Memory, Crisis and Culture:

A Spatio-Temporal Analysis

Edited by Isabella Fiore Di Napolia

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Interdisciplinary Discourses

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Introduction

Memory and its collective realities emerging through war, propaganda, unity of culture and internationalism within a spatio-temporal landscape are examined in this collection of essays.

Maryjane Dunn looks at the cultural significance of the Camino de Santiago in her essay *The Intangible Cultural Heritage of the Medieval Camino de Santiago* and the attempt to ensure its listing in UNESCO's World Heritage sites. Examining meaning, symbolism and culture, we see how connections are transmitted through time and space, through oral traditions, storytelling, culturemes, rituals and various intangible yet significant ways, permeating a global fraternity of pilgrims through collective memory.

This global unity is seen in *How do Tourist Stakeholders relate to the Shrine of the Sanctuary of Our Lady of Mellieha?* from **Alfred Mifsud**, looking at the sanctuary within its ecosystem and the ethnographic understanding of the shrine, drawing tourists and pilgrims alike through a shared interest and memory, whether motivated by religiosity or tourism equally fuelling the international bonds of the enterprise, such an overlap similarly seen on the journey across Britain to its furthest points examined autoethnographically in *Is the End to End (Land's End to John O'Groats or vice versa) a pilgrimage?* by family members **Janet Lees, Bob Warwicker and Hannah Warwicker.** Through their ethnographic research connecting their personal experiences to broader cultural and social meanings and understandings they examine what pilgrimage is and the meanings behind this journey and the renewed understanding it brings. They all walk at different stages of their lives, at different points in time, taking slightly varying routes and with different motivations and yet their essay elucidates their shared experiences, memory and narratives, the shared

community felt and gained. Shared in time and space within the identity of other End to Enders and the memories of their associated communities and rituals, which in **Vijay Prakash Singh's,** *Ritual Bathing in Hindu Pilgrimage* we see how said rituals are integral and advocated in Hindi scripture. The subsequent pilgrimages borne from motivation towards the sacred sees collective devotion, solidarity and a sense of oneness.

Vrishali in her paper *From Fragmentation to Fusion: Rethinking the Making of the Early Medieval Europe* demonstrates this historiographical focus that can shift and wane in accordance with the patriotism of the historian, with one unfavourable faction or another being 'otherised' in potentially revisionist readings of history depending on the perspective of the author.

Such propaganda becomes central to governments and communities looking to take extreme action against other countries or propagate the colonial cause such as the imperialist project of the Italian nationalists of the 20th century in their desired acquisition of colonies in Africa seen as a solution to a plethora of issues on home soil. Such endeavours require the support of the nation to enact and **Serena Minniti** in her essay *Emigration and colonies: Italian nationalists and the propaganda for the conquest of Libya* exemplifies this ideology and the way it was propagated throughout the country through the promotion of often flawed nationalist propaganda to enhance imperialist sentiment through ideologically motivated imperialist rhetoric.

The dissemination of propaganda to prepare for an interventionist approach was noted pre WW1 in Portugal also and is exemplified by examples within Portuguese literature analysed in *"Damn the war." Shadows and light in three Portuguese short stories about the First World War* from **Sérgio Neto**. The frame of reference of the three stories chosen range from the nationalist approaches legitimising the war effort to more moderate visions emphasising the economic and human costs balanced against the nationalist objectives to anti conflict pacifist writings.

Literary testimonies of war and propaganda, as well as the nucleus of memory, are additionally exemplified in *The Fading Background of Thanatosonic Testimonial Poems: On Paratexts and WWII Media Culture* by **Dobrawa Lisak-Gębala** and her understanding of the revival of essential oral cultures within thanatosonic poems. These literary traditions driven by bans on writing in prison camps meaning memorisation of oral literature and mediums were their tool of preservation of content and the saviour of disembodied perishing voices. Another such medium of wartime memory is also photography as **Anna Bradshaw** exemplifies in *Reconciling history through photography in W.G. Sebald's Austerlitz*, photography bridging the gap between reality and memory, allowing witnesses to reconnect with the past as mnemonic tools, just as art can possess the same power.

As well as providing us with an insight into memory and a glimpse into the space and time of personal history **Christina Mammone** in her T*he Image of Reconciliation: Evaluating the Depiction of Reconciliation and Forgiveness in Post-Conflict Sierra Leone Artwork* illustrates how art can equally promote reconciliation and healing. Rehabilitation efforts in the aftermath of the horrors of a child soldier predominant war used art therapy incorporated into the psycho-social and trauma counselling of ex-combatants.

The psychological effects and repercussions of war are exemplified in the trauma personified in *Living in Survival Mode: Complex Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder in Toni Morrison's Novels* from **Dalal Turki Alsharif** analysing the Toni Morrison's novels from the perspective of the multiple traumatic experiences during the characters lives such as the chronic traumatization of one character within war zone combat. The analysis demonstrates the significance of repeated trauma over extended periods of time, exacerbating and deepening the trauma through the role of time and, as the author argues, culminating in not just PTSD but complex PTSD. Another novel that critiques war and its subsequent trauma is 'Slaughterhouse-Five' as analysed in *Funes De Memorious" and Slaughterhouse-Five: A Study in the Importance of Forgetting* from **Snigdha Nagar**. Nagar's focus is examining the connection

with trauma and memory and how lack of memory or forgetting is a complementary phenomenon integral to the psychological and social well-being of those who live through wartime trauma. By virtue of temporality and the faculty of forgetting, the past events are allowed a renewed sense of meaning, altering cognition and comprehension of traumatic events. While conversely holding on to these disturbing memories we see the devastation on the psyche as illuminated in **Stefano Ross's** *Intrusive Yesterdays: Ghostly Apparitions and the Burden of the Past in Wilfred R. Bion's A Memoir of the Future* where in analysis of Bion's first hand wartime experience we witness the muddled entangling of memory and time with the incursion of the disturbing events of the past into his present, the 'today' dissipating, disorientating their concept and perception of time.

This uncomfortable merging of time, no longer linear in its presentation and enactment, with the spatiotemporal landscape altering phenomenological understanding is demonstrated in *Beyond form: The subject embedded in the flow of spatiotemporal continuity in the works of Daniele Del Giudice, Peter Handke and Jean-Philippe Toussaint* from **Samantha Sechi**. She demonstrates how the excesses of wartime devastation also disenables writers to articulate the true extent of the destruction seen and felt which in turn leads to a crisis in the remembering and presentation of history. This deconstructed and limited narration of the past is also symptomatic of colonial literature, de-colonial writing questions perspective and authority as **Lucy Hamilton** shows in her paper *De-colonial Temporality: A Stylistic Approach to Countering Discursive Authority* where in the analysis of her own novel 'The Widening of Tolo Highway' we can participate in this querying, prompting our questioning of post-colonial Hong Kong and exploration of perspective of the post colonial systems at work, otherness and identity within a globalised city.

These political and institutional systems that govern people, as well as the benefits of these globalised processes, are investigated in the linguistic examination of two competitive concepts *Multiculturalism and cosmopolitanism: two faces of the same coin?*

by **Orazio Maria Gnerre**. We need to recognise polysemy at work in understanding and clarifying meanings of concepts, coupled with differing context and ideological characteristics as well as nuanced understandings of the globalisation project according to the ruling power. Conceptual confusions arise from the, never neutral, words used and can have significant repercussions but semantics aside, we can witness a larger vision of the global community.

Isabella Fiore Di Napoli

Maryjane Dunn

The Intangible Cultural Heritage of the Medieval Camino de Santiago

Documented pilgrimage to the tomb of Saint James the Greater in the far northwest corner of Galicia began in the ninth century. During its heyday of the twelfth through fifteenth centuries pilgrims numbered in the hundreds of thousands and Santiago de Compostela rivaled Rome and Jerusalem in popularity and importance as a Christian pilgrimage destination. Although pilgrimage travel to Compostela was moribund in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, a resurgence of interest by general travelers and support from the Spanish and Galician governments revitalized the Camino to encourage more pilgrims in the late twentieth century.[1] What began in the 1960s as a fanciful recreation of a medieval act today has grown into an intrinsic part of Spanish heritage and culture. As a result, multiple communities, groups, institutions, and scholars are attempting to document the cultural relevance of the pilgrimage to Santiago de Compostela, not just as a physical UNESCO World Heritage site, but also incorporating many of the Camino's cultural elements on the UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) lists. Spanish towns and communities promote highly localized and specific cultural elements to be included on these lists, but many more survive in the amorphous

1 - Statistics show that fewer than 100 pilgrims arrived yearly in Compostela in the 1860-1900s, 231 in 1979, 1,868 in Holy Year 1982, jumping to 99,436 in the next Holy Year (1993). The numbers continue to rise. Seventy thousand pilgrims arrived in the first three months of 2022.

international community of pilgrims who walk the many Caminos to Santiago de Compostela. The universality of these elements grows out of the shared heritage of Camino lore passed on through medieval texts such as the *Codex Calixtinus*.

UNESCO Heritage Lists

Since 1978, with the announcement of the first ten UNESCO World Heritage sites, tourists have flocked to visit the natural and cultural wonders listed. The number of sites has since grown to 1,154 properties. Eight hundred ninety-seven monuments and groups of buildings are designated as valuable for their historical, aesthetic, ethnological and anthropological cultural heritage. Two hundred eighteen are chosen as natural heritage sites for the outstanding universal value of their features and geological formations from the point of view of science or conservation. Thirty-nine properties listed are assigned as of mixed cultural and natural value. UNESCO's stated goal in creating this list is to protect, conserve, present and transmit all these sites to future generations.

The Spanish portion of the Camino Francés, the traditional and most well-known pilgrimage route to Santiago de Compostela, was named to the UNESCO World Heritage List in 1993. It was the first UNESCO-named trail to be registered for its cultural significance, as opposed to its natural, geological features. The listing for the Camino Francés was expanded in 1998 to include its four French medieval routes and their extensions. The Spanish routes of the Camino del Norte and the Camino Primitivo were added, along with the Liébana and Basque Interior variants, in 2015. Although these are all listed as "routes," their applications for inclusion on the UNESCO list are simply itemized collections of greater to lesser physical monuments—from cathedrals to bridges to fountains—associated with medieval pilgrims traveling to Compostela.

In 2003 UNESCO officially began expanding its initial understanding and protection of physical cultural sites to include those cultural elements which are intangible, creating the Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage to "maintain

cultural diversity in the face of growing globalization" (UNESCO, 2022a). Elements designated as "intangible cultural heritage" must fulfill four features to be included on the list. They must be (1) traditional, contemporary, and living at the same time, (2) inclusive, (3) representative, and (4) community based. Intangible cultural heritage elements may be inherited from previous generations but may also be practices in which diverse modern cultural groups participate. They are inclusive in the sense that they may be practiced by multiple groups in multiple places through inherited traditions or due to developing as a response to similar environments. The knowledge of traditions, skills, and culture may be represented by specific groups and passed along to other communities as well as to other generations.

The first recognized elements were named to the "List of ICH in need of Urgent Safeguarding" in 2008. Two other lists, "Representative list of the ICH of Humanity" and the "Register of Good Safeguarding Practices" began publishing their ICH elements in 2009. Elements named to these lists fall under various domains, such as oral traditions and expressions, performing arts, social practices, rituals and festive events, knowledge and practices concerning nature and the universe, and traditional craftsmanship (UNESCO, 2022b).

To date, there is not a single event or element specifically related to the Camino(s) de Santiago on any of the three lists. As early as 1987, however, the Council of Europe named the pilgrimage routes to Compostela as the First European Cultural Route, (Fig. 1) so clearly there is and has been an understanding that the Camino to Santiago, in any of its itineraries, represents an intangible link between cultures and is more than just a physical inventory of medieval buildings and bridges. Currently multiple groups, councils, institutions, and individuals are working within Spain to build a case for a variety of Camino-related cultural elements to be included on the UNESCO lists. The recently published tome, *Patrimonio cultural inmaterial: De los Castells al Camino de Santiago* (Rivera, Guzmán and i Gasó, 2021), which received financial publication support from multiple Spanish universities as well as several

government ministries and the Cathedral of Santiago itself, is an example of multiple groups promoting ICH status for a wide variety of elements. My article within this work, "Proverbios, cuentos, cantos, poemas épicos, sermones, plegarias, salmodias y canciones en el Camino de Santiago", discusses the existence of elements from multiple ICH domains that could be considered for formal inclusion on one of the official ICH lists.

As groups make applications for an element or event to be accepted as an official ICH of the Camino de Santiago, they must describe not only the element as it survives, but also provide details about its origination and transmission. According to UNESCO, the intangibility of the potential ICH elements or events means they must move fluidly through time and space yet be linked to a specific generation and community. As Camino elements are elected to the ICH lists, the applications of suitability for inclusion must consider the following questions: When and from what source or group did the event of the Camino(s) develop? Who is responsible for the transmission and/or maintenance of its intangible cultural heritage? From what community or generation do ICH elements of the Santiago pilgrimage descend? What is the heritage of these intangible cultural elements? Are ICH elements of the Camino(s) rooted in the local persons and communities who live along them? If so, how long must they have lived there to be a part of the generational chain of transmission? As time goes by, to what future cultural identity or community will these elements contribute?

Camino Proverbs and Sayings

"Oral traditions and expressions are used to pass on knowledge, cultural and social values and collective memory. They play a crucial part in keeping cultures alive" (UNESCO, 2022e). Proverbs and sayings generally fall withing this ICH domain. Collecting of proverbs into formal inventories helps to safeguard them from linguistic and expressive performance loss. Maintaining the use of proverbs and sayings provides opportunities to pass along cultural knowledge and

creative language expression. Although proverbs generally fall into the UNESCO category of true oral transmission of cultural elements, there is still the question of generational transmission for both universal and localized proverbs. An important rationale for UNESCO's creation of the ICH category is to support, maintain, and encourage localized cultural elements in the face of globalization, yet it seems that many Camino proverbs are universal in nature. They exist and are transmitted in their own global community unfettered by physical geographical boundaries.

The origins of sayings and proverbs about the pilgrimage to Santiago may be modern or medieval, geographic or universal, but they are nurtured and shared through a global pilgrim community. Some proverbs and sayings that live among persons walking the Camino(s) express modern cultural beliefs about pilgrimage in general, although referring to Compostela. These may be ascribed to a specific person, such as: "Europe was born through pilgrimage" (Goethe); "Santiago is not the end of the Camino, it is its beginning" (Coelho); "You don't walk the Camino, you live it" (*The Way*, 2011). Others may spring into use from an unknown author, as in "Pilgrimage is to pray with your feet". These modern adages survive in multiple languages, translated by speakers to their own tongues. Some may have been born in published works, but they live on in oral tradition. Many pilgrims have seen and internalized these universal sayings before ever setting foot on the Camino. They may learn them from others while on the way, or even after they return home from their pilgrimage—seeing them as memes, reading them on Facebook, or hearing them in a movie. These pilgrimage sayings may therefore connect only tangentially to the physical routes of the pilgrimage to Santiago, yet they exist as the cultural heritage of pilgrims all over the world.

Other geographically oriented Spanish proverbs tie places, such as the towns of Santo Domingo de la Calzada (La Rioja) and Padrón (A Coruña) or the cathedral of San Salvador in Oviedo (Asturias), to the physical pilgrimage experience. These medieval Spanish proverbs are shared with international pilgrims who take them home as memories of the events or places. Examples of these sayings include:

- "Santo Domingo de la Calzada, donde cantó la gallina después de asada." [Santo Domingo de la Calzada, where the chicken crowed after being roasted.]
- "Quien va a Santiago e non va al Padrón, o faz romería o non." [Who travels to Santiago and doesn't go to Padrón (where Saint James's body supposedly came to rest after its removal from Jerusalem) doesn't really make a pilgrimage.]
- "Quien va a Santiago y no al Salvador, visita al criado y no al Señor." [Who travels to Santiago and not to Salvador (the church of San Salvador of Oviedo, which houses the relic of Jesus's shroud) visits the servant and not the Lord.]

These refrains are shared orally by local persons and are often included in tourist brochures and guidebooks, as well as being repeated by pilgrims themselves in their own blogs, vlogs, and other writings.[2]

The *Codex Calixtinus* and Four Culturemes

Beyond proverbs, there are multiple representative and inclusive ICH elements of the pilgrimage to Santiago de Compostela that can be traced to the Middle Ages. The pilgrimage to Compostela is in itself an event, an intangible social practice that may seem to reside on specific routes or trails, but pilgrims return home and still consider themselves part of the greater Camino community. Pilgrims, regardless of which physical trail they follow, become guardians, interpreters, and transmitters of ICH elements of the

2 - There are also many nature and agricultural proverbs based on the chores and weather for July 25, Saint James's feast day that are connected to the saint but not necessarily to the pilgrimage route. These may be considered representative of ICH that is "knowledge and practices concerning nature and the universe" but are not connected to the ICH of the Camino de Santiago.

medieval heritage of the Camino that can be traced, either directly or indirectly, from a twelfth-century manuscript housed in the Compostela Cathedral archives: the *Codex Calixtinus*.[3]

The *Codex Calixtinus* is a compilation of five separate and very distinctive books plus an 11-folio appendix. It consists of Book I, *The Sermons and Liturgy of Saint James*; Book I, *The Miracles of Saint James;* Book III, *The* Translatio *of Saint James; Book* IV, *The Pseudo-Turpin Chronicle;* and Book V, *The Pilgrim's Guide*.[4] The appendix contains a collection of some of the earliest polyphonic compositions in western Europe. The manuscript has always been housed in the Compostela cathedral archives.

The very existence of the pilgrimage to Santiago de Compostela today depends largely on the stories collected in the *Codex Calixtinus*. The biblical story of Saint James's passion is limited to Acts 12:1 – 2: "It was about this time that King Herod arrested some who belonged to the church, intending to persecute them. He had James, the brother of John, put to death with the sword." Book III, *The* Translatio *of Saint James*, expands the narration of the events leading up to Saint James's passion. It tells of his preaching in Galicia and calling of disciples, his return to Jerusalem and the conversion of Philetus and Hermogenes. Another chapter relates how his disciples gathered Saint James's body after his beheading to return it to Galicia for burial. It gathers and reinvents earlier stories of the fantastic adventures of the disciples as they search for a place to build his tomb: their meeting with the Roman matron Luparia, the miracle of the bridge which collapses under the pagan armies chasing them, their confrontation with a giant dragon, and their encounter with wild bulls which become tame to pull Saint James's sarcophagus. Finally, it tells about Luparia's relinquishment of a small shrine on Libredón, which is converted into a tomb, over

3 - Other later copies of this manuscript exist across Spain and western Europe. The original title given to all the manuscripts is *Liber Sancti Jacobi,* or *Book of Saint James.*

4 - All five books of the *Codex Calixtinus* have been translated into English and published by Italica Press. See entries under Coffey and Dunn (2019), Poole (2014) , and Melczer (1993) in the bibliography.

which is built a church that will in time become the cathedral of Santiago de Compostela. We know that variations of these stories circulated among early pilgrims, for Sermon 17 of Book I warns against telling similar but apocryphal stories which the author proceeds to list. These tales (both real and apocryphal) have been passed along to pilgrims via art and sculpture as well as oral and written tradition. Not all contemporary pilgrims learn all these legends. Nevertheless, they are exposed to them through observation of art and sculptures along the routes, through hearing stories told by local tour guides and lay people, through sharing information among pilgrims themselves, and through reading professional guidebooks and personal travel journals. Only a few know they are looking at the stone walls of that first shrine when, as part of the arrival ritual, they visit the Apostle's sepulcher below the cathedral altar.

