of measurement and the physical standards (Kisch 1965; Zupko 1977). Distances, weights, and measurement itself were changed in substantive ways from city to country croft.

Additionally, these policies reflected a London-centered worldview in which all local districts would be held responsible to the standards set in the capital. While this may seem logical nowadays, during this time of profound change in England, many villages had their own competing systems of measurement. The reform movement met heavy resistance in enforcement of standards in local communities. These policies, then, were originally designed to allow for better business practices throughout England, but they also had the effect of isolating power—even in terms of the way land and space was to be measured—in the hands of London merchants, government officials, and local lords intent on obtaining more lands.

Even the mile was standardized in a statute in 1593, which was codified to curtail further development in the periphery of London, especially the suburbs, but it soon became the national standard (Sullivan 1997, 8). The mensuration of the country was not done in secret, for the maintaining of exact measurements, especially with land boundaries—whether it is house, field, or city—became a pronounced part of public discourse as Elizabeth I created not only standards for troy and avoirdupois weights between 1582 and 1602, but she enforced national standards on local communities with an iron will.

Enclosing and Engrossing Land

In the latter part of the sixteenth century there exists a great deal of upheaval in rural England and "the impetus to fashion authoritative representations of agrarian practice and change assumed a heightened significance. The Tudor moralists' cries of complaint in the face of change and the agrarian improvers' calls for progressive reform are equally urgent, yet utterly opposed in their definitions of social and economic values" (McRae 1996, 3). Yet, one of the principal problems in the land debate revolved around enclosing common land for private use, specifically sheep farming (Jessel 2011). Enclosing land involved the abolition of common rights, subsuming common village areas, arable strips of common land, and other fringe areas under the authority of private individuals. If it could be measured with the new "modern" methods, in juxtaposition to traditional medieval land practices, then these tracts of land could be annexed by whoever paid the surveyor (Jessel 2011).

Concomitant with enclosing private land was another process called engrossing, which ultimately had the same effect on common village space:

> Engrossing, which was not necessarily carried out in association with enclosure, 'signified the amalgamation of two or more farms into one'. Each process extended the rights of individuals over those of a community; and in many instances, each could lead to depopulation and an abandonment of traditional methods of husbandry (McRae 1996, 16).

Both enclosure and engrossing involved the same threat to traditional conceptions of social and economic order. It mattered little if an industrious farmer cared to engross his land by two rods or if a manorial baron found some method by which he could enclose common land to his own profit, these acts took away from common land. Indeed, enclosure fundamentally altered the relationship of master to servant and man to land: "the guiding principle of enclosure is the rational apportionment of rights of property over any given piece of land. Its strict distribution of common and waste land privileges individual interests over communal relations, and thus facilitates the gradual formulation of a modern conception of property" (McRae 1996, 42).

These enclosure acts had a profound effect on social relations and the construction of social space. And while enclosure in England is more commonly associated with parliamentary acts during the 18th and 19th centuries, where the process accelerated tremendously, its origin can be found in the sixteenth century (Attack 2010; Cragoe & McDonagh 2013; Wheeler 1894). Every measure, no matter how small, affected social and human relations since it altered the place in which people gather together, how they gathered, and with whom they gathered. The particular agrarian configuration of human relations came under profound change precisely during this period (Finberg & Thirsk 1967; Thirsk 2006), so much so that even Sir Thomas More's *Utopia* reflected the enclosing of dramatic landscapes (Closel 2018).

Few phenomena were more disruptive to local social relations and land disbursement than were the surveyors who proliferated during the period. According to McRae:

> The century between the 1520s and the 1620s, by comparison, has been identified as that of 'the birth of the modern surveyor'. During this period the surveyor was increasingly seen as an independent specialist, who brought to an estate a newly legalistic appreciation of tenurial relationships and newly rationalistic standards of land measurement and estate planning (McRae 1996, 170).

During Elizabeth's tenure as Queen, the number of surveyors multiplied rapidly, both as a result of Elizabeth's goal to solidify new measurement and weight standards, but also because private landowners were hiring them with the hope of increasing their landholdings through "legitimate" calculation.

And enclosure was part of the public zeitgeist, not a trend that villagers or low-level landed gentry would have been unaware. McRae, for instance, has charted some of these changes in agrarian politics of the time by looking specifically at the representation of the plough in agrarian treatises by arguing that the plough changes meaning in the various books of husbandry from the early 1500's to become a contentious symbol in the fight against enclosure acts by the 1550's (McRae 1996). As a symbol of morality early in the century, the plough later symbolizes new capitalist tendencies that nearly every writer of the time appropriated for his own uses. Featuring the ploughman as a stolid, reasonable character allowed for societal critique as the ploughman changes in the literature from the noble poor man who works his land in the early part of the sixteenth century to a poor man who threatens land owners by his incessant attempts to appropriate land not his own (i.e. common areas not assigned to him by the surveyor) (McRae 1996). But what interests us here is not that the plough operates as a symbol of morality, but that it becomes a contested symbol that was used to argue government policy about the allocation of land and the use of rural areas. And this allocation was under constant strain by an army of surveyors entering small communities to initiate enclosure/engrossing processes.

The Rise of the Surveyor

It should be no surprise that John Fitzherbert, who produced a blockbuster text on husbandry, also produced the earliest printed book on surveying (*The boke of surveying and improvements / John Fitzherbert* 1974; Henley & Grosseteste 1508). Like his other success, this book went through 11 editions between 1523 and 1567 in which he fully capitalized on the new medium of print (Baron, Lindquist, & Shevlin 2007; Eisenstein 2013). Also like his *Boke of Husbandry*, Fitzherbert's treatment of surveying focused more on traditional social relations (or at least the maintaining of them in an increasingly changing world) rather than on actual surveying methods, spending much of his effort here on the treatment of fealty rather than surveying, but by 1567, surveyor texts gradually leave the discussion of fealty behind on the field and instead focus on "modern" methods of land calculation, private ownership, and capital gain through increased work.

These books increasingly take a pragmatic view toward land mensuration, arguing that a man should know exactly how much land he owns. This led to significant reordering of village level space since common land gradually became subsumed within private landholdings. Where farmers would have known roughly where their land ended and the villages' land began in the medieval conception, through the surveyor's intervention, they could now know exactly where every boundary lay.

Surveying was not an esoteric subject read by the very few. Many other tracts on surveying were produced during this time. John Norden's *Surveiors Dialogue* with editions in 1607, 1610, and 1618 found great success (*The surveiors dialogue very profitable for all men to peruse especially lords of mannors, stewards of mannor-courts, tenants, farmers and husbandmen*, 1738). Other notable tracts include: Edward Worsop's *A Discoverie of sundrie errours and faults daily committed by Landemeaters* (Worsop 1582); Rooke Churche's *An olde thrift newly revived* (Chruche 1612); Robert Recorde's *The Pathway to Knowledge* (Record 1574) and subsequent editions 1551, 1574, 1602; Valentine Leigh's *The Moste Profitable and commendable science, of Surveying* with five editions between 1577 and 1596 (Leigh 1578).

In these later tracts "land ownership is figured as reducible to facts and figures: a conception which inevitably undermines the matrix of duties and responsibilities which had previously been seen to define the manorial community. In the perception of the surveyor, the land is defined as property, as the landlord's 'own'" (McRae 1996, 178). These tracts use the increasing knowledge of geometry to articulate a science for land measurement that replaced the traditional agrarian method of measuring land as the amount that could be ploughed in one day. Treading the open fields or measuring based on a day's work were passe by the mid to late sixteenth century, and more exact methods using geometry could accurately measure the amount of land in a given area, a practice greatly to the nobleman's benefit as lands were slowly taken away from villagers.

The medieval notion of land use had suddenly met the tools of the surveyors, and more than not, surveyed boundaries benefited the wealthy—those able to pay the surveyor's fees—rather than villagers who actual used these common areas. Hired by a local lord, surveyors descended upon communities, participated in enclosure, and attempted to "accurately" measure land down to the nearest foot. While the science of mensuration could allow for accurate measurements, often the employer, if displeased with the accuracy of the surveyor's findings, could ask for a secondary opinion, which could lead to a claim for more land. The surveyor cut into the traditional method of land disbursement based on fealty and mutual obligation as the decisive shift away from the ideals of Fitzherbert (the last publication of his book being in 1567) to the newer methods of agrarian measurement shows, which allowed for actual quantification of lands and resources.

Surveyors altered village topography in a massive way, literally redrawing maps to indicate changes in ownership, and one (expensive) function of the new surveyor was to draw new maps that reflected the new shift in property within the village. This service became quite important to lords who wished to consolidate their holdings or occasionally for the upwardly mobile farmer.

Enclosure, engrossing, and ultimately measurement of local lands all contributed to the changing dynamics of village life, but not everyone agreed with these new initiatives. One of the most prominent sets of surveying texts articulates the concern of farmers in an extended dialogue between irate farmer and logical surveyor:

> for indeede there are euen amongft vs, in the Mannor wherein I dwell, officious fellowes, that to procure the Lords good opinion, will pry into mens estates, and indeede as you say, into the quantity, quality, and value of mens Lands, and give fale information oftentimes, and I know it is a foule abuse... (*Foure bookes of husbandry* 1578, 14).

As this is a tract written by surveyors, the hapless farmer eventually concedes to the righteousness of the surveyor and the justness of having an exact demarcation of his land in a form of subversion and containment (Greenblatt 1988; Mark 2014).

Attempts to change these measurement systems had been made before, especially during the Anglo-Saxon period, but they had little success because they weren't conducted as countrywide changes. Likewise, enclosing public land had also been attempted, but on a very small scale and thus did not totally alter the traditional roles of servants and masters in communities across England. Surveyors and their new techniques, then, changed the way people related to the space around them, all of which began to accelerate into the 1600s with the Parliamentary enclosures that occurred then.

This type of change affected nearly every parish beginning in the 1550's and progressing well into the 1800's. One major instance of this appears in the parish of Laxton, which was originally settled by Saxon farmers in the sixth or seventh century. Laxton operated with the traditional relations of a feudal manor, but this gradually began to change. Finally, in 1635 Sir William Courten bought the manor and commissioned a surveyor named Mark Pierce to make a detailed map showing the ownership of the land. Indeed, by 1635 "the strips of the demesne had already been consolidated into a solid block of land just north of the village of Laxton," and the subsequent maps produced from this endeavor clearly illustrate the gains made by the new owner of the manor (Hart 1998, 123).

Laxton represents only one village of many that were undergoing vast change. Enclosure physically and socially altered relations during this time, and it became necessary that members of the community know about the new boundaries:

> Survey lines must be identifiable unambiguously on the ground, and the most obvious manifestations of land-survey systems on the visible landscape are the fences that mark field boundaries. An observant traveler may sense a survey system, and occasional vantage points may offer a bird's-eye view of the way the land has been divided, but usually you can see survey systems only on maps and aerial photographs. In contrast, you can actually see field boundaries on the ground, and they have piquant tales to tell to anyone who learns to read them aright. Not only do they show the line that surveyors laid out on the land, but fence, or even the absence of fences, may also send messages about the rural economy and its physical environment (Hart 1998, 165).

The only good boundary system is the one that people in the community recognize. New fences, new boundaries, and new consolidation of land strips altered the physical geography of the field system.

Those traditional methods of social order that relied on the distribution of land by lords to servants changed within a few generations, straining the social compact. Villagers had to interact within this new system of land use; they could see the physical change in the environment; they could speculate about its meaning, but more profoundly, they then had to change the way they related to other villages in time-space. One scholar has even gone so far as to call this change of social relationships an inevitable collapse:

> What we see then is that the feudal conception of social relations that has been under strain since at least the beginning of rampant enclosure is by the Elizabethan era finally near collapse. The ideology of paternalistic interdependence could hardly flourish in its feudal form for long with the 'covetous' father of the manor moving to the big city and relinquishing all his familial responsibilities (Sullivan 1998, 37).

This fragmentation, partly due to the reformation of land use and surveying policies, changed society irrevocably (Parkes & Thrift 1980).

Just as with the witchcraft trials, the social tensions boiled over as the dearth of famine exacerbated fears of land ownership as evidenced by the contemporary Oxfordshire rebellion of 1597, and one of the primary complaints of this early modern peasants' revolt was for "the petitions for redress of enclosure and relief of corn [that] confirm that enclosure was the focus for popular discontent in the dearth of 1596" (John 2013, 81). This despair is not hard to understand, as the Oxford family had managed to purchase some eighty-six thousand acres of assorted land, seventy-eight mills, fisheries, rectories, and other alienations of public land within 64 transactions from 1574 to 1592 (Estate 2004, 48-49).

Husbandry Manuals and Social Change

The massive change in land use policies can be seen reflected in the host of husbandry and surveying manuals that were produced and reproduced during this the sixteenth century: just as social relations were being altered due to land grabs, so were traditional gender roles and social hierarchies reinforced with a host of husbandry manuals published during the same period. Xenophon's *Oeconomicus* or *Treatise of Household* appeared in six English editions between 1532 and 1573 (Fussell 1972; Xenophon & Pomeroy 1995). This work reflected the traditional master/servant relationship as well as traditional land use policies and didn't contain much relatively valuable information to farmers. Likewise, John Fitzherbert's *Boke of Husbandrye*, which came out with 18 editions from 1523 and 1600, focused heavily on the role of women and men in rural economies (Fitzherbert 1552). Part of the *Hausvater* literature that emphasized patriarchal dominance, Fitzherbert's book emphasized social control and proper social position for wife, ploughman, servant, and master: on the master's land.

Numerous other husbandry texts from the period reinforce notions of gender (*Foure bookes of husbandry* 1578), contain advice for diligent work as in *The Country Farme* (Estienne, Liébault, Markham, & Surflet 1616) or include a miscellany of good advice as in Thomas Tusser's *Five Hundred Points of Good Husbandry* (Tusser 1984). Originally published in 1557 as *A hundreth good pointes of husbandrie,* it led the market for 50 years and grew in stature and size.

These manuals gradually came to be written for members of all orders since their presentation "was increasingly designed to encourage the diffusion of their information, either directly or indirectly, through to the middle and lower orders" (McRae 1996, 145). Other books appeared that were for precisely written for the public at large: Leonard Mascall, *The first booke of Cattel* (1587), which had 13 editions from 1587-1662; and *The Husbandlye ordring and Governmente of Poultrie*, which appeared in 1581. These books represent the trend to order both gender relations and land relations during the period. The early works focus on the traditional relations of men and women and servant and lord, whereas the later works gradually come to argue for a type of individual diligence in farming.

Even *Piers Plowman* surfaced again in the 1550s in its role as sociological husbandry manual and provocateur of English dissent (Alford 1988), where Robert Crowley's edition framed Langland not only as a proto-Protestant, but the poem was appropriated for the land debate to signify the traditional relations of man to land and servant to master (Bowers 1992; Rentz 2011; Rhodes 2014, 2015). Numerous *Piers Plowman* manuscripts and bastardizations were printed (Hudson 2020); *I playne Piers (1550; STC 19903a); Pierce the Ploughmans crede (printed in 1553 (STC 19904); Pyers plowmans exhortation (1550 STC 19905),* each one appropriating the poem for its own purposes. Just like the husbandry manual tradition, *Piers Plowman* also participates in the enclosure debate by either coming in on the side of "traditional" relations or by being appropriated by nascent landowners hoping to solidify their gains.

Familiars and Anti-husbandry

In numerous descriptions, they are discovered as pets—kept in pots, or simply fed scraps of food—within the houses of suspected witches and the role of these familiars within the domestic structure was no less important to the outcome of the trial as was the meeting of them on some deserted road. These pamphlets constantly emphasize the domestic nature of caring for these strange animals and that these witches have changed their house space into a foul perversion of motherhood. *The Witches of St. Osyth* includes many descriptions of small creatures in the midst of domestic scenes (Rosen 1991; W & Harris 1981); these descriptions of these animals seem tender and motherly.

Ursula Kemp, who herself harbored familiars, reports in her own confession on a number of other women in her community whom she "knew" kept familiars of all kinds:

> …she went unto Mother Bennett's house for a mess of milk, the which she had promised her. But at her coming, this examinate saith, she knocked at her door and nobody made her any answer, whereupon she went to her chamber window and looked in thereat, saying, 'Ho, ho, Mother Bennett, are you at home?' And casting her eyes aside, there was a spirit lifting up a cloth lying over a pot, looking much like a ferret (Rosen 1991, 118).

Ursula also happened to visit the house of William Hunt, where she espied "a spirit to look out of a potsherd from under a cloth, the nose thereof being brown like unto a ferret." The *St. Osyth* pamphlet reveals an Ursula Kemp who has admitted to practicing magic on her neighbors, whose own familiar, Tiffin, shared with her that both Mother Bennett and Hunt's wife used their familiars for harm. But what is remarkable here is the attention to details of domestic space. Ursula Kemp is at the very least guilty of prying into her neighbor's affairs and houses. But more than that she violates their space just as she does with Grace Thurlow and others.

Familiars are often described in such situations. They are cared for in elaborate ways, given wool to sleep on, milk to drink bits of scraps to eat (Rosen 1991, 95, 110, 112, 123-125, 128-139). Henry Sellis reports that his mother often: "fed them out of a black dish each other day with milk, and saith, that he hath seen her to carry it unto a heap of wood and broom standing under a crab tree by the house. And being asked what their names were, he saith, that one of them is called by two names, which is Herculus, other John or Jack, and that is a black one" (Rosen 1991, 133).

Another young boy confessed that his mother kept three familiars, one in a wicker bottle, another in a leather bottle, and the third in a woolpack. The elaborate care and ministrations that these old women apparently showed their familiars is without parallel. These beasts are often described in terms of their arrangements within the house of the "masters." In this regard, the familiar simply becomes an extension of the witch with its intimate connection to domestic spaces (Willis 1995).

Hundreds of pages from the tracts could be brought to bear to illustrate the vagaries of the witchcraft accusations in England, especially in Chelmsford, England where the cast of characters grows as the accusations rampage through that community as evidenced from the expansive Chensforde trial pamphlet (Phillip 1566).

Familiars as Social Construct

The sixteenth century, in particular, saw the rise of two genres of texts, the surveyor's manual and the husbandry manual, but they both had the same focus: to legitimize the revised land use policies while affirming traditional relationships that reinforced the hierarchy. Witches in the latter half of the sixteenth century were doubly to blame. Not only did they violate the rules of "good husbandry" espoused by the countless manuals circulating during the period, but their *maleficium* violated the space of others.

According to one estimate, public lands (the common waste) had already been reduced to 5-10 percent of the commons by 1600 (Clark & Clark 2001, 1034) through enclosure practices. Thus, rampant surveyors in villages, increased numbers of land transactions that consolidated wealth holdings, and changing dynamics within the village environment were already well underway before 1600 (Bell, Brooks, & Killick 2019, 301-302).

In many of the witchcraft cases from the period, familiars are not simply placed within the home, as the descriptions of the accusers would have us believe. These familiars do not easily become the tame yet monstrous entities who can suckle at the third teat, murder an infant, kill cattle, and terrorize neighbors all before breakfast. There is, in fact, a type of seduction that occurs in these tracts in that the familiars slowly approach the domestic in order to corrupt it. They initially contact these suspected witches in boundary areas and crossroads while the witches are underway and then cajole or seduce their way into the witches' house.

Ultimately, however, these familiars are sent out on missions of disruption, crossing boundaries, and causing harm to the good husbandry of others. Where witches in Continental Europe more often created contracts with the devil, oftentimes for apparently no remuneration in either a social or monetary sense, witches in England manage to force their servants to work for them in a perverted husbandry relationship. What should be noted, however, is that they demand that familiars in the English tradition during the sixteenth century trespass on their neighbor's land continuously, which is perhaps an echo of the increased litigation from 1540-1650 involving parcels of land (Brooks 1998). In this sense, English witchcraft remains the anomaly within the tradition since it developed the pact with the devil quite late and lacked, for the most part, the

Witches' Sabbath. Indeed, no trial reference to the pact with the devil (outside of ones with familiars) exists before 1612 and it wasn't until Matthew Hopkin's famous witch hunt in the 1640s that the written covenant with the devil occurs (Thomas 1997, 444).

What changes in the English tradition? The extensive transformation of land use through enclosure acts, engrossing, purchases of land, and alterations of tenancy, along with the enforcement of behavioral norms through husbandry manuals contribute a great deal to the transgressive nature of these women within these tracts as familiars trespass space while the witches themselves turn into monstrous visions of a perverted domestic—the antithesis of good husbandry.

Henri Lefebvre, the great critic of space and construct, writes that social space subsumes things and encompasses interrelationships, creating multilayered meanings (Bauer & Fischer 2019; Lefebvre, Brenner, & Elden 2009; Lefebvre, Elden, Lebas, & Kofman 2006). For Lefebvre, spatial representations transform based on a myriad of contexts:

> the relationship of local and global; the re-presentation of that relationship; action as signs; the trivialized spaces of everyday life; and, in opposition to these last, spaces made special by symbolic means as desirable or undesirable, benevolent or malevolent, sanctioned or forbidden to particular groups (Lefebvre 1974/91, 288).

In essence, space is constantly being refigured and remains a potent exemplar of cultural and political meaning (Bauer & Fischer 2019; Blake 2002; Jannis 2021).

The presence of familiars in the English witchcraft trials transform these proceedings into a contested site for symbolic meaning, both in terms of the prevalent husbandry manuals with their corrupted domestic spheres but also from the alterations of land boundaries that are symbolically violated in the tracts. Familiars are the quintessential early modern "other," an amalgamation of superstition and response to societal stresses brought on by a literal landscape that morphs into an "othered" space where devilish creatures run rampant across field, stone, and property line, causing ruination along the way. The wayward crone and her familiar, maligned by neighbors and accused by community members, is the site where class, land, and husbandry meet (John 2013; Sennett & Cobb 1993), a potent moment of symbolic value where the concerns and values of the community are laid bare at the feet of its vulnerable population and metastasized in the corrupted magic of the anti-domestic.

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That'll Teach You: A Humanistic Reconstructionist Approach to the Project-Based Educations of the Companions of *Doctor Who*

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Abstract:

From the early 1900s through the 1950s, child-centered and humanistic theories of education were developed and disseminated from hubs of progressive educational theorization. Based on the resultant educational reforms of the 1960s, humanistic approaches to education became popular in schools throughout the United States. Concurrently, and perhaps not coincidentally, while these theories were being developed, *Doctor Who* was conceived and promoted as an educational television series for young learners throughout Britain. This essay posits that, consciously or inadvertently experimenting with progressive new pedagogical models, the Doctor and his series of companions present a complementary union of potentially opposing pedagogical approaches. While the Doctor's lessons tend to be pedantic in nature and substance, the companions' efforts to absorb the Doctor's demonstrated teachings, relating that message to the audience, make episodes humanistic learning experiences for the viewer. By presenting dilemmas confronted and varyingly resolved by companions of the Doctors show-run by Russell Davies and Steven Moffat, this essay illustrates each companion's personal struggle~~s~~ and attempts to understand and assimilate the Doctor's lessons into an expanding worldview or moral truth that parallels and elicits the viewer's—who occupies the silent, observant position of novice companion, or neophyte as acolyte—empathetically vicarious experiences.

Keywords: education, science fiction, television, *Doctor Who*, Montessori, Freire, project-based, learning, humanistic, reconstructionist

From the early 1900s through the 1950s, child-centered and humanistic theories of education were being developed and disseminated from the University of Chicago, Teachers College and Columbia University, hubs of progressive educational theorization. Based on the resultant educational reforms of the 1960s, humanistic approaches to education became popular in schools throughout the United States. Concurrently, and perhaps not coincidentally, while these theories were being developed, *Doctor Who* was being conceived and promoted as an educational television series for young learners throughout Britain. This essay posits that, consciously or inadvertently experimenting with progressive new pedagogical models, the Doctor and his series of companions have continuously presented a complementary union of potentially opposing pedagogical approaches. Further, this essay demonstrates that, while the Doctor's lessons tends to be pedantic in nature and substance, the companions' efforts to absorb the Doctor's demonstrated teachings and relate his overall message to the audience make each episode a humanistic learning experience for the viewer. By presenting dilemmas confronted and varyingly resolved by companions of the Doctors show-run by Russell Davies and Steven Moffat, this essay illustrates an example of each companion's personal struggle~~s~~ in their attempts to understand and to assimilate the Doctor's lessons into an expanding worldview or moral truth that parallels and elicits in the viewer—who occupies the silent, observant position of the novice companion, or neophyte as acolyte—empathetically vicarious experiences.

Carl Rogers, in his analyses of humanistic psychology and education, helps to shift classroom styles from a focus on the subject to a focus on the student and on each student's own unique relationship with the subject. For a well-known example, Maria Montessori's pedagogical practices are firmly humanistic. As is the case with progressive educational theories, Reconstructionism supports the development of students' knowledge through and according to their relationships with their environments. Through a series of attempts, students learn what is successful or harmful, what is good for the student and what is good for others. Because this Reconstructionist pedagogical goal is student-oriented, the educator must be ready to direct and advise, but not to dictate.

Child- and community-centered humanistic education such as that expounded by Montessori, Paolo Freire and Carol Tomlinson would argue that learning is never completed by rote parroting of facts and formulas but must be developed into something "bigger-on-the-inside," such as a comprehensive worldview with application to real-world problems. The Doctor's lessons become exponentially more difficult as each learner-as-companion grows beyond the struggle for abstract comprehension of the Doctor's otherworldly lesson and takes responsibility for the use of his or her newly acquired knowledge.