Modern Santiago feast day celebrations, liturgical songs, cathedral ceremonies, and pilgrim rituals are general examples of ICH based on the *Codex Calixtinus*. These broader ICH events are conveyed from place to place, from community to community, and from generation to generation along the Camino(s). In addition to initiating these broader legends establishing the pilgrimage to Santiago de Compostela the *Codex Calixtinus* offers multiple culturemes that have evolved into potential ICH elements associated with the contemporary pilgrimage and Camino de Santiago. These elements are maintained by individuals, groups, and communities both on the Camino(s) and globally through numerous confraternities, "amigo" groups, or religious organizations dedicated to supporting pilgrims.

Culturemes are "any specific symbolic cultural element, simple or complex that corresponds to an objective, idea, activity, or fact that is sufficiently well-known among members of a society that it has symbolic value and serves as guide, reference, or model of interpretation or action for the members of said society"[5] (Luque

5 - "cualquier elemento simbólico especifico cultural, simple o complejo, que corresponda a un objeto, idea, actividad o hecho, que sea suficientemente conocido entre los miembros de una Sociedad, que tenga valor simbólico y sirva de guía, referencia, o modelo de interpretación o acción para los miembros de dicha sociedad."

Nadal, p. 97, translation mine). Simply put, culturemes are those smallest bits of a specific cultural element recognizable by a cultural group or subgroup understood to be greater than its translatable lexicographic meaning.[6] The following four culturemes—the importance of hospitality, the equation of the Camino to the Milky Way, the legend of the hanged pilgrim, and the *Ultreya* greeting and song—meet the UNESCO requirements of ICH elements, as they come from a traditional source, yet they exist in contemporary time. They are inclusive of all persons living along or traveling via any of the routes to Compostela. They represent common beliefs and are well-known symbols of the Santiago pilgrimage and are based within a community of pilgrims and pilgrim supporters.

Hospitality

Of the twenty-two sermons of the *Codex Calixtinus* Book I, *The Sermons and Liturgy of Saint James*, the most well-known is Sermon 17, the "*Veneranda dies*" ("Blessed be the day"). It offers a wealth of information about customs of medieval pilgrims, merchants, travelers, and locals along the pilgrimage routes through its warnings and admonitions. From it we retain one of the most important aspects of ICH along the Camino: the giving and receiving of hospitality. This sermon details dangers encountered along the way—fraudulent practices and deceitful acts abounded—but it also tells of pilgrims helping each other, of pilgrims' reliance on charity, and of hospitality provided by both religious groups and local lay persons. The blessing of providing hospitality is twofold, bestowed on both the giver and the receiver. This shared hospitality is still found along the way. In 1979, ten years before the Camino Francés was marked by yellow arrows, Señora Cirauqui, a middle-aged woman living in her sixteenth century home in Torres del Río

6 - A U.S. example might be "As American as mom, baseball, and apple pie" in which together each noun (mom, baseball, apple pie) represents a greater symbolic or metaphoric meaning than the individual nouns themselves.

(Navarre), stopped our group of nine pilgrims as we walked through the village, inviting us to have a coffee and proffering provisions for our lunch, announcing "My family has always helped care for pilgrims." (Fig. 2)

The 1987 Primer Congreso Internacional del Camino de Santiago in Jaca, Spain addressed the need to revitalize the system of *albergues* and *refugios* (pilgrim hostels and refuges) based on the charity model of medieval hospitals and monasteries the *Codex Calixtinus* describes in Book V, *The Pilgrim's Guide (Primer Congreso Internacional Camino de Santiago*, 1987). Its pages name multiple places of support for pilgrims such as the hospice of Roland (Roncesvalles, Navarre), the hospice of Santa Cristina on the Somport pass (Aragón), and the hospice beyond Los Arcos (Navarre). It praises the hospitality of Poitou (Nouvelle-Aquitaine, France) and the generosity of the Gascons. Today, *albergues donativos* (donation-based hostels) exist along many of the Caminos de Santiago. In some, such as the privately owned El Rincón del Peregrino in Alberguería (Pontevedra, Galicia), a wide spot in the road on the Sanabrés route in Galicia, pilgrims work together to make a communal evening "stone soup" meal—each pilgrim sharing from their meager supplies to create a banquet for all. In others, veteran pilgrims volunteer to provide comfortable lodging, support, and a communal meal to pilgrims supported only by pilgrim donations.

The Milky Way and the Field of Stars

"The Milky Way" or simply "The Way" is often used as a symbolic reference to the Camino de Santiago, especially the Camino Francés route. This is not surprising, for the *Codex Calixtinus* Book IV, *The Chronicle of Pseudo-Turpin*, opens with emperor Charlemagne contemplating the night sky. Suddenly a knightly figure appears before him, introducing himself as Saint James. (Fig. 3) The Apostle chastises Charlemagne for allowing the infidel to overrun his (James's) land, and for letting his tomb languish,

forgotten and neglected. James gestures toward the "ribbon of stars," demanding that Charlemagne should follow it to his tomb and restore it to its proper honor. Designating the Milky Way as the symbolic pilgrimage route to Compostela is thus directly related to the *Codex Calixtinus*. When they are in less populated areas, many pilgrims awaken before dawn to gaze upon the Milky Way, a phenomenon not normally visible due to the light pollution of cities.

The connection between the Milky Way and the pilgrimage to Santiago has an even older, deeper relationship to the ICH domain of "Knowledge and practices concerning nature and the universe" (UNESCO, 2022d). The Milky Way runs East-West across northern Spain, almost directly over the Camino Francés, only during the months of July and late December—the two months of James's most important liturgical feasts. Few modern pilgrims realize this specific astronomical connection, believing the *Codex Calixtinus* reference to be symbolic and/or a year-round phenomenon. This is an example of an ancient ICH worldview (or in this case, skyview) that is in danger of being lost.

The general connection between the Milky Way and the Camino is further supported by the false (but widespread) belief that the etymology of the name "Compostela" derives from the Latin for "field of stars" (*campus stellae*), rather than the more likely *compositum* (burial place). The *Historia compostelana*, another 12th century manuscript, tells of the rediscovery of the tomb in c.814 when the hermit Pelayo saw strange lights (often interpreted as stars) shining over the burial place. Today in the cathedral, when pilgrims descend below the altar to visit the sepulcher, they see a silver star affixed above the casket as a reminder of this event. Numerous pilgrim narratives pay homage to these connections in their titles: *Following the Milky Way* (Feinberg, 1989), *Road of Stars to Santiago* (Stanton, 1994), *To the Field of Stars* (Codd, 2008), etc. This ICH connection between the night sky and the Camino is transmitted through time and through the wider community of pilgrims as they write about their experiences, reveal their photographs and artwork, or simply share their feelings with others.

The Hanged Pilgrim Folktale

Tales connecting to Saint James and the Camino first circulated via oral transmission. Miracle recipients recounted their experiences, pilgrims told entertaining and edifying stories, and local religious or lay persons advertised the special relationship of their locale to the Apostle or to the Camino. *The Miracles of Saint James,* Book II of the *Codex Calixtinus*, sets down twenty-three separate miracle tales that transpired in a wide variety of places across western Europe and the Mediterranean Sea. One of the most famous is Miracle 5, that of the hanged pilgrim, which, in the *Codex Calixtinus* version, takes place in Toulouse, France. Barcelos, Portugal also claims a similar tale as their own. The most famous iteration, however, places the episode in Santo Domingo de la Calzada (La Rioja, Spain).[7] The basic story is similar in each place. A family unit (father and son, or parents and son) are on pilgrimage to Compostela. While they are staying at an inn a wicked person (the innkeeper or his daughter) hides a silver cup in the young man's satchel and reports it stolen after they leave. The boy is stopped, searched, arrested, found guilty and hung; his sorrowful parents continue to Compostela. On their return trip, their son calls out from the gallows that he is not dead but has been held up by Saint James. The family rushes to the town proclaiming the miracle. The boy is cut down and the true guilty party is punished. Both the Barcelos and Santo Domingo versions end even more dramatically. When the parents rush to tell their good news to the magistrate, who is eating lunch, he does not believe their tale. He dismisses them brusquely, saying that their son is as dead as the chickens on his platter. Immediately, the chickens jump to life and crow. This story ending gives rise to the aforementioned proverb, "Santo Domingo de la Calzada, donde cantó la gallina después de asada."

7 - The Santo Domingo version is most famously found in Gonzalo de Berceo's biography of Saint Dominic of the Causeway, *La Vida de Santo Domingo*, c. 1250.

This tale, whether set either in Toulouse or Santo Domingo was popular throughout Europe, appearing in numerous other works, including an eighteenth-century French broadside. In 1829, the English poet Robert Southey gives a humorous account of the story in his "The Pilgrim to Compostella", attesting to its widespread diffusion beyond the medieval period and the Spanish Camino Francés (Southey, 1829). Today, almost every pilgrim passing through Santo Domingo has heard this tale, either from other pilgrims on the route or from locals, and most delight in going into the cathedral to see the "holy chicken coop." With time even more tales have developed about the fowls—for example, that a pilgrim is doubly blessed if they crow while the pilgrim is in the church, or if they peck at the grain held up for them. Feathers which fall from them are snatched up as a lucky talisman, a sign of blessing, or just as a cool souvenir. In time these stories may grow and develop much as early medieval tales did, passed on over a meal or a drink or while walking on the route. Some day they may be considered as part of the ICH of the Camino.

Ultreya as Greeting and Song

This last cultureme exists as both a greeting and a song and originates from the appendix of the *Codex Calixtinus*. Out of these last folios modern pilgrims have adopted the Latin phrase *Ultreya!* (Onward!), commonly using it as a welcoming or rallying cry. This phrase derives from one of the most famous and enigmatic of all the songs found in the *Codex Calixtinus*, the "*Dum Pater Familias*." (Fig. 5) Some scholars suggest this piece is the first known pilgrim marching song; it is neither a hymn nor a liturgical composition. What wins it a place in the Camino's ICH tradition is the short stanza that appears between the second verse and its chorus. This stanza includes Germanic and Romance words and the already noted "*ultreya*": "*Herru Santiago, Got Santiago, E ultreia, e suseia, Deus aia nos*"[8] (Coffey and Dunn, 2021, p. 450). The mixture of Latin,

8 - "Lord Saint James, Good Saint James. Both onwards and upwards, God help us." (Coffey and Dunn, 2021, p. 450).

Germanic, and Romance languages shows that already in the twelfth century this work was being transmitted in a popular manner. Special liturgical services at the Compostela cathedral, as well as other churches associated with the pilgrimage routes, now incorporate the song as written in the *Codex*.

Even greater proof of the "*Dum pater familias*" as a living element of intangible cultural heritage is this stanza's incorporation into a modern French song, the "*Chant de pélerins de Compostelle*," composed by Jean-Claude Benazet in 1992 (Benazet, 1992). It is sung throughout France at pilgrim hostels and churches along the route, but the community and tradition of this song is not anchored to just France, the French routes, or French pilgrims. Diverse international groups, such as American Pilgrims on the Camino and the Canadian Company of Pilgrims, sing it at their gatherings. As an example of its widespread fame, in May 2022, while my students and I were staying in the government-run *albergue* in the town of San Cristovo de Cea (Ourense), on the Sanabrés pilgrimage route, a French pilgrim was humming this song as she prepared to leave. Soon several other pilgrims—French, German, Australian, American—joined in singing the words, if not to all the verses, at least to this short stanza refrain. This spontaneous event provides a clue to determining the community to which much of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of the Camino belongs.

UNESCO's goal in identifying and registering ICH is to safeguard elements against loss due to globalization. At the same time, the Convention "speaks about communities and groups of tradition-bearers in a non-specific way. The spirit of the Convention is such that communities should be seen as having an open character, not necessarily linked to specific territories" (UNESCO, 2022c). Much of the ICH of the Camino is truly intangible, not tied physically to any single point or community on a map. As groups, institutions, or other entities apply for ICH status for elements connected to the Camino(s) they need to recognize this broader definition of "community." The proverbs and sayings and the culturemes of the pilgrimage are transmitted via pilgrims to locals, locals to pilgrims, and pilgrims to each other. These elements will only continue to

exist in both time and place through transmission by a global community of pilgrims and pilgrim supporters. The Intangible Cultural Heritage of the Camino(s) de Santiago resides, not in tourists, but in all pilgrims who, in their own modern way, reinterpret and recreate an ancient medieval ritual. It belongs to any and all pilgrims who walk any of the Santiago Caminos through whatever land or nation, and for whatever reason. *Ultreya!*

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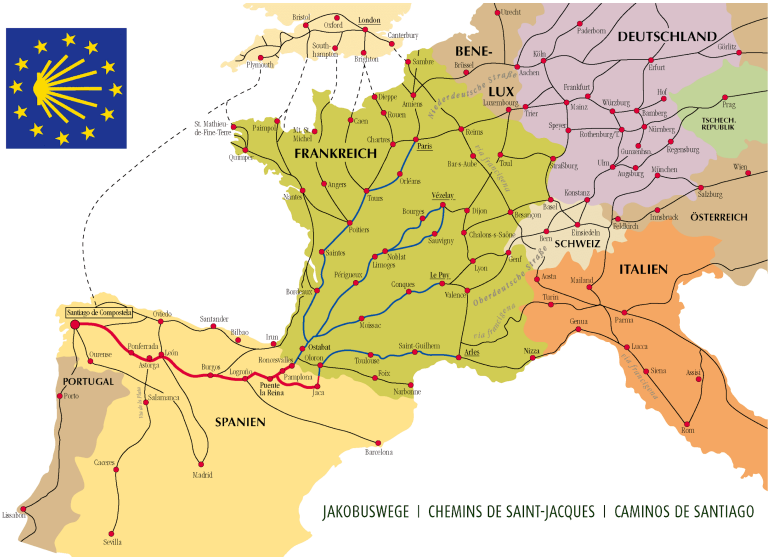

Fig. 1. Santiago de Compostela pilgrim routes named as first Cultural Route of the Council of Europe in 1987 (Illustration by Manfred Zentgraf, Volkach, Germany - Manfred Zentgraf, Volkach, Germany used under the Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 2.5 Generic, CC BY-SA 3.0).

Fig. 2. The author (Maryjane Dunn) with Señora Cirauqui in her kitchen, Torres del Río, Navarre, Spain, May 1979 (Personal photo).

Fig. 3. Saint James appears to Charlemagne in a nighttime vision, saying: "The path of stars that you have contemplated in the sky is the sign indicating that you must take a great army from here to Galicia to do battle with those perfidious pagans, to free my path and my lands and to visit my basilica and my tomb. After you, all peoples from sea to sea will walk there as pilgrims" (Poole, 6) (Personal photo from *Codex Calixtinus*, Folio 162r).

Fig. 4. The holy chicken coop located in front of the mausoleum crypt in the cathedral of Santo Domingo de la Calzada (Photo "Santo Domingo de la Calzada - Chicken Coop," July 2013, © Gerhard Huber, used under Creative Commons Attribution-Noncommercial 4.0 International +Edu).

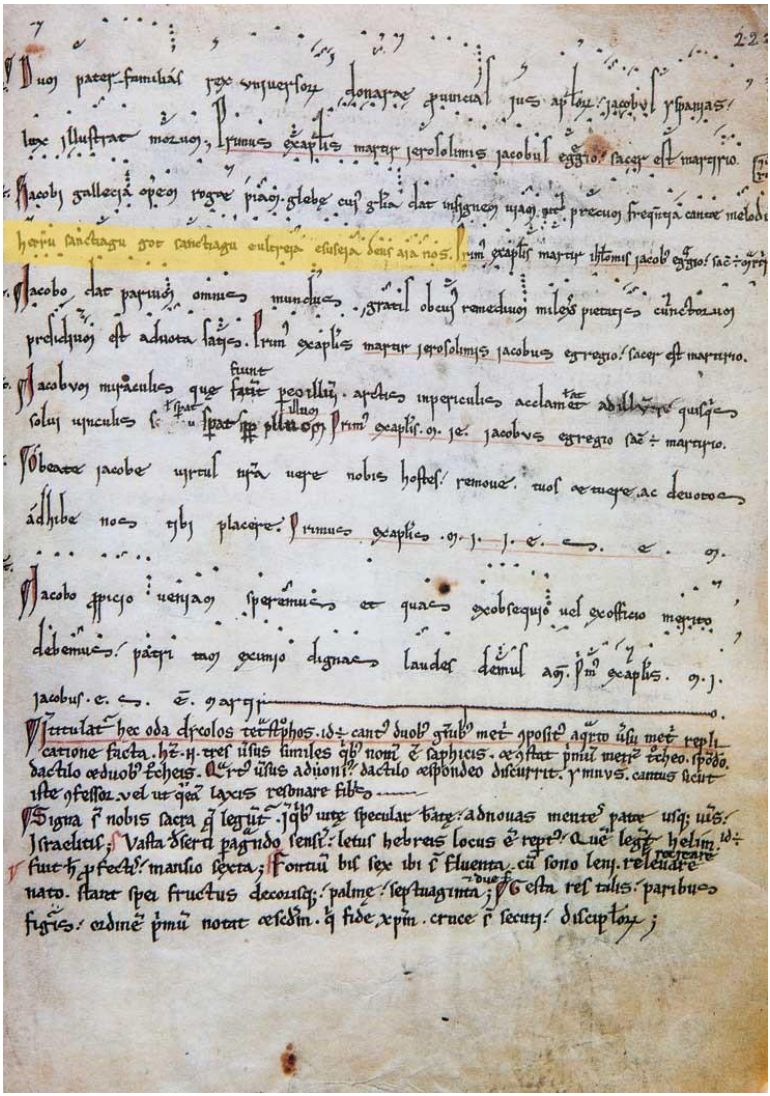

Fig. 5. The "*Dum pater familias"* with Romance-Germanic stanza highlighted (Personal photo from *Codex Calixtinus*, Folio 193r).

Alfred Mifsud

How Do Tourist Stakeholders Relate to the Shrine of the Sanctuary of Our Lady of Mellieha?

Alfred Mifsud

Our Lady of Mellieha, Malta *(Photographed by the Author)*

This study explores the relevance the Sanctuary of Our Lady of Mellieha has within the pilgrimage and tourism development in Malta. It looks into how the constant attention to the needs of the pilgrims and tourists has kept this landmark vivid amongst all its

visitors. Furthermore, how this development overlapped with the progression of the tourism industry in the north part of Malta, namely Mellieha.

Mellieha today has been attributed as a location of excellence for forward looking tourism. Within the core of Mellieha, there is nestled the Sanctuary of Our Lady of Mellieha, together with its long history dating back to the shipwreck of St Paul in the year 60 AD (Acts 27-28). Over the years many pilgrims, both local and foreign found haven at the presence of Our Lady. Together with the pilgrims came tourism. With the notion of achieving an all year round flow of tourism, it is rightly considered that this location fits into the new tourism product offered.

There is a rational that some stakeholders aim to align themselves with the Sanctuary. Some consider it important to take advantage of this relationship, whereas others feel indifferent. This paper attempts to investigate the relevance of the Sanctuary within the ecosystem, and determine whether there is a relationship between the tourist stakeholders and the Sanctuary.

1.0 Introduction:

Within this ambience the Sanctuary of Our Lady of Mellieha fulfilled this need. Indeed for many years the activity was centred on the Sanctuary not only from Mellieha itself but to a wide aspect nationwide (Vella, 2013). The testimony of this importance rests on two points of references, first the old maps of Malta and the ex-Votos.

Various old maps of Malta dating as late as between the period 1678 - 1685; point exclusively to the Sanctuary of Our lady of Mellieha (Ganado and Schiro, 2011). This unveils that at that time the edifice was already considered as a landmark and place of importance. In addition to the maps one notes the various ex-Votos that are on exhibit in the adjacent caves to the chapel making up the whole building (Muscat, 2009).

One could appreciate that this place drew the attention of crowds and also the administration took into consideration to organise the place by establishing a number of rooms to host the pilgrims during their time of visit. Today these are recognised as one of the oldest building structures in the village. In total the sanctuary offered protection, to which the faithful sought to keep within their reach and regular visitations.

2.0 Pilgrimage and Tourism:

The search for faith in related places and the associated relief that such places comfort the individual has compelled one to move into the era of tourism. In fact, tourism emerged from pilgrimages.

Collins-Kreiner (2020) explores this fact, "Although modern tourism is regarded as a relatively new phenomenon, its origins are clearly rooted in the age old practice of pilgrimage." Indeed the sanctuary fits within this paradigm which we are experiencing today. With this concept in mind the author reflects on the place making up this point of pilgrimage which today is also being sought for tourism. Comfort is assured by the fact that there are millions of pilgrims who travel every year to a variety of sanctuaries and religious sites. Religion has been a strong motivation for the pilgrim to embark on the trip (Galzacorta and Guereno-Omil, 2016).

However, there are other individuals who are not only compelled by religious motivation but by curiosity and the want to know and want to feel the experience by their presences at the site.

2.1 The Place

The Sanctuary of Our Lady of Mellieha has had a very tumultuous beginning, which thanks to these incidents has been given the proper name of protector. Over the years many faithful

sought the shrine for the relief of their troubles and pains. In 1990, it had the distinctive privilege to be visited by the then most important pilgrim in the world, the Pope St John Paul II.

In the meantime, the administration of the Sanctuary has been involved in the process of restoring and concluding the project adjacent to the Sanctuary, referred to as the Pilgrim's lodge. These rooms are being redeveloped into a museum – A pilgrim's experience. In April 2022, Malta welcomed the current most important pilgrim Pope Francis. He passed from the place and as a kind gesture sent a prayer to Our Lady of Mellieha.

This latest development tossed the idea that this place intends to provide the visitor, tourist and pilgrim another aspect to complement one's visit to the place. The concept of the museum provides an openness for those who might not be religious. This fact of the museum brings into line the total package in a comparable manner with other places of interest.

2.2 Ecosystem

Pilgrimages were the foundations of tourism mobility to come into existence thousands of years ago. Modern tourism is still regarded as a relatively new phenomenon, its origins are clearly rooted in the age-old practice of pilgrimage (Collins-Kreiner, 2020). The development was further managed with the interaction of various participants along the way, whom to residents, the hospitality operators, local authorities, the priests and the nuns. The pilgrimage today is the foundation of the religious tourism which one will further contemplate about.

Religious tourism is made up of contemporary patterns of travel to the sacred places and religious sites. One can justify that the religious tourism is the current version of pilgrimages in the current times. The interaction of the stakeholders and the presence of the various players related to the spiritual or religious icon leads one to contemplate about the ecosystem.

An ecosystem provides a basis to consider and understand the connections amongst the constituting parts and their relationship to the whole and finally as one. Shinde (2021) contemplates that religious tourism can be viewed as an ecosystem of resources, producers and consumers, thereby allowing for a more comprehensive understanding of religious tourism. There could be further sub-ecosystems depending on what resources are at play. Within this theme one can explore the applicability of the Sanctuary of Our Lady of Mellieha. Figure 1 below searches the interactions of the ecosystem within this environment. Within this model there are four components which are: Sacred; Tourism; Religious; and Spiritual.

Although there is no documented knowledge whether there was any apparition, there is a strong sense of the intervention by the Holy Mother as it is depicted in the votive paintings and other testimonials held at the Sanctuary. In addition to this there is wide recognition of the holy place even by the visit of his holiness Pope St John Paul II and the messages sent by current living Popes who sent special prayers and thoughts whilst on their visit in Malta in 2010 and 2022. This all consolidates the sacred component and everyone holds up to this blessedness. The sacred status influences the tourism, religious and spiritual motives.

The shrine has opened up for tourism. Tourists are welcomed and the administration takes initiative to accommodate such visits. There are various literature and social media spots to support such visitors. The interaction with tourists is eased by making all literature in their native language available. On the site there are guided tours to explain the historical background and this is part of an offering of a recreational nature as well. The current developments with respect to the Museum dedicated to the Pilgrim is a vivid demonstration of this initiative towards the binding of the sacred and tourism.

The religious aspect is present and in any visit the message of the Icon is transmitted to the visitor. The message is that the icon is the core principle of this setup. The whole narrative of how the icon has become, together with the restoration works carried out over the years maintained the religiosity of the place. This is further aided by

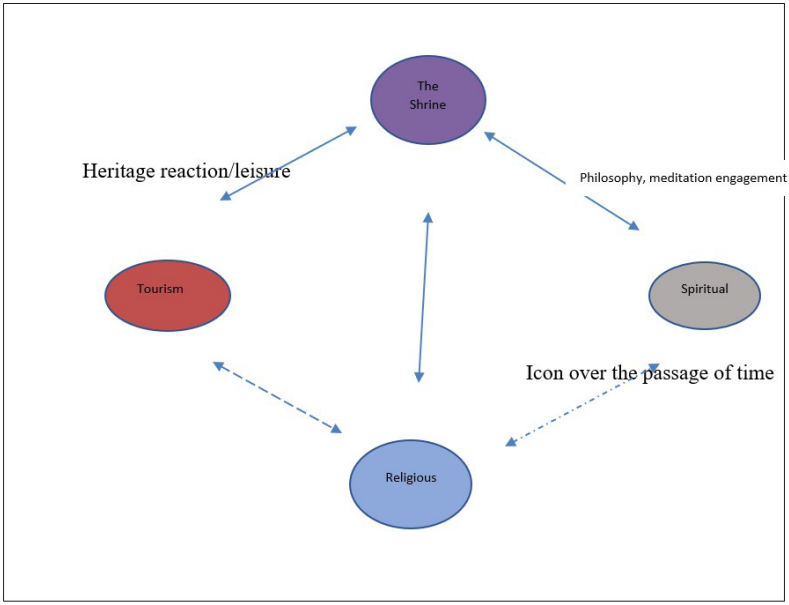

Figure 1: The Ecosystem of the Sanctuary of Our Lady of Mellieha.
Source: Adapted from Shinde (2021)

the visit to the votive paintings and other testimonies which reinforce the religiousness of this place. The current trend that the shrine has witnessed lately, was the huge infiltration of an Indian community in Malta, who have opted for this shrine, who with the help of some Indian nuns were easily introduced to fulfil their religious wants. Frankly they have found in the shrine their heavenly mother in this place of the world. This shows that this place is open to all nationalities and not solely the locals.

As regards the spiritual motives, the shrine has been affiliated with the European Marian Network, where the shrine is one of twenty other European Marian sanctuaries. The main scope of this association is to ensure pilgrims burdened with everyday troubles

can explore tranquillity in mind and soul. Within this prospect one might contemplate on the philosophy and the opportunity to engage. Such initiatives seem to be present in varying degrees.

2.2.1 A Sub-Ecosystem from Tourism for the Shrine

After reviewing the touristic, religious and spiritual motives emanating from the sacred source of the shrine, one would investigate the sub ecosystem within the tourism part where this would involve the contemplation of the stakeholders within the village core. In fact, the author has identified four aspects of the key stakeholders. These are demonstrated in figure 2.

The stakeholders have been grouped into four parts namely the Religious members; Tourist outlets; Education/social; and the Local council. These are discussed in further depth below.

- The religious members: these are a key element within the ecosystem of the shrine. They are, many a time, the face that presents the shrine and holds the activity within the shrine for the pilgrims and faithful who visit. Through their actions they can encourage or discourage the welcome of such individuals.

- The tourist outlets: understanding the importance of the shrine especially by those who visit the locality for other purposes, matters. Some tourist outlets are in close vicinity of the shrine and have built up a tacit knowledge about the shrine. If the tourist who had visited the locality for some other purposes becomes acquainted with the shrine, it might compel them to pay a visit. The idea in retrospect also matters. This is also followed by a sense of curiosity. What is behind these walls? Why is there this light? Obviously, these questions could be answered by a visit, or by asking the person delivering the service at the tourist outlet. What is of concern however is whether the person who is providing the service is knowledgeable about the shrine and its developments?

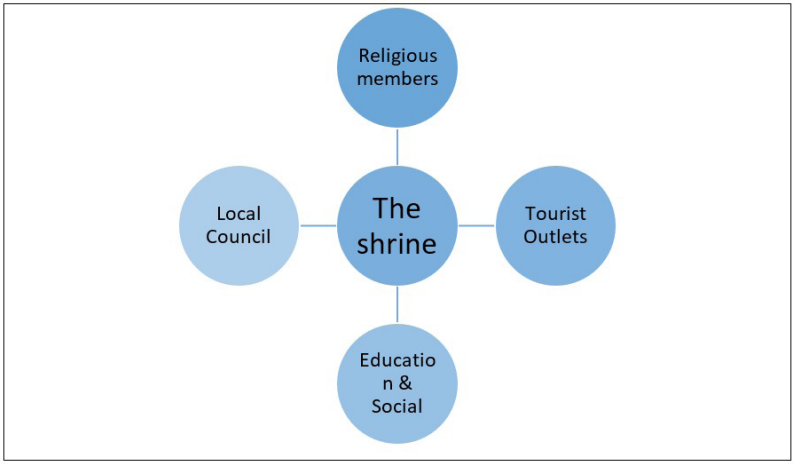

Figure 2: The Ecosystem for the Shrine Inclusive of the Stakeholders.
Source: Adapted by the author.

- Education/Social: how much interaction between the education and social activity within the village matters? What educational efforts are being put into effect? What social efforts are being followed by the non-educational institutes within the village? These are questions that need to be answered however there seems a lack of individuals who can relate.
- The local council: this is an administrative entity from the public sector, who is interested in the well-being of the tourism and business within the locality. In the year 2000, the council launched a tourism brochure in which the shrine featured very well. Today the brochure has been discontinued due to the presence on the web site, where any person interested can easily follow on. Nevertheless, one cannot judge whether this is enough. Definitely one can complement the regular inclusion of the Shrine within the festivities commemorating the Mellieha Summer

Nights, where an entire evening out of three, is being devoted towards the shrine. Something which is carried each year mainly oriented for visitors and tourists.

- In addition to the local government's initiatives, in 2008 a new Old people's home was inaugurated by the central government and was named after the shrine as Home of Our Lady of Mellieha, "Dar il-Madonna tal-Mellieha".

2.3 Conservation and Restoration Works:

The importance of the icon can remain vivid as long as care and attention is continuously sustained. In this regard conservation and restoration works have become a constant within such an area. Such works have a significant impact, especially by the contribution to additional information, improvement in the settings, and the rejuvenation of the place. The rejuvenation to the icon, the interior of the sanctuary and the surrounding buildings. The power of these works leave an impression on the life cycle of the icon.

Muscat (2017) compared the restoration works carried out in 1972 and 2016 on the icon. The latest restoration works carried out by Atelier del restauro, a partnership of Italian and Maltese restorers were completed in 2016 (Zenzani and Lupi, 2013). One could admire the scientific and skill in the works carried out and the discovery of new features on the icon. Such discoveries were ranging from the fact that the image depicts the figure which demonstrates that icon as a Hodegetria meaning that Virgin Hodegetria, is an iconographic depiction of the Theotokos (Virgin Mary) holding the Child Jesus at her side while pointing to him as the source of salvation for humankind. In addition, two words in Latin were noted, namely MAT meaning Mater, mother and DEI, meaning God, hence Mother of God!

Muscat contrasts the restoration works carried out by Samuel Bugeja in 1972, who relates that he was frightened to work on the icon for the fear of losing parts of it, since his work at that time was purely guesswork rather than work supported with scientific backing.

The 1972 restoration works were carried out due to the fact that there was knowledge that the original painting was still there. In 1587, during a pastoral visit by Bishop Tommaso Gargallo, he ordered the Augustinian monks who were looking after the sanctuary to paint the Madonna again because it was in a dilapidated state. In this way they covered the original painting. This was carried out sometime between the years 1610-1614.

Many times the pilgrims used to complain about the deteriorating imagery and this compelled the chaplain in charge to take action. In fact, in 1750, a painting on canvas was completed by the French artist Antoine De Favray. His painting was used in front of the wall painting. This painting today is on exhibit at the Mellieha Parish Church. The painting has been worshipped for over 223 years by pilgrims (Muscat, 2016).

2.4 Life Cycle

Over the years the interest in the Shrine varied, and there were events and circumstances which mostly have boasted the interest from the pilgrims' side and in the later years the tourist. Figure 3 demonstrates an adaption of the life cycle chart towards the icon.

Once the idea is new, there is a constant increase in the interest and over the passage of time this improves gradually until it attains a mature stage. It is at this point that something needs to be done. Over the years there were instances when the interest in the icon was growing and when it was declining. In this instance it was noted that either through an event or through some restoration works the interest in the icon has managed to survive. In this regard the restoration works enable the icon to remain relevant to the current times and worth visiting. If no attention is paid to the shrine, then the general public will reject it. The main problem with these restoration works are that the stakeholders have to be informed to ensure that they can be knowledgeable about and share them with their patrons.

Figure 3: The Life Cycle of the Icon

Source: Adaption of the life cycle to the Icon of Our Lady of Mellieha.

The following are some of the most significant dates pertaining to the sanctuary which are taken from the souvenir booklet of the Sanctuary. They date back as far as to 1091 when Malta acquired back its Religious freedom after years under the occupation of the Arabs. This was achieved thanks to Count Roger the Norman. One can comment that this brought the visibility of the icon, whereby it became a point of interest.

In 1614 the shrine suffered an attack by the Ottomans in which the icon was seriously damaged, nevertheless as a result of this incident the icon was elevated to a protector from that date onwards. It was considered as a shield for the Maltese faithful.

In 1719 an arch was constructed depicting the much awaited and needed rain after a prolonged period of drought; where the faithful had put all their hope through prayer in the Virgin Mary. On the arc the following verse was inscribed taken from Psalm 21, “In thee did our fathers trust; they trusted and thou didst deliver them.”

In 1899 the Madonna was crowned, confirming the existence of great devotion to it and instilled an even deeper faith in the people.

In 1973, during restoration works it was observed that under the painting there was another painting of the effigy, this gave another meaning to the presentation. One has to recall that in 1750, after various complaints from the visiting pilgrims, the administration of the sanctuary were ordered to place an oil painting on canvas in front of the old icon.

In 1990, as remarked earlier there was the visit by the then Pope, his holiness St John Paul II, in May of that year where he prayed in front of the icon. This had a huge effect on the tourism especially from the aspect since an ancillary museum was set up to commemorate this visit. Many tourists commented favourably regarding this point.

In 2016 extensive restoration works came to a close after the present day icon had been revealed. The works carried out revealed more information than envisaged beforehand.

In all these instances the interest of the general public including the pilgrims and the tourist fluctuated in accordance with the event. Such instances were beneficial for the wellbeing of the icon, hence ensuring its longevity. Overall, the life cycle theory fits to the icon and in moments when it was evident that the icon was in decline these instances signified the need to rejuvenate and enabled the interest to be revived again.

3.0 Methodology:

The author carried a review of the area with respect to the various outlets that are in the vicinity of the shrine. The outlets that are in close vicinity had been included in the study. Also, those stakeholders who had an influence over their clientele had been selected. In total these made up the main stakeholders and were included in this study.

The methodology approach adopted was an ethnographical one. The stakeholders were visited and were asked a set of questions in a discreet and casual manner, over a service delivery. At the same time an observation was conducted to see any special features which highlighted an affinity or support to the research question being investigated. In cases where the stakeholder was receptive and willing to participate further reflections were carried out.

The questionnaire used was qualitative in nature with a purpose of seeking nominal, ordinal and ratio data.

The main research question that was under consideration was:

> "***How do Tourist Stakeholders relate to the shrine of the Sanctuary of Our Lady of Mellieha?"***

All the visits were held during the month of May 2022 and were carried out by the author.

One has to remark that during this period, there was a positive trend in the number of customers being entertained in the various outlets, especially after the pandemic and the advent of the summer season.

Some of the limitations that were observed during the study were that one cannot hold talks with all the members of the tourist operators. These units experience high staff turnover, especially during this time of the year, when new staff come in. Furthermore, the influx of foreign employees had its effect on the responses since most of the time they were not aware of what were the surroundings to their place of work.

The approach had to be cautious as described earlier, not to disclose the task away early, since if the subject was stated that this was a research concerning the Sanctuary then answers would be biased in virtue of the shrine and would be meaningless.

4.0 Research Findings

The outcome findings of this research attempts were grouped into the following three sections:

- The stakeholder;
- Preferences suggested by the stakeholder; and
- Relationship and suggestions.

Each of these parts were further expounded in further detail.

4.1 The Stakeholder

All the stakeholders interviewed and observed had a special affinity for tourists or guests. In their capacity they were interacting with the guests and operated in the vicinity of the shrine. They were all willing to help and suggest, even in one particular situation the barmaid was only in the premises for a few days and was not familiar with the surroundings, however she still proposed three locations which she got to know from her friends – in all probability they were recommended to her. Nevertheless, this was an important lesson to observe.

The people who were interviewed came from different backgrounds, there were those who were native Maltese; there were foreigners working in Malta, most of them resided in Mellieha; but there were some who lived outside Mellieha. Finally on the other hand there came the issue of faith. Although none of the stakeholders were asked about their faith, there was an understanding whether they had religious affinity or not. This brought the researcher to identify a number of characteristics of the stakeholder which are demonstrated in figure 4.