Effective teaching links the student's internal experiences with the larger world. Each Doctor has, in his or her own way, engaged in extensive dialogue in the sense of explaining the companions' lessons to the companions; in addition, however, the Doctor's incarnations have generally given companions an opportunity to engage in dialogue with to process and understand the nuances and overarching messages in their experiences. Strikingly, the Doctor engages in the pedagogically revolutionary practice of teaching through dialogue as espoused by Paulo Freire in *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. "Authentic reflection considers," Freire postulates, "people in relations to the world" because "consciousness and the world are simultaneous: consciousness neither precedes the world nor follows it" (1968, 81). This reciprocity of communication provides the opportunity for the companions, who are concurrently the Doctors' students, to dedicate themselves fully to immersion in their learning experiences and to living out the reality of their potentially abstract lessons. In imparting to the companions "education as the practice of freedom" which "denies that man is abstract, isolated, independent, and unattached to the world," it falls upon each Doctor to create a dialogue that links them and the viewer to every aspect of the universe they travel. This is also known as project-based learning, a method of instruction "opposed to education as the practice of domination" (Freire 1968, 81). According to Thom Markham, project-based learning "refocuses education on the student, not the curriculum" because the global world "rewards intangible assets such as drive, passion, creativity, empathy, and resiliency," individualized strengths that "must be activated through experience" (2011, 38). According to Markham, the point of such instruction is to make taught material relevant in an educational environment that "denies that the world exists as a reality apart from the people" (Freire 1968, 81). The learner must take the lesson and apply it to real issues, finding solutions that are socially and personally meaningful.

Each Doctor's assignment of problems through a dialogic teaching style gives the companions access to a universe of engaging subjects. Freire presents the notions of dialogic teaching, anti-subjugation social identity and the cultivation of a social appetite for knowledge, theorizing from experience. Freire's message is clear to those whose lives have somehow led them to share similar experiences of disempowerment, subjugation or helplessness. From the First Doctor's goal-oriented and confident granddaughter through the Fourth Doctor's various travel mates, possibly the most companions assigned to a single Doctor, to the newest Doctors' highly relatable friends and companions, the companions' experiences transform them completely, toppling outdated hierarchical power structures even as they are forced to function within them. "In slave societies," Ira Berlin reminds students of American history in the Whovian-ly eye-opening lessons of *Many Thousands Gone,* "slavery stood at the center of economic production, and the master-slave relationship provided the model for all social relations" (1998, 8). The predominant status of chattel slavery as a society's preeminent form of productivity meant that "from the most intimate connections between men and women to the most public ones between ruler and ruled, all relationships mimicked those of slavery" (Berlin 1998, 8). However, once Britain and the U.S. saw a post-World War II social shift to industrial wage labor from enslaved, indentured or sharecropping farm labor, and a subsequent need to provide broad-based education to the upcoming generations of industrial wage-earners of all ethnicities and genders making up the new working classes, *Doctor Who* began to experiment with breaking down outdated hierarchical modes of instruction and encouraging progressive exploratory methods of teaching learners to perpetually self-instruct. *Doctor Who*'s companions and vicarious learners, in a rapidly expanding mid-twentieth-to-early-twenty-first-century universe, must become true world—or intergalactic—citizens if they, and we all, are to survive.

These learning experiences, though seemingly free of responsibility in their Montessori-like openness to each companion's choice of selections, force the companions to take on a degree of responsibility that they may not otherwise have willingly taken, had they only participated as hierarchically lower-ranking observers in the Doctor's adventures. Similarly, the initial apparent freedom in the Montessori classroom is contained by certain limits and safeties, within which students may develop knowledge and skill. According to Mario Montessori, Maria Montessori's method—as well as the Doctor's—embraces the practice of observing and teaching according to students' innate tendencies and abilities. "Knowledge and understanding of these Human Tendencies," Montessori explains, "forms part of the basis for an education which is designed to assist the optimum development (preservation) of each individual" (1956, 20). The Montessori theory is that following the learner's natural inclination will, by necessity for survival, lead to the student's intellectual and skill development.

At the side of the Twelfth Doctor, Bill finds inspiration to become a student. A university canteen assistant when she first meets the Doctor in "The Pilot," Bill learns through her reality-defying experiences how to understand and engage with the Doctor's lectures. He tutors her as they travel the universe, and Bill steadily shows her developing grasp of microsocial, macrosocial, and vastly abstract issues and ideals. Her growth as a student and universe traveler is clear during her time as a companion, with Bill developing an impressive sense of responsibility and selflessness by the end of her time with the Doctor.

Because each companion becomes an integral part of the Doctor's travels, each must process and use the authority he or she has been given, whether dictating where to go or trying to be an objective, disinterested and non-participatory observer. Being a cosmic looker-on is an avoidant technique that never works to absolve the companion of decision-making pressures and responsibility because, like any conscientiously humanistic educator, the Doctor never tolerates the passive absorption of information without testing what his mentees are learning. In the Doctors' high-octane learning universe, every choice the companions are allowed, encouraged or forced to make directly impacts the Doctor, the citizens of the universe and the very fabric of time, itself. Whatever the immediate, urgent lesson of the moment, each of the companions and all of their viewers are thereby constantly forced to learn that they must be thoughtful, responsible world citizens or face infinitely echoing repercussions and the heavy weight of guilt for selfish, precipitate or misjudged choices.

Project-based instruction is intended to give students the opportunity to tackle real-world problems and to confront, accept and attempt to deal with the implications and responsibilities involved in doing so. The Doctors' project-based teaching method becomes both Socratic and Freire-ian in its pedagogical application. The companions must not only solve a potential problem but must also face the massive weight of the multiple, multiplying and interacting repercussions of every decision made in the process. Companion Amy does this, for instance, in her first travelling adventure with the Eleventh Doctor, "The Beast Below."

Amy is confronted with the issues surrounding the extinction of her own species. But Amy is also responsible for deciding whether to rescue or to perpetuate the abuse of the endangered and mistreated starwhale that has saved the British human survivors. Amy's first adventure is the Doctor's opportunity to be a guide, to inform his companion about the impact of her choices and mentor her through the steps that will make her a thoughtful and—perhaps, even—beneficent time-traveler. Instead, Amy wipes her own memory and hides this painful conundrum from the Doctor. Because of Amy's initial solution to the impossible decision between saving the whale or saving the people aboard the starship, and the Doctor's furious disapproval of her perceived abuse of that decision-making authority, she comes to also face the consequences of having chosen to continue to perpetuate the starwhale's suffering while absolving herself and the Doctor of guilt by wiping clear her own memory.

Amy wishes to spare the Doctor an agonizing decision but gives him the pain of the realization that she would hide something of such magnitude for a seemingly petty–or at least cowardly—reason. While he faces as difficult a decision as Amy's, himself, the Doctor needs Amy to see that she must confront such decisions head-on. Running away from the burden of responsibility can only lead to extended and increasingly conflict-laden problems for all involved. In order to overcome this adventure-ending predicament, a dialogue must be opened. In this interaction, the viewer learns through Amy that hard decisions and painful choices must not only be made, but their consequences must be faced and accepted.

Amy, realizing what decision her guide and mentor faces and being able to observe his, Queen Elizabeth's and the starwhale's efforts to do what they agree by consultation and consensus is most right among a sea of potentially wrong choices, understands why communication is so crucial and whose interests she must keep continually uppermost in mind. Amy thereby becomes not only a conscious and conscientious participant in the resolution of the starwhale's suffering but learns to accept the realization that those whose times she visits are going to find their lives influenced by her actions. If it is she who has the power to impact others' timelines, then, Amy learns, she must be careful, alert, self-aware, deliberate in her choices, and responsible: the humanist educator's model pupil.

Teaching using dialogue is a concept that Freire goes to great lengths to identify and explain. It is a potential challenge to educators, even after decades of the availability and translation of *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, to understand and apply dialogic teaching effectively. Teaching through dialogue is not, as one may potentially assume, a simple method of communicating assignments to students, nor even finding engaging ways to communicate lessons. Instead, the dialogic pedagogical method requires an open dialogue, facilitated by the instructor, that manages to successfully engage the student in the subject matter on a personal level. The instructor does not speak at the student in the sense of delivering a lecture in monologue; the instructor speaks with learners who have the responsibility of controlling their own educational destinies.

This control is a potential threat to the established structure of pedagogy, as Freire notes in his work. An educated populace is a powerful populace. It is miseducation, or the lack of any education at all, that creates groups that can be oppressed. While there exist ways in which an educated population can be manipulated, managing to do so is much more of a challenge than the manipulation and even the control of a group that cannot interpret for itself the information to which it is exposed. An educated and empowered populace results in what Freire refers to as true organization (1968, 148). Education, as Freire presents it, is a tool for personal, social and political empowerment.

For example, Amy as first companion of the Eleventh Doctor understands the years of experiential lessons she has been taught about existence. She has come to learn that there are things she can change, and that there are things she cannot change but can survive. She has internalized what she has learned to the extent that she chooses to make the painful decision to join her husband in a remote and fixed point in time in "The Angels Take Manhattan," forever losing the Doctor and the life she led on her own timeline, when her husband is gone and the Doctor is too distraught to make a decision. Taking responsibility implies that the learner is assuming the authority of teacher and taking moral ownership. In this developing worldview, certain events cannot be changed, but those other events that are malleable imply tremendous responsibility on the part of the companion and viewer as vicarious companion, whose choices made during each episode might potentially wipe out whole civilizations. Conversely, not being able to change certain events presents each companion and viewer with the difficult lessons of simultaneously practicing adaptability while consciously embracing humility in letting go of expectations, in the complex processes of growth and psychosocial development.

Illustrating this point, Donna, best friend of the Tenth Doctor, experiences both the crippling helplessness of being unable to change the consequences of one horrible event and the obverse empowerment of changing the seemingly impossible. Travelling through history, Donna discovers that the Doctor cannot save the residents of Pompeii, despite his genius and technology. She must face the loss of those with whom she has developed personal bonds and thus acquiesce to fate. Donna later becomes a hero to the Ood, a species subjugated by humans. Able to see the needs of her own species and to sympathize simultaneously with those of the Ood, Donna's ability to keep a humanistic focus while travelling with the Doctor has become so strengthened through practice during their time together that she transcends the status of companion and is able to become part of a new team: the Doctor/Donna. The student has been so guided and supported through her initiation into this new world of knowledge and potential that she has reached the level of mentor, herself. Though, unfortunately, the Doctor/Donna cannot continue to exist because human brains cannot handle the information overload feed from the Tardis, Donna's intellectual development shows the potential success of the Doctor's methods. It is thereby proven to be possible for the student to master the teacher's lessons.

An exceptional example of the student achieving mastery of his or her learning experiences in the universe of *Doctor Who* is in the intellectual and skill development of Rose. The first of the rebooted Doctor's companions, Rose spends several years travelling with two of his incarnations. From the first, Rose learns two important lessons. First, some sort of fate or cosmic rule exists that certain things cannot be changed. These fixed points in time allow future developments and advances to happen that impact world and universal history. As painful as it may be to accept certain unpleasant realities, it is sometimes necessary. Rather than changing or denying the past, the student becomes prepared to positively impact the present and future. Secondly, even if a person has the ability to wield destructive and restricting power over others, one should choose to empower instead of disempower or destroy others. The Ninth Doctor seeks peaceful resolution and happy endings as often as possible, celebrating them when they happen. When his own resolve fails, Rose has learned enough to remind him of those contractual obligations of time travel. By the end of the Ninth Doctor's time, the student has taught and even saved the teacher. Even after their time together is over, the Tenth Doctor's lessons to Rose continue to develop. He has so empowered her that, when they lose each other in alternate universes, Rose continues to work on her own until she can eventually break inter-universe travel rules that even the Doctor could not manipulate, to rescue him.

Martha, a doctor who is arguably one of the most well-trained students of the Doctor, learns to balance her logical understanding of the experiences she has with the Tenth Doctor with her emotional responses to each of them and her relationship with the Doctor, himself. She serves as an apprentice, doctor to his Doctor, learning to apply her theoretical preparation and philosophies to every otherworldly situation she encounters. Martha's medical apprenticeship years before she enters the Doctor's collection of companions prepares her for each life- and death-deciding situation that she encounters at his side. The only insurmountable challenge to this companion's partnership with the Doctor is not a struggle understanding the worlds-wide effect of every decision made but the desire to be seen as a peer, not a student, and to feel central to the attentions of the Doctor, who is still mourning the loss of Rose.

The real-time situations in which companions find themselves test theoretical solutions, intellectual assumptions and biases. Whether due to the unalterable reality of fixed points in time or the Doctor's less than accurate navigation through the space-time continuum, though certain situations can be mended or reversed, most dilemmas are incontrovertible. Wounds heal but do not disappear. Scars accumulate both for the Doctor and every companion until one dies, regenerates, or leaves the other behind. The Doctor provides the universe as a classroom, but the classroom is life. The consequences of every decision are immediate and, increasingly, irreversible. The inevitability of consequence, rather than time, hangs over both Doctor and companion. Each adventure in which the characters find themselves not only teaches new concepts and experiences, but again and again tests the characters' commitment to certain standards and preconceptions. Convictions are tested, even as they are being formed. Companions, along with the Doctor, must establish a functional idealism or be destroyed in the process of failing to do so.

Malleable points in time are so because all involved in that event still fulfill their roles-as-duties within that time; gravity is the reason bodies run in real-time. The Doctor's dialogic lessons are grounded in "the body." In the highly abstract lessons taught throughout the *Dr. Who* series, time, space and limits are all understood through the boundaries of the body. Just as Amy's decisions could have killed the last living starwhale or the human survivors on the ship it tows, companion Clara's moon adventure, "Kill the Moon," has the viewer learning another painfully personal as well as abstract lesson. Travelling with the Twelfth Doctor and one of her own students, Clara is faced with a species-destroying set of decisions. The moon is an egg, the episode posits, and that egg is about to hatch. If the moon-egg hatches, humankind may be wiped out with the side-effects of the loss of the moon's earth-balancing gravity. But, to keep the mass of the moon in place, the innocent hatchling inside the moon-egg must be killed. The moon would thereby become a huge, glowing tomb, a constant visible reminder of the price paid for earthlings' survival. This education through the body is perhaps in no episode more forcible than in this one, in which viewers' reality is threatened by the imminent potential loss of gravity and, with it, corporeal existence as all viewers know it. Clara discovers, when faced with the apparently horrible dilemma of the death of one (hatchling) versus the death of many (earthbound beings), that the Doctor's choices are almost always painful and haunting. These travels present not just adventures, the companion and vicarious learner-as-companion learn; these adventures encapsulate reality-defining decisions.

Instead of Amy's decision of indecision, Clara passes preemptive judgment. In the end, it turns out that the hatchling immediately lays another egg, keeping everything in balance. No deaths have been necessary, this time; and the viewer can breathe a sigh of relief as one learns along with Clara that, as is usually the case with the natural world, nature will develop a way to balance itself. Sometimes the intuitive decision involves more information than the rational mind has had an opportunity to recognize that it is processing. Sometimes it is necessary to go with one's "gut." Rarely, but wonderfully, the viewer through Clara's choice learns, courage and audacity may be rewarded with an unexpected happy ending.

A vivid example of the unfortunate consequences of questionable decisions and the refusal to accept difficult life lessons is the forfeit of Clara's mortal life and existence for the Twelfth Doctor following her insistence that he use anachronistic technology to artificially revive Ashildr, a young woman Clara feels is unfairly robbed of life, in spite of the Doctor's protestations. Clara's insistence that Ashildr be saved are successful, thanks to the unusual circumstances of her relationship with the Doctor. While Clara is not the first companion already in place to greet a new incarnation of the Doctor, she has the unique role of being asked by his former self to take care of the new version. Mentor and mentee roles, therefore, get confused and the power dynamics of the relationship between the Twelfth Doctor and Clara become unstable. The instability of the power dynamic between the Twelfth Doctor and Clara is great and destructive enough that their relationship leads to the intergalactic "Hell Bent" legend of a dangerous Hybrid, composed of two peers who are so alike that they do not hold each other accountable, driving each other to make increasingly catastrophic decisions. The immortal Ashildr, whose memories disappear over time, is one of those catastrophic decisions. Ashildr's post-first death existence directly leads to Clara's death—which, even if postponed, cannot be avoided—and the following removal of her existence from the Doctor's memory. In defying and denying the reality in front of her, Clara condemns Ashildr to an endless, lonely, resentful existence and takes

Ashildr's place in death. The price for Clara's refusal to accept the lesson the Doctor attempts to teach in "The Girl Who Died" is the forfeit, however delayed, of her own life. She must replace what she did not allow to take place.

Differentiated instruction is presented by theorists Freire and Tomlinson as a challenging yet effective method of reaching and successfully involving students in their own learning experiences. Applying Tomlinson's *The Differentiated Classroom* to the series *Doctor Who*, the Doctor develops a curriculum of complex instruction and orbital studies through which to develop learners' personal involvement, understanding, and skills of synthesis and mastery. The mentoring instructor must "study students continually and systematically to identify individual strengths. Teachers then design complex instruction tasks that call upon the various student abilities" (1999, 69), which process, in turn, hones those developing abilities. Though the weight of responsibility on the instructor who teaches through complex instruction is heavy, such education makes it possible for students who may otherwise not realize their potential strengths to feel empowered by and responsible for the development of their own skills.

The companions may spend a few episodes or an entire season, if not their entire time with the Doctor, "orbiting" around a particular theme. In orbital studies, a concept Tomlinson credits to Chris Stevenson, an instructor links the lessons and investigations from which students may choose to develop their own topics—or, for the Doctor's companions, in which they choose their adventures—to some aspect of the curriculum. Linking back to Freire's dialogues, Tomlinson explains that, "orbitals work from the premise that all learners are dignified by developing and sharing knowledge and skills" (1999, 71). The instructor is the facilitating mentor whose work is to keep students' explorations within the boundaries stated in their learning contracts. Tomlinson explains that the contract allows the students freedom to explore within the extent of the possibilities set in otherwise planned lessons by the instructor. Once the terms have been set, students and companions are free to explore, not being held back by the instructor so that their behavior and choices can be closely monitored. Rather, learners guide themselves to stay within the limited restrictions that they have been given. The challenge is that the instructor is constantly evaluating his or her methods based on student receptivity and performance and modifying those methods and practices accordingly. Such an instruction experience is flexible, malleable, endlessly variable, and therefore never the same.

Flexible instruction can be difficult to evaluate and even more difficult to support in the current educational climate, in which standardization has more weight than individual experience. Nevertheless, if the practice of personally involving students in their own educations is as crucial to students' long-term growth and success as when the Doctor first undertook this approach on television half a century ago, then U.S. pedagogy may be well-advised to adopt the widely traveled and well-tried pedagogical methodologies of *Dr. Who*.

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Religion, Sport, and Cultural (Mis)understanding: Japan and the United States in Religio-Imperialist Rivalry

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Abstract:

In the 1930s and 1940s, American authorities surveilled members of the Dai Nippon Butokukai in the United States. Upon the outbreak of war with Japan, the FBI and other American agencies began arresting Butokukai members as religious subversives and even enemy informants. Operating under Enlightenment assumptions of a hard divide between the secular and the sacred, the Americans could not make sense of the Butokukai, which was predicated upon different, non-Enlightenment views of society and religion. Drawing on recent research about the nature of pre-Enlightenment societies in the West, in this paper I argue that the Dai Nippon Butokukai was caught up in a much broader misunderstanding between Japan and the United States over religion, society, and the role of the individual in relation to the wartime state.

Keywords: Enlightenment, *bushidō*, *budō*, martial spirit, Butokuden, *Yamato damashii*, Ashizawa Hirozumi, Lt. Col. P.K. Roest, Gen. Douglas MacArthur, René Descartes, King St. Louis IX, Torinoumi Kōki

Introduction

As tensions with Japan mounted in the late 1930s and early 1940s and war in the Pacific looked increasingly inevitable, the United States government, certain that its imperial rival was a threat both at home and abroad, was deeply suspicious of Japanese Americans and Japanese immigrants living in the United States. Since the earliest period of Japanese immigration to North America, after all, Washington—and many American citizens—had viewed the Japanese in their midst with a mixture of wariness and respect. But as both Japan and the United States moved to a war footing and began girding for a showdown to decide control of the Asia-Pacific region, Americans and their government became ever more certain that the Japanese, both in Japan and in the U.S., were dangerous. Particularly perilous were the many Japanese and Japanese American groups which the American authorities saw as quasi-religious.

For example, in the late 1930s, Americans such as Cedrick Shimo and his father, Tamori Shimo, were placed under FBI surveillance.[1] As Shirley Castelnuovo writes in *Soldiers of Conscience: Japanese American Military Resisters in World War II*, "[Cedrick] Shimo's father was suspect because he was a Buddhist and the secretary of the Dai Nippon Butoku Kai, a martial arts organization that, according to the FBI, was a subversive organization which had intimate connections to the Imperial Japanese government." But that was not all. The Dai Nippon Butoku Kai, Castelnuovo continues:

> had also been under observation by ONI [Office of Naval Intelligence]. ONI had identified the club as a 'Military Virtue Society', and it was thought to be one of the organizations most actively involved in subversive activities. [...] The organization [also] appeared suspect [to the FBI because] the Japanese Consul in Los Angeles was its honorary president, its headquarters was in Japan, and its stated goal was the development of the Japanese warrior spirit in its members (Castelnuovo 2008, 32-33, citing FBI File #280, 654).

The United States government in the run-up to the Pacific War was thus wary about both the nefarious intentions of the Japanese and the nature of the Dai Nippon Butokukai 大日本武徳会 as an organization aimed at putting those intentions into action (see Williams 2019). The government was further uneasy that the Dai Nippon Butokukai may be linked to religion—in some sense Buddhist, as the FBI insinuated in its report against the Shimos, and in other ways martially spiritual, as the Office of Naval Intelligence surmised, charged with developing "the Japanese warrior spirit in its members."

But were these assessments accurate? Was there really a secret plot afoot in the U.S. spearheaded by the "Military Virtue Society," and was the impetus a too-heavy dose of "martial spirit," threatening America's carefully cultivated separation of church and state?[2] What do these suspicions reveal about the relationship between Japan and the United States, changing assumptions about religion and society, and the uneasy linking of new traditions with old as nation-states sought legitimacy amidst social, cultural, and political change? Was the Dai Nippon Butokukai a religious organization, in other words, and what does the question mean for understanding modern Japan?

In this essay, I argue that differences in the understanding of "religion" and "religious" between the United States and Japan, exacerbated by broad cultural stereotypes and an increasingly tense geopolitical rivalry which exploded into outright war in late 1941, led American authorities and military leaders to fundamentally misunderstand Japan in general, Japanese religion more narrowly, and, specifically, the Dai Nippon Butokukai.[3] This misunderstanding colored the Pacific War and its aftermath, leading to calls to eradicate Japanese civilization as fanatically devoted to religious war. A closer look at the Dai Nippon Butokukai, however, reveals much more ambiguity and even uncertainty than the American caricature could admit.

Clash of Religions, or Clash of Religiosities?

When the FBI raided Cedrick and Tamori Shimo's home in the late 1930s, the FBI thought that the organization to which the Shimos belonged, the Dai Nippon Butokukai, was a "subversive" organization, a front for religious war.[4] According to various chapters and branches of the Dai Nippon Butoku Kai's own documents and practices, however, the California and other American chapters of the Dai Nippon Butokukai did not fit the FBI's description of religious, or even subversive.[5] To give just one example, a Dai Nippon Butokukai booklet published in 1898 in Japan provides detailed instructions, complete with illustrations, on the gentlemanly art of the steeplechase. No mention of anything that might be considered religious is made among pages of instructions in riding, jumping, and caring for horses (Dai Nippon Butokukai 1898). Even publications that go beyond the technical aspects of various sports and martial disciplines reveal very little that could be deemed "religious".[6] A Dai Nippon Butokukai booklet issued in 1927 teaches that the fundamental principle of butoku is fidelity to the sovereign and love of country, admonishing practitioners to avoid shameful behavior, preserve their honor, and see to it that the esprit de corps of the Japanese people as a whole is advanced (Dai Nippon Butokukai 1927, 1-2). The butoku curriculum recommended in the 1927 volume includes both martial arts and classroom work—subjects such as morality, ethics, grammar, writing, history, and so forth were to be taught to budding pupils of martial virtue—but there was not a trace of anything hearkening to a metaphysics beyond patriotic sentiment (Dai Nippon Butokukai 1927, 7-9). No Zen meditation, no morning chapel, no evening prayer, not even grace before meals or readings from scriptures were part of the butoku student's prescribed daily routine.

Despite the lack of what many would recognize as objective religious content, many of the groups and individuals under prewar surveillance by the American authorities were aware that their activities were being interpreted as fanaticism and took preventive action to fend off suspicion. For example, Federal Bureau of Investigation File No. 100-6868, "North American Dai Nippon Butoku Kai, also known as Southern California Kendo Association and Kendo Association of America," is a report made at Los Angeles on 3 June 1942, for 19 and 20 April 1942. In the report is a translation of Butokukai records which reads, in part, "[...] we [that is, the Butoku Branch] are afraid that we may be investigated by the FBI. For this reason we had a committee meeting on the 17th of August [presumably 1941] and we agreed to change the name to NANKA KENDO KYOKAI (Southern California Sword Association) and we reformed our constitution in a very simple way. On the 22nd of August the manager of BUTOKU KAI visited an authority of the American government with the new constitution and explained the trust state of business of the BUTOKU KAI. [...] The authority who had deep understanding said, 'You should try to make Americans understand who have previously also misunderstood KENDO.'" But as the report's "Synopsis of Facts" (partially redacted) bluntly states, the outcome of the meeting was: "All known alien members of subject organization taken into custody as enemy aliens." Those under surveillance for association with the Butokukai and other "subversive" groups could not expect much from their efforts to reach out to American authorities, even when trying to convince the FBI and other entities that martial virtue had nothing to do with any creed or sect.