The knowledge and appreciation of the place was an attribute of whether the stakeholder had a confirmation of the three elements, that is whether the participant was a local, living in Mellieha and

had an affinity of any faith. Most of the time those who had a score in the three characteristics would immediately identify the place. However, in other instances, this required a more concentrated effort, since some stakeholders themselves identified as absent in some of these characteristics. Nevertheless, the stakeholder was working towards ensuring a completeness of the person representing the place. One can recall that one particular stakeholder notified that they prepare the staff about the whereabouts of the village and what to suggest and recommend. This seemed a perfect preparation from the stakeholder's part. However, this was more an exception rather than the rule, from the perspectives of the stakeholders. One has to appreciate that the current staff turnover and continuous change might make this initiative very difficult to abide by.

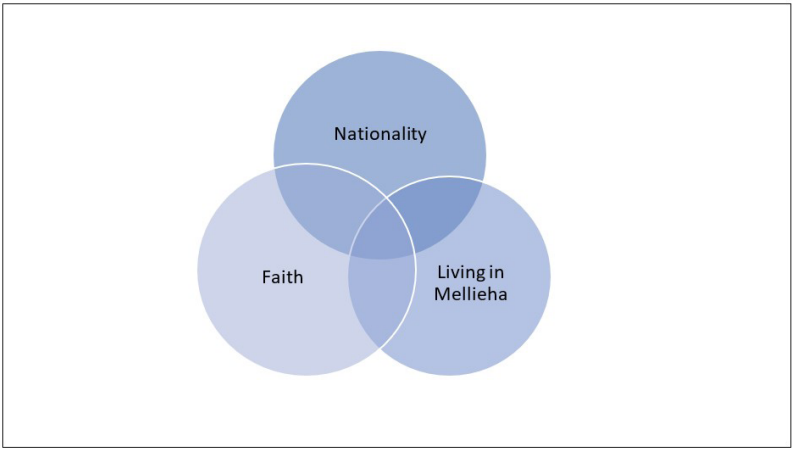

Figure 4: The Characteristics of the Stakeholder.
Source: Research findings 2022

4.2 Preferences by the Stakeholders

Each stakeholder was asked to recommend three places within Mellieha that they would suggest that the tourist should visit. Figure 5 demonstrates the recommendations in percentage scores by the stakeholders. The place mostly suggested by the stakeholders was Popeye Village. The other places mentioned follow suit with less scores. Nevertheless, the Sanctuary features within the list of recommendations. One has to comment that Mellieha is more sought for tourism and amongst the other places of interest, Popeye village has an ongoing promotion campaign which definitely leaves an imprint on everyone, especially the stakeholders in other operations.

The preferences were further qualified over the fact of whether the tourist was young or of a more advanced age. In most cases the young age tourist opt to suggest the beaches and the fun park of Popeye village. One of the stakeholders who was representing the local tourism authority expressed the fact that most of the time tourists seek Mellieha in the summer for its beaches. Following the pandemic, this was still in a trial mode. Another area which was highly in demand were the war shelters, which are in close vicinity of the Sanctuary. There is an understanding and a reality with this fact. Most of the tourists who seek this site are British veterans, however over the pandemic there has been an alteration in the numbers of such visitors.

These outcomes were cross examined with a google search on the top places to visit in Mellieha. The recommendations by tripadvisor states that there are 72 things to do in Mellieha and from these total amounts, classifies the Popeye village, as the ninth thing to do in Mellieha. The sanctuary was grouped with the main church and was classified as the second thing to do in Mellieha (Tripadvisor, 2022). This comprises the validity of the place the whole year round where other sites might be subject to seasonality. Upon the review of the google search one has to point out that the

site needs to be cared for in order to ensure that the latest imagery is used. Since it was noted that the image of the Our Lady depicts the icon prior to the restoration works of 2016. This will assist in achieving a dual benefit both in terms of tourism and pilgrimage.

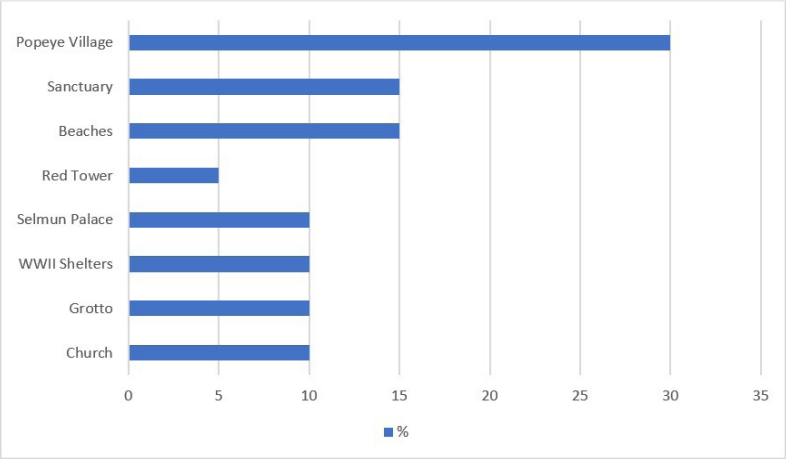

Figure 5: Recommendations by the Tourist's Stakeholders
Source: Research findings 2022

4.3 Relationships and Suggestions

During the visits the author observed whether the stakeholders had any memento or signage to promote the shrine to the tourists who enter in their outlet. Unfortunately this was not visible. The only entity which had a copy of the effigy was the local bank. The bank had been the main sponsor of the restoration works and was proud of its collaboration in joining in the history of the shrine. Although there was no proof, this memento might entice customers of the bank to visit the shrine.

One of the important features that came out of these meetings was that the administration of the Sanctuary has to reach out to the stakeholders to ensure a healthy communication and awareness. In this manner stakeholders can spread the word about the Sanctuary which will be of a twofold benefit. The tourist can benefit from a visit, whilst the stakeholder can ensure the delivery of value beyond one's service. In all fairness it can provide a more total appreciation of Mellieha in its totality.

5.0 Conclusion and Recommendations

The conclusion from the outcome of this study, confirms that there is a relationship between the stakeholders and the shrine. Although not explicit, the interest in the shrine is sensed and there is a feeling that they want to be included in this ecosystem. Obviously, the degree varies depending on the distance from the operator and the shrine. Outlets closer by tend to be more in gear to support and recommend the shrine.

This relationship can further benefit if networks are set amongst the stakeholders and the Shrine administrators. Here the stakeholders should constantly be kept abreast of the developments within the sanctuary. This open channel between the shrine and the stakeholders can be an important part of the value chain of the sanctuary. The author believes that there should be an exhibit distribution to each stakeholder within the village thereby building a link and making the link a part of the shrine trail on their premises. In this manner the tourists may observe, question and understand the relationship. Finally, it would compel the tourist to visit the shrine.

The administration of the shrine has constantly sought the restoration works to ensure that the shrine remains valid and pleasant to see and pray in front of the icon. This ongoing process should be constantly upheld amongst the stakeholders to gain support and even share amongst their patrons.

One trusts that in the near future the Pilgrim Experience Museum will be completed and open for the general public. This is an additional experience to what is being offered today. It should complement and further sustain the interest in the place for those who visit it. All in all, it will definitely require the input of current stakeholders to promote this place of interest.

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Janet Lees
Bob Warwicker
Hannah Warwicker

Is the End to End (Land's End to John O'Groats or vice versa) a Pilgrimage?

Introduction

We are walkers and we often talk and write about walking. This paper reflects on twenty years of walking and on one particular walk: The End to End. This is the name given to a journey between the two farthest places on the British mainland: Lands End and John O'Groats. We have all three walked the End to End between those two places but by different routes, which from south to north, our direction of travel, is also called LEJOG (the route in the other direction is called JOGLE). In this paper we will briefly give a history of the End to End as a walking route and a personal history of our own walks.

Using autoethnography, we have reflected on the meaning of the End to End in our experience, developing a core narrative that has emerged from our writings and discussions concerning the End to End as a pilgrimage. Examples will be given from the narrative to illustrate ways in which pilgrimage and tourism overlap in our experience of the End to End, and affirm that it is a journey for anyone to undertake.

Brief History of the End to End as a walking route

Walking may seem an everyday activity for the majority but as Solnit (2001) notes: 'It has sometimes been, at least since the eighteenth century, an act of resistance to the mainstream'. [1] As walkers we are mindful that we tread in the footsteps of many, living as we do not far from Kinder Scout, site of the Mass Trespass in 1932 [2] but that, compared with many walkers, especially from the Global South, we also walk with privilege being relatively free to do so as a leisure activity.

Although there is much debate about the End to End it has been a magnet for travellers for over 150 years. The first recorded End to End walk was in 1871 and was actually from north to south (John O'Groats to Lands End) by brothers John and Robert Naylor. In 1960, Billy Butlin, the tourism entrepreneur, set up a walking race that began on 29th February of that year. [3]

Into the twenty first century the route attracts people of all ages and abilities, for leisure, for charity, for record attempts and many other reasons. [4] Janet was passed by the current holder of the world hand-cycle record, paralympic athlete Mel Nicholls, in June 2019, when she set the current record at 6 days, 22 hours and 17 minutes. Janet was walking. [5]

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1 - Solnit, R. (2001), Wanderlust: A History of Walking. London: Verso, p. 268.

2 - Mass Trespass on Kinder Scout, Derbyshire, 23th April 1932, for the right to roam in England.

3 - Details from the Lands End exhibition on the End to End, visited on 2nd April 2019. One of the competitors to get a special mention for completing the course was a 62 year old grandmother, Maud Nicholas

4 - A long but not complete list can be found at https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Land%27s_End_to_John_o%27_Groats

5 - https://melnicholls.co.uk/Handcycle-Britain-World-Record Nicholls described the End to End as 'The great British iconic endurance journey'.

Personal histories of the End to End

We are participant observers in the End to End, but we are not disinterested or disconnected. We think, write and talk about the End to End because we have walked it ourselves.

In 2003 Bob Warwicker, an ordained minister of the United Reformed Church, walked LEJOG for his first ministerial sabbatical. [6] Working as a Chaplain with the South Yorkshire Workplace Chaplaincy [7] at the time, he decided to reflect on life on the economic and social margins as he walked. This determined the things he wrote about, the blog diary and prayers he developed, and the route he took. He completed the walk in 71 days and his work influenced the walks made by Janet and Hannah. [8]

In 2012 Hannah Warwicker walked LEJOG as a young adult emerging from her A Levels and anticipating her transition to university. Hannah had been 9 years old when Bob walked LEJOG. Aged 18 when she walked it, completing in 63 days, she later said she'd been 'planning it for half of my life'. [9] When asked to describe her walk, she said it was 'a pilgrimage before I knew what the word signified'. [10] It was also about emerging into the adult world and as such something of a rite of passage, but not just a one off event as it has gone on to resurface many times in her adult life.

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6 - Ministers of the United Reformed Church may take a paid 3 month sabbatical for every ten years of active ministry.

7 - SYWC: South Yorkshire Workplace Chaplaincy, formerly Industrial Mission in South Yorkshire, was an ecumenical team of chaplains, lay and ordained, that operated in South Yorkshire Workplaces for several decades. Bob Warwicker was a member of that team from 1998-2008.

8 - Bob's diary, reports and prayers are at https://bobjanet.org.uk/lejog/index.htm

9 - HLW personal communication, 1st June 2022. Much of the material for the paper is like this, made up of comments, conversations and writings that we have shared together about the End to End.

10 - ibid.

In 2019 Janet Lees, who has been a school chaplain and is a writer, walked LEJOG on retirement as a pilgrimage. Aware of the toll recent experiences had taken on her mental health, and of the increasing ecological crisis for the planet, by then an overweight 60 year old, Janet is the most recent member of her family to walk the End to End, taking 117 days. [11]

Although all three walked alone, we also walked together and with others, both in personal and virtual accompanists. We supported each other, sharing some of the routes and being part of the support mechanism providing food, water, bag carrying and advice. The best for us has been a mix of these but also each doing our 'own thing'. [12]

Our stories, our selves

Using our convenience sample of three, we have searched and refreshed our data for nearly twenty years. Each one tells their own story of the End to End but also reflects on the shared elements of the story together. The data itself is in notes, conversations, blogs, prayers and photographs amongst other personal sources. We have used autoethnography as a prism for viewing our experiences of the End to End: a form of qualitative research that uses personal experience and the narratives generated by those experiences to develop social meaning and understanding. A cross discipline method related to ethnography, it is defined by Ellis (2004) as 'research, writing, story and method that connect the autobiographical and personal to the cultural, social and political'. [13]

11 - Her book 'Come Wind, Come Weather' was published by Wild Goose (Glasgow) in 2024 and is available at https://www.ionabooks.com/product/come-wind-come-weather/

12 - details of the routes we used are available on line at https://bobjanet.org.uk/pilgrimage/lejogroutes.html

13 - Ellis, C. (2004) The Autographic I, Walnut Creek: Altamira Press, p. xix.

Criticised by some for the way in which personal over-reflection may lead to narcissism, we have tried to overcome some of these methodological shortcomings by sharing our narratives and reflections on our experiences. As Ellis goes on to say: 'Narrative is the way we remember the past, turn life into language and disclose to ourselves and others the truth of our experiences'. [14] With a depth of data to explore we present the following examples from our narratives for discussion.

Developing a narrative of the End to End as pilgrimage

It is perhaps to some extent down to Billy Butlin in 1960 that the End to End has been linked to tourism but from our experience it is not necessary to view pilgrimage and tourism as opposites. The Loch Ness Monster shops of Drumnadrochit High Street may look like pure tourism to some but just back on the track is a small cave which each of us has found to be a tranquil place for a pause in a green cathedral. [15] The End to End is just one example of the overlap between the two. Defined in many different ways, pilgrimage is generally seen as a journey that takes a person away to find a new meaning to their identity or chosen life path and from there return to their life with renewed understanding. Traditionally the destination was important, chosen for spiritual reasons it would have been a religious centre of some kind. But the things of pilgrimage have expanded to include nature, encounter, relationships, places and stories and definitions including 'Bring your own Beliefs' have moved towards greater inclusion. [16] The End to End includes all of these aspects and more.

14 - ibid, page 126

15 - On the Great Glen Way, a 79 mile path from Fort William to Inverness: https://www.highland.gov.uk/greatglenway/

16 - The British Pilgrimage Trust has this underlying aim and can be found at https://britishpilgrimage.org/

People make journeys of spiritual importance to them in the course of their travelling or tourism in other contexts. They may visit places which have connections to their family history, or which have a vocational aspect, like a gap year, or a physical challenge like a marathon or triathlon. As far as we can tell these are all linked by a sense of people seeking some sort of fulfilment and renewal through the journey itself.

Hannah Warwicker writes that 'The placement of pilgrimage and tourism as opposites feels rather outdated to me, a "millennial" who has grown up in a more secular UK (Warwicker, 2022). To say something is "just tourism" feels like the sort of put-down you get from more formal folks who are part of institutionalised religion. Faith and spirituality should not be "us versus them". Faith communities are starting to get the hang of cooperating with and welcoming other faith communities. However, they still seem at a loss as to how to welcome those of no faith, occasional faith, or less formalised faith'. [17] Developing more inclusive views of pilgrimage may be one challenge to such attitudes.

Whilst the End to End has a beginning and end point, our reflections reveal that the journey itself is more than its start and finish. The beginning of the journey requires as much thought as the end particularly when you include all the planning detail required and the post journey reflection. Here is an example of that point, also by Hannah:

'People always comment on "that's a long way" or "two months - what a lot of walking" or "you must have got really fit" or "did you get blisters?". But it's not the physical aspects that I remember or the physical challenge which made its mark on me. I do recall the first part being tough, but the physical challenge wasn't what defined the process for me. Instead I remember the highlights, but mostly the logistical frustrations along the way! These are the kinds of things which make good anecdotes, but also since I was doing it as a transition to adulthood I think they stick with me as examples of frustration and resilience, especially that moment five

17 - Hannah Warwicker, unpublished notes about the End to End, June 2022.

nights from John O'Groats at Tain where the tent blew down and my jacket potato went cold, which I was discussing with one of my students recently'.[18] A year after her End to End, Janet Lees reflected on a similar point: 'From Land's End to John O'Groats the things most people asked about were my feet. It seems to be a common assumption that if you're going on a long walk it's your feet that will suffer, hence the hundreds of foot based conversations. But my feet were largely fine. I was wearing Hannah's socks, as they'd not worn out from her 2012 walk, and had a rotation of four pairs of boots. My Nike [19] inspired mile nibblers kept my plates of meat [20] more or less on the straight and narrow for 117 days and 1110 miles. My next to little toe on my right foot does have a little ridge, not Striding Edge [21] stuff, but it can niggle. It will rub a bit on a seemingly seamless sock and from time to time it did make an attempt to dramatise the foot related aspects of the walk. But the End to End is not just about feet'. [22]

Even so, we have wondered about the ways in which pilgrims of other times and places might have reflected on their experiences as we have ours. Janet was concerned what they may have done on the route to Canterbury in the Middle Ages when diarrhoea struck as it did on the Severn Way. Hannah thought: 'I bet what they really remembered was that time a stray dog stole their breakfast somewhere near Rochester'. [23] As with any outdoor activity in

18 - Ibid. Hannah, now 28, teaches teenagers and has the End to End on her CV as a talking point.

19 - Nike, Greek goddess of victory.

20 - 'plates of meat', Cockney rhyming slang for feet. Janet's family have links to the east end of London through her father who was born within the sound of Bow Bells, the traditional definition of a Cockney, people that use the dialect.

21 - Striding Edge is a ridge in the Lake District.

22 - https://foowr.org.uk/lejogblog/2020/04/page/3/

23 - Ibid. One of the criticisms of autoethnography is the way it may blur the line between fact and fiction, but this is also one of its strengths in creating a meaningful narrative.

Britain, the weather came up quite often as a theme in reflections and conversations. It's not possible to walk for a few months without the weather having some impact. Hannah walked from July to September in 2012, which was said to be the wettest summer in 100 years. With changes in the climate induced by human activity making more of a global impact it is right that we reflect on the weather. With his background in science and an interest in the weather, it was a subject near to Bob's heart and one he shared with Hannah and Janet. 'It was a cold, sunny day. In the part of the day when I had to dawdle, I lay down in the shelter of some gorse out of the easterly breeze and in the sun. It was like summer, with winter five feet away'.[24]

It was this observation that led to the phrase 'Gorse bush viewed from a recumbent position' joining our shared narratives such that we would often look out for one.

There were other common themes in our narratives: hospitality and companionship were two that came up quite often. All of us remember people who went out of their way to welcome us or offer their company and we tried to be welcoming and supportive in turn. At Kelso, Bob noted: 'Once again I've been made welcome. I've spent the day as I pleased: bathing, getting the air to my toes, sitting by the fire looking at maps and dreaming of what lay ahead'. [25]

Although each of us has our own list of highlights of the End to End it is the crossing of Rannoch Moor that takes the top spot. This long day walking on the West Highland Way crosses a remote and challenging terrain with awesome views. [26] Bob's observation sums it up: 'It will never be better than this... I've been in this great theatre where a show of light and cloud and sky and massive peaks and shining lochans has been playing out all around me. Other people are in this theatre... They have seen the same light and shade and

24 - https://bobjanet.org.uk/lejog/12150.htm

25 - https://bobjanet.org.uk/lejog/12184.htm

26 - Opened in 1980, the West Highland Way is a 95 mile route from Glasgow to Fort William.

rock and water and maybe they have been caught up in it too. But we each have our own scripts: we each have our own ideas of the play to which these elements belong'.

His blessing from Rannoch Moor is the one we have most often used since returning from our walks.

> *May God bless you on the journey.*
> *If it rains may you not arrive wet.*
> *If the load is heavy, may it not break you.*
> *If the path is steep, may you not fall.*
> *If you are tired, may you find rest.*
> *If you have far to go, may a friend greet you at the end.* [27]

Even after it is over 'a good pilgrimage can be revisited and recycled' wrote Hannah, contributing a 'permanence and significance' to our memories and ourselves. We revisit our journeys separately, together and with others. They are more than a trail of stories or lists of the best habits or frequently asked questions. [28] There are rituals that pop up on other walks or other days, like our habit of nominating a Tree of the Day as both a celebration of the landscape and our lament of the climate crisis. Simplicity is something we all learnt from walking the End to End, as Hannah wrote:

'I think this End to End taught me a thing or two about simplicity. All my life I've handled my anxiety by being over prepared for every eventuality. This was the first time I really found myself noticing that there is an easier way!' [29]

Of course, a traveller may not reach the end. We are three who have completed the End to End but many more must start and not reach that goal or leave bits out. Janet often thought she wouldn't

27 - https://bobjanet.org.uk/lejog/12195.htm

28 - Janet did a reblog of her whole journey from April 2020 during the Covid19 pandemic when the UK was in lockdown: https://foowr.org.uk/lejogblog/2020/

29 - Hannah Warwicker, unpublished notes about the End to End, June 2022.

make it to the end of a day let alone John O'Groats, as these words about day 105 illustrate:

'There is that moment almost every day of the walk when I think I might not get to the end. Often it's on strenuous uphill sections when my legs ache and I wonder why I've taken this route. Predictably this happened again today on the way up to the pass out of Glen Loth.' [30] But Bob, her pilgrim guide, would come back towards her on the track and shepherd her home. It was a team effort in the true spirit of pilgrimage.

This spirit did spill over into other personal interactions too. Bob writes of this encounter on the way through Northumberland;- "In Safeways at Ponteland, I met a woman by the fruit juices who had the same problem as mine. She was visiting someone in hospital and only needed one carton, but they were packed in threes. We arranged to split a three between us..." [31] From the Canterbury Tales to the Camino, the pilgrim spirit has also often been about a journey and accommodation shared with strangers who are doing the same thing. This was true of the three of us to a degree, but such encounters were sparse along the whole route. There were plenty of meetings with people who were not on LEJOG, and numerous interactions through the internet with supporters and followers. We made the most of this connectivity, which maybe not so much in the classic way of pilgrimages and is perhaps a sign of the changing times. The opportunity to use the internet to connect with other pilgrims and as a space for personal reflection is something we have used to our advantage. It is this development of that pilgrim spirit that had made us into the travellers we are today. Hannah puts it like this, writing ten years after her own End to End:

'You don't stop being an End-to-Ender. You certainly don't when it's the family business and your mum does it a few years later. I never stopped being a walker. I didn't walk a great deal for a while, but during the pandemic I managed to string together enough

30 - https://foowr.org.uk/lejogblog/2019/08/

31 - https://bobjanet.org.uk/lejog/12180.htm

progress to start going for a little walk most days. These days my "great outdoors" is a dodgy patch of wasteland/woodland where the police are occasionally pursuing the local drug dealers. But walking is still inherently an act of pilgrimage for me; that's a behaviour I've grown up with and I'm not going to unlearn it now.' [32]

There is the obvious question of what to do after the End to End. Like all pilgrimages it feeds into other journeys and we have each of us taken up other challenges, walking between cities when moving house or 'joining up the dots' between walks during the Covid 19 pandemic : going End to End teaches walking as a vehicle for handling changes of all kinds.

Resources for the End to End

You will find the End to End mentioned in guide books, magazines and on websites. The route you choose will depend on many variables: the form of travel you intend to use, whether you prefer roads or off-road routes and if you travel with a time constraint or not. There is no set route, although you will find plenty of advice online. [33] You are most likely to meet other End to Enders near the beginnings and the ends of the route, and at the Solway Firth where the 'back road' is the only route for non-motorway traffic on the west side of the England/Scotland border. Listen to their stories too.

These and much more are part of the cultural heritage of the End to End, making up the knowledge, skills and practices, including songs, drama, festivals and so on, that are the lived experiences of End to Enders and their associated communities.

32 - Hannah Warwicker, unpublished notes about the End to End, June 2022.

33 - The routes for our three End to Ends are listed at https://bobjanet.org.uk/pilgrimage/lejogroutes.html

Conclusions

There's no need to create any division between pilgrims and tourists, to downplay some journeys over others. Faith can be found on any route and it can be renewed and challenged by any journey as our narratives illustrate. Just as we do not all express our faith by turning up for formal acts of worship in a specified time and place, so too we can grow and change through many kinds of journeys, of which the End to End is one example. However, making a route like the End to End inclusive in ways that encourage travellers to bring their own spirituality is a challenge to us all. Anyone can go End to End and in our dreams we still do.

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Vijay Prakash Singh

Ritual Bathing in Hindu Pilgrimage

Ritual bathing in sacred rivers is an essential fact of Hindu life. In fact, according to *Atharva Veda* the fourth of the sacred scriptures known as Vedas the significance of water is clearly emphasised, "May the waters bring us well-being" (Eck, 1981). Diana Eck a Harvard scholar points out the Sanskrit word for pilgrimage is "*tirtha*" literally a river, ford or crossing, a channel to be crossed. She writes "Hence many Hindu pilgrimage sites are located at riverbanks either to a particular side of worldly troubles or beyond the endless cycle of birth and death. So closely associated is the '*tirtha*' with pure running waters that in South India the word tirtha has come to mean sacred waters" (Eck, 1981, p. 335). According to Eck, "The Vedic imagination produced two great images of crossing the river flood. First since the universe is fundamentally three storied with the heavens above or in the case of Gods from heaven to earth, the atmosphere in the middle and the earth below, one crosses over from earth to heaven or in the case of Gods from heaven to earth. The second image is related: India's rivers are seen as originating in heaven and flowing vertically from the lake of divine waters in heaven, down through the atmosphere, and out upon the face of the earth" (Eck, 1981, p. 324)

According to the *Rig Veda* the first of the Vedas (circa 1200 BCE), "In the beginning darkness was hidden by darkness, all the world was an unrecognisable salty ocean (translated as salila in sanskrit)" (Witzel, 2015). This is frequently repeated as, "In the beginning there was just the salty ocean" (Witzel, 2015). According to Michael Witzel (2015), "Indian texts regard rivers as goddesses

and the term "inviolate ladies" refers to their beneficial waters. The purifying bath delivers people from their karma and allows them to go to heaven after death…This belief has a long prehistory: taking a bath at certain confluences is followed by a March upstream toward the world tree situated in the lower Himalaya" (Witzel, 2015). According to Diana Eck (1981), "The river is an ancient and complex cultural symbol in India. India's oldest civilization was a river culture on the Indus and in the hymns of invading Aryans as well this particular river, called the Sindhu is highly praised" (Eck, 1981, p. 324). Indeed, apart from the iconic significance attached to the Sindhu, the group of seven sacred rivers namely the Ganga, Yamuna, Saraswati, Narmada, Godavari and Kaveri are equally sacrosanct. All rivers in India are a natural manifestation of the female principle, also manifest as *Shakti* literally female power.

"Samsara the ceaseless flow of birth and death and birth again was likened to a river, and the far shore became an apt and powerful symbol of the spiritual traveller as well" (Eck, 1981, p. 324). While the rivers are a significant source of drinking the waters the *tirtha* was, "apparently a place of bathing as well. For example, in the *Tattriya Samhita* the priest of the Soma sacrifice bathes in the waters; verily visibly he secures consecration and penance" (Eck, 1981, p. 327). The soma is India's legendary potion derived from the juice of a plant that is mixed with water and milk. This was a sacred offering to fire in the rituals of the Vedic period with the belief that oblations would be carried to the Gods.

The *Skand Purana* to quote Julian Hollick states that "All rivers are holy". Hollick quotes from the Purana, "There are hundreds of rivers. All remove sins. All of them are bestowers of merit. Of all the rivers those that fall into the sea are most excellent. Of all those rivers Ganga, Yamuna, Narmada and Saraswati are excellent rivers, O meritorious sages, These four are highly meritorious" (Hollick, 2020).

With a culture where rivers are so venerated the bath in the river both in daily life as well as during pilgrimage served as a purifying act. According to Nandi, "Sin that accrued from impurity

was considered to be a kind of contagion which could be removed by bathing in sacred rivers or by massaging the body with the earth of a holy river or by undertaking a pilgrimage" (1979-80, Nandi cited in Arya, 2000-2001, p. 166). Vijay Nath points out that "the ritual of bathing in holy water as integral to the institution of tirtha underwent considerable elaboration in the writings of *puranic* composers" (Nath, 1923). To quote S. N. Arya, "Of all the important rituals, suggested to be performed in the *Puranic* literature, a holy bath is highly appreciated. A man after taking a bath in holy centres was considered to be pure and eligible to worship his ancestors and gods and offer a number of gifts to the priests. The *Vanapara* of the Mahabharata stresses a bath in several tirthas including Puskara" (Arya, 2000-2001, p. 166). Bathing at certain times is particularly auspicious. "Taking a holy dip in rivers under particular astronomical conjunctions such as *Kumbha* or lunar eclipse or during month of *Magh* (January) was declared in the *Puranas* to be sure means of achieving salvation. The *Mahabharata* recommends bathing in Pushkara (a lake in the state of Rajasthan) on full moon day of the *Karttika* (i.e, October) month, which is considered to provide great merit to the performer. Similarly the *Varaha Purana* views that bath in Puskara on new moon day in the bright and dark fortnights of the month of *Kartikka* liberates a man from all his sins" (Arya, 2000-2001). Apart from the timing the place of bath also bears relevance to its sanctity. According to S. N. Arya the *Vayu Purana* and the *Padma Purana* assigned to the period between the third and sixth centuries, "extol that the river Ganga is the holiest of all rivers. The *Padma Purana* composed late in the eleventh, twelfth centuries declares that bathing in the Ganga is the best means of salvation. According to the *Matsya Purana*, Ganga is sacred in Kanakhal, the Saraswati in Kurukshetra and the Narmada in all places where it flows" (Arya, 2000-2001).

Rana PB Singh of Banaras Hindu University writes in his article "Water Symbolism and Sacred Landscape in Hinduism: A Study of Benares (Varanasi)" , "In ancient Hindu mythology (about 800 BCE) water is described as the foundation of the whole world, the basis for life and the elixir of immortality...In curative terms

water is regarded as a healer. Metaphorically and metaphysically the ancient mythologies refer to water as the container of life, strength and eternity. More commonly water is perceived as a purifying medium. However, to reach the source and receive the merit of "living water" involves a series of consecrations, rituals and religious activities like pilgrimage and sacred baths" (Singh, 1994, p. 210). Singh elaborates how of all the rivers in India the Ganga is the most sacred and thereby celebrated, "embodying the most prominent and purifying liquid power" known as "Mother Ganga" (Singh, 1994, p. 210). The two most important occasions for bathing in the Ganga at Varanasi are the winter solstice in January and the vernal equinox in April. Likewise full moon days, eclipses and new moon days are sacred for baths. According to Singh the sacred bath and the suitable time for it are determined by the conjunction of the sun with various constellations. He writes, "The sun symbolizes the male (awakened, *jagratha*) and water the female (sleep, *susupta*) modes of existence" (Singh, 1994).

Another aspect of the *tirtha* is the socially egalitarian provision it serves for those who are not affluent or well-off or of upper caste. While the economically privileged sections can make substantial offerings in temples or to the pundits in household *pujas* (ritualised prayers) to earn merits, the layman cannot afford such a luxury. Similarly, the *tirtha* allows people of all castes to participate so that caste restrictions on performing *pujas* or worshipping at temples entry to most of which was banned for centuries to those of the lower castes. Thus, the pilgrimage serves as an accessible way to perform a pious act that Hindu faith decrees. To quote Diana Eck, "pilgrimage to a *tirtha* is not only less expensive than the elaborate rites of *brahmanas* and kings, it is also less restrictive socially. The *tirtha* might be seen therefore as a place where one crosses the ordinary boundaries of caste and sex. The way of the *tirtha* is open to all *sudras*, outcastes and women who are excluded from Brahmanical rites" (Eck, 1981, p. 338). It is significant to mention here that the tirtha is being seen in the context of traditional casteism which prevailed in the Hindu social structure for centuries. It may be noted that the constitution of India does not endorse any discrimination

on the grounds of caste or sex though several such biases still operate. Arya (2000-2001) also reinforces the idea of the pilgrimage as being a means of social egalitarianism. He writes, "The religious popularity of the ritual of bath in early medieval period was also due to the fact that people of all four religious orders irrespective of caste, creed and gender were considered to attain salvation by a dip in holy water at sacred centres" (Arya, 2000-2001, p. 167).

The *tirtha* is not just in the physical realm but an emotional sanctification that is as much a pilgrimage of the heart. According to Diana Eck, "Going to a *tirtha* is not only a matter of the feet, but also a matter of the heart…If water alone were enough to purify then the water leeches and fishes of the Ganga would all be transported to heaven. It is by bathing in the *tirthas* of the heart that one may truly "cross over"" (Eck, 1981, p. 340).Yet the physical purification certainly has greater value. Arya writes, "bathing in sacred rivers had always been deemed meritorious but the ritual acquired immense significance in the Gupta and post-Gupta periods when it became integral to the institution of *tirtha*. Only after the performance of the ritual was one required to offer prayers, libations and gifts, and thus earn merit of destruction of sin and other heavenly bliss" (Arya, 2000-2001).

Govindaswamy Agoramoorthy writes in his article "Sacred Rivers: Their spiritual significance in Hindu Religion", "The scripture *Puranas* (Sanskrit: ancient) portrays that a person can gain salvation by bathing in the Ganges. But the same goal can be achieved by catching the site of the holy river Narmada" (Agoramoorthy, 2014, p. 1081).

In the hierarchy of seven sacred rivers, "Narmada is next to Ganges in sacredness so temples and cremation sites line up its banks" (Agoramoorthy, 2014). A scientifically established fact is that rivers are also saturated with antimicrobial minerals and a recent study shows that the Ganges water not only kills waterborne pathogens but also heals naturally showing its curative properties. In fact *Ganga jal* (literally water of the Ganga) kept in copper, silver or brass urns or in bottles in most traditional Hindu homes is water that is sacred to Pooja (the traditional Hindu Prayer performed at

home or in a temple) or in death rites when administering drops of *Ganga jal* is considered a sacred rite by which the dying person attains salvation. This stored water does not get discoloured or turbid. Literally the water of this river is like *Amrit* or nectar so it can be imagined how purifying the act of immersion in such water is; it redeems one of all sins and is *paapnashak* (literally the destroyer of sins). Scriptures mention that a devout Hindu ought to take a bath daily before sun rise by chanting, 'O holy mother Sindhu, O Cauvery. May you all be pleased to manifest in these waters with which I shall purify myself (Agoramoorthy, 2014).

The Brahminical ritual of bathing as a part of daily ablutions and before the routine chores of prayer and eating is a prevalent practice since centuries and remains a part of traditional village life although the increasing availability of tap water in the rural areas and the drying up or degradation of rivers has led to a dwindling of the practice. One of the largest pilgrim congregations for the purpose of bathing in the most holy of India's rivers namely the Ganga is at the *Kumbha Mela* at Allahabad, reputed to be the largest religious congregation of the world. Agoramoorthy writes, "Allahabad receives over 100 million pilgrims over a period of fifty five days where they gather to have a dip in the Ganges" (2014, p. 1082). So huge are the crowds that the infrastructure needed for such a mammoth gathering in terms of organisation and management is an act of systematic planning and execution.

In recent years with the growth and expanse of cyber age tourism the *Kumbh* (literally a pitcher which is symbolic of the waters of the holy Ganga) as the largest religious congregation of the world attracts not just the devout pilgrim but documentary producers and directors, spiritualists, scholars, writers and paradoxically voyeurs. The sheer visual appeal of thousands of pilgrims participating in a purifying ritual that is the only one of its kind in the world with all the chaos and carnival spirit of profound faith certainly makes the *Kumbha* an interesting subject for a documentary. Likewise the exploration of a faith in purification through bath and the idea of *Moksha* or salvation is something that must intrigue the philosopher, tourist and rationalist.

Kama Maclean writes of the sanctity of Allahabad, the Triveni Sangam literally the meeting of three rivers Ganga, Yamuna and Saraswati. It is this sacred confluence which makes Allahabad '*Tirtha raj*' literally meaning king of pilgrim sites. She writes, "Bathing in the confluence of these rivers is thought to cleanse one of all sins; as such bathing is the core religious activity for all pilgrims coming to Allahabad. Bathing at the Triveni is an ancient practice that is believed to deliver various rewards including freedom from all sins" (Maclean, 2009). In fact, 20 million pilgrims was the estimated figure for the Kumbha Mela of 2001.

Kama Maclean has pointed out how tourists and media invade the privacy of the bathing ghats in order to get photos that can be circulated as vignettes of blind faith or a culture steeped in ritualistic purification depending on the perception of the photographer. This obsession with the actual ritual of bathing can take on a voyeuristic angle with the sight of so much nakedness, of women trying to perform the ritual of the holy bath while maintaining the decorum of keeping their bodies as much covered as is practically possible. Maclean has pointed out how during the *Kumbha Mela* of 2001 photographers were blatantly invading the privacy of the pilgrims by taking photographs of bathing men and women. She points out how as early as 1830 a British journalist had observed that women bathed stark naked in sight of the men without any conscious concealment of their nudity until the presence of more and more outsiders made them conscious of the liberty they had enjoyed. For decades since women have draped themselves with clothing and bathed covered and therefore at least partially impervious to the voyeuristic gaze but the liberty of the bath enjoyed by the male bather barely compares with the self-effacing ritual that the women undergo. For decades media persons were likewise at liberty to take photos of bathing pilgrims until in 1940 a formal ban on photography was legislated, a ban that the Commissioner of Allahabad Mr.Sada Kant invoked in the 2001 *Kumbh* when he disparaged the media for taking, "a lewd, titillating and moral view of the mela" (Maclean, 2009).