The gap between the Butokukai's anodyne activities and the intensity of the American authorities' suspicions raises the question of why the United States government tended to see the Butokukai was a "subversive" or even religious organization. The issue is in part one of definition. Jason Ananda Josephson argues that "religion" as a category is itself a recent invention and adaptation in Japan. I agree, and think that this ambiguity complicated the tangle between Japan and the United States over whether the Dai Nippon Butokukai was a "religious" organization (Josephson 2012).[7] Definitional and categorical slippage also belie cultural and ideological gaps. As Jolyon Baraka Thomas shows in *Faking Liberties: Religious Freedom in American-Occupied Japan*, the American authorities used the ideology of exporting "religious freedom" to Japan in order to justify, in part, the Pacific War and the unconditional-surrender policy that had drawn it out at the cost of hundreds of thousands of lives. But this retroactively applied ideological marker was not only historically false—Thomas concludes that the Japanese had had a robust freedom of religious belief and practice since at least the promulgation of the Meiji Constitution—but also culturally myopic. The Americans were operating on a high Enlightenment understanding of "religion" as distinct, and easily distinguishable, from "the secular," a category which included the state. Japanese culture absorbed some Enlightenment thinking prior to World War II, but not the Enlightenment root-to-branch. The line between what in the United States would be categorized as "religious" and "secular" was not as distinct in Japan, and in some places the line simply wasn't there. Many Americans failed to understand religion in Japan, and among Japanese and Japanese Americans in the U.S., in large part because "religion," and the array of cultural and ideological referenda which the term connotes, simply meant very different things depending upon whether one was from Tokyo or Washington, DC (Thomas 2019).[8]

In many ways, the confusion in the United States about the Dai Nippon Butokukai and the affiliated and spin-off organizations elsewhere in Asia and in Hawai'i, California, and other places in the West, stems from a cultural amnesia over pre-Enlightenment modes of religious belief and practice. By and large, Americans had forgotten that it was once possible in Christendom to practice "martial virtue" without connotations of religious or political subversion. Andrew Willard Jones argues in *Before Church and State* that the reign of King St. Louis IX (1214-1270) was typified by what Henri de Lubac (1896-1991) would much later term a "complete act," a wholeness of endeavor which did not presuppose any Cartesian divide between mind and body, soul and statecraft, or "religion" and "the secular" (both modern categories used to describe Cartesian society) (Jones 2017, 5, n. 1).[9] Jones writes:

> To us moderns, the secular is fundamental. [...] In such an approach, 'religion' is a category that functions *within* the secular. [...] I argue that thirteenth-century France [...] *was* Christian, fundamentally. There was no State lurking beneath the kingdom's religious trappings. There was no State at all, but a Christian kingdom. In this kingdom, neither the 'secular' nor the 'religious' existed. Neither did 'sovereignty'. I do not mean that the religious was everywhere and that the secular had not yet emerged from under it. I mean *they did not exist at all*" (Jones 2017, 3, 18. Emphases in original).

While the Japanese leaders were not medieval Ludovican kings, and while the Frankish society of synonymousness between sacred and secular is not a stand-in for Japan in the 1930s and 40s, the assessment by Jones of St. Louis IX's world, and the distance between it and the world of the "moderns," helps us to understand why there was such confusion among the very modern Americans over the status of the Dai Nippon Butokukai. The American authorities, conditioned to operate under categorical divisions between the religious and the non-religious, were talking past their Japanese counterparts, who largely understood the question of religion and state to be much more Lubacian, or non-Cartesian. The Butokukai and related organizations did not see themselves as "subversive," but rather as constructive of a healthy patriotism and spiritual strength cultivated by means of bodily training: "martial virtue". Butokukai practitioners were cultivating martial virtue, not as a religion and not for revolution, but as a "complete act" of the human person, neither wholly secular nor wholly religious.

I am not arguing here that there was a mind-body non-dualism in Japan, or that a peculiarly Eastern or Orientalist "holism" was the reason for the confusion between the Americans and the Japanese. I mean that the American authorities imposed categories of "religious" and "secular" in ways that their Japanese counterparts, for the most part, did not.[10] Indeed, it was the lack of specific religiosity—the vague penumbra of "martial virtue"—that seems to have troubled the American government the most. It was not enough that the Dai Nippon Butokukai be ostensibly non-sectarian or even openly agnostic. The blanket indictment of Tamori Shimo's Buddhism by the FBI notwithstanding, it was ultimately the quasi-religious nature of the Japanese polity itself, and the Dai Nippon Butokukai's connection to it, that provoked the ire of the U.S. authorities. The easy merger of martial virtue and imperial patriotism in Japan seemed almost calculated to raise the suspicions of liberal-Enlightenment Americans. In the final analysis, the U.S. government could not understand the Dai Nippon Butokukai because it could not understand, in historico-cultural *longue durée*, the emerging nation of Japan that underlay it. The Butokukai was such a perplexing challenge to the American authorities for the same reason that Japan itself befuddled those who tried to apply Western socio-cultural categories to a state which was increasingly rejecting liberalism in its entirety. This very modern anti-modernity was the root cause of the tension between the Butokukai and the FBI, and between Japan and the United States.

The Advent of the Butokukai

As with many "old" things in Japan, the Dai Nippon Butokukai was of relatively recent vintage (see Nakamura 1985, 27-28, and Hobsbawm and Ranger 1983). Founded in 1895 by Kyoto tax collector and martial arts devotée Torinoumi Kōki 鳥海弘毅 (1849–1914), the Dai Nippon Butokukai was designed to instill a greater degree of respect for the Imperial Household among average Japanese. As martial arts historian Alexander Bennett writes:

> The construction of the Heian Shrine in Kyoto was scheduled for 1895 to celebrate the 1,100th anniversary of Emperor Kammu's (737–806) creation of the Heian capital (794) (Bennett 2015, 143). [...] Torimi [sic] observed with a cynical eye how celebrations for the Shrine's ground-breaking ceremony were being unsatisfactorily conducted, as were other preparations for the festivities marking such a prestigious occasion. Joining forces with Konishi Shin'emon [...] together they planned a martial arts demonstration to mark the historical event fittingly (Bennett 2015, 144).[11]

The early directors of the Dai Nippon Butokukai thus went to great lengths to imbue their organization with the trappings and spirit of antiquity while incorporating it fully into the Meiji project of re-founding Japan as a modern nation-state along Western models, with a strong central government and a sense among the populace of citizenship in a growing imperial power (Bennett 2015, 143).[12] As Bennett observes:

> The timing [of the Dai Nippon Butokukai's founding] was contemporaneous with the growing sentiments of nationalism, especially with the triumphant war against almighty China. [...] The Japanese as a whole were understandably proud of their country's success, and it was from around this time that a broader appreciation of traditional culture began to flourish. A particular allure was felt to the culture and ideals of the samurai (Bennett 2015, 144-45). [...] The leaders all met for the first time on April 3, 1895, and a general assembly was convened on April 17 where the founding principles of the Dai-Nippon Butokukai were formulated. A proposal to reconstruct the ancient Hall of Martial Virtue (Butokuden) near the Heian Shrine and have it serve as the base *dōjō* was agreed upon, and the Butokukai was officially launched (Bennett 2015, 145.).[13]

A feature of Japan's modernity was that it rejected the break with the past upon which modernity is predicated in the West. Japan refused to refuse its martial heritage, albeit a heritage repackaged for a contemporary milieu. The Americans were suspicious of a belligerent feudalism lying just beneath the surface of Japan's modern, Westernized façade. The Butokukai was, for many Americans, like a buoy on a deep sea marking shoals of anti-modernity below.

The connection with the Butokuden provides a key clue as to why the Americans were so unsettled by the Dai Nippon Butokukai. The Butokuden was built by the Emperor Kanmu 桓武天皇 (735-806) in 794 after he moved the Japanese capital to Heian-kyo (Kyoto).[14] Kanmu, whose reign name includes the character for "martial," 武 was active in recovering and expanding the scope and area of imperial power—a legacy which the Dai Nippon Butokukai founders wished to see emulated by the new Meiji Emperor. In addition to this overt symbolism, many Dai Nippon Butokukai publications emphasized Emperor Kanmu's descent from the first emperor, Jinmu 神武天皇, whose two-character reign name means "spirit/divinity" and "martial." The Dai Nippon Butokukai took advantage of the semantic possibilities of these imperial appellations, for example advocating a philosophy of "unity with [Emperor] Jinmu" that could just as easily be read as "unity of the martial and the spiritual/divine".

Shadows of Modernity in Modern *Budō*

Thus, the Butokukai appeared tied in with the restoration of imperial rule in Japan in a way that did not sufficiently reject, to the satisfaction of the modern American authorities, the interpellation of religious political themes, or ideas of kingship not exclusively secular. To be sure, the restoration of imperial rule in Japan was shoehorned into a very modern scramble for colonial dominance in Asia, and the deployment of *budō* 武道 or *bushidō* 武士道 and the appeal to martial virtue was also inevitably tinged with a contemporary cast.[15] But these things were in many ways responses, however overdetermined, to Western colonialism (see Horne 2004). The irony of the Americans' suspicion of the Dai Nippon Butokukai is that it had been the encounter with Western powers, in particular the United States, that had prompted Japanese authorities to centralize and nationalize various elements of Japanese life. In doing so, those elements were brought closer to the Imperial Household and also systematized from "arts" (*jutsu* 術) into "ways" (*dō* 道) to emphasize the distinction between the West and the rising empire of Japan (see Sakaue 1985, 9-10).[16] These changes carried spiritual connotations (a "way" entails a whole-life approach to a pursuit, a dedication involving the spirit as well as the mind) which caused the Americans to mistake such things as the Dai Nippon Butokukai for religious organizations. But in decrying the confluence of the martial and the spiritual—the political and the religious—in the Dai Nippon Butokukai, the Americans were unwittingly castigating their own long shadow cast over the rest of the modern world.

A further irony lies in the fact that the *bushidō* which the American authorities came to fear was revivified in Japan at first as a Christian hermeneutic device. Many Westerners who are familiar with the concept of the "way of the warrior" received their general instruction in the subject from *Bushido: The Soul of Japan*, a book published by Japanese public intellectual Nitobe Inazō 新渡戸稲造 (1862-1933) in 1900. Nitobe's lionization of *bushidō* was later pressed into service by the Japanese wartime state, but Nitobe—a Quaker—wrote his treatise in a dialectical spirit, not in order to present *bushidō* as uniquely Japanese or to encourage conquest, but in the hopes that a greater appreciation for the dignity of Japanese tradition would effect Japan's conversion to Christianity (Green and Svinth 2010, 480). Likewise, the first book ever to use the word "bushidō" in the title was written by yet another Japanese Christian, Uemura Masahisa 植村正久 (1858-1925), whose *Kirusutokyō to bushidō* appeared in 1894 (Green and Svinth 2010, 479). Similarly to Nitobe, "Uemura argued [that] modern Japanese should rely on Christianity just as warriors" in Japan had earlier relied on Confucianism (Green and Svinth 2010, 479-80). Although Dai Nippon Butokukai founder Torinoumi Kōki positioned the organization as a revival of Japanese culture, the Butokukai was, if anything, a reprisal of a cultural echo, a re-weaving of the tapestry of Japanese history by incorporating a thread of *bushidō* thinking spun largely outside of Japan on the loom of a foreign religion.[17] In positioning *bushidō* as a part of Japan's spiritual essence, the Butokukai was unwittingly incorporating the cultural legacy of *bushidō* as the gateway to the archipelago's Christianization.

Just as *bushidō* was a concept in considerable flux during Japan's early engagement with the West, the Japanese martial arts in general did not enjoy universal approval within Japan. Perhaps most salient opposition to the martial arts came from the Japanese government itself. The Ministry of Education, for example, repeatedly refused to incorporate kendo and judo into the nationwide curriculum, rebuffing requests by self-styled martial arts "traditionalists" in 1883, 1896, and 1905 to have schools teach students how to fence and grapple in the Japanese way (see Gainty 2013, 27 ff).[18] It was only in 1908, after the Japanese Diet overrode the de facto veto of the bureaucracy, that the Ministry of Education yielded and allowed judo and kendo to be part of the curriculum at Japanese middle and high schools (Guttmann and Thompson 2001, 16). What the Americans later saw as evidence of the religious fanaticism of the Japanese state, the same state's own official organs, just a generation earlier, saw as a nuisance not conducive to modern educational needs.

If Japanese bureaucrats were less than enthusiastic about Japanese martial arts, then the Japanese public was often even cooler to the imperial project than is generally recognized today. If there was religious fervor for the Japanese empire in the early twentieth century, it was not shared by more than a tiny minority. For example, while the Dai Nippon Butokukai was founded in part to coordinate a "yearly celebration of a martial arts festival 'for the placating of the [Imperial] soul' (*shinrei wo nagusame tatematsuru koto* 心霊を慰め奉る事)," the fact that the festival had fallen into desuetude for centuries and the palace grounds where it had been held no longer even contained the building that once hosted it is not evidence of widespread public devotion to the imperial cause (Gainty 2013, 40).[19] The founders of the Dai Nippon Butokukai thought their new organization was necessary precisely because so few people seemed properly enthusiastic for the emperor or Japan's emerging imperial prospects. This indifference continued even after the Meiji state began gaining international prominence. Just ten years after the Butokukai's founding, when the Japanese won a war against the powerhouse of czarist Russia but were forced by military, budgetary, and political realities to settle for a subdued peace in the Treaty of Portsmouth (1905), the Japanese public, feeling betrayed by wartime propaganda, ran riot at Hibiya in downtown Tokyo, smashing up symbols of state power and indoctrination such as police boxes and newspapers. Some enterprising rioters even went swimming in the moat around the imperial palace (see Nakamura et al., 1967). All in all, the Dai Nippon Butokukai's founders saw the Japanese population at large as badly lacking in the discipline deemed befitting a rising power.

It was therefore in many ways the modern, Westphalian arrangement of nation-states increasingly moving toward total war that necessitated the founding of an organization such as the Dai Nippon Butokukai. One of the best ways to unite the "one hundred million Japanese" with the 2,600 years of their imperial tradition was through the practice of sports, which, it was hoped, would not only inculcate respect for that tradition and allow practitioners to feel a personal connection to their own nation, but also improve the physical condition of the body politic in preparation for the wars to defend Japan from her colonialist enemies. As Dennis Gainty writes, "The very practice of martial arts was [...] the proper means of honoring the Imperial soul;

and this, through the magic of an eternal and divine Emperor, meant that martial arts was the proper way to honor the very institution of the Emperor and its representatives, past or present" (Gainty 2013, 118).[20] If the Dai Nippon Butokukai was a religious organization, it was only because the Japanese state was grounded in an imperial line that was the antithesis of the Western liberal-democratic polities which largely eschewed religion and tradition in favor of the spread of governmentality and Euro-American-centric mercantilism (see esp. Quigley 1981).

But these arguments do not allow for a full understanding of the Dai Nippon Butokukai and why it was misunderstood by the American authorities to be a religious organization. The secular approach also does not allow us to see how the views of many within Japan regarding the Butokukai changed over time. The Dai Nippon Butokukai was founded as a martial organization with a decidedly imperial cast (see Masuda 2000, 270, Shimamura 1941, 7-8, and Sakaue 2011, 8-9). And yet, it was only very gradually that the Butokukai came under the outright sway of the military—in this way, too, reflecting the overall change in Japanese society throughout the first five decades of the Butokukai's existence, and also mirroring the militarization of the United States (see Yasukōchi, Tomozoe, and Mori 1984, 153-154). In 1917, for example, after the question of martial arts curricula in Japan had been settled by parliamentary fiat in favor of the Butokukai, the Special Council for Education submitted a report to the Ministry of Education exhorting that "[male] students above middle school should be trained to be a soldier with patriotic conformity, martial spirit, obedience, and toughness of mind and body," and the Diet adopted this report in the same year. In 1925 the Ministry of Education "attach[ed] military officers to [...] institutions above middle schools," and the "Army Ministry [sent] inspectors [...] to schools" who reported on whether schools were complying with the Ministry of Education's Syllabus of Military Drill (Abe, Kiyohara, and Nakajima 2000 (no pagination). See also Kōseishō 1942a, 16-22). By 1942, the Dai Nippon Butokukai was headed by members of the military and the organization had been officially co-opted into the wartime effort.

The Dai Nippon Butokukai and Imperial Politics in Asia

While the Dai Nippon Butokukai sent a delegation to Manchukuo in 1941 to mark the tenth anniversary of the Manchurian Incident that brought the territory firmly in the orbit of imperial Japan, the organization as a whole had not taken political positions and its military relationship was more of a formality than a substantial alignment with particular policy decisions (Bennett 2015, 206). More important, there was substantial resistance to the politicization and militarization of the Butokukai from within the society's ranks. Restated in different terms, there were many in the Dai Nippon Butokukai who understood the organization in a way very different from the secularist project of Meiji modernization, and as part of a much older tradition of envisioning the ruling house of Japan as a "complete act" combining the modern categories of the secular and the sacred. The Butokukai was not a religious organization, and was also not a paramilitary group. It was a martial virtue society, just as its name advertised. The rude intervention of the military into the affairs of an organization devoted to the emperor was grating to the sensibilities of martial arts devotees within the Butokukai. As American Occupation authority and chief of the Political Affairs Division Lt. Col. Pieter Kornelis ("P.K.") Roest (1898-1968) later asserted in SCAP documents:

> The generals who headed the national organization had usually cooperated fully with the civilian members to maintain the society's independent character and were themselves, as a rule, opposed to the intrusion of army methods and the fighting arts of shooting and bayonet practice. During the period that Tojo [Hideki] was in charge his deputy, General Ryukichi Tanaka, director of the Army's Bureau of Military Affairs, and Admiral Sakai Tokunagi [sic: Vice Admiral Tokunaga Sakae], director of the Education Bureau of the Navy, actually 'ran the show'. Great friction was caused during this period by the persistence of many of the old members in adhering to the old methods as against the new ones of the military. Hence in many local branches the new methods never prevailed.[21]

Even if the Dai Nippon Butokukai was seen as an adjunct of the Japanese imperial state, it was a reluctant ally, often insisting on practicing martial arts free from political influence. The Butokukai bridged the past and the present, but could find no final home in either.

At a time when wartime jingoism was at a peak and breathless reports from the front filled the pages of Japanese newspapers, the articles that began appearing in the Butokukai newsletter and other publications even after the purported military takeover in 1942 were thoughtful, at times almost defeatist—a far cry from the kind of confident martial-missionary zeal that marked many religious publications in the West, too. For example, in the September, 1943 issue of *Butoku*, the official magazine of the Dai Nippon Butokukai, director Ishii Saburō 石井三郎 set up a dichotomy between the "materialist" (*butsuteki* 物的) English and Americans and the "Yamato damashii" (大和魂) spirit of the Japanese, taking refuge in a higher moral plane and finding solace in the purity of Japanese tradition and spirit as the fight against the philistines of this world took a bad turn in the field (Ishii 1943, 3). It is the aesthetics of martial metaphysics, and not the hard fighting of the battlefield or the thrill of total victory, which animates Ishii's essay. Martial virtue is the goal—not military drill, not fanatic devotion to the wartime state, but the cultivation of the better self through spiritual-bodily exercises. Ishii's and other similar articles recommended the maintenance of martial virtue and devotion to the emperor while allowing, at least tacitly, for the possibility that the present course would falter. This cuts-both-ways metaphysics, lending itself neither wholly to the martial nor wholly to the imperialist, greatly complicates Gen. Douglas MacArthur's postwar assessment that the conflict between the United States and Japan had been "basically theological" (Thomas 2019, 177, citing Moore 2011, 31, 139-40). Spiritual, martial practice in the Butokukai bled over Western categories drawing bright lines between the religious and the secular.

The martial virtues themselves were also not absolute, and were seen within Japan, and especially by members of the Dai Nippon Butokukai, as being considerably more delicate than the

American authorities believed. Far from being principles of religious fanaticism, the martial virtues, according to their expositors in the Dai Nippon Butokukai during the late 1930s and early 1940s, required constant vigilance in order to maintain their purity from outside influence. Butoku, seen as monolithic by the Americans—a cult-like drumbeat goading the Japanese millions to wage aggressive war—concealed endless gradations of meaning within an eternally-receding epistemic horizon. In fact, according to the wartime Butokukai publications, *butoku* was anything but a tonic for fanatic bellicosity. The true practitioner of martial virtue had to accept that the goal of inner discipline and the exercise of martial-virtue uprightness in society could never really be achieved. For a world-conquering creed (as many Americans saw it), the way of the warrior turned out to be remarkably introspective, even defeatist. Perhaps this esoteric aspect of *butoku* made it all the more religious in the eyes of the American authorities, but if this is true then, at the same time, it would have made the Dai Nippon Butokukai martially impotent to the same degree that it was religiously inclined.

This esotericism—on full display in many Dai Nippon Butokukai publications, especially *after* the sharp military turn in the early 1940s—further complicates the question of whether the Dai Nippon Butokukai was a religious organization. For example, in "Japanese Spirit and Character Development," written by martial arts devotee Ashizawa Hirozumi 蘆澤碩純 and published under the auspices of the Hokubei [North American] Butokukai 北米武徳會, the Japanese *kokutai*, or national character, is presented as an elaborate reflection of the solar system and other heavenly bodies, with the number of moons orbiting each planet and their distance and position from the sun all forming an intricate numerological whole reinforcing the universal necessity of the Japanese empire and, ultimately, the Imperial Household (Ashizawa 1938, 3-12). If anyone had wanted to turn this astrological Pythagoreanism into motivation for aggressive war, he or she would first have had to figure out what it all meant—no mean feat, and perhaps akin to translating the prophecies of Nostradamus into an army quartermaster's report. The Dai Nippon Butokukai may have been primarily an organization for practicing fencing, wrestling, archery, and other gymnastic and calisthenics arts, but at precisely the time that the Butokukai was supposed by the Americans to be mesmerizing the Japanese into mindless militarism, those in charge of the Butokukai invested the organization—and martial arts as a whole—with a cosmology which, albeit springing from and terminating in the imperial line, nevertheless presented a formidable obstacle to anyone who might have wished to vulgarize the martial arts into jingoistic marching orders.[22] Here, again, we find the "complete act" of premodern religious sensibilities swamping the Enlightenment categories which the Americans, and the Japanese modernizers, were attempting to impose upon Japan.

To be sure, the Butokukai was not only an esoteric study group. There was more to the Butokukai, and to the martial arts, than these musings about the harmony of the spheres. There was much robust physicality involved, and the publications of the Dai Nippon Butokukai are not short on tough talk for those who were seen as imperiling the spiritual unity of the Japanese nation.

According to one fairly typical tract from 1936, for instance, weakling intellectuals were to be kept at bay and prevented from hamstringing imperial Japan through a regimen of exercise of the body as well as of the mind, bringing the two into a joint state of hardy discipline (Shimamura 1936, 2, 16 ff). Beyond this, Edo-period civic-minded philosophers such as Ninomiya Sontoku 二宮尊徳 (1787-1856) were to be emulated and enfolded into an all-encompassing *budō* ethos braiding the mental and menial into sinewy citizens ready to make sacrifices as their country required (Satō 1943a, 3-5). Martial heroes from the past, such as Yamaoka Tesshū 山岡鉄舟 (1836-1888) and Miyamoto Musashi 宮本武蔵 (1584-1645), were also held up by many in the Butokukai as models for modern Japanese (Satō 1943b, 6-7). Perhaps in an effort to bridge the chasm between the intricacies of *butoku* philosophy and the immediacies of *butoku* practice, Dai Nippon Butokukai publications contained a liberal dose of the cerebral, the spiritual, and the more readily accessible.

At the same time, had the American authorities who were accusing Japan of plans for world domination under a divine emperor reflected a bit more, they might have found that such a goal would be difficult due to the emphasis that so many Butokukai leaders placed on the idea of Japan as an outsized family. If the Dai Nippon Butokukai was part of a religion, it certainly lacked the universality of Buddhism or Christianity. Aforementioned *butoku* expositor Ashizawa Hirozumi, for example, posits Japan as a giant kinship network comprising the unified people and their emperor (Ashizawa 1938, 2). According to Ashizawa and many of his contemporaries, martial spirituality was to be practiced in order to train the Japanese people for service to the emperor (Shimamura 1936, 3). This is an ideal that translated awkwardly, if at all, when non-Japanese people were involved. Likewise, Butokukai author Satō Kenji emphasized that Japanese history was, in essence, tribal, with state and gods smoothly linked and the Japanese people drawn together thereunder (Satō 1943a, 4). Not even St. Louis IX had argued that Christendom was only for Frenchmen. If the Japanese Empire was truly bent on global conquest (religious or otherwise), as the Americans kept insisting, then these Butokukai ideas would seem to be much more hindrance than help to such a plan.

Paradoxically, the untenability of Butokukai "ideology" as vehicle for religious imperialism can be seen in the very breadth of the Dai Nippon Butokukai's reach. As the Japanese Empire (and Japanese out-migration) expanded, Butokukai branches, branch shrines, and spinoff groups appeared throughout North America, Asia, and the Pacific: Taiwan, Manchukuo, Hawaii,[23] California, Karafuto 樺太, the Korean Peninsula, Qingdao, and Shanghai, among other places. But this vast expanse of territory conceals the tension at the heart of the Japanese imperial project.[24] Because the Japanese people were subjects of an emperor to whom they were connected by more than war and politics—because Japanese society as a whole retained some of the "complete act" which Andrew Jones argues typified premodern Christian societies before the invention of categories such as "secular," "sacred," and "religion"—the Dai Nippon Butokukai should perhaps best be situated as part of "Japan's informal empire" (Duus, Myers, and Peattie 1991), wherein "Butokukai membership serve[d] to (re)create and maintain local social hierarchies, while

Butokukai spectacles, events, and classes offered members and non-members alike the opportunity to create and enjoy notions of Japanese national community through their own local practices and realities" (Gainty 2013, 3). In both war and peace, and both at home and abroad, Japan the country, the Japanese as a people, and the Emperor as the sovereign of both were bound in ways that made the Butokukai a vector for the propagation of a sense of imperial belonging, as well as a site for experiencing the ambiguity of what it meant to take part in that state (Gainty 2013, 3). The belonging on offer was not universally fungible.

In fact, far from dominating their surroundings, and in contrast to the role they played in helping form Japanese imperial identity, Butokukai chapters tended to stay on the margins of life outside the home islands. Few religions proselytize so stealthily. Many Dai Nippon Butokukai shrines and dojos in China and Taiwan were in Japanese concessions or other areas set apart from the public. In other places, Butokukai building projects were crowdfunded, further diluting the connection to centralized control. Halls were used for communal purposes as well as martial arts functions, making them more like Kiwanis Clubs than training grounds (Nakagawa and Nishikawa 2020). Internal divisions within the Butokukai prevented even this limited outreach from being effective. Lt. Col. P.K. Roest, the GHQ official who adopted a nuanced view of the Butokukai during the Occupation in contrast with most of his colleagues, wrote in 1946 that:

> Many so-called branch societies [of the Dai Nippon Butokukai] were formed all over Japanese occupied territory since 1941, but these were never recognized by their home society since they disagreed on the strict standards maintained by the Japanese organization. No members were ever sent to these branches at the initiative of the BUTOKU KAI.[25]

If the Butokukai chapters in foreign territories were meant to inculcate non-Japanese people, or even local Japanese residents, into the religious cult of emperor worship, they signally failed in their mission. It is much closer to the historical truth to say that the Dai Nippon Butokukai was shy, even retiring, in foreign settings. Sometimes even comically so. In Seattle, the Butokukai dojo was just a borrowed room at the Seattle First Baptist Church (Bennett 2015, 206).[26]

Know Your Enemy?

Unlike Lt. Col. Roest, many Americans, particularly those in positions of authority, were not ready to allow such ambiguities to modulate the harsh tones and broad brushstrokes increasingly used to portray Japan as the liberal world order's implacable foe. In its blanketing of the American and Asia-Pacific populations with pre-war innuendo and wartime propaganda, the American government seized on the confluence of religion and politics in portraying Japan as a uniquely fanatic nation-state (see esp. Dower 1987). One of the best examples of how the United States government saw Japan—and insisted that its soldiers and citizens see the country, too—is filmmaker Frank C. Capra's (1897-1991) propagandistic diptych *Why We Fight: The Battle of China* (1944) and *Know Your Enemy: Japan* (1945). Taken together, these films are a droning work of monomaniacal ideology accusing Japan of wishing to bring half of the globe under imperial domination in accordance with the little-known or -understood (then or now) doctrine of *hakkō ichiu* 八紘一宇, the program for uniting the many races of Asia and the Pacific under the Japanese emperor (see also Kuroiwa 2022).[27] In Capra's films, bells gong and the Japanese people mindlessly bow in submissive obedience, automatons of emperor worship who are marching in lockstep on a drive for conquest. Although it was later learned that the "Tanaka Memorial"—the document purporting to be by Baron Tanaka Giichi 田中義一 (1864-1929) memorializing to the Shōwa Emperor (1901-1989) on Japan's plans for world domination—on which Capra largely premised his films was a forgery and a hoax, the false document neatly captures the anti-Japanese hysteria that typified wartime America. The Butokukai was lumped in by the American authorities with these fever visions of a rampant, fanatical Japan, and therefore seen as also being infected with what the Americans characterized as cultish behavior (see also Union of Democratic Control 1936, esp. 4-7).

While the Americans went to great lengths to paint Japan, and the Butokukai in particular, as irredeemably religious, after the war the Occupation authorities used the Butokukai as a catch-all to purge many with no overt religious affiliation at all.[28] Whereas the Butokukai had been (erroneously) linked with Buddhism by the FBI as a pretext for arresting Tamori Shimo, and then positioned as an adjunct of the statist Shintoism of the war years, immediately after the Japanese surrender the Americans reversed course, as it were, with many seeing the Butokukai, not as a religious organization, but as a militarist one. Charges of religious devotion evaporated and the Butokukai was re-positioned by the American authorities as a kind of right-wing militia. As Denis Gainty points out, "Fully two-thirds of the Japanese bureaucrats purged by the Occupation—including police officers and mid-level administrative officials—were removed because of their membership in the Butokukai" (Gainty 2013, 145).[29] The purge rolled across the archipelago, with officials in every prefecture and administrative unit affected by the clearing-out of the Butokukai's ranks (Sakaue 2012, especially the table on p. 24).[30]

One individual purged by the American authorities whose case reveals the Americans' deeply conflicted thinking on the Dai Nippon Butokukai is Suehiro Izutarō 末弘厳太郎 (1888-1951), a legal scholar and public intellectual active mainly during the Taishō and early to mid Shōwa periods. Although Suehiro hailed from a family of *kannushi* 神主, or Shintō priests, in southern Japan, Suehiro's father had refused to continue in that line of work and instead moved to Tokyo, where he eventually became a judge on the Daishin'in 大審院, or Court of Cassation, an earlier iteration of the Japanese Supreme Court. In his voluminous writings, Suehiro Izutarō, who followed in his father's footsteps in studying the law, displays both an erudition about religion as well as a deep skepticism about all forms of religious belief. There is no evidence of which I am aware that Suehiro was involved in any form of organized religion or that he held any metaphysical commitments whatsoever. And yet, like so many other Japanese public figures in the second half of the 1940s, Suehiro was investigated by the American authorities based in large part on his involvement with the Butokukai, as well as with the Nippon Taiiku Kai 日本體育會 (Japan Athletic Union).

An early champion of the use of sports to strengthen Japan's body politic and prepare the population for carrying out the imperial project as well as the defense of the homeland, Suehiro parlayed his position as one of the top swimming coaches in Japan into an assignment to coach the Japan men's swimming team at the 1932 and 1936 Olympics. Suehiro's promotion to Olympic swimming coach was part of a calculated effort on the part of Japanese authorities to inculcate military preparedness in the Japanese people—not as part of a religious program, but as readiness against the geopolitical contingencies of a worsening regional and global situation. While many in the West were wary about Japan's rise, especially after Japan won the most gold medals and the most medals overall in swimming at the 1932 summer games, military officials in Japan saw the possibility for translating Olympic success into greater enthusiasm for martial virtue.

Much of the Japanese authorities' actions were also intended as rebuttals to Western racism. Racist caricatures in the Western press confirm the insecurity with which many there viewed a strengthening Japan, in particular through the lens of sports. The Japanese, in turn, were well aware of how they were seen abroad, and many wanted to correct such malicious misinterpretations of their country. One especially racist cartoon, from France, was featured in the *Yomiuri Shimbun* on September 3, 1932. The French cartoon riffs on the "yellow peril" directly under an article announcing that Japan is prepared to welcome home its "conquering" (*gaisen*) swimming athletes from Los Angeles (Yomiuri Shimbun 1932 a, 5). A country which can hold its own in international athletic competitions need not bow to the race-baiting tropes of the colonialist Western powers.

At the same time, the Japanese papers, and public, largely conflated athletic and martial victory as part of the same overall project. The September 9, 1932 issue of the *Yomiuri Shimbun*, for example, has headlines about the victorious Olympians preparing to arrive in Japan, and also about victorious soldiers and their officers announcing their victory in Manchuria at the Imperial Palace. The news on the second page is grouped under the general heading "Pride of Domination" (*seiha no hokori* 制覇の誇り) (Yomiuri Shimbun 1932b, 5). Taken all together, the portrait that emerges is one of geopolitical clearsightedness, not religious blindness to reality. The cultural momentum of sports in Japan was martial, not doctrinal. The country was preparing for war, not proselytization.

The military strongly encouraged Suehiro to push this party line of sports as warm-up for war among his team members. In a September, 1944 pamphlet titled, "War and Physical Culture" (*Taiiku to sensō* 体體と戦争)—partially translated by SCAP staff—Suehiro recalls how the military pressured him to put sports at the service of the empire:

> I got to hear of it [that is, the army's attempt to co-opt sports for military purposes] for the first time in June, 1936 when on my way to the Olympics in Berlin, from Lieutenant General Oshima who was at that time the Managing Chief Director of the Great Japan Phys[ical] Culture Assisting Assoc[iation]

> (Dai Nippon Tai Iku Kyo [sic] Kai).[31] What his Excellency Oshima told me at that time was: "You are going to the Olympics in this brilliant summer. The general public too, not knowing anything, hustle about to see you off. As long as you win in Berlin, they are simple enough to believe that that shows the excellence of our people's Physical Culture. But what the results of the latest examination of the conscripts show is something to be anxious about. I am Managing Director General of the Phys[ical] Culture Assisting Assoc[iation] + as such I have great anxiety about the future of our country. What I want you to do when you arrive in Berlin is win in the Olympics by all means. That goes without saying. But more than that—starting with Germany see how physical culture in every country is doing. Particularly note + see whether the general public in foreign countries are in ecstasy as in our country over the principle of Olympics. I want you to note + study this point carefully + look at it as a means of national defense.[32]

In the end, Suehiro concurred with Lt. Gen. Oshima, agreeing to allow sports—in this case, swimming—to be co-opted by the imperial state. No mention is made of religion.

If anything, these suggestions by the military that sports be politicized dovetailed with a growing admiration among Suehiro and his fellow law-and-society scholars for the National Socialist regime, and in particular the successes it enjoyed in turning sports, labor movements, and other ostensibly non-political activities and organizations to the service of the central state.[33] Nor were Suehiro and his Japanese colleagues alone in their thrall to the possibilities of organizing a state under the twin rubrics of wartime readiness and physical fitness.

> Even England [where Suehiro sojourned in the autumn of 1936 on his way home to Japan from Berlin] was deadly in earnest on the viewpoint of defense + was making phys[ical] strength of the people her objective. And being made to see this, I secretly felt the anxiety for my country's slowness on this point.[34]

The 1936 Olympics were thus a landmark event in twentieth-century history in more ways than one, marking a burgeoning worldwide embrace of a National Socialist-style marriage between the technocratic state and a physically fit, well-ordered citizenry.[35] It need hardly be pointed out that National Socialists were contemptuous of religion. In Japan, too, admiration for National Socialism sprung most often from political, societal concerns—how to make Japan stronger, strong enough to resist the onslaught of liberalism and Bolshevism. Those who admired National Socialism in Japan were not monks, priests, or pastors. Sports, for Japanese "national socialists," were for war, not for the individual soul.

Suehiro's enthusiasm for the adhesive and transformative power of sports was also partly inspired by the United States, where similar conflations of sport and manly readiness for battle were very much in vogue. In 1931, for example, Suehiro cited Theodore Roosevelt's views on sports, which were that some amount of "sacrifice" (*gisei* 犠牲) on the field of play was necessary, even if it meant losing lives to the violence of sport, in order to cultivate "fighting spirit" (*fuaichingu supiritto* ファチングスピリット) among young men (*Chūō Kōron*, October, 1931, reprinted in

Suehiro 1933, 327-328).[36] In August of 1932, on the occasion of the send-off party for the Japan men's swim team, Suehiro again echoed Roosevelt when he wrote in *Bungei Shunjū* that winning was much less important than sportsmanship, and that luck would determine much more of the outcome than would will (Suehiro 1933, 333-334). In wars, one must be ready to regroup and return to fight another day—just the lessons that competitive sports also teach. In all, Suehiro saw the Butokukai as teaching fair play, determination, and physical culture, all of which could be pressed into wartime service.

This drive to make sports double as training sessions for military service goes much farther back than the twentieth century. For instance, although there is some doubt as to whether the Duke of Wellington (1769-1852) really said—as is often repeated—that the battle of Waterloo had been won on the playing fields of Eton, Suehiro's citation of Theodore Roosevelt and his remarks about England's receptivity to sports for empire show that governments around the world saw the advantages in a citizenry both fit for physical activity and ready to put fitness to use in overseas wars (Green and Svinth, eds. 2010, 479). The Wellington trope—true or not—was deployed in Japan by those responsible for training young men physically and spiritually to fight in imperial wars, such as in a 1908 address to the Education Ministry and War Department which advocated teaching karate and related martial arts on the grounds that the Duke of Wellington had credited English success against Napoleon to the hale bodies formed in English schoolyards.[37] Twentieth-century powers knew that what was needed for national strength was mobilization, and nothing prepared society to be mobilized like athletics. This was a common point among all great military nations, regardless of their religious or political striping.

Modernity's insistence on viewing sports as bigger than recreation or exercise went far beyond even these visions of pick-up games as first musterings for empire. Pierre Coubertin (1863-1937), founder of the modern Olympic games, was explicit in his view that sports could be a new kind of religion. Religion scholar Peter J. Leithart explicates Coubertin's theme in this way:

> The religious underpinnings of the Olympic revival were explicit in the voluminous writings of the French educator, historian, and sociologist, Baron Pierre de Coubertin. [...] For Coubertin, the Olympics cultivated the ancient *religio athletae* for the modern world. Sports foster physical culture as well as an ethos of 'nobility of thinking and purity of morals.' Coubertin wrote in his memoirs, 'For me, sport is a religion with church, dogma, cult . . . but especially with religious feeling' (Leithart 2012).[38]

To be sure, *strictu sensu* Coubertin's Olypianism was not the same thing as muscular Christianity, the latter being a recapitulation of Thomas Hughes' (1822-1896) *Tom Brown's School Days* (1857) wherein the rough-and-tumble of the boys' school inculcates Christian morality on the basis of shared striving and competitive sport (Green and Svinth 2010, 479). Olympianism was transnational and humanist while muscular Christianity sought to put Christianity at the service of the nation-state.[39] This important distinction notwithstanding, given this worldwide trend toward conflating sports, religion, and politics, it is not surprising that the American authorities should have failed to understand the Dai Nippon Butokukai, both before and after the Second World War—unable to decide whether it was a religious organization or not, and, if it was, what kind of religion it espoused. In the event, the Butokukai defied categorization. It was not "muscular Shintō," not a religious cult, not a paramilitary, not a club for fanatics—it was, simply, a martial virtue society, rooted in Japanese traditions both corporeal and spiritual. East or West, moderns just could not make any sense out of the thing. The Butokukai retained a Lubacian wholeness which modernity implicitly denied could still (unthreateningly) exist.

Even in the plenitude of postwar power and purging, the U.S. still was not sure what the Butokukai was or how it should be treated (see, e.g., Bennett 2015, 160). For example, as Masuda Hiroshi details, GS Political Affairs Division Chief P.K. Roest, who was charged with helping uproot fanaticism from Japanese society, continued his behind-the-scenes support for the Butokukai, writing, "At no time did the Butoku Kai have a specialist or group in charge of 'spiritual' training. The 'spiritual' counterpart of the sports taught had been an integral element of the teaching itself for every one of these sports" (Bennett 2015, 157).[40] In other words, the Butokukai was sui generis, leaning neither into the military barracks nor into the religious revival tent. Maj. Gen. Charles A. Willoughby (1892-1972), Public Safety Division chief Col. Harry S. Pulliam, and others in the Civil Information and Education (CIE) section of the Occupation were also opposed to a broad purge of the Butokukai on the grounds that it would lead unnecessarily to a weakening of domestic order (Gainty 2013, 144-45; Wildes 1953). Many Butokukai members and supporters wrote to the Occupation authorities, arguing in favor of keeping the Butokukai as a martial arts society which could contribute, as one Butokukai leader from Ibaraki Prefecture put it in a 1946 letter, its spirit to the rebuilding of a peaceful Japan (Yamamoto 1996b, 179).[41] In the end, however, the anti-Butokukai faction won out. Government Section (GS) leaders Maj. Gen. Courtney Whitney (1897-1969) and Col. Charles L. Kades (1906-1996), backed by MacArthur, pressed forward with a full-scale purge of the Butokukai (Masuda 2000, 270-71).[42] The Butokukai was neither religious nor militaristic, and perhaps that was precisely why it needed to go. The Americans ended up not knowing their enemy after all.

Lingering Categorical Confusion

Even the purge of the Butokukai was ambivalent, unsure of whether the organization being wrung of untoward influence was martial, religious, neither, or both. In 1947, for example, SCAP directly forbade all "spiritual" education, but then, inexplicably given previous denunciations of the Butokukai as a subversive religious organization, declined to prosecute the Dai Nippon Butokukai membership on these anti-spiritual grounds. "In all educational organizations," the SCAP directive read, "the teaching of military curriculum must be forbidden. [...] Physical education must no longer be linked to 'spiritual education'" (Bennett 2015, 160-61).[43] Ignoring this entirely, GHQ instead decided to purge the Dai Nippon Butokukai in accordance with SCAP directives aimed at "militarist" and "ultra-nationalist" societies and organizations—

precisely the opposite of what American pre-war and wartime propaganda would have led one to expect (SCAPIN 548 and 550).[44] The Butokukai had resisted infiltration by the military, but was now being purged as an adjunct to militarism. (A similar organization, the Kōdōkan 講道館, had been encouraged by its founder, Kanō Jigorō 嘉納治五郎, to be proactive in supporting the Japanese Empire, but the Kōdōkan was not dissolved postwar (Sato 2013, 308).) This cross-purposing was reflected in Lt. Col. Roest's bifurcated assessment of the Dai Nippon Butokukai:

> From the materials submitted by the Home Ministry it appears that the BUTOKU KAI could not be considered as an instrument of ultra-nationalism and militarism until the beginning of 1942, unless the athletics taught by the organization in connection with the Samurai code are in themselves considered evil. If that extreme position is taken the organization stands condemned from its inception in 1895.[45]

Even—especially—when the moment of danger had passed, the Occupation could not decide what to make of the Butokukai, or of its own wartime propaganda. The Butokukai confounded moderns, and confounded them more the more modern they became.[46]

The Americans' ambiguous attitude toward the Dai Nippon Butokukai continued well after the purge and even after the end of the Occupation. The Dai Nippon Butoku Kai remained on the U.S. Attorney General's List of Subversive Organizations as late as 1959, even as the U.S. was pressing Japan to play a greater role in world affairs by bringing its client state deeper into the Washington-led "security" system (see Iokibe 2017 and Pyle 2018). Japan was thus to take its place at the front lines of American military dominance, but, according to the U.S. Attorney General, at least, Japan's martial virtue society was the equivalent of the Knights of the White Camelia, the Friends of the Soviet Union, and the Ku Klux Klan.[47] Applicants for government positions in the United States, and potential CIA informants inside of Japan, had to declare whether they had any affiliation with the Butokukai. Although the threat of Japanese invasion had long since been neutralized, the federal government continued to eye the Butokukai with deep suspicion. Even American veterans who had been flagged as members of the Dai Nippon Butoku Kai before entering the military were subjected to continued surveillance after returning to the United States. Did the American authorities really fear a recrudescence of Japanese military power, or was it the possibility that the Dai Nippon Butokukai might still be a *religious* organization that caused the Americans to continue its surveillance of the group and its members?

Conclusion

The ongoing confusion among the American authorities, and also in part among the military and government authorities of Japan, over the nature of the Dai Nippon Butokukai and its affiliates and spinoff groups, is more than just a problem of propaganda, war, or even religion. It is a problem, at heart, of categories and definitions. When speaking of groups or people as "religious" or "secular," appeal is inevitably made to categories arising from the Cartesian divide between the material and the spiritual and the entire Enlightenment movement stemming from this split. The Butokukai had many aspects and functions, but it grew out of a society in which the Cartesian mode of predicating "secular" and "religious" had not entirely taken hold. Japan incorporated many Enlightenment ideas from the West, but it was not an Enlightenment country. The American authorities expected to be able to make sharp distinctions between "secular" and "religious" organizations, but the Lubacian Butokukai frustrated this categorical imperative, leading to suspicion and, in the end, a disastrous prolongation of an already disastrous war.

While the entire Pacific conflict, and the near-century of intermittent misunderstandings that lay temporally on either side of it, cannot be understood solely as a product of differing conceptions of religion, the Ludovican example, explicated by Jones, of the "complete act" in a society not disfigured by a Cartesian split, does go a long way toward helping us understand why the Americans of the mid twentieth century displayed such a strong tendency toward misunderstanding Japan. The Dai Nippon Butokukai was founded in the Meiji moment of modernization and wholesale Westernization, but it was also part of a much, much older tradition of envisioning society as a whole, and not as dissectible into conceptual parts or categorical modes. Conceptually and categorically blind to the realities of "modern" Japan and the different ways in which "religion" and "the secular" might be realized outside of a high-Enlightenment nation-state, the American authorities viewed the Dai Nippon Butokukai, and prewar and wartime Japan overall, as a categorical Other, and therefore, in part, as the target for total war.

Endnotes:

1. The surveillance of the Shimos began at least as early as October, 1939. See, for example, Federal Bureau of Investigation, File No. 61-32, "THE HAWAII BRANCH OF THE DAI NIPPON BUTOKU-KAI," report made at Honolulu, T.H., on January 11, 1940, for October 11, 16, and 17, 1939 on suspicion of "SUBVERSIVE ACTIVITIES". The Shimos were hardly the FBI's only Japanese quarries. See Power 2003.
2. On the martial and imperial nature of the Butokukai, see briefly Ravina 2010, p. 705, citing Ozeki 1910, pp. 1, 5.
3. On "religion" in Japan, see, e.g., Isomae 2003.
4. On the FBI and religion, see, e.g., Johnson and Weitzman 2017.
5. This is not the case today, however. According to the Dai Nippon Butokukai's website, "The Governor of DNBK [Dai Nippon Butoku Kai] is His Royal Highness, Sosai, Higashi Fushimi, Jiko, the chief abbot of [the] renowned Shorenin Temple. He is cousin to [the] late [sic] Emperor Akihito of Japan." Aikido of Richmond, "DNBK".
6. For an overview of the general dynamic between religion and sports, see Alpert 2013.
7. For a discussion of the term "religion" across a variety of cultures, creeds, and time periods, see, for example, Smith 1998, p. 269, cited in Green and Svinth 2010, p. 474.
8. On the ongoing category split within the United States, see, for example, Guelzo 2020.
9. Citing de Lubac 1998, p. xix: "Something that existed long ago was, in its time, 'a complete act', and it must be understood as such, in its totality."
10. On the debate about "holism" and Orientalism, see, for example, Slingerland 2019.
11. Citing Dai-Nippon Butokukai 1906, p. 39. The pronunciation of Torinoumi's surname is found here: http://www.minatotakanobu.com/?p=6239 (last accessed May 14, 2021). See also Wada 1969.