The second dimension of the Kumbh that Maclean observes is that with the solemn ritual of bathing for purification from sins the occasion involves a carnival spirit with sadhus professing wisdom

even as they intoxicate with marijuana, stuntmen performing all sorts of feats to catch the curious eye, hawkers trying to make a profit with the teeming crowds, a carnival wherein all forms of celebration take place with, "endless stalls, books and sweetmeats, toys etc" (Maclean, 2009). The Paradox mystifies the western tourist but is an inseparable part of the Hindu psyche of *Leela* (literally playfulness of life) as the core of life wherein the sanctity of a religious ritual combines seamlessly with a festive spirit.

A third dimension is that of the nature of the pilgrims who come to the city of Allahabad not just for the sole purpose of ritual bathing but also as tourists who combine the solemn act of bathing with sightseeing, visiting Anand Bhavan and Swaraj Bhavan the large mansion like homes of the Nehru family and other sites. While the pilgrim becomes the tourist the sceptical or rationalist tourist rarely summons up the faith to actually immerse himself in waters that he may not believe as having the power to cleanse his sins. The debate over the actual purifying qualities of the water of the Ganga and several other rivers with the existing high levels of pollution is not in the purview of this paper but is nevertheless a tenable debate of science versus faith.

The tourist attraction of the *Kumbh* is now well established. As Maclean writes, "Kumbha Mela is now broadly advertised in a number of tourist manuals and is listed as *one of the 100 things to do before you die,* a guidebook of 'must have' experiences for serious adventurers and enthusiasts of the unique and the off-beat" (Maclean, 2009). This paradox of the solemn with the carnival spirit is today the essential charm of the Kumbh and is aptly summed up by the *India Today* journalist Prassanarajan who describes the festival as a congregation of, "the sadhu, the saint, the sinner, the sinned, the voyeur, the karma junkie,The New age Yogi…all of them have come together to turn the spiritual into a maha - spectacle of the millennium" (Prassanarajan, 2001).

Lisa Safford points out how, "Hindu mythology is rich in personifications, both male and female, of waters purifying and life-giving powers. Supreme among them is Vishnu the sustainer of the

universe…Vishnu's female counterpart or *Shakti* (energy) is *Lakshmi* or *Shri* also a water entity…serpents of all kinds, *nagas* and *naginis* (males and females respectively), personify the rivers, lakes and oceans of the earth and every waterway likewise is personified by a Goddess, as for example the great rivers: Ganges, Sarasvati, Brahma and Yamuna" (Safford, 2010).

Hindu pilgrimage has focused on the idea of *Darshan* which means the grace of the sight of the deity in the sanctum sanctorum where he or she resides as it were. The other equally significant practice is that of ritual bathing whether in the Ganges which is the highest in the hierarchy of holy rivers or in the other rivers be it Narmada, Cauvery or Godavari. Ritual bathing is as collective an experience as the seeking of *Darshan* or the blessed sighting. The bath becomes an act of purification because of the sanctity of the river in which the bath is taken. Both the Darshan and the bath make up a kind of duality of the Hindu pilgrimage. A huge population and the ardent devotion that it feels and manifests towards pilgrimage makes the Hindu religious practice unique. Whole groups and communities of people travel together and live together so that a kind of solidarity and sense of oneness becomes a valued part of the experience. Diana Eck sums up the spirit of the pilgrimage:

> "Nothing in the world however begins to match the extensiveness or intensity of pilgrimage travel in India. While Hindu pilgrimages may sometimes include stops at places, governmental buildings or old temple monuments, there is an important distinction between tourism and pilgrimage. Tourism may take us to "see the sights" but (Hindu) pilgrimage takes us for *Darshan,* the beholding of a sacred image or a sacred place" (Eck, 2012, p. 443)

Thus, the spirit of a pilgrimage is ideally an act of devotion and epiphany. In today's social ethos this ideal is fast becoming commercialised so that the push and frenetic scramble for a *Darshan* or the sanctifying immersion of a ritual bath in a river that is degraded with pollution has to quite an extent diluted the intensity

of the practice of a Hindu pilgrimage, but some essence and fervour still exists. Hindu faith and pilgrimage has sustained for centuries and the practice of seeking temple *Darshans* and ritual bathing has carried on despite adverse circumstances. Yet the sanctity of Hindu practice in time to come will have meaning only if temples are kept free from crass commercialism and rivers are cleaned and kept free from pollution. This is easier said than done because rapacious priests rampant in our temples fleece or blackmail devotees hankering for a *Darshan* while the contamination of our rivers is an environmental abuse for which far more stringent government policies and public awareness is needed. Half-hearted attempts will not bear fruit and the spirit of these practices which constitute so important a part of Hindu pilgrimage will remain compromised. Most of our rivers are polluted and in dire need of cleaning up and revival. The Ganga remains no less polluted than other rivers though it ranks supreme in the family of the sacred seven and despite an independent Ministry being established for its clean-up, decisive action has not been taken.

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Vrishali

From Fragmentation to Fusion: Rethinking the Making of the Early Medieval Europe

Introduction: Periodisation of History and the 'Dark' Middle Ages

Although time is a perennial river, there has been an attempt since our days of yore to trace certain watersheds in between, demonstrating some prime ideological and psychological shifts on the broader temporal and spatial arena. Periodisation in history writing has led to division of time in history, not just in objective, numerical terms, but also in terms of teleology, as time is now measured on a linear scale of progress. There is a tendency to read history backwards from the contemporary period which is seen as equivalent to the 'modern' period in history. There has been a general consensus amongst historians and scholars regarding the rationale behind this periodisation though the timelines of different spaces of the world are still dictated and warped by those of the West, and quite often so. One such broad categorisation is that of the medieval age, characterised largely by the nature of medieval society commencing in Western Europe and the parallel cases occurring elsewhere in the world.

To talk about Western Europe in particular, scholars have normally seen the demise of the Roman Empire as marking a clear shift from the classical Ancient civilization to a more enhanced and progressive Modern world, intersected by a wide historical gulf-like

disjuncture of the Middle Ages. The obsession with Roman antiquity led to a romanticisation of the past by several early rhetorical-deceptive magicians who all dipped their pens into the cornucopia bequeathing a general belief to the masses that the 'beautiful flower' of European Antiquity symbolized by Roman cultural and political efflorescence, withered away with the 'fall of Rome'. Insinuated by some internal and external catalysts, the upshot was the plunging of the whole of Western Europe into an era of darkness, characterized by traits of medievalism, backwardness, stagnancy, and so on. St. Augustine, an upholder of Christianity, stated in his 426 AD work The City of God that Rome succumbed to its own wounds inflicted by paganism. Thus, in stark contrast with the much glorified Roman Empire - marked by its unparalleled ideas of law, order, citizenship and civilization - this phase was understood as the 'Dark Age' for a long time in the history of Europe, a concept which has come to be greatly disregarded by modern scholars due to negative connotations associated with it (Le Goff, 1990, p. 3). Pitted against the once mighty Rome, the study of this period in European history generally focused on the 'absence of systemic structures' (economic, political, civic, etc.) lost after antiquity, which persisted for a long time before 'modernity' finally arrived to save the day.

Although 'Medieval' is still not universal and cannot be straight-jacketed across continents and countries and over time, this division guides our perceptions and aids our understanding to a great extent. In terms of Western Europe, early historiography narrativized the early medieval ages in a way that gave centrality to the Germanic invasions and fall of the Roman Empire. All economic, political and social structures were then sought to be understood in terms of these two events. However, over the years, and especially towards the close of the twentieth century, there was subsequent revisiting by historians from different and diverse paradigms and perspectives. Rome was not built in a day and it did not fall in a day, later studies argued. Although scholars are still in two minds about what weightage be assigned to each of the centripetal and the centrifugal forces leading to the combined gradual demise of the empire, they

share the opinion that it took years of tumultuous internal politics, weakening fiscal system and waves of recurrent invasions, among an eclectic plethora of other reasons to finally assassinate the already-on-the-death-bed Rome. There appears to be a consensus amongst the historians that the period cannot be studied in terms of abrupt and drastic discontinuities caused by 'barbaric' invasions and fall of the Roman Empire. The period is now looked at in terms of gradual transformation marked by elements of crisis, continuity as well as transformation- each, from time to time. While historians like Anderson (2013) have sought to explain the period in terms of a socio-politico-economic transition, many others, including Innes (2007), have sought to study the structures of this period in their own terms instead of locating them within the framework of a meta-narrative of a series of social formations.

Historiography: Issues with Early Histories of the 'Fall' of Rome

The historiography on the topic has been shaped and reshaped with the selection of different sources and their interpretations. These selections need to be located in their own political contexts. For example, many a time, the sources used mostly belong to the Carolingian period (early 9th century) which does not provide a very revealing picture of the earlier period. Also, both the World Wars further led to a politicization of the study. After the First World War, as suggested by Anderson (2013), the historiographical focus shifted in accordance with the patriotism of the historian; this would then decide the respective importance given to Germanic tribes and Roman vestiges in making and shaping this period. Conversely, the narratives after the Second World War saw a drastic change in the approach of study wherein, there was a tendency to underplay the importance of Germanic contributions in the making of this period. Arguments of continuity of the Roman traditions began to overtake the arguments of Germanic influences.

Wickham's (2009) work provides imperative details in this regard, for a nuanced and enlightening understanding of Early Medieval Western Europe. His central argument focuses on slow transformation of the landscape, involving continuities from the Ancient Roman Civilization, instead of its drastic change into medieval Europe. The detailed study of Lansing and English (2009) is also based on similar premises and is centrally suggestive of the continuities through time, instead of a sudden collapse. The composition of aristocracies transformed gradually. The settlements became more dispersed in the immediate post-Roman Western Europe, while there was a simultaneous agglomeration of houses of roughly equivalent size and status alongside one another. By the eighth century, the settlements were further stabilized and became more nucleated. Trade continued in this period but it became more localized and its intrinsic linkage with the state was snapped off. The villae were abandoned in the post-Roman times and the aristocracy was militarized.

But, while these Revisionist works have been very useful in the understanding of the processual changes during the period under consideration, they appear to have completely underplayed the role of Germanic invasions in affecting changes, perhaps due to their sole emphasis on continuities. Heather's (2009) work is very useful in this regard. Heather critiques the Revisionist view which suggested that the Roman Empire would have collapsed regardless of the Germanic invasions. He attributes great importance to the violence inflicted by the invaders and suggests that the empire would have survived had there not been a Germanic invasion. He also studies in great detail the migratory patterns and gradual transformations which eventually came to shape the continent.

Drawing on and analyzing a few secondary works by well-reputed historians of Early Medieval Europe, this study seeks to identify elements of crisis, continuity, and transition. It also attempts to discuss the nature of this period by examining its elements within their historical context, thereby avoiding evaluation through the lens of hindsight.

The Roman Empire of the Late Antiquity: A Background

The beginning of the Medieval Age in Europe, traces its roots to the Roman Empire which dominated most parts of Europe for centuries. The beginning of the empire can be dated back to 27 BC when Augustus was crowned the emperor. The Roman Empire came to be regarded as the largest empire in the ancient world with its capital set in Rome. Owing to the large size of the empire, which had greatly expanded over time, the empire was divided into Eastern and Western during the reign of Diocletian. The eastern part (the Byzantine Empire) continued to survive and remained a major power with its capital at Constantinople. However, the western part of the Roman Empire was arguably brought to a 'sharp' end, when the last Roman emperor, Romulus Augustus, was deposed by the Germanic King Odoacer in 476 AD. This event very roughly marked the end of the Ancient World and the beginning of the Middle Ages.

The Roman Empire, in its initial years, excelled in warfare, law, architecture and in a myriad of other fields. Their excellent methods of warfare resulted in victories in wars which, in turn, provided them with slaves and man power. As such, the Western Roman Empire economy was greatly dependent upon these wars and on the resources accumulated through them and it also relied heavily on the riches and hoards of precious metals from the east. However, in the later period, as a result of various crises which hit Rome, the Roman citadels- from which the legions departed to capture booties and slaves from the war- were themselves besieged and captured (Le Goff, 1990, p. 4). Besides, the West had to suffer economically due to the flow of gold to the East which caused a serious imbalance.

Before delving deeper, it is essential to examine the crises embedded in Roman society, polity, and economy, which began to emerge in the Empire's final years and ultimately signaled its demise.

Roman Crises:
Unpacking the Processes Behind Rome's Decline

I. Slavery in Classical 'Colonies' and Technological Stagnation

The slave mode of production of the Ancient World, an economic 'miracle', provided the ultimate basis for both its accomplishments and its decline (Anderson, 2013, pp. 19-21). Slavery was the economic hinge, the fulcrum point between the city and the countryside as well as a form of movable property central to the entire economy. However, this system had dire consequences as slave relations of production imposed unprecedented limits to ancient forces of production. This and Rome's scarcity of metals led to a lag in technical inventions and material advancement leading to a lack of economic equipment and the eventual paralyzing of the agricultural and industrial productivity of Rome (Duby, 1974, pp. 15-16).

Technological stagnation, the low average productivity of manual labor, and the structural constraints of slavery led to a separation of material work from the sphere of liberty, resulting in direct intra-economic consequences (Anderson, 2013, pp.24-28). Even though Anderson (2013) and Little and Rosenwein (1998) highlight that this period saw technological innovations such as the rotary mill and the screw press, they admit that these do not seem to have been dynamic and lasting due to social obstacles, the lack of interest owing to the poor soil, and also because technological innovations received little objective impetus at the time. All this had rendered a colonial character to the Classical civilization, which had started inhibiting its economic growth and that of the military whose maintenance was closely associated with it.

II. Decline in Slave Supply and Inflation

The slave mode of production was undergoing technical stagnation. The economy was facing a glut since there was neither the impulse nor the incentive to further improve the production process within the same economic structure. To add to their miseries, the supply of slaves, which largely depended on the prisoners of war from Rome's foreign conquests, suffered due to the halt in further expansion by the Principate and the exhaustion of servile labour across the Mediterranean, which eventually dried up the well of manpower. This lacuna led to a steep inflation. Nor could the dwindling number of slaves be compensated by an increase in productivity. The limits of the Roman agrarian economy, therefore, were soon reached (Anderson, 2013, pp. 76-80).

III. Growth of Regional Economies Amid the Collapse of the Tax System, Long-Distance Trade, Industries, and Aristocratic Decline

Although agriculture was the dominant force in the Roman economy, long-distance trade organized by the Roman state and structured by the tax system played a crucial role. But these too mirrored political change and suffered a cataclysmic setback as the systems supplying Roman armies in the West came to a dramatic end with the collapse of the Rhine frontier around 400 (Lansing and English, 2009, pp. 17-18). There was no development of commercial companies and no existence of funded debts or an advanced credit system. The regionalization of manufacturers and the sheer disinterest of the propertied classes slacked industrial concentration and trade, respectively. The contraction of external supplies might have gradually diminished the stock of servile artisans in the cities. This resulted in a gargantuan internal crisis in the whole economic and social system which soon developed into an all-pervasive

crumbling of the traditional political edifice. Rome also saw an utter lack of legitimate rulers, justice and goodwill, and an increasing number of selfish aristocrats who persuaded communities of local landowners to accept their leadership.

IV. Environmental and Socio-Economic Concerns

Georges Duby highlighted the importance of plague epidemics, poverty and malnutrition which spread via trade routes as having catastrophic consequences on Roman demographics around the 6th century (Duby, 1974, p. 12). Duby attempts to explain the nature of the period through intricate analyses of various factors like the climate, the population, the tools and the landscape. He suggests that, in terms of both time and space, the period saw great climatic variations. These variations were influential in determining the nature of economy and polity. It is interesting to note that the period of crisis and transformation (beginning of the 5th till the middle of the 8th century) was marked by a glacial advance, a dip in population growth, and by a quantitative and qualitative paucity of tools.

Climatic change, population growth, and the hunt for more fertile territories, cultivable land, and pastures were some of the key causes that opened the way for invaders and immigrants from across Europe. However, more significant causes may have included the displacement of certain nearby tribes, driven out of their land by stronger groups of expanding settlers, famines, and the refusal of the Roman state and elite to provide asylum. These tribes were forced to resort to violence and invade Roman territory.

The Church also became a burden on the system. The institution of the Church did not help preserve traditional attitudes or mitigate obsolescence in terms of technology. All these factors constituted key elements of the crisis during this period.

V. 'Barbaric' Invasions and Waves of Immigration: The Final Nails in the Coffin?

Some historians have argued that the Medieval West was born out of the crisis of the Western Roman Empire which had its beginning in the 3rd century. This crisis intensified in the 5th century and continued up to the 8th century. Since the reign of Marcus Aurelius, Germanic menace had been a permanent burden on the empire. The sack of Rome in 410 by Alaric and the Visigoths was one of the most spectacular events. Likewise, from 407 to 429, Italy, Gaul and Spain were ravaged by a series of raids. Similar such invasions continued to take place.

The centre of the empire- Rome in Italy could barely protect itself, let alone the other provinces. Taking advantage of the situation, these provinces broke free from the shackles of the Roman empire and rose in rebellion. On top of this, Rome was plundered by 'barbarians' (the outsiders/invaders were othered by contemporary historians) acting according to the laws of war and menaced by displaced slaves and youths who proceeded wantonly in defiance of all laws (Lansing and English, 2009, p. 10). The tremendous strain on the Roman Empire was aggravated all the more by the repeated invasions from various Germanic tribes and other marauders over the centuries. As warfare became increasingly dependent on heavy cavalry, the maintenance of which was a drain on Rome's resources, the infantry-based Roman military started to lose its importance against the recurring waves of immigrants who sought better land and resources in Rome (Heather, 2009). The disturbance caused by the Huns on the Roman Western frontiers led the Germanic tribes to seek refuge, and the empire was forced to accommodate their large numbers. Within Roman society, the lower classes who were treated ruthlessly by the upper class were encouraged by dint of this to side with the 'barbarians' and seek refuge for dignity. The invasions continued up until the 8th century, making their presence felt throughout the Western Roman Empire and bringing about drastic change in the political map of the West.

'Fall' or 'Decline'?: Problematising the Early Histories and their Idea of Rome

One of the better ways of understanding the period under study is by locating the social formation of this period in continuum and in conversation with the preceding and the subsequent social formations. In this regard, Anderson's 1974 work has been highly influential. He has sought to understand the period by locating it within the framework of transition from the antique to the feudal mode of production. Anderson rejects the idea of drastic changes brought about by sudden invasions and explains the changes as gradual transformation through the synthesis of the primitive and the ancient modes of the Germanic tribes and the ancient Romans, respectively. He begins by explaining the nature of the social structure of the Germanic tribes and goes on to suggest that these tribes were highly heterogeneous and not a monolithic entity attacking the Roman Empire strategically. Thus, it becomes important to question the notion of these invasions as 'a political move to pull down the mighty Rome'.