12. See also Gainty 2013, pp. 36-37, citing Dai-Nippon Butokukai 1906, p. 38.
13. See also Kayashima 2004, pp. 135-136, and "Nippon kenkoku no taikan," in Momii 2001, pp. 1 ff.
14. Ironically, this move was in large part to curb, not complement, the power of the Buddhist establishment in Nara.
15. On *dō* in general, see Yokoyama 1985, pp. 19-20, citing also Sagara 1984, Fukunaga 1984, and Terada 1979.
16. Hiromichi Nishikubo, a police official, took over as head of the Bujutsu Senmon Gakkō (Martial Arts Technical College) in 1919 and immediately renamed it the Budō Senmon Gakkō. The Dai Nippon Butokukai swiftly changed its own terminology as well. See Abe, Kiyohara, and Nakajima 2000, note 3, citing Nakamura 1994.
17. See Emiko Ohnuki-Tierney's reading of "meconnaisance" as "the ambiguity and absence of shared signification […] in a given social context." Ohnuki-Tierney 2002, p. 28, cited in Gainty 2013, p. 4.
18. The institutional debate over physical education curriculum bore an indirect American influence, as George A. Leland was among the *o-yatoi gaikokujin*, or foreign experts, who advised the fledgling Meiji government on education reform, in Leland's case physical education. See Abe, Kiyohara, and Nakajima, 2000 (no pagination).
19. Citing *Hinode* newspaper (Kyoto), April 20, 1895.
20. Citing a Dai Nippon Butokukai pamphlet by president Kitagaki Kunimichi, 1899.
21. "Memorandum for the Record, General Headquarters, Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers, Government Section, 26 November 1946. Subject: Information on the Dai Nippon Butoku Kai." Signed P.K. Roest. In Hans Baerwald Collection, BAE-41, National Diet Library, Tokyo, Japan.
22. See "Religious and Spiritual Development in Japan," in Green and Svinth 2010, p. 472. See also Nasu 1937.
23. On the founding of the first Dai Nippont Butokukai dojo in the Kingdom of Hawaii in 1890, see Momii 1939, p. 7, cited in Bennett 2015, p. 205.
24. See "Budō hanshi kyōshi renshi chihōbetsu jin'in chōsa hyō," in Dai Nippon Butokukai Honbu 1937.
25. "Memorandum for the Record, General Headquarters, Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers, Government Section, 26 November 1946. Subject: Information on the Dai Nippon Butoku Kai." Signed P.K. Roest. In Hans Baerwald Collection, BAE-41, National Diet Library, Tokyo, Japan.
26. Citing Fukuda in Takezawa 1995, p. 68. Butokukai chapters had similarly ambiguous positions in Asia, and while Butokukai buildings and practices remain in place many local populations the marginality of the tradition continues. On kendo in South Korea, for example, see Bennett 2015, pp. 208 ff.
27. The phrase was first used in modern times in 1940 by then-prime minister Konoe Fumimaro (1891-1945), but was also taken up by some Japanese philosophers, such as Nishida Kitarō (1870-1945). See, for example, Arisaka 1996, pp. 81-105. See also Kayashima 2004, p. 136, and Abe, Kiyohara, and Nakajima 2000, esp. "V. After the Manchurian Incident: Consolidation of Fascistic Sport and Physical Education". For an alternative reading which militates against the militarist gloss, see Ōhara 2015. On *hakkō ichiu* see Morgan 2021.
28. Numerous SCAP documents reveal the Americans' discovery that the Dai Nippon Butokukai was not religious after all. For example, a memorandum from Beate Sirota (1923-2012) to "Major Napier" (probably Maj. Jack P. Napier) dated 15 April 1947 details that the leadership of the Butokukai was composed entirely of military and government men. See "Officials of the Dai Nippon Butoku Kai (Great Japan Military Virtues Society) falling under Category G, Appendix A, SCAPIN 550," in the Hans Baerwald Papers, National Diet Library, Tokyo, BAE-45.
29. Citing Baerwald 1959. On the purge of the Dai Nippon Butokukai, see Kayashima 2004, pp. 133 ff.
30. The Butokukai purge revealed the complexity of the organization and the diversity of its members' beliefs. See Bennett 2013.
31. Suehiro probably means Lt. Gen. Ōshima Hiroshi (1886-1975).
32. GHQ/SCAP Records (RG 331, National Archives and Records Service), Box no. 5435, Folder title/number (12) War and Physical Culture—by SUEHIRO, Gentaro (Senso To Taiiku), Sept. 1944, Classification 750,870, handwritten pages, pp. 1-4. Cited in Morgan 2020, p. 178-179.

33. On the worldwide interest in National Socialist law at this time, see Wagatsuma, ed. 1937, esp. pp. 3-4. See also Miwa 1943, pp. 6 ff. On "volunteerism" and fascism, see Ikeda 2019.
34. GHQ/SCAP Records (RG 331, National Archives and Records Service), Box no. 5435, Folder title/number (12) War and Physical Culture—by SUEHIRO, Gentaro (Senso To Taiiku), Sept. 1944, Classification 750,870, handwritten pages, pp. 1-4.
35. See also "Reorganization of Youth and Sport as a Means of Ideological Control" and "Military Fitness and Fundamentalism" in Abe, Kiyohara, and Nakajima 2000 (no pagination).
36. Cited in Morgan 2020, p. 187.
37. "Dai Nippon Butokukai-大日本武徳會 An Analysis by Patrick McCarthy," International Ryukyu Karate Research Society, April, 2013. http://irkrs.blogspot.com/2013/04/dai-nippon-butokukai-analysis-by.html.
38. See also Green and Svinth 2010, p. 477, citing Guttmann 1992, p. 3.
39. For more on the differences—and similarities—between the two, see Hübner 2015, pp. 532-557.
40. Citing Baerwald, "Information on the Dai Nippon Butoku Kai," BAE-41, nos. 2-10, National Diet Library, Tokyo, Japan.
41. Citing Washington National Records Center, GHQ/SCAP Records CIE (B) 05843.
42. Citing Masuda 1998, ch. 2. See also Yamamoto 1996a, pp. 1-12, and Ware, Jr. 1983. Cf. "Memorandum for the Ministry of Home Affairs," signed "COURTNEY WHITNEY," 13 March 1947, in Hans Baerwald Papers, National Diet Library, Tokyo, BAE-42.
43. Citing Beauchamp and Vardaman 1994, p. 99.
44. Cited in Bennett 2015, p. 155.
45. Memorandum for the Record, General Headquarters, Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers, Government Section, 26 November 1946. Subject: Information on the DAI NIPPON BUTOKU KAI. Signed P.K. ROEST, Chief, Political Affairs Division. Hans Baerwald Papers, National Diet Library, Tokyo, BAE-41.
46. For more details on the Butokukai purge, see Bennett 2013.
47. See also, e.g., a May 27, 1955 secret memorandum to the CIA director [Allen W. Dulles] on political leader Ogata Taketora: "Tokyo Metropolitan Police informant told JAMI liaison 28 Aug 1954 that Ogata and other favor revival Butokai (Martial Arts Society) to strengthen the conservatives," under subheading "2. Re Ogata Taketora Recent Ultranationalist Connections". Classified Message to CIA Director, 215, 27 May 55, available at CIA FOIA Reading Room.

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The Politics of Blackness and Citizenship in Post-1980s France

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Abstract:
In France, since race is constitutionally and legally not recognized as a category, Blackness and Frenchness remain approached as mutually exclusive categories. The term "Noir," the linguistic equivalent of the term "Black" in English, is not compatible with the French national identity. It is not as common as a means of identification as the term "Black" is in the United States. The status quo that the French Republican universalism established makes identifying with term "Noir" self-isolating and "communautariste". Despite the huge Black population in France, "France Noire" or "Black France" is still mentioned with critical interrogation (Mudimbe-Boyi 2012, 27). In this article, I use Sami Tchak's *Place des Fêtes* (2001) and Rokhaya Diallo's activist voice to examine how French-born children of immigrants claim belonging in their land of birth. In doing so, I reflect on their relationship with both Africa (Africanness) and France (Frenchness).

Keywords: World Literature, Negritude, National Identity, Blackness, Citizenship, Belonging, Race, Culture

In France, since race is constitutionally and legally not recognized as a category, Blackness and Frenchness remain approached as mutually exclusive categories.[1] The term "Noir," the linguistic equivalent of the term "Black" in English, is not compatible with the French national identity. It is not as common as a means of identification as the term "Black" is in the United States. The status quo that the French Republican universalism established makes identifying with term "Noir" self-isolating and "communautariste". Despite the huge Black population in France, "France Noire" or "Black France" is still mentioned with critical interrogation (Mudimbe-Boyi 2012, 27). In this article, I use Sami Tchak's *Place des Fêtes* (2001) and Rokhaya Diallo's activist voice to examine how French-born children of immigrants claim belonging in their land of birth. In doing so, I reflect on their relationship with both Africa (Africanness) and France (Frenchness).

To my knowledge, of all the fictional works produced in this period by West African African writers, only *Place des Fêtes* centers on a French-born protagonist to African parents. Tchak's *Place des Fêtes* is about an unnamed young man who looks with disdain at the African immigrant community and who constantly criticizes his parents for keeping ties with Africa despite their French nationality. In this novel, Africanness and Frenchness are completely antagonized. The protagonist refuses to acknowledge his African origins and finds it hard to live his Frenchness self-assuredly but blames his condition on his African origins.

Unlike Tchak who was born in Togo in 1960 and arrived in France only in the 1980s, Diallo was born in France. She is a journalist and author of a few documentaries and numerous creative non-fiction books including *Racismes: mode d'emploi* (2011), *Moi raciste? Jamais!* (2015), *La France tu l'aimes ou tu la fermes* (2019), and *Ne reste pas à ta place* (2019). In addition to her media appearances and conferences, most of the analysis I make in this essay will be focused on *Ne reste pas à ta place*, Diallo's autobiographical book that retraces her activist career and covers her general work. In her works and media appearances, she is known for addressing issues of identity, race, racism, and sexism in France. Diallo is also the founder of *Les indivisibles*, a movement which offers a new narrative about how to fight against the separation of skin color and geographical origin from French identity. As a Black French activist, Diallo offers an insider perspective on how Blackness and Frenchness should be normalized as opposed to embracing a universalist discourse that overshadows the "race question".

A Critique of Negritude

These brief biographic notes show that I am comparing the works of two writers of different positionalities and literary agenda. Tchak's generation of writers disclaim negritude militantism for writing autonomy. They reject this Negritudist positionality in which they are always already placed. As for Diallo, she does not claim allegiance to any literary paradigm neither is she defensive about the prospect of being imposed a way of writing. These two positionalities are important to understand as they determine the way these authors' protagonists choose to navigate Blackness and Frenchness in their writings

In his text on "Immigration, 'Littérature-Monde', and Universality," Alain Mabanckou lays out what he refers to as "the Strange Fate of the African Writer" in the following passage:

> African writers were [thus] expected to speak in the name of Africa, in defense of the African people: they had a *mission*, which was not the case for French writers. Today two contrasting attitudes toward that mission assigned to Francophone African authors create the clearest of dividing lines between those writers who proclaim their roots in the African continent and those who opt to seek openings in other realms. (2011, 75)

The thematic homogeneity which was rooted in the "mission to speak in the name of Africa" that bound earlier generation of African writers seems to have loosened up because of a new generation of Francophone African writers' desire to "seek openings in other realms". According to Mabanckou, one of the leading figures of this new paradigm, this choice is usually associated with a betrayal and an allegiance to the West's literary demands.

This claim for a dissociation from the "auteur engagé" paradigm is mainly characterized in the literature of this new generation by their protagonists' rejection of group identity, their ambivalence in political issues, and the change of subject matter and literary landscape through which the image of Africa as it was previously conceived vanishes little by little. As Papa Samba Diop puts it, "the idyllic poetry of childhood that had informed earlier writings ceased to illuminate a literature now impatient to mark its distance from an increasingly obscure past" (2011, 18). This new generation's positionality is often interpreted by some critics "as a way of escaping from the periphery and fitting into the mold of a global literature, more prestigious and validating, by erasing all outward signs of African-ness" (Mabanckou 2011, 83). Indeed, there has been a widespread assumption that this positionality is motivated by a search for a more promising career in writing. As Diop says,

> Confronted by the indistinct boundaries of a Francophone sub-Saharan African literary sphere, and often by the vagaries of its publishing and distribution operations, an ever-increasing cohort of authors has chosen to write outside Africa, arguing for the real international world that ensures their livelihood and striving, by means resolutely transgressive prose, to integrate their work into a more structured and, as they see it, more consistent realm. (2011, 21)

Mabanckou argues that there is no relation of causality between the rejection of the label "auteur engagé" and their willingness to be inserted into the "mold of a global literature." In fact, Mabanckou is one among forty-four writers of diverse backgrounds who signed the 2007 manifesto: "Pour une 'littérature-monde' en Français" [Toward a World Literature in French] (lemonde.fr). For these Francophone African writers, this manifesto was inscribed into a refusal of the center-periphery paradigm in which the French publishing institutions puts them. In this sense, the epithet "francophone" marks their attachment to the French literary sphere according to their response to norms deemed conventional, while at the same time differentiating them from metropolitan French writers (Diop 2011, 15). This anti-label positionality is, for Mabanckou, an attempt at achieving universality through which they would not have to speak in the name of any nation or people (83). Thus, to achieve this universality is to not only "jettison the collective impulse—Africa's supposedly glorious past exemplified by Negritude movement" (Mabanckou 2011, 78), but also "to refuse the "orders" whispered in the ear of African writers to get them to say or write what they are expected to say or write and thus close off any avenues to the exploration of their own diversity" (Mabanckou 2011, 85-6). Thus, the World Literature paradigm is both a reaction against the literary tradition of earlier generation of African writers and against the hegemony of the French literary sphere.

However, the Parisian publishing industry continues to have an influence on Francophone writers. As Holly Collins argues "despite the independence that the *Littérature-monde* has announced, affirmed and defended, the French literary institution does not seem to fully recognize it." Another reality is that Parisian publishing institutions remain the places where Francophone African writers go to for a successful career as these institutions remain "as much of a judge of who will be successful as the readership itself" (2015, 498-499). In other words, "Paris and its agencies world-wide are far better able to create a reputation or open up future prospects for an author than Dakar or Lomé, Abidjan or Yaoundé, all African cities with their own publishing houses"

(Diop, 2011 22). This is a reality that even Sami Tchak, the author of *Place des Fêtes*, the novel under study, recognizes when he says:

> True, the rise of a literature is often tied to the history of a nation. Frankly, for many writers to write is to dream of being taken in by one of the great nations. African writers, for example, dream - and I believe we are all aware of this - of being taken in by France, perhaps exclusively, but it is certainly important. Because in the present circumstances our own countries are incapable of nurturing an autonomous literature. (...) The great writers of the great nations impose themselves or are imposed as the great writers of the world. Naturally, they are indeed great writers, but their worldwide aura depends largely on the nations that they have behind them. As for us, we are at present nationless orphans. As I write I am painfully aware of this. (qtd. in Diop 2011, 21)

The desire for a literary success and both the feeling and claim for "nationless-ness" help explain the lack of militancy of these Francophone African writers resulting consequently in their obsession with individualism. Does the transition of Francophone literature in the diaspora with an individualist subjectivity necessarily reflect a Black French subjectivity? Are their discourses on identity or their positionality representative of French-born Black people, for instance?

Place des Fêtes

My reading of Tchak's *Place des Fêtes* suggests that these varying positionalities are governed by an obsession with individualism in the French literary space; a literary individualism which ultimately translate itself into a way of life that leads to claiming Frenchness as it is universally dictated by the Republic. Referring to Tchak's novel, Mabanckou says that it "is the kind of introspection that typifies the discourse of the new generation, and it implies a willingness to confront Africans with their own shortcomings and so risk contradicting the Negritude movement with its great hostility to self- criticism" (2011, 81). In this respect, it would be interesting to see how Tchak's protagonist constructs a counternarrative to this stated cultural nationalism.

According to Michelle Wright, there are two extremes that "Black subjectivity" must negotiate in its shaping in the West:

> Seeking to determine Black subjectivity in the African diaspora means constantly negotiating between two extremes. On the one hand stands the 'blackness that shallows', the hypercollective essentialist identity, which provides the comfort of absolutist assertion in exchange for the total annihilation of the self. On the other stands the hyperindividual identity, most commonly found in poststructuralist critiques of racism and colonialism, which grants a wholly individualized (and somewhat fragmented) self in exchange for the annihilation of 'blackness' as a collective term. (2004, 2)

Sami Tchak's protagonist shows complete allegiance to a "hyperindividual" mode of subjectivity as he rejects collective identity.

If the "hypercollective" identity is characterized by the discourse of return and idealization of Africa through the voice of the father of Tchak's narrator, the "hyperindividual" identity is to be seen in the narrator's "unsympathetic, even hostile, handling of the roots motif" (Adesanmi 2004, 238) as exemplified by his harsh relationship with his parents and other African immigrants. The "hyperindividual" identity is also to be seen in the narrator's denial of race and racism and the claiming of France as it is universally perceived. This "hyperindividual" positionality is what shapes Tchak's protagonist's subjective self-making and sense of belonging in France. With his father, he perpetuates the same feeling of rejection that Tckak's generation of writers has toward Negritude generation.

It is such a lack of militancy, the indifference to, and the shunning of the "roots motif" that marks the limit of this "hyperindividual" positionality as it pertains to the Black French subjects. His state of Otherness in France and his African origin are two realities that Tchak's narrator overlooks and repulses. He reacts against his Otherness (the position he is placed in as a Black) by attempting to shake off his African origin, thus defending France against his fellow Afro-descendants and Africans. In that sense, his African origin and the stereotypes attached to it appear to be of deep concern to Tchak's unnamed protagonist and consequently threatens his Frenchness. As Allison Van Deventer says, "his belonging is demonstrated not only in terms of his social location as a citizen of France, but also in terms of his emotional attachment to an idea of France as a bastion of individual freedoms" (2014, 68). This "attachment to the idea of France as a bastion of individual freedoms" is made possible by the narrator's harsh criticism towards his parents and African immigrants. His sense of belonging is expressed through this antagonistic and repetitive rhetoric, "mes parents sont nés là-bas... moi je suis né ici" [my parents were born there...I was born here] (Tchak 2000, 9). In other words, his identification with "here" (France) is validated by his dissociation from "there" (Africa). Furthermore, the "born here" rhetoric is not antagonized with the exclusionary rhetoric of the French state but with his parents' sense of pride in their African-ness exemplified by his father's yearning for return to and the idealization of Africa. In this process of dissociation from the "roots motif", the narrator falls into, and embodies the republican assimilationism rhetoric around which he builds his individualism.

Tchak's protagonist's reinforcement of stereotypes and cliché attached to the Black African subject denotes his internalization of the universalizing discourses that are meant to dissociate Blackness and French-ness. In that sense, the French republic is defended against his racial group. In the chapter entitled "Putain de quartier!" [fucking banlieue] he states, "j'avoue que ça ne me plait pas du tout, ce coin, il y a trop de regroupement racial là-bas. Et la où il y a regroupement racial, il y a toujours tendance ethnique et c'est un peu comme si la République réculait" [I admit that I don't like it in this corner, there is too much racial gathering there. And where there is racial gathering, there is always an ethnic tendency, and it is kind of like the Republic is moving backward] (2000, 165-7). According to Crystal Marie Fleming, the ban on racial categories in France is evidence of the practice of white supremacy. She argues that "French white supremacy functions in at least three features: anti-racialism, asymmetric racialization, and anti-communitarianism." Grounded in the French republican universalism, these three features obfuscate white supremacy. For Fleming, anti-racialism refers to "the vague references to 'racism'" or to "the denial of race as an extant phenomenon," which "tend to obscure the dominant group". In France, it is not uncommon to see "the stigmatization and moral censure of people who use racial categories in the public sphere," however as Fleming notes, "minorities are more frequently racialized than the majority population," a phenomenon she refers to as "asymmetric racialism." Finally, "anti-communitarianism" refers to the rejection of group membership (Fleming 2017, 37). Tchak's protagonist's hypothetical response to the label "communautariste" would be siding with the universalist principle of anti-communitarianism and thus perpetuating the other two features of white supremacy in France (anti-racialism and asymmetric racialization). In that respect, French Republican universalism vilifies and makes unavailable the terms through which racial particularity could be asserted.

Thus, Tchak's protagonist is "Français dans les manières" [French in the manners], which, according to him, means "prendre conscience" [being conscious], not to be "archaic" like the "nés-là-bas" (168-9) etc. He accepts to be French according to the way it is prescribed by the Republic. In contrast, Van Devanter sees it in a different way. As she argues, "What I wish to highlight by reading *Place des Fêtes* as an Afropean text—and not only a francophone African or a Togolese text—is the narrator's subversive performance of an innate belonging to France that is continually threatened by his enforced association with Africa" (2014, 69). But why is it that his sense of belonging to France is threatened by his racial association with Africa? If his belonging to France is threatened by his racial association with Blackness and Africanness, where does its subversiveness lie? Does he really embrace his Blackness if his association with Africa is *enforced*? Van Daventer explains the narrator's "subversive performance of an innate belonging to France" through this following passage she considers a "sharp criticism of French Republican ideals":

> Mais, je suis né français, papa. Je suis français, même si je ne suis pas vraiment Français, parce que ma peau ne colle pas avec mes papiers. Mais je sais que je ne suis pas de la-bàs non plus, parce que je n'ai rien à voir vraiment avec là-bas, [...] Je veux dire que la France c'est mon pays natal, mais ce n'est pas ma patrie. Je veux dire que je n'ai pas vraiment de patrie. Les gens croient qu'il suffit de naitre quelque part pour avoir une patrie. Mais non! Une patrie c'est autre chose que la nationalité, une patrie c'est dans le sang. (Tchak 2000, 22)

> But I was born French, dad. I am French, even though I am not really French because my skin does not match my papers. But I know I am not from there either, because I have nothing to do with there really, [...] I want to say that France is my native country, but it is not my *patrie* I want to say that I don't really have a *patrie*. People believe that being born somewhere is enough to have a *patrie*. But no! A *patrie* is not the same as nationality, a *patrie* is in the blood.

My reading of this passage suggests, however, that it is both ventriloquism of French republicanism if one considers the influence of republican assimilationism on the narrator, and an acceptance of French republicanism, if one considers the sense of individualistic agency offered by France's so-called "liberté multicolore" [multicolor freedom] he asserts. The latter refutes any possibility of activist militancy and of racial, cultural, and communitarian particularism. Even when he mentions the "precariousness of his place in French society" (Van Deventer 2014, 69), he does so with an attitude of indifference and does not seem to claim his Blackness as a response to it: "j'ai déja eu à *essuyer* ma couleur comme une insulte. J'ai déja eu à voir les portes se fermer au nez de ma couleur. C'est aussi simple que ça" (33) [I have already had to wipe my color off like an insult. I have already had doors shut on my nose because of my color. It is as simple as that]. The attitude of Tchak's narrator in *Places des Fêtes* denotes what Fleming calls the "minimization of racism and trivialization of antiblackness" as a problem in literature on race in France (2017, 31).

His subversiveness lies instead in the charge against the "Black community" in France. He sees this "Black community" as the roots for his not being a "vrai Français" [real French] against which he builds his individualism. Consequently, he accepts his not being a "vrai Français" but does not blame the French Republic for it and says this instead:

> Si moi, j'avais été un vrai français, si ma couleur n'avait pas été trop tendance, j'aurais voté Front National[2] à cause des conneries de ce genre[3] [...]. C'est nous les nés-ici avec la couleur tendance, qui aurions du voté FN. Vous savez pourquoi? C'est parce qu'il y a trop de Noirs n'importe comment dans ce pays que les gens, ne sachant plus que faire pour nous distinguer, nous foutent tous dans le même sac. (Tckak 2000, 175-6)
>
> If I had been a real French, if my color was not trendy, I would have voted National Front because of some craziness like this [...]. It is us the born-here with the trendy color who should have voted for NF. You know why? It's because there are so many Blacks in this country that people, not knowing how to distinguish us, put us all in one bag.

The presence of the native-born is praised and elevated above the non-native-born. The narrator claims that he is owed privilege for the fact that he is native born, but also for the idea that he is "French in the manners". It is in this sense of assimilationist Afro-Europeanness that he rejects Blackness altogether with its heterogeneity as well. "Although France will never be his 'patrie', he will live as though it were, inventing his own form of belonging in this country where his 'couleur tordue' provides a visible reminder of its broken promises" (Van Devanter 76). The Republican universalism expects him to live as if France were his "patrie," a tendency that favors meekness and avoids tension or conflict between who he is and who he is expected to be.

Where Adesanmi explains the narrator's "psychic/identitarian impasse" as rooted in a "lack of a place to return, an African way of being" (2004, 237), Mabanckou sees it as the narrator's deliberate expression of freedom as he "feels no need to comprehend African ways and finds it cumbersome to pay them respect" (2011, 81). To follow Mabanckou's observation, what Tchak's narrator demonstrates is less a performance of "lack" than an expression of freedom from the "hypercollective" identity. Furthermore, while the father in Tchak's narrative might have an idealistic view of Africa, by looking at Africa from the "reportage télévisé," (20) Tchak's narrator holds an extremely stereotypic view of Africa as his "single story" (Adiche). It is such rhetoric of dissociation from the "roots motif" that shapes Tchak's narrator's individualism, his belonging in France, his assimilationist sense of Afro-Europeanness, and his freedom "que [lui] confère la nation" [which the nation bestows upon him]. His sense of Afro-Europeanness is grounded on the fact that, as a Black, he performs "an innate belonging to France," as Deventer puts it, while accepting to be invisible, not to be a real French, and consequently pleading allegiance to French universalism. He refuses to acknowledge the "roots motif" as part of his identity. In that way, all ethnic and racial identifications are completely shunned in favor of the French Republican universalist values.

Tchak's narrator's anti-label and "hyperindividualist" positionality makes him shun all ethno-racial particularity, deny racism, and consequently perpetuates the way in which Frenchness is universally conceived. Ethno-racial identification is tied to isolation in the French Republic and to belong usually means to reject your ethnicity or cultural particularity. Other than "I was born here," Tchak's protagonist does not make use of any identifying lexicon to self-assuredly name his ethno-racial difference in France**.** He focuses more on freeing himself from the "hypercollective" identity than questioning the Republican universalism which is manifested in "anti-racialism, asymmetric racialism, and anti-communitarianism". In what follows, I question Tchak's narrator's subjectivity through the work of Rokhaya Diallo.

Rokhaya Diallo: An Alternative to Black Diasporic Conformity

Rokhaya Diallo is a Black French journalist, writer, and filmmaker. Her overtness in the French public space about race and racism owed her international recognition. She was appointed to the Executive board of the Center for International Justice; an organization "based in Berlin dedicated to advancing equality and justice for all by combating intersecting forms of structural inequality and discrimination in Europe" (intersectionaljustice.org). She joined the Washington Post and The Guardian as contributor writing monthly on issues related to race, racism, and sexism in France (washingtonpost.com). Being a contributor to these widely read popular media, Diallo's voice provides a way in which Black Frenchness can both be imagined and articulated without the influence and control of French universalism. Her articles in these online journals highlight the lived experiences of current Black people in Europe. She articulates a 21st century global diasporic and Afro-diasporic linkage around race and injustice. In addition to that, her voice across these Western spaces exposes French approach to race and racism to the rest of the Black diaspora and particularly to Afro-European diaspora.