One gets to trace elements of crisis, continuity and transformation in Anderson's work, through his very explanation of the social-political-economic structures of the period. He explains the period up till the 8th century in three phases- the first phase, being marked by rigid and brittle dualism; the second phase marked by a regression and the third phase being marked by a process of synthesis (after the 6th century). The phase of dualism was one of shared power between the Roman and Germanic institutions, where the power of one was simultaneously negotiated and controlled by the other. The Roman authorities employed the Hunic and other such tribes into their administrative institutions and these institutions, on the other hand, were being constantly shaped and reshaped by the Germanic influence. By the 5th century, the Germanic tribes had managed to break the Western Roman Empire and establish themselves in its place.

The fall of the empire though, was not solely due to the Germanic invasions. As mentioned earlier, the empire was facing crises on several fronts.

Political Continuity after the First Wave

The first wave of Germanic invasions in the 5th century under the 'primitive communities' led by Alaric and the Suevi, Vandal and Alans, made the 'barbarians' witness relative weakness, isolation and unease on the face of an alien more progressed civilization, due to which they lent heavily on the pre-existing Roman imperial structures, paradoxically preserved wherever possible, reflected in the relative fluidity in the ranks of imperial armies (Anderson, 2013, pp. 108-110). This was followed by Germanic control of land and institutions, further contributing to their increasing internal differentiation and the intensification of class crystallization and stratification. However, this phase was to be identified by what Anderson calls 'official dualism'. The Germanic influences were not so strong, nor capable enough to entirely displace the Roman structures of administration, social control and governance. Hence, for a long time, the combination of both Roman and Germanic influences worked to shape the nature and functioning of the period. The client chiefs of the Roman diplomats kept their independence beyond the Roman borders but defended Roman interests in the 'barbarian' world in return for the fulfilment of personal and political interests. A high percentage of Germanic troops had been integrated into the Roman troops by the mid 4th century, both culturally and politically amalgamated into Roman society.

There was, thus, this fission or assimilation of the two worlds, with elements of Roman continuity well-preserved with the interweaving of Roman and Germanic elements within the imperial state apparatus itself. The divisions of land and the taxation systems also showcased this systematic institutional dualism of the

analogues. This dualism was most pronounced in Ostrogothic Italy where a conglomeration of Germanic military apparatus and Roman civilian bureaucracy were effectively juxtaposed within Theodoric's government. The existence of two separate legal codes and no tampering with the Latin legality further exhibited the continuity of the Roman juridical and political structures.

Subsequent Stages of the Invasion and Elements of Continuity in the Socio-Cultural Realm

Encounters and interactions were taking place, many a time-fruitful (Duby, 1974, p. 4). The 'barbaric' Germans intended to adopt the 'civilized' elite lifestyle and methods of subsistence of the Romans, leading, once again, to a continuum that was archetypal of the Romans, to some extent.

Most of the conquering Germanic people were Arians, notably the Goths, but they saw their religion as only marking out their own identity vis-a-vis their new Roman subjects who could stay Catholic. It was a 'badge of apartness' which they maintained with complete respect and distance from the imperial Catholics (Anderson, 2013, pp. 118-119). Besides, Vandals were very much like Romans already. Eventually, in the 5th century they continued as a privileged political elite in the absence of the senatorial class. But however Romanized the Vandals were, they were agents of major change (Wickham, 2009, pp. 77-78). After the first wave of invasions, Rome was more retained than modified. The shift away from Roman government was rather less organized or quick as has been implied in various conquest narratives as Wickham suggests. By the 470s, most of the West was under the control of more Roman polities, whether Gothic, Burgundian or Vandal (Wickham, 2009, pp. 88-89). The administrative and fiscal systems had little in contrast; the same traditional landowners dominated politics, beside a new (but partly Romanizing) Gothic or Ostrogothic military elite.

Economic Efflorescence and Assimilation

Although some Germanic nobles interfered with Bacaudae and the large-scale agrarian slavery to some extent, they largely left these and the other rural institutions such as the colonate intact. These 'barbarian' kingdoms in fact tried to restore the damage done to the Roman edifices by meticulously patronizing and promoting Roman art, language, culture, literary works, architecture and foreign relations. Thus, for at least some time, there was more fission than fusion, and apart from the disarray caused by war and civil war, things continued in accordance with their German prototypes (Anderson, 2013, pp. 119-120).

Failure of the Roman Imperial Project and Neo Political Formations: The Beginning of Transitions

The world of power-politics was incessantly changing, and the end of political unity was not a trivial shift; the whole structure of politics had to change, as a result. As a consequential cause of the late 5th century breakdown of the central government, the ruling classes of the provinces, who were still mostly Roman, were diverging fast. There was a growing trend towards provincialisation and though a common political culture may have survived initially, points of references in each Roman region were becoming more localized (Wickham, 2009, pp. 89-91). The stage was already set for the post-Roman West to be dominated by different long and short-term power-bridle holders such as the Merovingians, the Franks, the Lombards and so on. When the Persian war largely stopped in 554, Rome was left with a ruined fiscal system, a fragmented and stagnant economy and a largely scattered aristocracy. The eastern emperor Justinian's protagonism gave a final blow to the 5th century West, marking the failure of the Roman imperial project (Wickham, 2009, pp. 93-95).

The Volkerwanderung[1]: A Decisive Shift in the History of Europe

The initial crude wave had cleared the ground thoroughly of actual organized resistance by the imperial West. The road was now clear for the Frankish conquest of Gaul, the military Volkerwanderung under the Lombards, and the consequent mass-migrations to Italy. Heather (2009) has studied these migratory phenomena and the social stress that drove them. These were not uninvited 'peoples' but a conglomeration of identities with varying roots. These episodes were to bring about the actual transition and to bring about Western feudalism ardently and permanently to Europe (Anderson, 2013, p. 120). They were added ingredients to the crucible of collapse- the final flash in the pan.

The Church, Economic and Cultural Shifts, and the Seeds of Feudalism

The 7th and 8th centuries were decisive as the cultural shift was much deeper this time and could be easily witnessed in the linguistic shifts. The malleable dualism was beaten and fired into a rigid singularism in the 6th century. Germanic Europe died a strange death. The hospitalitas system[2] was abandoned, a more amorphous two-fold pattern of settlement adopted. Local latifundia[3] were

1 - The period of mass migration of Germanic people in Europe in the early medieval period (roughly 376 to 800)

2 - Twofold in character (private and public), the hospitium is an ancient Greco-Roman concept of hospitality which implied a divine right of the guest and divine duty of the host. In the early medieval ages, the term was extended in meaning to include buildings, monastery extensions, dormitories or complexes where guests of Rome could receive hospitality from the Romans.

3 - Large ancient Roman estates, which employed a vast number of peasants or slave labourers, known as latifundia, originated in the early 2nd century BC. These estates consisted of confiscated land, which was reallocated to private buyers to be cultivated for export products.

confiscated by the Lombards and the Roman landowners crushed or eliminated. Nucleated village communities, a subsequent feature of feudalism, multiplied with the demise of the Villae[4] which were now organized as units of production, gradually transforming into political units. Political intermarriages and blending contributed to the formation of a unified rural aristocracy. The final blow to Roman antiquity was dealt by the Church, which, acting as a subtle agent of transformation, led to the ultimate fusion of Roman and Germanic elements. This cultural decline, instigated by the Church, set Western Europe on the path to feudalism in the waning years of the Roman Empire.

The Curious Case of the Cities and Socio-Cultural Restructuring with the Advent of Feudalism

Duby (1974) discusses the changing landscape of Rome in this period in some detail. The landscape, he suggests, was undergoing a gradual transformation with the combination of elements of Roman decay and Germanic improvement and this process was evident in the change in subsistence patterns (increase in interconnection between agriculture and animal husbandry, suggestive of the combining of pastoralism and agriculture), dietary habits (increasing non-vegetarianism), and change in settlement patterns (abandonment of villae).

The cities inevitably transformed and played a central role in the decline as the social and political system was restructured from the 3rd to the 5th century, also serving as important ecclesiastical and political centers. Tax evasion was common. The cities continued to act as interfaces between the government and the local landed society, but rarely became sites of enforcement when the masses attempted to evade tax collection, implying a crisis of public

4 - A villa was a country house built for rich citizens or the elite aristocrats in the Roman Republic.

confidence in city life (Lansing and English, 2009, pp. 14-15). Rome could not shoulder the cumulative weight of a declining urban demography, a perishing urban economy and a failing commerce. Besides, the multifaceted interactions with the Christian 'barbarians' had led to the birth of a hybrid culture with some senatorial families creating new forms of cultural and social dominance through the Church. Imperial habitation became more and more sparse by the beginning of the 8th century, as more and more people flocked seeking residence around these churches or around their secular leaders (Lansing and English, 2009, pp. 14-16).

The total disappearance of the Villae which were important centres of 'aristocratic conspicuous consumptions' and, so, major economic hubs, from the countryside by the 7th century was another important pointer of the crisis, as it demonstrated the collapse of a particular system of elite dominance, rooted in the close relationship between Roman landlords and the Roman state, as also the cultural values and patterns thereby, indicating the mutations of the Roman ruling class into the early Medieval Western aristocracies (Lansing and English, 2009, pp. 20-21). The political collapse of the 5th century crippled the Germanic-Roman senatorial aristocracy. In its place emerged a series of regional aristocracies which were highly militarized and which had adopted distinct ethnic identities to articulate personal interests (Lansing and English, 2009, pp. 23-25). By the 5th century, the formal status-markers of the senatorial elite had vanished and the category had itself become far more subjective and inclusive, with fluid hierarchies and elastic identities having just economic limits. The emergence of the manorial system and rural monasticism (first seemed to have commenced in the 7th century) led to intensified forms of agricultural exploitation and consequently, a transition to feudalism (Lansing and English, 2009, p. 24).

Inception of the 'Early Medieval Europe' and its Political Landscape

The subsequent Frankish empires saw attempts towards increasing centralization and administrative and financial standardization. The Carolingian era was the highest point of this process. The empire's legitimacy was based off of claims of Roman revival. In terms of social crystallization, this period saw increasing intermarriage between landed families leading to the formation of a close-knit aristocratic class. In the course of the 8th century and in the subsequent period, the vassalage system slowly crept in, leading to the formation of layers of beneficiaries placed in a contiguous chain of hierarchy situated within a complex web of benefits and obligations. These cumulative syntheses were reflected in the transformative emergence of feudalism. Anderson's work has been immensely useful for a concise conceptual analysis of the period in terms of larger processual changes in history. Nonetheless, his methodology contains implicit assumptions of 'inevitability' in explaining historical events. This tends to fit events into a neat, sequential framework, thereby effacing some details that could provide a freer insight into the period and help gauge its mood.

Conclusion

Ballads of the fall of the mighty city of Rome ushering in a 'Dark' era have been sung since ages. Stories have been told and retold about the reverberations from within, weakening the very foundations of the once 'invincible' empire, accentuated by the marauders annihilating the colossal columns of its edifice. A stooped, exhausted, crooked Rome merely looked on with folded hands, tears cornering the eyes, as it was defiled and fragmented over the years by the myriad of voices which echoed its death knell, — or so history books would have us believe. However, the narrative now is quite different. The conjured-up images of a bastard civilization, featuring

partial Roman, Christian, Germanic, or feudal components, which brought about stagnation, are finally being dispelled. The focus has shifted to celebrating these very components, which, when combined, created the perfect patchwork quilt. This shift emphasizes the full consequences of the development processes that had been at work throughout the half-millennium of the Empire's existence, and thus, positions early medieval Western Europe as the harbinger of change. Nevertheless, the incipient crises of the Empire could never have realised their full potential had it not been for the 'march of civilization' (Heather, 2009, p. 384).

There are historians who have a while used the categories of fusion and transformation to analyse the Early Medieval period in Europe. These include Duby (1974), Wickham (2009), Lansing and English (2009) and Heather (2009). These works, some of which are from the Revisionist school, emphasizing finer continuities, have been highly influential in understanding the period. Some of these detailed readings are also immensely useful in understanding the peculiarities of the period and in analyzing the systems and structures in place in the period of study in their temporal and spatial contexts. Duby's 1974 work is quite significant in this regard as it provides crucial insights into the understanding of the demography, the climate and the related economy of the period. Nonetheless, perhaps a more detailed and descriptive analysis could have been synthesized further into the formation of strong suggestive arguments and analytical hypotheses. While the arguments often suffice in content, they lack in application.

The continuities in the new 'barbarian' empires were significant, Wickham (2009) suggests, but these continuities are not so much with the Roman Empire as with the non-Romanized parts of the erstwhile empire. The central aspect in his explanation of continuities is 'ethnogenesis'. To quote him, "*ethnic identities were flexible, malleable, 'situational constructs'; the same 'barbarian' in the 6th-century Italy could be Rugian, and Ostrogothic, and (though only after the east Roman conquest) even Roman… Each of the 'Romano-Germanic' kingdoms had a bricolage of beliefs and identities with*

very varying roots, and these, to repeat, could change, and be reconfigured, in each generation to fit new needs… From all of this, one has to conclude that post-Roman identities were a complex mixture, and they had a variety of origins: Roman, barbarian, biblical; and also both oral and literary". At the same time, there were crucial elements of change too. This period was marked by dents and fractures in the erstwhile centralisation and an increasing provincialisation. Increasing 'German-ness' was evident in various aspects of daily life, including the emphasis on aristocratic meat-eating and emergence of the culture of public assembly, "*the formal meeting of the adult male members of a political community, to deliberate and decide on political action and war, and increasingly, to make law and judge disputes*". However, Duby (1974) goes on to explain that the changes were not so much due to the cultural differences as from the structural position of each of the Germanic groups. This is evident in the instance of shift from public taxation to collection of rents from private landowning. The 'barbarian' armies that overtook the provinces sought to settle on the lands after their conquest. This led to increasing sedentarisation and, consequently, changes in the form of revenue collection, as explained above. The settlement of these armies also altered the composition of the aristocratic strata, which shifted from a civil to a martial nature. This, in turn, contributed to the emergence of a militarized society and the eventual abandonment of the villae. These elements help us sketch a clearer picture of the period and understand the processes that led to the emergence of the medieval era in Europe.

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Serena Minniti

Emigration and Colonies: Italian Nationalists and the Propaganda for the Conquest of Libya

Introduction

The following analysis focuses on the imperialist propaganda that characterised the political agenda of Italian nationalists in the first decade of the 20th century.

When I refer here to Italian nationalism, I am talking about the political movement that developed from the end of the 19th century and that would become a fully-fledged political entity only in 1910, the year in which the Italian Nationalist Association was born. It took many years, and several internal splits, before nationalism emerged as a well-defined political program. However, from the beginning the Association was characterised by a range of political aims shared by all its members. These features were: a profound hostility to the socialist party; a rejection of the Italian parliamentary system characterised by a practice called *trasformismo*, which means the use of ruling through post-election deals between supposedly hostile parties; a consequent disdain for the liberal governments; and, last but not least, the intention to create an "activist stance towards foreign policy and an imperialist project in Africa" (De Grand, 1978). In short, the nationalists wanted to represent a third way between the two existing political cultures of the time, socialism and liberalism.

From this point of view, for a scholar dealing with Italian contemporary history, the story of the Nationalist Association plays no small role: it is about tracing the historical path that led the country to the political palingenesis that led to the experience of the Fascist regime.

It is important to underline that for a long period, historiography has mainly studied Italian nationalism because of the relationship that the Nationalist Association had with the fascist movement. This methodological bias, for which Italian nationalism would have represented only a sort of pre-fascism, was an obstacle to the development of a study of nationalism as a stand-alone phenomenon. In addition, such a perspective inevitably leads to the complete overlapping of the nationalist phenomenon with the fascist one and also implies a failure to recognise the leading political role, now unanimously acknowledged in historiography, played by the Nationalist Association in Italy during the early 20th century. The insufficiency of this approach was filled, between the 1960s and 1970s, thanks to a new direction of research that, going beyond the methodological framework that had prevailed until then, made it possible to write the autonomous history of Italian nationalism.

However, among these factors, the issue of foreign policy, as is well known, played a central role within Italian nationalism's political action. It was not only a matter of hoping for an energy-fueled international stance - reflecting not only the example of the great European powers, the United States and Japan - but also the desire to have a leading role within the *mare nostrum,* whose centrality had already been exalted by the patriots of the Risorgimento in the second half of the 19th century. Alongside these issues, there was a total lack of confidence in the assumption that it was realistic, especially in the aftermath of the Italian defeat at Adua in 1896, to have a government that would be able to promote a substantial change in Italian foreign policy. Such a government, that is, capable of correcting the *modus operandi* according to which Italy, from the Ethiopian defeat onward, had passively assisted in the European game rather than taking part in it. The reason for such an absence of confidence, was related to the effective

sameness noticeable among the governments that succeeded the last Crispi cabinet with regard to their approach to foreign policy: whether it was Pelloux, Zanardelli or Giolitti, it seemed to the nationalists that Italy's strategy in front of the European imperialist scenario was to remain unchanged. In other words, nationalists' imperialism not only took on a precise doctrinaire profile over the years, but also represented a voracious hunger, stimulated both by the desire to compete on equal terms with the European powers and by the hope, which was promptly unfulfilled, of assisting to a manifestation of will on the part of national policy.

One of the main issues of nationalist imperialist propaganda in Africa was the topic of settlement colonies, something much spoken about in Italy since the time of the national unification. To be more specific, nationalists saw the acquisition of colonies in Africa as a solution to the serious problem of Italian emigration. In fact, between the end of the 19th century and the first decade of the 1900s, an uninterrupted stream of young people, mainly from southern Italy, left the homeland in search of better living conditions overseas. The nationalists were really of the belief that the conquest of new territories in Africa would allow Italy to arrest this phenomenon. So, it can be said that "what seemed to set Italian imperialism apart from that of the richer nations of Europe was precisely the desperate poverty which drove Italians to find new homes in foreign lands" (De Grand, 1978). This rationale for expansion was summarised in the nationalist slogan "poor people's imperialism": nationalists underlined Italy was a poor nation, because it covered a relatively small geographical area, its soil was not fertile enough for massive agricultural production, its territory lacked natural resources, such as coal, and as if this wasn't enough, its industrial sector was not adequately developed. Despite these facts, however, Italy's population growth was one of the highest in Europe, so high that the motherland, "in its poverty-stricken condition, was unable to contain the entire population, which was thus forced to overflow" (De Grand, 1978). According to this reasoning, the conquest of territories in Africa would ensure a kind of extension of the nation, toward which the flow of migration could be directed. Nevertheless, of course, it would be contained within the political boundaries of the homeland.