Talks on race and practice of racism are traditionally approached as accidental, external, and circumstantial issues in France. However, Diallo's approach on these racial issues challenges the French republican universalism's rhetorical principles. Such rhetorical principles deny racism as constitutive in the making of France. Because of her approach and her contribution to British and American popular media, she has been accused of being influenced by Anglo-American ideology on race relation issues (Diallo 97). The reality is that external spaces seem to give Diallo more opportunity to voice her concerns in the French society. She clearly acknowledges that "C'est aux États-Unis que j'ai appris à prendre conscience de ma valeur" [I learned to be conscious about my worth in The United States] (2019, 92). Occupying a positionality where one could talk about race in France is no easy task. That is why Diallo understands that "associating her with a foreign power is to deny the anchoring nature of the racial issues I raise in French soil" (263 my translation). With her insistence on the racial debate, it is the French Republic that is threatened. Thus, in return, Diallo has to resist the invalidation and the de-legitimation of her Black French positionality.

Diallo's speaking up about racism has led to her removal from national digital council, a commission created by the French government for a "more inclusive digital policy" (theguardian.com). In the letter that triggered this dismissal procedure written by a right-wing MP and addressed to French prime minister, Diallo was disapprovingly described as "decolonial feminist" and a "divisive figure." After this incident, the questions raised by the Black French scholar, Maboula Soumahoro, are then "Who has access to the highest level of the public life, and on what terms?" (theguardian.com). What is clear about this dismissal is that Diallo's only fault is speaking up publicly, with facts at hand, about racism in France. It seems that for the Black subject in France, censure is the price to pay for occupying a place outside meekness and docility.

Despite the difficulty of speaking up about racism in France, Diallo consistently refuses to espouse the French republican universalist discourse in her works, on television, and radio shows. Diallo's sense of universalism is one that challenges the norm of French republican universalism which is rooted in denying racial and cultural differences. As she argues in her autobiographical book, *Ne reste pas à ta place*,

> Ce n'est pas à nous de nous adapter au monde, c'est au monde de tenir compte des spécificités de chacun (45) .... Quand on est minoritaire, le défi est de parvenir à rester soi-même, de ne pas tenter de gommer ce qui nous caractérise pour se fondre dans la norme (57). S'adapter en présupposant ce que veulent voir les spectateurs ou en copiant l'image que l'on associe à sa fonction est une négation de soi, de son intégrité. (2019, 69-70)

> It is not up to us to adapt to the world; it is the world that has to take the specificities of everyone into account (45) .... When you are a minority, the challenge is to be able to stay true to yourself, not to attempt at erasing what characterizes you in order to lose yourself in the norm (57). To fit in by presupposing what others want to see or by copying how you are expected to be is a self-negation, a negation of one's integrity.

These rhetorical phrases that I put here together from different pages are recurrent in Diallo's work. They refer to her refusal to be invisible. This positionality is subversively different from that of the older generation (born overseas in the 1940s and 1950s) of highly qualified professionals that Fred Constant interviewed in France (2012, 131-135). Constant's interviewees blame the Black youth social immobility on their refusal "to conform to the principles, customs, or ways of this country; in short, to French culture" (2012, 134). They have internalized the republican principles, so much so that they believe hard work, sense of "discipline," and submission to the dominant culture are the secret to social mobility, and thus dismiss any reference to race. In that sense, docility, meekness, and alienation are not problematized; they are overlooked for the sake of success and acceptance.

Diallo's subjectivity shows the gap between older generation of immigrants and the post-1980s generation. Not only does this subjectivity reveal her self-assured sense of self amid the dismissive republican universalism, but also, it sends a message to the children of immigrants who are uncomfortable with the thought of being associated with their parents' foreign accent, "strange clothes," and "strange food" (2019, 37-8). In *Ne reste pas à ta place*, under the subtitle "je suis d'ici," [I am from here] Diallo states that "on doit prouver que l'on est pleinement français, sans que cela contredise que l'on soit également à l'aise avec ce que l'on a hérité de ses parents" [we have to prove that we are fully French without contradicting the fact that we are at ease with what we inherited from our parents] (Tchak 2000, 40). Thus, unlike Tchak's narrator who accepts that he is not a "vrai français," [real French] Diallo questions what she refers to as "une francité conditionnée par un comportement consensuel" [a French-ness that is conditioned by a consensual behavior] (32). It is the consent to such conditional French-ness that explains Tchak's narrator's rejection of the "roots motif" and his embrace of the Republican universalism.

This positionality is frequent in Black writing published by the French conventional literary institutions. Blinded by the ideals of Republican universalism, some writers such as Fatou Diome[4] and Alain Mabanckou[5] choose to be politically correct by praising universalism and consequently obfuscating inherent anti-black racism in France. With a moralist tone, they focus more on how to avoid the reality (racism) than how to deal with it realistically. From "sociéte de romanciers coloniaux" [society of colonial writers] (1924), "association des écrivains de langue française" [Association of French Language Writers] (1968) to "organization internationale de la Francophonie" [Francophonie international organization] (1970), Black writing in France has been partly shaped or influenced by these institutions' assimilationist and universalist agenda.[6]

Diallo's voice, however, is subversive and revolutionary in that she fights against racism from an anti-conformist perspective. She clearly states, "Je n'entrerai jamais dans les cases.... Je ne crains pas de déranger l'establishment" [I will never enter boxes.... I am not scared to disturb the establishment] (2019, 41). Along with her dissident voice, Diallo's diction is mixed with English expressions. Just to name a few, "Establishment" and "unapologetic" (2019, 99) are English terms that she uses in her French text without quotation, translation, and italics. The impossibility or difficulty of translating these words, as she notes with the term "unapologetic," for example, raises questions about whether Black French subjects have linguistic tools with which to challenge not only "anti-racialism" and "asymmetric racialism," but also "une francité conditionée par un comportement consensuel" [a French-ness that is conditioned by a consensual behavior]. Thus, Diallo questions, "Comment s'assumer quand on appartient à une catégorie dont la présence est si rarement mentionnée?" [How to self-assuredly assert oneself when we belong to a category whose presence is rarely mentioned?] (2019, 361). She suggests, "pour que l'on cesse de nous ranger dans des cases, nous devons dire avec assurance qui nous sommes vraiment" [To break out from boxes, we must say self-assuredly who we really are] (58). In that sense, she clearly states, "Je suis effectivement une Noire (inutile de m'appeler « Black », « Noire » n'est pas un gros mot) très sympa mais je n'ai jamais eu l'intention de devenir un alibi" [I am truly *Noire* (useless calling me "Black", "Noire" is not a vulgar word) very sympathetic, but I never intended to be an alibi] (2019, 249). She claims the word "Noire" which is perceived as a vulgar word in accordance with the principle of French Republican universalism.

To sound less offensive to the Republican universalism's principles, "Noire" tends to be replaced by its English translation "Black" or the continental referent "African" (Mudimbe-Boyi. 2012, 19). If these two terms (Black and African) are politically correct in the French Republican universalism ideology, it is because of their foreign connotation. The term "Black" is thought of as a circumstantially borrowed lexicon that is just used to mimic an Anglo-American means of identification and therefore has no ground in French context. The term "African" gives a geographical imagery which is to be located outside France as well. As Maboula Soumaoro puts it,

> Les gens vont parler de nous [les Noir(e)s] en France en parlant d'immigration alors qu'on est pas des immigrés, on va parler de noir ou de race en s'appuyant sur les États-Unis alors qu'on est pas des Américains. Donc si t'es noir et français, noir et de couleur, noir et non-blanc, tu n'as pas tellement de place (le monde.fr).
>
> People talk about us [Blacks] in France by talking about immigration whereas we are not immigrants, they talk about blackness or race by focusing on the United States whereas we are not Americans. So, if you are black and French, black and colored, black and nonwhite, you don't have a place.

For Diallo, to fail using the local equivalent of "Black," which is "Noire," is to accept its denial by the French Republican universalism. Thus, Diallo's claim of the term "Noire" is subversive in that she calls the French Republic to come to terms with the underlying presence of the Black Other in the making of France.

Diallo is not the only French subject who sees the urgency and importance of claiming the racial identification, "Noir". In the interviews that Pap Ndiaye had with some Black individuals in France, a lot of young people claimed their racial identity by self-identifying as "français noir" or "française noire". Others claim that they are French, but do not fail to incorporate their parents' national origin as in terms such as "franco-sénégalais," "franco-congolais" etc. (2009, 47-52). Nevertheless, although born to Senegalese parents, an ethnic background that she embraces, Diallo refers to herself as "française" and "noire" or "française noire," just like many other Black youths in France. According to Ndiaye, cognizant of the fact that they are implicitly considered and looked at as "noir," young Black people in France are more and more inclined in identifying as "noir" along with insistence that they are French regardless of their multiple identities (2009, 52). In other words, Ndiaye's sociological research suggests that nowadays there are more people identifying as "noir" in France than there were in the past "comme si un tabou avait été levé, une gêne, une honte parfois, qu'il y a à dire que l'on est noir" [as if a taboo has been broken, a discomfort, an embarrassment sometimes, to say one is *noir*] (2009, 53). Currently, it is very common to hear young Black French people using the term "renoi" in their informal street language which is called "verlan"[7]. Diallo's approach is to normalize terms and expressions that are conceived of as offensive or inappropriate. For Diallo, failing to use these terms leaves Black French subjects unnamed, thus invisible.

She proposes and reenacts a Negritudist positionality in her assertion and practice of Black Frenchness (2019, 294). While the Negritude generation claimed the humiliating term "nègre" for racial solidarity in the 1930s as opposed to the politically correct terms of the time: "noir" and "homme de couleur" (Edwards 2003, 28-33), the current Black French generation claim the term "noir" for visibility and practice of rootedness. Identifying with the term "noir" as French is a subversive practice in that the French republican universalism denies it on the grounds that it is divisive while still not indifferent to it.

To challenge this French society's isolating rhetoric and system, Diallo also created the movement *Les Indivisibles* with a group of friends. For Diallo the creation of the movement was a way to raise her voice against prejudices that tied French-ness to physical characteristics and religious culture. It was also a way to find an empowering means to reflect on the stigmatizing rhetoric in media across France (2019, 133). Diallo acknowledged that she was inspired by another Afro-European subject from Germany. Her name is Noah Sow; she initiated a movement called *Der Braune Mob* ("Mobilisation Brune", "Brown Mobilization") to show that Blackness is not incompatible with Germanness. This is an Afro-European connection that Diallo thinks the European continent should be thankful for. As she says "J'ai la conviction que c'est une bénédiction pour le continent européen de compter autant de TCK [Third Culture Kids] parmi ses citoyens, car nous nourrissons et enrichissons son identité" [I have the conviction that it is a blessing for the European continent to count as many Third Culture Kids among its citizens because we nourish and enrich its identity] (2019, 45). *Third Culture Kid* is an expression that Diallo borrowed from two American sociologists, David C. Pollock and Ruth Van Reken, to designate people like her and Noah Sow. They are children who were raised in a culture that is different from their parents' who, across time, create a third culture as a result of a mixture of their parents' culture and that of the host country (Diallo 2019, 43-44). Being Afro-European equals to embodying this third culture positionality. The post 1980s Afro-European is somehow different from both their parents and the national conception of the country they were born into.

Diallo's movement helps normalize a more inclusive conception of French-ness. Unlike Tchak's narrator, she believes that there is no such thing as "vrai Français" [real French]. Actually, the term "indivisible" takes its sense from the French republican philosophy which professes the indivisibility of the Republic (2019, 136). If Tchak's protagonist advocates for a more conformist Black positionality in France, Diallo questions the notion of racial authenticity monolithically tied to French-ness. As she says, "on n'est pas plus français ou mieux français parce qu'on est issu d'une vieille famille « bien » Française. L'« authenticité », c'est bon pour le marketing, pas pour parler d'identité (...) il n'existe pas de souche gauloise « pure » dont seraient issus les vrai Francais" [we are not more French or better French because we are from "very" French old family. Authenticity is good for marketing, not for speaking about identity ... there is no such thing as a "pure" *souche gauloise* where real French would come from] (2019, 134-5). In this way, she not only racializes and ethnicizes whiteness, but also, she detaches it from the essence of French-ness just as Stuart Hall ethnicized whiteness and Englishness and differentiated them from Britishness.

Unlike Tchak's narrator, Diallo claims her transcultural identity against the monolithic conception of Frenchness in all French public spaces that are known for their lack of inclusion. She engaged in cinema to address the lack of diversity on French screens (Aljazeera.com). She produced and directed a number of documentaries such as "Les Marches de la liberté," [The Steps to Liberty] (2013), "De Paris à Ferguson: coupables d'être noirs," [Not yo Mama's Movement] (2016), and "Où sont les noirs" [Acting while Black: Blackness on French screens]" (2020). Not only do her films and documentaries contribute to a better representation of Black actors in French cinema, but also, they expose issues pertaining to Black people in the French media. In a similar vein, the French rap artist Abdel Malik, same generation as Diallo, made his contribution in this domain as well. At the *Théâtre du Chatelet*, Malik helped his Black actors and actresses perform "The Just Assassin" of Camus as the first play to be directed by a Black artist at this 257-year-old theater (nytimes.com). It Featured artists from poor Paris suburbs who occupied this theatric space from which Black people are usually excluded.

Literary critics tend to subsume potential Black French diasporic subjectivities and voices within the France-based African writing paradigm which either frames the question of identity within an immigrant experience or within a neoliberal individualist subjectivity as a practice of universalism. Diallo's works fill the gap in African or Black Francophone "conventional" or mainstream literature. Such literary production does not facilitate the contact with radical and realistic voices about race and racism in France. Recently Max Lobe has argued that Parisian publishing institutions colonize the African thought by imposing on France-based Francophone writers some writing criteria that are disconnected to the African continent's realities for the benefit of the French readership and Parisian book market (letemps.ch). If this assimilatory and universalizing practice does not help decolonize African literature and African thought, it also does not have positive impact on Blacks in France because it obfuscates direct reference to anti-blackness. However, Diallo's overt reference to race resembles what is seen in Anglo-American context. Her work and public appearances heavily address the denial of the racial category in France. Diallo's positionality is also rooted in the awareness that overlooking the racial category in France contributes to Black invisibility and Black conformity. As Mudimbe-Boyi puts it,

> In a political world where the Black finds himself- or herself in a subaltern position, and in the context of a colonizing France, subalternity is a consequence of the political and the cultural. How then can one be located in the political and the cultural without a reference to that other component, which is racial or pertaining to skin color? (2012, 25)

This is a question that rhetorically comes constantly in Diallo's work. For Diallo, there is no such thing as neutral position as Tchak's protagonist claims (2019, 151). The actions that Diallo takes in her writing and in her activism provide compelling responses to the needs and sensibilities of Black French subjects. Thus, she embodies what Mudimbe-Boyi refers to as the essence of Black French-ness because her positionality "goes well beyond a simple physical presence in France," it is also "a claim for the right to speak, the contestation of dominance, marginalization, and invisibility within French society where these exclusionary practices contradict republican ideals" (2012, 21). Diallo's frame of reference is to be found outside the French republican universalism.

Endnotes:

1. Recent scholarly works, however, have attempted to theorize Black-Frenchness. See *Black France/France Noire: The History and Politics of Blackness* (2012*)* edited by Trica Danielle Keaton, T. Denean Sharpley-Whiting, and Tyler Stovall; Pap Ndiaye's *La condition noire: essai sur une minorité française* (2008); Felix Germain, "Mercer Cook and the Origin of Black French Studies" (Spring 2016) etc.
2. The "National Front," a far-right political party in France.
3. The narrator argues that people are doing the promotion of paper-less immigrants by protesting on their behalf. He thus defends France for fighting against immigrants.
4. See *Mariane porte Plainte,* 2017.
5. See *Le sanglot de l'homme noir*, 2012 and *Black Bazar*, 2010.
6. See Ruth Bush and Claire Ducournau, "La literature Africaine de langue française, à quel(s) prix? Histoire d'une instance de légitimation littéraire méconnue (1924-2012)" 3/219 Cahiers D'études Africaines, 2015.
7. In verlan French words are reversed. For instance, noir(e) (*renoi)*; bonjour (*jourbon*) l'envers [the inverse] (*verlan).*

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From *Asog* to *Bakla*: Genealogical Analysis of the Philippine History to Diagnose the Roots of Homophobia

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Abstract:

Discrimination against Filipino LGBTQ people in the Philippines has various causes: culture, religion, power, or ideological differences. History plays a significant role in its development and reinforcement with the introduction of colonial beliefs into the Philippines. History has shown that they were once respected in society and had the freedom to practice their sexuality. The problem persists despite a few recent national and international milestones concerning the LGBTQ+ community. The transition of their societal status from celebrated to discriminated against raises the question: what happened? This study analyses how the problem existed and progressed by diagnosing the problem. Guided by Michel Foucault's Genealogy, this study identifies the origins of sex and gender discrimination in Filipino culture by reviewing research on Filipino LGBTQ people and history from the pre-colonial era to the 20th century. The discussion extends to the effects of society's prejudice, the devaluation of their once great stature, and the lack of research on Filipina lesbian people. The study discovered that homophobia in the Philippines is culturally engraved, vulnerable to western influences, and obliviously practiced. Moreover, the existence of the appropriation of the heterosexual mainstream was observed and seemed celebrated in Philippine society.

Keywords: Genealogy. LGBTQ. Philippines. History. Sex Discrimination. Gender Discrimination.

I. Introduction

The status of Filipino LGBTQ people in the Philippines has its ups and downs. At one point in history, the practice of diverse sexuality in the country was not frowned upon. The past events have changed how Filipinos think in every aspect of their lives, especially about the "appropriate" way to treat and deal with lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender people, and queer people. Thus, this study aims to provide a map of how the Philippine society changed how they treat them over time by establishing that their perceptions had become influenced by significant historical events.

The need for a considerable amount of historical narration took inspiration from Michel Foucault's Genealogy. Foucault said we should "examine the emergence and the development of the present rules, practices, and institutions that claimed authority over us to diagnose the current situation" (Lončarević 2013, 70). Published documents and studies about Filipino LGBTQ people were reviewed to determine the root of homophobia and sex and gender discrimination. This study summarizes the status of LGBTQ people in the Philippines from the pre-colonial era to the 20th century. This research considers that it is imperative to examine the evolutions that made such a society and how it is in the present to truly understand a culture's status. This study tries to disturb the existing conditions by laying down the characteristics of homophobia in the Philippines, as it maintains that diagnosing the problem in this context helps future researchers further examine today's societal situation of Filipino LGBTQ people and help provide feasible solutions to discrimination.

This study endeavored to use Filipino words for LGBTQ terminologies. It recognizes that some of it entail discriminatory connotations, but such utilization was not to encourage prejudice. The usages were maintained relative to the era being discussed, subject to transformation upon the changing of time. This is to maintain the chronological sequence of the historical progressions. Even though modern terms such as "homosexuality" were not used in the Philippines until the late 19th century (Brewer 1999), these are still used in the historical narration of the study due to the lack of Filipino translations of modern LGBTQ terminologies.

Finally, this study recognizes that it is impossible to give a comprehensive history of the state of the LGBTQ people in the country because of the lack of written documents. One of the country's colonizers, the Spaniards, halted the records for 300 years (Foe 2014). A limited number of accounts describe their esteemed stature in the past, while most existing accounts focus on the negative aspects. Lesbian history is also absent. However, the available ones were enough to prove that homophobia and sex and gender discrimination started to exist during colonization and were in different forms, such as words and religions, which are practiced until today.

II. Sexual Practices and Religions in the Pre-colonization and Spanish Era

Foucault states that diagnosing a problem entails figuring out the "contingent turns of history" that created the "system of thought" of the society that a researcher is investigating (Gutting and Oksala 2018, par. 27). This section details the transitions of a pre-colonial Philippine society to a Spanish-based society – which this study considers one of the most important "contingent turns of history" that affected the natives' way of life.

There was a time when gender identity and sexual orientation, under no circumstances, affected one's social status. Those with feminine gender expressions even held important roles in society. Many scholars focusing on gender studies in the country stated that the colonizers in the colonization years contributed to inculcating biased views about them (Hega and Evangelista 2017; Strom 2018; Scott 1992; Quintos 2012; Garcia 2004; UNDP, USAID 2014; UNDP, CHR 2018). Filipino women also suffered in this transition. During this time, women were known as *babaylan*. The *babaylan* held vital tasks in *barangay* or the local community, such as in the field of religion, astronomy, medicine, and agriculture. Native Filipinos practice animism as their religion wherein the *babaylan*, also known as shamans, communicate with spirits as a ritual for various reasons such as fertility of crops, victory in battles, recovery from illness, or blessings for newlyweds. The *babaylan* were equal to *datu* or local rulers and worked side by side during important social activities. The roles and duties of *babaylan* were also performed by transgender people and gay men. In fact, some of the *babaylan* were *asog, bayoguin,* and *binabayi* - the traditional terms for gay men (Quintos 2012; UNDP, CHR 2018). They practiced cross-dressing and mannerisms similar to women, and same-sex marriages and sexual relations were ordinary. Because of the *babaylan*, the belief that spirits only listened to prayers uttered by women (UNDP, CHR 2018) and that femininity was the vehicle to the spirit world (Brewer 1999) were normalized. Thus, gay or transgender *babaylan* must wear feminine clothing during rituals as it was believed that "the spiritual potency was dependent on identification with the feminine - whether the biological sex was female or male" (ibid., 34). For Garcia, this practice was not just a matter of men playing dress-up but an emblematic of respect during this time (2004). Garcia added that this practice reflected both as a symbol of social acceptance by aligning them with Filipino women's esteemed status during the pre-colonial era and the idea of freedom to wear any type of clothing.

These practices were deemed normal until the arrival of Spaniards in the Philippines in 1521. Accounts have confirmed that the reaction of the Spaniards upon the sight of *babaylan* was confusion (Quintos 2012). In the accounts of historians Carlos Quirino and Mauro Garcia, one could easily mistake an *asog* as a woman because of the effeminate characteristics equipped with feminine clothing (1958 cited in ibid*.*). Francisco Alcina also claimed the same, saying that Spanish missionaries got confused by the *babaylan* they saw because of their extravagant clothing and mannerisms when observing the natives (1668 cited in Quintos 2012). They had difficulty pinpointing which one was male in a group of *babaylan* due to their clothing and mannerism. Spanish priest and historian Pedro Chirino compared a male shaman's long and braided hair to a feminine hairstyle (1604 cited in Brewer 1999). Apart from the confusion, Garcia (2004) stated that the Spaniards were surprised and threatened because esteemed community leaders possessed such characteristics, which were unusual to them.

The start of Spaniards' effort to take possession of the country between 1564 and 1565 had simultaneously brought and enforced Catholicism to the Filipinos.

> The Spaniards in most places simply showed themselves to the natives, and the religious, who accompanied them, persuaded the untutored savages to submit to the King of Spain, through whom they would obtain the two-fold blessing of civilization and Christianity (Coleman 1899, 13).

Boxing the Filipinos to Catholicism had resulted in oppression on both *babaylan* and *asog*. The Catholic Church considered itself the source of morality and believed that the natives were deeply influenced by demons and needed to purify their cultural beliefs (Gealogo 2010 cited in Hega and Evangelista 2017, 1; Quintos 2012).

> As long as the natives lived in their paganism, it was not known that they had fallen into the abominable sin against nature. But after the Spaniards had entered their country, through communication with them ... it has been communicated to them somewhat, both to men and to women. In this matter, it has been necessary to take action (Morga 1609, 130).

The Spanish priests demonized the *babaylan,* and confiscated the instruments used for their rituals while claiming that the devil was specifically attracted to women (Brewer 1999) and that they were performing black magic (Hega and Evangelista 2017). The *babaylan* were replaced by Spanish missionary priests as the source of religious power (Gin and Tuan 2015, 250). Filipino women's freedom to explore their sexuality was also suppressed as the Spaniards "took control of their bodies and libidos through practices like confessions" (Hega and Evangelista 2017, 1). Virginity was not a big deal back then (Garcia 2009), which contradicted the church's teaching of remaining pure before matrimony. Spanish historian Antonia De Morga expressed his thoughts on the natives' sexual interests, especially women, by describing them as "vicious" and "sensual" juxtaposed with the terms "their perverseness" and "lascivious methods of communication" (1609, 130). "Gender-crossers" suffered from ridicule and scorn in the hands of the Spaniards (Garcia 2013, 53). Same-sex acts and sexual practices that were once viewed as normal by natives were also demonized and labeled as sinful. Same-sex marriages were forbidden, cross-dressing habits disappeared, men were forbidden to commit sexual acts with fellow men, and any similar acts practiced by the *asog* were met with punishments (Quintos 2012). Similar to women, the *asog* went through the same policing (confession) because all the sinners had to go through the process of cleansing a man's sins (Rafael 1988 cited in ibid.). The country underwent an inquisition that put several gay men to death through execution while caught having intercourse with the same sex (Joaquin 2014; Berco 2008 cited in Foe 2014). Brewer claimed that the Spanish inquisition was so powerful that the *asog* who were married to women, while simultaneously engaged in same-sex relationships, abandoned the religious traditions of their ancestors for the privilege of heterosexual Hispano/Catholic masculinity and even gave evidence against their wives to help the Spaniards with their inquisitions (1999, 22).

The Spaniards also strictly regulated and labeled the natives' normal sexual practices sins. The natives had always viewed masturbation as a routine, and according to Quintos, "what comes out of it signifies the peak of ecstasy and gives meaning to one's personality" (2012, 162). However, Spanish Franciscan Friar Sebastian Totanes expressed that this act was not only viewed as a sin in the religion but got worse if something came out of one's body while performing it (1865 cited in Quintos 2012). Tomas Pinpin stated the same context as he narrated a friar's instruction to natives saying that same-sex sexual acts and intercourse with someone who was not their spouses were sinful (1910 cited in Quintos 2012). Before their arrival, concubinage among married men was normal (Morga 1609). However, these were also frowned upon by the religion and the friars. Converts were closely monitored to ensure they would not return to their old ways (Macdonald 2004).

The priests strongly believed that it was their duty to eradicate the earlier religious practices of the native Filipinos and to contain other religions before they spread. By the 1800s, Christian converted Filipinos were nearly 7 million (Coleman 1899).

> These Borneans... were already introducing their religion among the natives of Luzon, and were giving them instructions, ceremonies, and the form of observing their religion... Had the Spaniards' coming been delayed longer, that religion would have spread throughout the island, and even through the others, and it would have been difficult to extirpate it. The mercy of God checked it in time... and they were freed from it (Morga 1609, 134-135).

The Spaniards believed that if it were not for them, the natives would not be educated or transitioned into well-behaved members of society.

> It was a success to be proud of among a people who, when the missionaries came, had no religious worship, nor temple, nor priest, nor form of worship. They had but a hazy notion of a Deity, their sole religious ideas consisting of some imperfect notions of a hell and a heaven (Coleman 1899, 15).

The earlier beliefs of the natives neither focused on ethics nor defined socially acceptable actions; instead, it was more on maintaining life and seeking protection from tragedies through communication with supernatural beings (Macdonald 2004). Macdonald also said that the arrival of Catholicism introduced new ideas to the natives, such as Christian doctrines, articles of faith, morality, and the Ten Commandments. Hence, they were obligated to turn away from earlier sexual practices that violated the Ten Commandments. Particularly the sixth, "thou shalt not commit adultery," and the ninth, "thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's wife," and conform to moral and spiritual behaviors that were deemed acceptable by the Spanish missionaries (2004, 82-88). The amendments covered self-stimulation, concubinage, and same-sex practices, which were labeled as "gravely disordered action" and "acts of grave depravity" by the Catholic Church (The Holy See 1992, par. 17-22). This section emphasizes the aforementioned sexual practices because the Confessional manuscripts written by a Spanish friar showed his thoughts on it. Quintos (2012) argued that Fray Totanes gave emphasis and malice to sexual intercours in his line of questioning. Totanes, in his book *Arte de la Lengua Tagala, y Manual Tagalog para Auxilio de los Religiosos*, mentioned several times how carnal desires made them sinners (1865, 104-118):

> *356. Ylan caya ang manga pinacasalanan mo?* (How many have you sinned with)?
> *360. Camag anak mo caya siya?* (Was she your relative?)
> *376. ... toui mo siyang naquiquita at inaalala, ay pinagnasaan mo din siya?* (Do you have sexual desires every time you see and think of her?)

> *377. At dahelan sa gayong pagnanasa mo, mey guinaua ca baga sa sarili mong cataouan anomang mahalay na laro? At nilabasan caya ang catauan mo?* (And for such a desire, did you play dishonestly with your body? Did you ejaculate?)
> *379. Macailan canang inotosan nang manga Pareng pinag-compisalan mo nang pag hiualay mo sa caniya?* (In your confessions, how many times did the confessors ordered you to terminate your relationship with her?)
> *380. Ano caya ang bilin, at parusa nila sa iyo? Sabihin mo, nang matalastas co cun naguin tapat na gamot caya, cun dili sa gayong saquet nang caloloua mo.* (Did the confessors give penance? Say it so that I can decide whether or not the medicine was suitable for such a disease of your soul.)
> *384. Ano caya ang sucat mong ipagdahelan, cun pagisipan ca nang P.Dios gayong asal mong pusalian?* (What can you claim when God takes care of such a quagmire in which you live?)

Totanes later instructed the sinner to leave the house of his sexual partner, not meet with her alone unless in the presence of his soon-to-be in-laws, resist temptation, and remove himself from a situation that would trigger his sin. He then proceeded with his sermon, saying that *calibugan* (lust), *calupaan* (worldliness), and *mahalai* (lascivious) thoughts were influenced by demons (1865, 112-113):

> *407. Opan sa capoua mo lalaqui, cun sa capoua mo babaye may bocor na cahalayan ca?* (Could it be that with another man like you, or with another like your wife, you have committed some special dishonesty?)
> *408. Ano caya yaon? Nagsiping baga cayo ... ? Houag cang mahiyang magsaisai yayamang uala cang hiya sa paggagaua nion sa harapan nang P.Dios, at dito,y caharap mo din naman, at tinitingnan niya cun paano ang pagsasabi mo,t pagcocompisal.* (And what was that? Did you have intercourse? Do not be ashamed to explain it. Of course, you weren't ashamed to do it before God, who was there watching you, and also present right now watching how you say it and how you confess.)

During this era, a term that characterized someone with a high stature (*asog*) was downgraded into a term that caused negative perceptions of gay men (*bakla*). Garcia mentioned that Spanish machismo was responsible for this (2013). In *Vocabulario de la Lengua Tagala* by Juan de Noceda and Pedro de Sanlucar, *asog* was defined as *hermafrodit*o and with two genders (1860 cited in Quintos 2012). Furthermore, in *Vocabulario de la Lengua Bicol* by Marcos de Lisboa, it was defined as a "male who dresses, acts and thinks like a female" (1865 cited in Quintos 2012, 157). The term *bakla,* which would later be used to designate gay men in the Filipino language, was also defined in Noceda and Sanlucar's book bearing four definitions: "(1) an illusion to make a person appear beautiful and radiant; (2) pertaining to a change in and fear of an object; (3) the shift in interests to attain an object, and; (4) the '*bacla*' as a part of the skin that one is scratching" (Quintos 2012, 157).

These definitions can be interpreted as not degrading at all. However, Quintos argued that the devaluation started when the Spanish missionaries used the second meaning in describing *asog* as cowards as they did not perform tasks that they believed were masculine standards (157). He stated that some of the first recorded documents of such an event are in Francisco Alcina's book *Historia de las Islas e Indios de Bisayas* (1668 cited in Quintos 2012). Quintos deduced that Alcina's rationale behind this was after noticing that the *asog* did not have tattoos like the other native men. At the time, having tattoos gave prominence to men and was perceived as a masculine characteristic because of the process and meaning attached to it. Tattoo inking involved throwing specific black powder over their bleeding, marked, and pricked skin surface (Morga 1609); and drawn elegantly on their entire bodies (Loarca 1909). Moreover, Spanish missionaries believed tattoos were a great tactic during local wars because the natives would be tattooed in proportion to their performance and positions in battle (Scott 1992). Former chiefs were also observed to have artistic tattoos on their bodies (ibid.). Tattooed natives were also excellent rowers and sailors (Morga 1609). These were some possible reasons why the Spaniards thought tattoos were one of the measurements of masculinity, and the lack of it inadvertently categorized the *asog* as "cowards." However, these tattooed men, called *Pintados*, did not gain their stature because of the tattoos but because of their positive attitudes. They were known to be "well-featured, of a good disposition, of better nature, and nobler in their actions" (Loarca 1909, 111). Spanish conquistador Loarca also described the *Pintados* men as a "courageous and warlike race" and very fond of their wives (117). Some Spaniards spoke highly of the *Pintados* that if we would follow this "tattoo logic," the native Filipino women should also be at the receiving end of such stature based on Morga's observations that Filipina women from Manila and Ilocos, and the female *Negritos*, *Igorrotes*, and from other independent tribes were also tattooed. But instead, negative descriptions were observed in these Spanish explorers' accounts; like Alcina's, which described the Visayan women – the *Visayas* was where the majority of the *Pintados* lived - as weak and delicate (Scott 1992), and Loarca's (1909) that depicted the *Pintados* women as beautiful but unchaste, extremely lewd, and did not hesitate to commit adultery.

This study takes that these beliefs were deeper than the "tattoo logic." It echoes what Garcia has said: it was an exhibition of machismo. Machismo is an exaggerated belief that men are physically and intellectually superior to women (Zimmerman 2000). The Spaniards' practices were patriarchal. Christianity emphasizes the binary gender. So when they arrived in the country and saw the sex and gender diversity and the matriarchal notion inherent in the Philippines, they got threatened and confused (UNDP, CHR 2018). The early sexual practices, sex and gender expressions, and matriarchy were threats to machismo. As a result, the Catholic religion as the dominant creed was imposed to ensure that women and the *asog* would remain restricted according to the rules of machismo. The decline in the number of *babaylan* and *asog* during this era, together with the unawareness that sex and gender equality started in the pre-colonial era, was proof that machismo was successfully imposed and integrated into the Filipinos' minds.

Other written documents that Quintos mentioned wherein weakness was attached to the term "*bacla*" was Gaspar Aquino de Belen's *Mahal na Passion ni Jesu Christong Panginoon natin na Tola* (originally published 1703), wherein "*nabacla*" was used as spineless and synonymous to cowardice. The contemporary use of the term is discussed later in the subsequent sections.

The practices and beliefs during this era continued until the end of the Spanish regime. This section described an important contingent turn of history: the Filipino people's change in beliefs regarding sexual diversity and practices aligned with the strict religious rules as influenced by the colonizer. Following one of Foucault's ideas in Genealogy, "identifying a system of thought that resulted from contingent turns of history" (Gutting and Oksala 2018, par. 27), this section has established that the Filipinos started viewing sex and gender perceptions in a patriarchal and religious manner. However, this was only the beginning as a western country again colonized the Philippines: the United States of America. Like the Spaniards, the Americans also brought along a set of new beliefs to the natives.

III. The Introduction of Modern Sexuality: American Occupation and the 1900s

This section is an extension of identifying the system of thought that resulted from important turns in history. The American colonization is also considered an important event in the country that significantly affected the Filipino's way of thinking and life after the Spanish's influence.

After over 300 years of colonization, the Philippines declared its independence from Spain in 1898 after revolutions made by the *Katipunan* or KKK. The *Katipuneros* were comprised of middle-class rebels and Filipino priests who disagreed with the Spanish rulings. This was also the year when the first arrival of the Americans in the Philippines was recorded. The Americans introduced the government system to the Philippines through the Schurman Commission in 1899 and the Taft Commission in 1900. The Americans also opened the doors of education to women. The education system during the Spanish era gave more importance and priority to men while women were confined to religious and vocational teachings.

The Americans were responsible for introducing the modern notions on sexual relations among the Filipinos within its 50 years of influence in the country, which was different from the accustomed Spanish mores. Carale claimed that this happened due to the democratization, urbanization of the society, modernization of communication and transportation, and increased mobility the country experienced under the wings of their second colonizer (1970). Moreover, Carale specifically pointed out the modernization of the mass media because it had brought consciousness to the Filipinos on social revolutions that were happening in the world, including the topic of sex (344). Some Filipino gay men saw the media depictions of the US and realized it was freer to be gay in America as they were more liberated than in the Philippines. In Foe's study, some participants claimed that the media focus on America about talks on same-sex was one of the reasons why they gained ideas of what it was like to practice their sexuality in another place (2014). Garcia has mirrored the same notion and said that this era was responsible for implicating "homosexuality" to "sexualization" in their mental, behavioral, and personality aspects; while stating that these things were one of the products of the American education system and when

Americans "Americanized" the government and mass media (2013, 53-54). Garcia added that the birth of this specific sexual consciousness in this era resulted from promulgating and regulating sexuality by utilizing academic learning and the mass media (2004). Most of the resources used for this study tried to explain the evolution of same-sex behaviors and situations in the Philippines during and after American colonization. However, these studies only focused on the psychological and medical aspects while quickly jumping to the 1960s and Marcos dictatorship period in 1972. It was a challenge to trace and formulate solid historical accounts of the history of the Filipino LGBTQ+ people in other sectors during this era. The emphasis on the clinical facet of such may be attributed to the law's treatment of same-sex sexual activities as an illness. In the Penal Code of the Philippines, promulgated as early as 1932, "homosexuality" was not criminalized (Carale 1970, 351). Unless violence and intimidation were involved, it would be treated as a criminal act. However, it was treated as a disease:

> Homosexuality is another sexual activity which is unknown to the penal code of the Philippines. Happily that this is so. There is an unmistakable trend to regard unnatural sexual activities as diseases instead of treating them as criminal acts (ibid., 351).

Some studies claim that gay men were starting to get comfortable showing and practicing their sexuality in public at this time. In the 1950s, gay males in Tondo, Manila, although not openly shown, were already conducting gay beauty pageants and engaging in same-sex relationships (Lopez 2007 cited in Foe 2014). The male gay participants in Foe's study compared the living status of gay men in the Philippines and the US during the 1960s. One said that the Philippines was like a paradise for them as they felt the freedom to showcase their sexuality because being gay could never be a cause for imprisonment. Also, there were no laws against cross-dressing, and no police harassment or entrapment was operated against them. In America, these practices would lead to incarceration and claims of misconduct against law enforcers (Foe 2014).

Garcia stated that the discourses that entailed this phenomenon, and other modern notions introduced by Americans, such as feminism and psychology, were responsible for creating a "homo/hetero dichotomy" in the Philippine society (2013, 54). Consequently, bigotry seemed to align with such phenomena. In a study conducted by Sechrest and Olson in 1971, freedom of expression was observed in conveying same-sex sexual desires via sexual graffiti and invitations found engraved on the wall of the comfort rooms in four educational institutions in Manila. However, the frequency of hostility toward LGBTQ people and related activities on the inscriptions was likewise observed. In Hart's exploration of the Negros Island region provinces, cross-dressing among gay men was already observed in the 1960s (1968). However, unlike in Manila, one interviewee claimed that the police usually took cross-dressers to the police station, not for arrest but only to be reprimanded. They also experienced slight judgments and josh from the locals by being called names. However, no hostility nor violence was inflicted upon them. Despite this, they look forward to *fiestas* (local festivals), for these were the times they could practice full-blown cross-dressing in hopes of finding potential sexual partners. However, the same research also discovered that same-sex intercourse was already being practiced and rampant among men secretly.

During the American occupation, writer Phifer described a typical night in Manila as frequented by "the throng of gay promenaders that had ranged the streets devoted at night to the business of pleasure instead of the pleasure of business" (1909, 26). The war gave birth to male prostitution in the country. Prostitution was a military necessity, as Bonnet claimed, and the arrival of American soldiers caused an "explosion of sexual services for the rest and recreation of the troops" (2017, 45-46). The war had also left everyone desperate for cash, as one male gay partaker in Foe's study revealed that he was already servicing American soldiers at sixteen for five dollars to support his family (2014). Poverty and prostitution gave way to the rise of call boys. Call boys are young boys who solicit money for sex. Aside from local gay men, their main targets were male gay tourists who mostly came from countries wherein homosexuality was illegal and young boys were unwilling to engage in same-sex intercourse (Mathews 1987). Call boys met most of their clientele from gay bars that proliferated in Manila in the late 1960s.

Both studies produced by Foe and Tan characterized gay men in this time as dignified, albeit from a different standpoint. Foe mentioned that his participants had great jobs at the time of the study, and construed that they strove harder to gain respect to compensate for their sexual orientation (2014). One respondent in his study, who came from the upper class, agreed with this, saying that gay men demonstrated greater intelligence than their bullies and did not allow them to be ridiculed. Meanwhile, Tan integrated sexuality with social classes as he explained that the 1960s was the time when gay men were considered "elite" – mostly comprised of middle to high-class "decent gay" men who studied in the US and some countries in Europe; and cross-dressing was "not daily-routinized *bakla* drag," (2001, 123-124). Both studies also attributed the emergence of societal gay acceptance to the former first lady Imelda Marcos because of her affection for beauty, arts, and cinema. Gay people were inspired by the former first lady's hairstyle, fashion, and taste.

As opposed to the elites, the low-income *bakla* was branded by Tan as the *parlorista* (2001). According to Tan, the main functions of the *parloristas*, or gay men working in beauty salons, were to entertain people during fiesta and service young boys who could not touch their girlfriends. Tan added that the proliferation of *parlorista* in the 1960s could be attributed to the economic problems in the country, which this study compares to the results of war during the American occupation and continued to persist until martial law years during the Marcos dictatorship era from 1972 to 1986. The term would later cage the *bakla* into this categorization. In this period, they were also boxed into female-oriented labors such as *tuba* vendors, *abaka* weavers, housemaids, and beauticians and manicurists (Hart 1968).

The notion that men will never fall in love with gay men if not for the money yielded in this era can be attributed to the business of male prostitution (Garcia 2009). However, Mathews (1987) discovered that some call boys developed feelings for their clients, became possessive at times, and tend to make their relationship last for a considerable amount of time while simultaneously prolonging monetary and material benefits from their gay lovers. Although some of his subjects were gay call boys, some still identified as straight men because they claimed they only engaged in prostitution to support their families, education, and lifestyle. They also started very early in this business because the rate was valued on their youth and beauty. Mathews concluded that Filipino male prostitutes were the opposite of the western notions that all male prostitutes were gay people, exploited, and only the adults were willing to undertake same-sex sexual activities.

The preferred sexual partners of gay men, from the late 60s to 70s, were straight men. Sexual intercourse with a fellow *bakla* was taboo. As Tan suggested:

> A proper *bakla* would never have sex with another *bakla*, for that would have been tantamount to lesbianism. A *bakla* was a "girl," and "girls" go for "real men" (2001, 121).

However, this belief changed because of western influence. In the late 70s, gay men started seeking another gay man as their sexual partner. This behavior originated from middle-class gay men who picked up western notions from their experiences abroad (Tan 2001). Unfortunately, this practice started the AIDS pandemic in the country. The first case of AIDS in the Philippines was recorded in 1984 by a gay man who contracted the infection overseas (Manaloto et al. 1994). Ten years later, the country would have reported 459 HIV-I infections, 100 of which were diagnosed as AIDS (ibid.). AIDS had stigmatized gay men (Pettis 2004; Garcia 2009), and people would initially think that if a person is gay, he could be HIV positive. Despite these, the epidemic gave positive results regarding the development of gay rights activists and organizations at the beginning of the 1990s. Some of their primary goals included AIDS awareness and prevention campaigns. This development can be considered an achievement because the first attempt to create one, the *Kakasarian* in the 70s, only lasted a year because the members considered there was no need to fight for gay rights in the Philippines (Tan 2001). Student gay organizations, led by some universities in Manila, were also formed. In 1994, the Pro-Gay Philippines organized the first pride march in Manila to end discrimination against the LGBTQ people, march against the imposition of the Value Added Tax, and commemorate the 1969 Stonewall Riot in New York (Tan 2001; Evangelista 2017). Among the established groups in this era that still exist are ProGay Philippines and UP Babaylan, while the groups focusing on HIV-AIDS awareness and prevention are Remedios AIDS Foundation and Katlo.

This section explained how the American beliefs on sexual orientations had changed the Filipino's perceptions of the LGBTQ people into a more modern notion significantly different from the beliefs formulated in the Spanish era. The two sets of beliefs formed during these two eras should be noted because these can still be observed in the Philippines society today. Following Foucault's point of "identifying a system of thought that resulted from contingent turns of history" (Gutting and Oksala 2018, par. 27), this study proposes that the Filipinos' current beliefs about the Filipino LGBTQ people were significantly influenced by their colonizers. This will be expounded in the discussion chapter.

IV. From *Asog* to *Bakla* – The Evolution (or Devaluation) of the Term

The historical narration in the previous section discovered that intersectionality among gay men in the American era occurred. This discovery opened up the discussion regarding the difference in gay men's attitudes and societal status throughout the years. Foucault stated that Genealogy requires searching for the processes of descent and emergence (Foucault 1984 cited in Garland 2014, 372) to understand further the transitions that occurred in society. This section will explain the transitions in the terminologies used on gay men, reflecting some Philippine society's thoughts on them.

Several terms were synonymous with *asog* during the early times (see Garcia 2013, 53). No accounts before the colonization stated that cowardice and being perplexed were unique to being an *asog*. Such grammatical evolution was observed during Spanish colonization, wherein the great *asog* became the weakling *bacla*. Aside from the early writings in the Spanish era mentioned earlier, Filipino literary writings during the American era had already adopted the term "*bakla*" to portray timidity. This was evident in the following books:

Patricio Mariano's translation of Jose Rizal's *El Filibusterismo* (1911, 102):

> *Ang sabi ko ngâ'y hindî tayo dapat mabaklá. Ang pagtuturò ng̃ wikàng kastilà ay mangyayaring pahintulutan ng̃ walâng anománg kapang̃aniban.*
> (Context: We should not be afraid for learning the Spanish language will be permitted without any threats.)

Agawan ng Dangal by Fausta Cortes (1914, 77):

> *Si Beteng ay parang iniinis. Nabakla tuloy na baka di na ng̃a sumipot ang komparsa.*
> (Context: Beteng got irritated and afraid that his associates might not show up.)

Jose Maria Rivera's *Cinematografo Dulang Tagalog* (1920, 11):

> *Ako'y may nakikilala*
> *Na isang binatang tang̃a,*
> *Na ang lahat ng̃ makita*
> *Tinatakhan, nababakla*
> (Context: I met a young fool man who is at a loss and perplexed by everything he sees.)

However, in an English-Spanish-Tagalog dictionary authored by Sofronio G. Calderon (1915), "*bakla*" was never defined as coward, fear, or timidity; and had not defined "gay" in sex or gender-focused manner:

Affect, v. [aféct]
Conmover, afectar.
Pumukaw, makabaklá.

Affectation, n. [afectécien]
Afectacion.
Pukaw, baklá.

Emotion, n. [imóciœn]
Emocion, agitation del ánimo.
Baklá, kabá, kutog; sigla; sikdó.

Emotional, adj. [imócional]
Concitativo.
Nakababaklá; nakakapagpasigla.

Flurry, n. [flérri]
Ráfaga; agitacion, conmocion.
Kislap; baklá, kilíg.

Gay, adj. [guey]
Alegre.
Masayá.

American writers who published their books detailing their lives and experiences in the Philippines during the American occupation also used the word "gay" several times not to address the gay men but as an alternative to the words happy, merry, and colorful. Fee (1912) described the mountain waters in Romblon as gayly colored, Filipinos only use gay music at funerals, and girls in Escuela Municipal in Manila wore gayly dresses. Russel (1907) had described the jackets of the Moros as made of gay cotton and had the gayest of colors. Finally, Conger (1904) used the term "gayly" to describe colors used by Filipinos for coffins and the ornamental toothpicks used by the natives in a flower bouquet.

Eventually, the words transformed into different meanings. The Filipino term *bakla* is used to refer to gay men, while *tomboy* is for lesbian people. Aside from the different western influences due to multiple colonization, the changes in the meaning of *bakla* can be attributed to the difficulty of enacting sex and gender diversity within the passing of the centuries; along with the status downgrade of Filipino women; and when the Tagalog regions of Luzon had started using the term to correspond to the meaning in question (Garcia 2013; Garcia 2004). The elite status enjoyed by upper-class *bakla,* through identifying themselves as "gay" in the late 60s, also significantly changed in the 80s as the term downgraded because of the practices by the *parloristang bakla* (parlor gay) concerning overt cross-dressing practices and sexual desire, which made Tan (2001) assert that "gay" became synonymous with *bakla*, in which *bakla* means being entertaining, funny, and an outlet for male libidos. This phenomenon can explain why the term "gay" – from the American era's "merry" – turned into *bakla* in the Philippine setting. Sadly, these words encapsulate stigmata in the country. *Baklas* have constantly been subjected to jokes, teasing, and often called names (i.e., sissy) and ridiculed for their non-manly characteristics. On a typical day, while minding their own business, people would often shout "*bakla!*" or "*bayot!*"

at them in a derogatory manner (see Foe 2014; Hart 1968; Ceperiano et al. 2016). The *bakla* was also considered a shame to the family, a disease, and possessed some kind of evil spirit – which was influenced by the Catholic religion (see Ocampo 2014; Baytan 2000; Mathews 1987).

Modern terminologies and definitions, such as 'homosexuality' which referred to a person sexually attracted to the same sex, were introduced to the Philippines in the late nineteenth century (Brewer 1999), whereas the usage of gay and lesbian terms started in the 70s (Tan 2001). However, the definition of such terms is different in the Philippine context compared to western notions. The early belief in the Philippines was that sexuality was based on one's gendered behavior (Nadal and Corpus 2012; Garcia 2009). This description can be explained as an outsider's judgment of a person's sexual orientation because of their gender expression. For example, an effeminate male is considered *bakla*, while a female with a masculine appearance is considered a *tomboy*. Being *bakla* emphasizes the social role rather than sexual orientation (Mathews 1987). Unfortunately, the term "homosexual" had been directly linked only to *bakla*, with connotations that a homosexual is "a genitally male man whose identity is defined as a function of his sexual desire for other men" (Garcia 2004; Garcia 2013, 55) for such Garcia (2008) attributed to the lack of awareness and critical discourse on homosexuality during the early times. The sexual role, as a basis of sexuality in the Philippines, is apparent when a straight male is involved in sexual activity with a *bakla* to gain money or material things from them. The earlier belief mentioned in this paper, wherein *bakla* only seeks straight men as their sexual partner, echoes this argument as what Garcia had also explained: the notion of the urban and rural poor Filipino is that in the mentioned sexual activity, the only legitimate gay man is the *bakla* (2013).

Terminologies get challenging when other members of the LGBTQ community experience misgendering - often unintentional. This is because such terms are not included in the Filipino language. Before the terms "transgender" and "bisexual" entered into the Filipino lexicon, Filipinos had a binary thought that there were only *bakla* and *tomboy* (Tang and Poudel 2018, 13). The term *bakla* became the umbrella term (Mathews 1987; Mathews 1999) for people with same-sex sexual activities among men, transgender people, effeminate males, and boys who were less active in games and outdoor activities (Sechrest and Flores 1969 cited in Mathews 1987) and even non-sexual activities shared with a person of the same-sex (Mathews 1987, 66-67). Currently, the *bakla*-mindset of seeking only a straight man as a sexual partner had changed to pursuing a fellow *bakla* because of western influences. However, there is no Filipino term for this yet (Foe 2014). A bisexual man is called *silahis*, but the term is only often used on men (ibid.; Garcia 2009). There is still no formal Filipino term for a bisexual woman. Due to a lack of formal terms, the Society of Transsexual Women of the Philippines, in 2008, coined the term *transpinay* to designate a transgender woman, which soon paved the way for the coinage of its counterpart, *transpinoy,* which was being used by some transgender men (UNDP, CHR 2018).

The meanings of the discussed terminologies changed again as time progressed. Nowadays, being *bakla* is no longer being an effeminate man. It now mirrors a gay man's affection or sexual desire towards the same sex. The same notion also relates to lesbian people, but the more appropriate terms would be lesbian or *lesbiyana*. In a nationwide survey conducted by UNDP and USAID (2014), it was discovered that gay men are okay to be called gay, *bakla*, *bading*, and in Mindanao – the southern area of the country – *bayot*, because they consider these words as a sign to their identities, universal and Americanized in nature, neutral, politically correct, and acceptable to all. Some even said they could overcome the adverse effects associated with the terms. However, *tomboys* preferred to steer away from the cultural reclamation by calling them lesbian, *lesbiyana*, and, in Visayas, *palakin-on*, instead. Their reasoning behind this is very similar to the rationale of the gay men, adding that the mentioned terms were non-discriminatory and had no other implications. Moreover, when I asked a couple of Filipino lesbian women about the proper usage of the terminologies, both said they preferred to be called 'lesbians.' According to them, a hint of discrimination and negative connotations are attached when addressed as *tomboy*. When asked about the difference between the terms lesbian and *lesbiyana*, they said the latter is more suitable for femmes in a relationship with lesbian people.

The *bakla* in the Philippines were able to create their own vocabulary with terminologies that only they could understand. In the 1960s, *swardspeak* (*gayspeak or baklese*) emerged. *Swardspeak* is a "subcultural lingo of urban gay men that uses elements from Tagalog, English, Spanish, and Japanese, as well as celebrities' names and trademark brands" (Ricordeau 2009 cited in UNDP, USAID 2014, 16). When discussing intimate conversions, the *bakla* often use the *swardspeak* lingo among themselves, for it is majorly comprised of extreme sexual terms (Alba 2006). *Swardspeak* became famous in the 1970s with the help of the media pioneered by *bakla* media professionals (Reyes 1977 cited in ibid.). It also made its way to other parts of the country, such as Cebu and Dumaguete in the Visayas, paving the way to the emergence of Visayan *swardspeak* in the late 70s (Hart and Hart 1990). It was just a matter of time before the term infected the Filipinos and had unconsciously made its way to the vernacular. Soon, *swardspeak* emerged into "gay lingo" in the 1990s and "*bekimon*" in the early 2010s, in which terminologies were continuously updated. Some examples of *swardspeak* that Filipinos use until now are anaconda (a snake, *ahas* in Tagalog, refers to a person who took away someone's lover), Sharon Stone (*shabu* – a slang term for drug methamphetamine), Tom Jones (hungry; derived from the last syllable of its Tagalog counterpart *gutom*), and *jowa* (boyfriend or girlfriend) (Constantino 2018).

> Gay language comes from a carnival of sources... The gays in the Philippines speak a common tongue. It is their code, their very sword. It is their way of communicating without letting the straight world understand the drift of their words (Remoto 2008, para. 8).

One of the discourses surrounding why these phenomena occurred is an attempt to circumvent the stigmata inflicted upon the *bakla*. Alba explained scholar Ronald Baytan's rationale in his essay Language, Sex, and Insults: Notes on Garcia and Remoto's the Gay Dict. According to him, the *bakla* invented the lingos to create terminologies that would sound neutral and less derogatory, convert their desires into self-affirmation, and talk about sex freely (2006). They know that the topic of sex is taboo in the Philippines and that such conversation, combined with them being *bakla*, would inflict ire, disgust, and judgment from people. Because of the gay lingo, they would not have to use the vernacular terms of sexual acts they would want to perform on the male's reproductive organ anymore – which they found very liberating (ibid.). Additionally, according to linguists Cagalingan and Igno, it was done to establish or define this group in the Filipino culture stating that these invented words captured the spirit of the "gay" era during that time (De Guzman 2017). Remoto gave thought-provoking implications on the proliferation of the gay lingo. While his notions mirrored the said discourses, he also argued that this propagation led to the appropriation of the heterosexual mainstream that fictionalized the Filipino LGBTQ people's integration into the Philippine society and trivialized the original intent of why this vocabulary even emerged in the first place (2008). This fictionalization mirrors the earlier mentioned survey conducted by UNDP and USAID stating that the Filipino gay men nowadays had already embraced these terms, to the point that they now prefer to be called such. Giving reasons that the terms had eventually evolved and built positive connotations that helped them represent their identity and sexuality to society indicates that cultural appropriation in the Philippines does not merely exist but is also celebrated. Nevertheless, combined with the talent of the Filipinos in wordplay using the languages they picked from their colonizers; and the formation of modern notions on sexual orientations, the history of the Filipino gay lingo had already proved that the "*swardspeak*-gay lingo-*bekimon*" would continue to evolve in the Philippine society as time goes by.

The point of this segment, which will be further discussed in the last section, explains that simple usage of terminologies can also inflict homophobia on LGBTQ people. From being an *asog*, that had positive and dignified meaning, it changed to *bakla* with negative connotation from the Spanish era, which contemporary Filipino gay men later reclaimed. The accounts here mirror one of Genealogy's ideas: viewing the "process of descent as the outcome of power struggles and battles over domination, use, and meaning" (Garland 2014, 373).

V. The History (or lack thereof) of Lesbian People in the Philippines

The abovementioned idea in Genealogy is also applied in discussing the history of Filipina lesbian people. However, this study later discovered that they were purposely discarded because of "power struggles and battles over domination" (ibid.) in history influenced by machismo and patriarchy. This study also considers their absence as a result of a process of descent in the Filipino LGBTQ history that contributed to the current society's system of thoughts toward Filipina lesbian people.

Before the introduction of modern vocabularies in the 70s, lesbian terminologies and slangs such as *tomboy* and *tibo* were already being used in the Philippines, as shown in Calderon's (1915) English-Spanish-Tagalog dictionary:

Tomboy, n. [tómboi]
Villano; doncella pizpireta y respingona.
Hámak; babaing magaslaw

Prickle, n. [prikl]
Pua, espina.
Tibó, tinik.

Prickly, adj. [príkli]
Lleno de puas, espinoso.
Maraming tibò, matinik.

Sting, n. [sting]
Aguijon; punzada; picadura.
Tibò; durò, tukâ, kagat.

However, it can be observed that the usages of *tibo* in the early 1900s were regular and unaffiliated with negative connotations. However, it could be surmised that the earlier version of the word *tomboy* already had a negative undertone ("*babaing magaslaw*" means a woman who acts rudely or immodest). According to the Merriam-Webster dictionary, the first known use of the word was in 1566. Skeat's dictionary on word etymologies had defined *tomboy* as "a rude girl" – which was similar to Calderon's definition in the Tagalog dictionary – and was coined "from [the combination of words] Tom and Boy" (1911, 562). The current Filipino dictionaries were already defining *tomboy* as a lesbian. In Lim's "Filipino-English English-Filipino Dictionary," the corresponding Filipino terms for lesbian people are *binalaki*, *tomboy,* and *lesbya* (2010, 16, 37, 99, 126).

There were very few studies made concerning the historical aspect of lesbian people in the Philippines (Marin 1996; Villar 2000). The mentioned authors even disclosed that such histories were essentially a series of passed-on stories from generation to generation due to the absence of known studies on them, according to anthropologists. This mirrors the Philippine research field's problem with a lack of exploration specializing only in this search radius. The lesbian people were rarely mentioned in the Spanish explorers' and conquistadors' accounts. Among the resources that this research has used, only Morga did such. However, even so, his account was vague as he did not provide further information when he said, "the women are very masculine" when describing the people of Catanduanes (1609, 107). Villar provided one brief account of the history of Filipino lesbians in Zimmerman's book From Amazon to Zami: Towards a Global Lesbian Feminism (2000). One of which was Villar's suggestion that Princess Urduja, a famous warrior princess and one of the pre-colonial chiefs, was perhaps a lesbian. The princess was quite well-known for her impeccable armed combat ability and intelligence. Accordingly, she would only marry someone who could defeat her in combat. It was also observed that she never had any relationship with a man before. However, there was no proof that she had same-sex relationships either (584). Villar again implied similar assumptions while admitting no evidence of same-sex relationships in the women-only spiritual communities that had existed for years in Mount Banahaw in southern Luzon. Marin also made the same attempt on the female members of the revolutionary soldiers and fighters, saying that "some of whom may have been lesbians" (1999, 33). Unfortunately, it is yet to uncover the complete account of such stories from the past because, according to both authors, there were no historical documents or accounts that refer to lesbian culture in pre-colonial and Hispanic societies in the Philippines. Marin claimed that there were also no attempts to reread and reinterpret historical texts and documents about lesbian people, emphasizing that the chroniclers' attempts to exclude women from their accounts generally made their existence became invisible (1999). Marin calls for the unearthing of archives and re-evaluates them. However, she said that the actions remained imminent because researchers of lesbian history were discouraged from further investigating for fear of dismissals from experts in different fields. Doran, likewise, pinpointed the same problem concerning accounting the history of the Filipina warriors and their roles in the revolution, wherein their military participation was systematically downplayed upon re-invention and re-imagination of their images from being autonomous agents to stereotypical roles such as mothers and sex objects (1998).

These research writings about lesbian history in the country only contained pieces and fragments of information, with no chronological order nor further information to back up the stories. However, this study does not dismiss these accounts. The effort to provide a picture of Filipino lesbian history is appreciated. Villar added some historical context on Filipino lesbian people, especially lesbian lexicons (2000). Even though there was no term for the word lesbian in the dialect of the *Badjaos* in Mindanao, there were words that represented sexual actions, such as *agkul-lit* or *kul-lit*, which meant vaginal manipulation by another woman. The word *binalaki*, which was used to describe the woman-to-woman relationships, is a combination of the words *babae* (woman) and *lalaki* (man). The exact meaning characterizes the word *byuts* – a term used in the 90s – coined by students in Catholic convents' exclusive all-girls schools (2000). Similarly, the term *mag-darling* (like darling) in the 1960s refers only to girls who have crushes on another girl (Sechrest and Flores 1969 cited in Mathews 1987, 66). Other Visayan terms exist like *lakin-on* or women with masculine physical characteristics, and *kuragan* or *kuragkuragang* as the sweetheart of a *lakin-on* (Hart 1968, 55-56).

By the 20th century, aside from some stories surfacing, like cross-dressed women and their long-term same-sex live-in relationships, Filipino lesbian people became invisible in society (Villar 2000). The lesbian people in this era were very secretive as they only associated with their social or business circle. They also organized occasional exclusive dance parties, which could be considered the closest "out" activities they could ever be. Like the elite status of gays in the 1960s, these exclusive dance parties comprised middle to upper-class lesbian people. Although, unlike the elite gay men, lesbian people were very private. They also perceived coming out as an unnecessary action because it was deemed as a western concept (Marin 1999). Coming out was considered a daunting process, especially in a society heavily influenced by the Catholic religion (Mohideen 1996). They were careful not to expose themselves to the risk of being considered as an outcast. The confirmation of a lesbian person's sexual orientation in their community, including their relationship status, was never fulfilled and was always only confirmed in the form of gossip. One example can be found in Hart's study on *bayot* and *lakin-on* in the province of Negros Island region (1968). Local communities had plenty of stories regarding many *lakin-on* living with their women partner juxtaposed with terms "like a husband," "like a regularly married couple," and "have regular family quarrels" (56). However, there was a variance in definitions of *lakin-on* in this region depending on the time period. In the 1920s, a *lakin-on* was a woman who did a man's job (57). In the 1950s to 1960s, it became a reference to a Visayan lesbian person's sexual orientation with unique identifiable characteristics such as muscular physicality, ownership of *kaingin* (swiddens) in nearby mountains, someone who works in the fields, distinct clothing of tight-fitting denim or corduroy trousers, Beatles or flat top hairstyles, and only women as their object of love.

Even Tan (2001) had observed the invisibility of lesbian people in the 1970s, acknowledging their earlier reiterated "low profile status," as they also lacked representation in public movements. According to Rozul, the lesbian issues were inadvertently drowned because of the women's and feminist studies, which he claimed were heterosexual in nature, and included them with the gay movement conceptualized as a female version of a gay man (2017). Only in the early 1990s did women's movements start to discuss issues concerning lesbian people in the country (Villar 2000). The turning point of lesbian activism in the Philippines happened in 1993 when a lesbian contingent joined the International Women's Day march for the first time (Mohideen 1996). This opened doors for Filipina lesbian people to gather and collectively voice out the issues they experienced as a lesbian. The First National Lesbian Rights Conference, later on, followed it in December 1996, organized by three major lesbian groups in the country (Villar 2000). By this time, contrary to the coming out notions in the 1960s as unnecessary and very western, the coming out process would be considered an important political act (Mohideen 1996). In that article, the mentioned statement was followed by the words "as it did in the western movement in the 70s" (par. 6). This statement re-emphasized the western's influence in the country that eventually made them decide to change their status quo. They realized that, similar to lesbian movements in the west, coming out was an integral part of helping them develop a base to organize movements. Additionally, the aims of the first Pride March in 1994 - naming it the "Stonewall Manila" – were aligned to its corresponding crusade in the US as revolutionary and political in nature (Evangelista 2017). Currently, the Galang Philippines is one of the biggest lesbian groups in the Philippines that supports Filipino lesbian, bisexual, and transmen in poor urban communities to help them achieve social and economic equality while creating an enabling policy environment for them.

Complicated family relationships, along with expectations to follow religious teachings and heteronormative practices, are one of the reasons why the *bakla* and lesbian people develop personal problems. Like the *bakla*, lesbian people were also considered to have brought shame to their families because of their sexual orientation. According to Marin, "anything that is deemed unpleasant, challenging, or threatening to the existing fabric of family relations is not viewed favorably" (1996, 39). Some lesbian people experienced corporal punishment when their parents or relatives learned about their sexual orientation (See Umbac 2005; Ceperiano et al.

2016; Atadero et al. 2014). Some would even be pressured to believe they were not normal (Mohideen 1996). Because of these, some lesbian people would hide or deny their sexual orientation, tone down their gender expression, and continue to perform traditional gender roles, like having a relationship or marrying the opposite sex to satisfy their parents' expectations (Ceperiano et al. 2016). Even though the lesbian people wanted to come out to their families, they were always faced with denial and animosity. As a consequence of religious guilt, some would resort to self-policing (Umbac 2005). These self-imposed disciplinary practices were done to protect both themselves and their families. These restraints and pressure from their families resulted in many experiencing emotional problems, dysphoria, and internal homophobia, thus leaving their sexuality publicly undiscussed. Hence, the privacy and the secrecy.

Aside from family issues, public ridicule, and discrimination, lesbian women also experience sexual harassment. Both the lesbian people and the *lesbiyana* in Ceperiano and colleagues' (2016) study experienced indecent gazes and remarks from men expressing their fascination on their physical features and saying they are a waste because of their sexual orientation. Additionally, the gossips about them usually contain negative information. One of which is the judgment on a *lesbiyana's* choice to choose a lesbian partner even though they were both poor (because the combination of these circumstances is discriminated against and ridiculed, mostly in the low socioeconomic class in the Philippines); and the reason for seeking a same-sex relationship was because she was "already defiled" (20-27). There are also reports of sexual harassment on lesbian people that happened in their workplaces and domestic abuse caused by their previous male partners. Cases proving that lesbian people, along with bisexual and transgender people, are "more exposed to violence and discrimination, suffer different kinds of cruelty committed by family members, and often prevented from accessing social welfare programs of the government" were presented by Hega and colleagues (2017, 15). Umbac listed reasons why these events persist in society: some still believe that rape can cure a lesbian person's sexual orientation, men still hold power, thus making the violence more invasive, and most lesbian women do not report rape and sexual harassment cases because they know that they would be subject to humiliation from medical practitioners and law enforcement officers (2005).

Presently, the word *tomboy* has negative connotations in the Philippine setting. Some lesbian partakers in Nadal and Corpus' (2013) study felt that it was easier to practice their sexuality in the US than in the Philippines because there was pressure on them to fit the stereotype due to the rigid terms and homophobic tendencies of some Filipino people. Like the *baklang parlorista*s, *tomboys* were stereotyped as a low-income masculine lesbian person, occasionally called *butch*, whose jobs often included security guard (Ceperiano et al. 2016). Other societal perceptions include being drunks, gamblers, non-monogamous, emotionally unstable, and violent (Umbac 2005; Marin 1999). Marin (1999) gave an interesting overview of the group partition of Filipino lesbian people in the 1990s. She divided them into two groups: the lesbian feminists (LF) and organic lesbian communities (OLC). The lesbian feminists were radical as their belief was founded on notions that lesbian people, through same-sex relationships, threaten and challenge the patriarchal society by denying men access to their bodies. The LFs were the ones who continually pushed lesbian issues on the political platform, actively organized lesbian gatherings and activities, and established the need to create global links through international lesbian groups. On the other hand, the organic lesbian communities were non-political, had no links to any movements, and were not governed by any lesbian feminist frameworks. Their sexuality and interpersonal relationships united the OLCs, and their primary function was to provide a support system to other lesbian people. Marin said that the majority of Filipino lesbian people belonged in this category. Furthermore, she gave two more distinguishable principles of these two lesbian groups in this era. First, the OLCs believed they were born gay, while the LFs believed their sexual orientation was a conscious political choice. The difference between these two is that the OLCs had always been sure about their sexuality admitting that they disagree with their feminine side and never felt any attraction towards the opposite sex, while the LFs believed that their sexual orientation was born out of feminist analysis and efforts to turn away from heteropatriarchy. Second, the LFs frown on the sexual and gender roles that the OLCs followed. The relationship dynamics of OLCs were derived from the heterosexist patterns: the "male" dominated the intimacy by being the sole giver in the sexual activities. Similarly, the "male" OLC also preferred manual labor and dangerous jobs because they believed that they could also perform tasks associated with men. The last two statements harmonized with the other studies mentioned in this study. The latter is similar to Hart's study in the Visayas wherein one of the characteristics of a *lakin-on* was a preference for fieldwork, while the first statement resembles the earlier mentioned notion of the gay men seeking another gay man as their sexual partners in the 60s and 70s.

> One of the most sacred tenets of this dynamic is that the *pars* (male) do not allow themselves even to be touched by their partner. To allow this would mean becoming "women" themselves, and as "women," they would be stripped of their power over the *mars* (female) in the relationship... *Pars* have their own ethics... unspoken policy to check on each other, making sure they do not succumb to "feminine" tendencies (Marin 1999, 47).

Despite all their differences, the agenda of lesbian separatism during this time was never raised. The LFs made an effort to change their attitudes towards the OLCs' sexual and gender roles by acknowledging that their disapproval was a form of self-righteousness that was condescending and discriminatory to the other party. However, this attitude resulted in steering away from collaboration and alienation of many women who could potentially be part of the lesbian rights movements in the country (Marin 1999).

VI. Discussion and Conclusion: Diagnosing the Roots of Homophobia based on Genealogy

One of the aims of this study is to contribute to finding ways to resolve the discrimination against Filipino LGBTQ people in the Philippines. However, to effectively do that, one must consider the pragmatics of society. Their discriminating depiction is deeply rooted in the country's culture, as shown by its history. This study considers that the existing problems can be diagnosed by Michel Foucault's Genealogy, which is "a system of thought resulting from contingent turns of history, not the outcome of rationally inevitable trends" (Gutting and Oksala 2018, par. 27). Out of the many interpretations of Foucault's Genealogy, the mentioned definition best describes the situation. The history is vital in showing how homophobic tendencies and discriminatory notions against them were constructed in the Filipino mentality. It was explained that these beliefs were not inherent in the Philippine culture and only formed after the arrival of Western colonizers. This study has also provided evidence showing that the evolution (or devaluation) of Filipino LGBTQ people's status in society, such as from being one of the authoritative figures to embodiments of cowardice and sexual perversion, was not caused by "rationally inevitable trends" but was triggered by "contingent turns of history" that were the western influences. Genealogy is not to solely search for the origins but it includes pinpointing the processes of descent and emergence (Foucault 1984 cited in Garland 2014). The study has laid foundations to explain both: the fall of both women and the *asog's* once-great characters were caused by the strict imposition of Catholicism and the overwhelming practice of machismo to replace the matriarchal society. Following the mentioned situations considered as the "descent" in this study, the process of emergence continues through introduction of modern philosophies and trends on sexual orientations inspired by the liberal concepts and urbanization produced during the American era. Such ideas contributed to the formation of current society's belief in women and LGBTQ+ people.

One of the "indispensable restraints" of Genealogy is the necessity to be sensitive to the recurrence of events "to isolate the different scenes where they engaged in different roles" (Rabinow 1984, 76). Following this idea, this study emphasizes how western influences have affected the lives of the Filipino people several times. Every conqueror from different eras had their own set of notions, independent from one another, that soon became normative in Philippine society—for example, the various characteristics of the *bakla* and lesbian women from pre-colonial to the 20th century. Every era has its own definition of being gay, i.e., elite gays in the 1960s and *parloristang bakla* in the 1970s. Even the meanings of the terminologies used to identify them had changed throughout the years. This study has included explanations of the terminologies that are etymological, not just to understand the Filipino language but to show the weight of discrimination in this country to the point that homophobia can also be inflicted through simple usage of such words. According to Garland, "Genealogy views the process of descent as the outcome of power struggles and battles over domination, use, and meaning" (2014, 373). The aim of presenting these events was not only to describe the history of Filipino LGBTQ people based on historical accounts and terminologies but to discuss that the root of homophobia was deeper and culturally engraved that the society had become vulnerable to changes because of its inability to withstand the influx of modern ideologies brought about by western influences.

Foucault also stated that Genealogy is "an insurrection of subjugated knowledge and subjugated knowers, marginalized knowledge, and knowers that could be seen as resistance against totalizing and dominant knowledge, eliminating others through violence" (Lončarević 2013, 68). Despite the rich, albeit unfortunate, history of Filipino LGBTQ people, it is also an alarming find that most of the studies mentioned mainly detailed the history of gay men. The study has emphasized that the historical accounts of Filipina lesbian people lacked or were non-existent. History has proved that it was challenging to be a female in a patriarchal society built with machismo beliefs. The lack of historical records of Filipina lesbian people emphasizes that the discrimination against them during the Spanish era extended to the point of total exclusion on paper. Discrimination is carried on in contemporary times. Marin (1999) stated that the culture had become silent witnesses to lesbian people's existence and continued to persist because of the country's dominant heteronormative culture. This study backs Foucault's belief of rebellion against dominated and side-lined knowledge of the Philippines regarding Filipino lesbian people and women. Doran claimed that contemporary historians focused on the racial divide and prevailing political forces that downplayed women and lesbian people in historical records (1998). In addition, the historians had set the pattern of portraying the lesbian people based on prevailing gender constructs, existing unequal gender relations, emphasis on sexual roles (ibid.), and only if what they did was extraordinary in the eyes of the chroniclers (Marin 1999). These are some instances that hinder gender equality from progressing, not just in historical records but also in the entire country.

History has also paved the way for understanding how and why the Philippines is conservative, Catholic, and patriarchal. Genealogy aims to "trace the forces that gave birth to our present-day practices to identify the historical conditions they still depend on" (Garland 2014, 373). The basis of moral values, even today, is religion. The Catholic influence is apparent, especially in Filipino families, and being religious or following the church's teachings is expected. This study has also provided documentation of homophobia within the family that later affects an LGBTQ person emotionally and psychologically. Garland said that to be able to write the "history of the present," we should start by identifying a present-day practice that is both taken for granted and problematic. Filipinos consider the family as the basic but essential unit of society. However, history has shown that even the unit supposed to be accepting also expressed prejudice among its LGBTQ family members. History has also proved how influential a family can be in Philippine society. Following this line of thinking, this research aims to mirror Foucault's intentions by disturbing "what was previously thought of as immobile" (Garland 2014, 372). This study is invoking these: from the past to the present, a person who is guided by the overt-conservative interpretation of Catholicism, powerful institutions demonstrating overwhelming machismo, and a society robbed of their original beliefs and replaced by outsiders' philosophies had become the unbecoming characteristics of homophobia and sex and gender discrimination in the Philippines. This study recommends that researchers consider this diagnosis and these characteristics when looking for possible solutions to sex and gender discrimination and homophobia in the future generation of Philippine society to help transform the country into a more accepting community for Filipino LGBTQ people.

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