Now, it is true that the nationalists really believed this solution would work – basing this belief on the example of the many communities of Italians who had already settled in Africa, such as in French Tunisia. However, what I would like to highlight is how the Italian nationalists turned this topic related to the settlement colonies to their political advantage in order to gain the consensus of the masses. The following analysis, in fact, starts from the assumption that the nationalists were the first political movement, in Italy, to attempt to build a "new right", namely a political proposal that, starting from a conservative ideology, aimed to involve the masses following the example of the socialist party, the main nationalists' political enemy. This was the case to such an extent that reading the texts of the nationalists, it is not uncommon to find their exponents – such as one of their leaders, Enrico Corradini – openly talking about the need to be inspired by the methods of the socialist party, or praising the ability of the socialists to appeal to the people. It is true, as Ernst Nolte has pointed out, that "Corradini and his friends immediately faced their main enemy, socialism, (...) assuming, however, its problematics and terminology" (Nolte, 1966). Indeed, the concept of national socialism developed by Corradini, shows clearly how he "moves entirely within the mentality and terminology of his political enemy when he makes the famous distinction between 'proletarian' and 'bourgeois' nations and declares that nationalism wants to be for the whole nation what socialism was for the working-class" (Nolte, 1966).

From this point of view, one of the main political aims of the nationalists was precisely that of seeking the consensus of both social classes, the middle class, from which they were for the most part drawn, and the working-class. Now, it could be said, then, that Italian nationalism understood the role of the emerging mass society in politics during the 20th century. So that, according to this assumption, the attempt to involve all social classes in the imperialist ideology was based on this reasoning: if imperialist recipes, from the nationalist point of view, would only have a real possibility of implementation once they were supported by the majority of the

population, then it was necessary to address the entire nation through a rhetoric that would win its consensus. In this sense, the imperial project, whose ultimate goal was primarily the geopolitical one of making Italy a great power, found in the theme of settlement colonies a perfect political tool.

Now, this kind of rhetoric would have resulted in the encounter between nationalists and syndicalists that would occur at the dawn of the Libyan enterprise, beginning with the first publications of the syndicalist magazine *La Lupa*. On this point, Maddalena Carli has rightly underlined that "nella versione corradiniana, il confronto/incontro tra le ali estreme dell'opposizione antigiolittiana prelude alla costruzione di un "nuovo ordine", alternativo al vigente in quanto fondato sull'innesto delle rispettive logiche e prassi politiche di appartenenza: ci si trova confrontati con il tentativo di connotare il movimento nazionalista in un senso differente dal conservatorismo tradizionale, conferendogli un pensiero sociale atto ad affrontare i problemi posti in campo dalla nascente società di massa e a misurarsi con quei processi di nazionalizzazione sui quali va consumandosi la crisi dello stato liberale" (Carli, 2013). Nevertheless, while it is true that the Italian Nationalists have been the first, from a "right-wing" political culture, to consider the problem of the relationship between the masses and the modern state, they failed in their intent to represent for the nation what socialism represented for the working-class: the Nationalist Association would only have achieved a true mass dimension after its union with the NPF in 1923, that is, when it would in fact cease to exist.

However, because of their attempt to do so, they could not do without sophisticated political propaganda which addressed the whole nation. Talking of the need to conquer territories in Africa with a view to providing a solution for young people forced to leave their homeland, represented an argument that would make this project far more popular and supported by the masses. The example of *this modus operandi* I am going to underline in the next pages, is the propaganda campaign for the Libyan war conducted in the columns of the nationalist magazine *L'Idea Nazionale*.

The Nationalists and the Propaganda for the Libyan War

First of all, before we begin, we have to consider that the opportunity to conquer Tripolitania and Cyrenaica, the two Turkish provinces which composed Libya, came at a very delicate moment for the Italian nation, when several nationalist concerns were in the foreground of public opinion. In fact, 1908 had marked a first hard blow to the Triple Alliance, due to the Bosnian affair; meanwhile, the depression of 1907-1908 had caused a surge in emigration, resulting in growing public awareness of the problem of emigration. In addition, the elections of 1909 saw further gains for the socialists and this meant they gained a significant number of parliamentary seats. Riding the wave of the Libyan cause for the nationalists meant facing all these problems with one weapon only.

In October 1911 the nationalist leader Enrico Corradini published the propaganda pamphlet *L'Ora di Tripoli*. The book opened with the author's preface dated September of that year, just over a week before the fourth cabinet led by Giovanni Giolitti declared war against the Ottoman Empire. In the few pages that make up the preface, Corradini expressly identified the Italian Nationalist Association as "the champion" of the campaign for the conquer of Libya. Indeed, in the months leading up to the opening of hostilities, the Italian nation had been "inflamed" for Tripoli: anticipating what would happen in 1915 for the interventionist campaign in the 1° W.W, the entire Italian nation, in fact, was converted to the cause of the war. In a few words, "l'anno dell'impresa libica, di fatto, fu (...) l'anno degli interventisti e dei neutralisti" (Volpe, 1946-1952).

Now, we cannot dwell here on a detailed analysis of the reasons related to the international framework that prompted the liberal government headed by Giovanni Giolitti to declare war against the Ottoman Empire for the conquest of Libya in October 1911. What is certain here is that, contrary to what they publicly claimed, it was not nationalist propaganda that was the decisive element in driving Giolitti into action. However, it is true that the nationalists were

among the first to make Libya the central and overriding issue of Italian politics. "Practically every issue of L'idea *nazionale* from March to September had one or more articles on Tripoli and Italian rights" (De Grand, 1978).

It was in this context that the "effective propaganda apparatus" for the Libyan enterprise architectured by the Roman nucleus of the Italian Nationalist Association worked (Roccucci, 2001). Referring to this, the incessant nationalist propaganda was based mainly on three things: the use of the nationalist press organs, whose one par excellence was the weekly *L'Idea Nazionale*; the several rallies held by the main nationalist exponents throughout Italy, from north to south; and the opening at this stage of nationalist offices in almost every big Italian city. As we can see, these were typical modern party actions.

The first issue of the nationalist paper was significantly published on March 1st, 1911, the anniversary of the "humiliation" of Adua. The weekly, in addition to celebrating with a long article full of *pathos* "Il dovere di ricordare" (The duty to remember), opened its publications by immediately placing the urgency of the Tripoline issue at the forefront: in condemning Italy's "tortuous, uncertain, weak, sluggish" (*L'Idea Nazionale,* 1° marzo 1911) foreign policy following the defeat at Adua, *L'Idea Nazionale* compared the Tripoline affair to "an act of political and civil honesty" (*L'Idea Nazionale,* 1° marzo 1911). Thus began the tight nationalist propaganda for war against the Ottoman Empire. Although the nationalist magazine has never been the Association's official representer, it, as Franco Gaeta has noted, "era indubbiamente l'organo che polarizzava attorno a sé il maggior interesse dei nazionalisti e dei loro avversari" (Gaeta, 1981). It is relevant to point out, in fact, that all of its editors - Enrico Corradini, Maurizio Maraviglia, Luigi Federzoni, Francesco Coppola, and Roberto Forges Davanzati - were members of the Central Committee of the Association elected at the Association's founding congress, held in Florence in 1910; moreover, Corradini, Federzoni and Maraviglia

had been elected by the Central Committee, at its meeting on December 28, 1910, members of the Executive Board formed by five people, of which the editors of *L'idea*, therefore, "constituted the majority" (Gaeta, 1981).

Summarising, we can say at this point that the nationalists identified the Libyan cause as the perfect opportunity to popularise imperialist ideology in the mind of the masses. To give a basic example of the way they seized this opportunity, it suffices to say that the cause of Libya had previously been discussed infrequently and with little conviction by the nationalists themselves in their main magazines, which were more oriented toward an imperialism project on the shores of the Red Sea.

So that, from one day to the next, beginning with the first publication of *L'Idea Nazionale*, Libya became the centre of the national-imperialist program. Among other things, in March 1911, when l'*Idea Nazionale* had just begun its political campaign for Tripoli, the nationalist Gualtiero Castellini published "the first book openly inciting the conquest of Libya" entitled *Tunisi and Tripoli* (Molinelli, 1966).

The main argument of these writings was the belief that Italian expansion in the Mediterranean would open the doors to vast fertile territories for Italian farmers of the South, the ones who were forced to emigrate overseas because of the lack of work in the peninsula, marking the final end of the drama of Italian emigration overseas. In other words, "Tripoli, si disse, si scrisse, si ripeté, aiuterà a risolvere anche i famosi problemi interni, primo e massimo, quello del Mezzogiorno (...) I suoi lavoratori non avranno più solo le rotte obbligate d'America, saranno più ricercati, potranno scegliere e porre condizioni" (Volpe, 1946-52).

For this reason, the Libyan soil was loosely described as extremely fertile, and therefore would allow Italian agriculture to flourish. Testifying to the plausibility of these aspirations were the correspondences from Libya of men such as Giuseppe Piazza (1911) and Giuseppe Bevione, who described the country as a "flourishing" land, rich in water sources, suitable for "hosting millions of Italians"

(Bevione, 1912). In particular, the nationalists made use of three basic arguments to support their pro-Tripoli propaganda: that the low fertility of the Libyan soil depended exclusively on Arab-Turkish misadministration; that the prodigious fertility of Cyrenaica would largely compensate for the arid province of Tripoline; and that the Italians would easily win the goodwill of the arabs. It is enough to mention that Bevione (1912), in his letters from Tripolitania, wrote not only that "the Arabs would without difficulty sell the whole of Tripolitania to the Europeans", but also that "for them Italy is the Nation destined to do in their country what England and France have done in the East and West", asserting that the Italians would be well received by the native tribes. Such themes echoed for months in the columns of the nationalist magazine, as well as in the warnings of nationalist speakers haranguing the audience at pro-Tripoli rallies. Enrico Corradini used to claim that "a Tripoli il deserto non è un fatto fisico, è un fatto storico. Non è abbandonato perché sia sterile; è sterile perché fu abbandonato" (in Tripoli the desert is not a physical fact, it is a historical fact. It is not abandoned because it is barren; it is barren because it was abandoned); and in his printed publications extolling the conquest of the Ottoman provinces, the leader of Italian nationalism minutely described the richness of the Libyan territory (Castellini, 1912).

Conclusions

Now, regarding the overemphasis which characterised the nationalists' propaganda, based on the descriptions of the resources of a territory they were unfamiliar with, one should not limit himself to a report of the deliberate distortion of reality in describing the "promised land". It is true that this attitude showed how Italians shared this conviction: "si ribadì da tante parti essere necessario non appartarsi dalle attività del mondo, se non si voleva rimanere in balìa delle forze più energiche e perdere, con la ragione di vivere, la vita stessa" (it was necessary not to withdraw from the world, if we did not want to remain at the mercy of the most energetic forces and

lose, with the reason for living, life itself) (Volpe, 1946-52). Nevertheless, at the same time, the fact remains that an entire press campaign was consciously built on erroneous information. As we have said, this can be attributed to the fact that the nationalist goal to involve not only the middle class but also the working class in the ardour of imperialist conquest, required the ability to give the Tripoli cause an ideal and utopian value. To this end, they tried to describe Libya as a kind of Eden, an earthly paradise, a ripe fruit to be easily plucked. In this regard, inaccuracies and false information about the fertility of the Libyan soil were later openly admitted by the nationalists themselves, claiming that they had treated the subject with naivety because they were inebriated by the imperialist cause.

In 1906, the Italian sociologist Giovanni Amadori Virgilj published a work entitled "Sentimento imperialista" (Imperialist Sentiment). The text aimed to scientifically discuss the imperialist ideologies, studying the phenomenon while not looking at the reasons of national prestige or economic-industrial growth that drove nations to conquer new territories. In short, it was a matter of understanding the meaning of imperialist sentiment, leaving aside the utilitarian component of territorial expansionism, i.e. that connected to the conquest of new territories in order to boost industrialisation. The author's thesis, in essence, starts from such a consideration: "tutte le trasformazioni mentali e d'azione concreta, che si possono riscontrare nei gruppi imperialisti, trovano nel sentimento il loro comune denominatore, che le spiega e ne dà l'ultima essenza. Da ciò l'assoluta deficienza di tutte le definizioni, che si sono volute dare al fenomeno come fatto di tendenzialità politico-economiche, determinate da una teoria qualsiasi di uomini superiori: definizioni errate nel loro criterio di composizione perché assumono gli effetti, ed effetti contingenti e transitori, alla dignità della causa; errate pure nel loro contenuto perché questi effetti non sono che uno degli effetti, tra i più appariscenti forse, ma che per il loro carattere non danno affatto l'idea della somma energia sociale, di cui il fenomeno dispone. (...) L'imperialismo invece è un sentimento, un sentimento generale, di popolo; e in questa sua

generalità sociale, nel suo carattere quasi passionale stanno le uniche peculiarità, che individualizzano attraverso la storia il fenomeno, lo rendono incomparabile con le conquiste che formarono gli imperi monumentali di tutte le epoche passate" (Virgilij, 1906).

From this viewpoint, the author accurately grasps the similarity between the social function of imperialism and the one of socialism: by using the Le Bon's approach found in "The Crowd: a study of the popular mind", published in 1895, the author argued that imperialism fulfils the same social function as socialism, endowing the collectivity with an impetus of ideality. In this sense, 19th century imperialism differs from earlier forms of territorial expansionism, such as colonialism, because it plays a role directly related to the rise of the masses in modern society. For this reason, imperialist sentiment, on the one hand, and socialism, on the other, represent two sides of the same coin. In imperialism, in short, "il popolo, tutto il popolo, vi trova un centro di gravitazione, un punto dove affissarsi; nella calma uniformità della psiche collettiva è venuta l'idealità nuova: idealità di lotta, di conforto, di fede. Il popolo, il grande idealista, se ne è impossessato, come si sarebbe impossessato di un'altra qualunque idealità purché lo avesse potuto scuotere e trascinare – come molti si sono impossessati dell'idealità socialista. È stata il suo messia psichico quell'idea lo ha strappato dall'immobilità, esso si è sentito compreso come di vita nuova, si è sentito travolto da una vita più forte, più generosa, più grandiosa, si è dato a lei, all'animatrice sua con frenesia, con avidità..." (Virgilij, 1906). As Francesco Perfetti highlighted, from this point of view: "sentimento socialista e sentimento imperialista appaiono dunque allo studioso come fenomeni con efficienze parallele" (Perfetti, 1984).

Now, is it possible to assume that the nationalists were at once the author and the victim of imperialist sentiment in Italy: on the one hand, they were fascinated by it; on the other, they understood its power as an ideology and used it as a tool to involve all social classes in their political project. This means that the nationalists understood well that not only to conquer the masses, but also to convert the supporters of socialism to the nationalist belief, it was necessary to elaborate a real political liturgy, which could rely on

many symbols and metaphors. For this reason, nationalist propaganda was characterised by references to the Roman empire and to the model of the Latin past. However, it should be pointed out that this was, in fact, more a matter of sentimental rhetoric than of appropriation of the past as a political project. The political project of the nationalists was revolutionary in the sense that, starting from a right-wing political culture, it proposed the construction of a totally new system of government, which would overcome the flaws of the liberal model, but also, at the same time, the ones related to the alternative offered by the socialists.

It is for this reason that in my analysis I have labelled the Italian Nationalist Association as a new right populist party, because they grasped the political significance of the rise of the mass society at the beginning of the 20th century, and, unlike the traditional conservative party, they tried to build a right-wing ideology that could reach the people taking the place of that of the socialists.

Obviously, they used morally condemnable methods trying to achieve this goal, adopting a populist language based on a sort of mystification of reality with the aim of convincing the masses to support certain political choices. However, at the same time, this attitude was evidence of how nationalists understood the change that was taking place in the language of politics: it was no longer possible to carry out any political project without the support of the majority of the population, and this meant seeking new ways for rulers to exercise power.

In conclusion, then, imperial rhetoric, spiced with mystifying images about the richness of Libyan soil, is linked to an awareness about the need to make use of political language that aimed to stir up the masses rather than to inform or convince them. In this sense, the Libyan war is a useful example to help us understand how the nationalists' attempt to achieve popular acceptance became intertwined with the problem of Italian emigration turning it into a tool of political struggle.

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Sérgio Neto

"Damn the war." Shadows and Light in Three Portuguese Short Stories about the First World War[1]

Introduction

When the First World War broke out, the chasm between Portuguese politics and society was immense. The establishment of the First Republic regime four years earlier was followed by two monarchic uprisings in 1911 and 1912 and by the promulgation of the controversial Law of Separation of State and Church in 1911. The provisions of this law, which sought to circumscribe the power of the Catholic Church, were boldly anticlerical, showing the marked opposition between the Church and its congregation. For its part, the Portuguese Republican Party (PRP), which had triggered the uprising that led to the new regime, had split into various party forces, each with different stances as regards the country's participation in the war.

The colonial issue was most relevant at the time, as Angola and Mozambique were neighbouring territories to the South West Africa and German East Africa colonies, respectively. The Lisbon government was attentive to the 1912-1913 negotiations between London and Berlin, which presupposed a possible split

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of the Portuguese colonies between the two empires (Meneses, 2014, pp. 179-181). Although Portugal engaged in some border fighting with the Germans in Southern Angola in 1914, the country remained neutral until March 1916. Meanwhile, an intense campaign for and against participation was unleashed in the press. Once the war was declared, some of the most important voices in the arts and literature milieu supported the decision of the government by publishing texts and poems in magazines and newspapers. Moreover, some plays staged in Lisbon and other smaller towns campaigned for war (Figueiredo, 2013).

Having sent soldiers to the colonies and also to Flanders, the country soon began to feel the effects of inflation, poverty, and hunger. The Mozambique campaign was marked by a series of setbacks against the guerrilla tactics used by General von Lettow-Vorbeck, while the army services were unable to respond effectively to the lack of water, food, and tropical diseases (Arrifes, 2004, pp. 201-210). In Flanders, soldiers found it difficult to adapt to the trenches, weather, and diet; however, their participation in the Western Front would be marked by the Battle of the Lys on 9 April 1918. Despite the defeat suffered, which was later mythologised as a moral victory of the Portuguese soldier's courage, the fact is that the country was among the victors in November 1918, achieving its main objective of the war: to keep the colonies under Portuguese rule. Political and social unrest nevertheless continued to grow and ultimately contributed to the end of the First Republic in 1926, with a coup that instituted a military dictatorship, which then slowly paved the way for the rise of António de Oliveira Salazar, the politician responsible for creating the equally dictatorial Estado Novo [*New State*] regime (Meneses, 2010).

Most of the literature on the First World War was published between 1918 and 1940. It was at a conference in the 1930s that a writer and Flanders veteran described in detail, perhaps for the first time, the Portuguese 'canon' (Cidade, 1937). It consisted of only one theatre play, a novel, some poems and poetry books, and, above all, the memoirs. However, the number of published (and unpublished) works is much higher – at least more than fifty plays, many dozens

of short stories, and about twelve novels. It should be noted that some anthologies and essays, most of which were published on the occasion of the 100th anniversary of the conflict, have pointed to somewhat forgotten texts (Ventura, 2018). However, more sustained analyses are still lacking, like those by Fussel (1975), Hynes (1991) and, more recently, Lewis-Setempel (2017), for the British case.

By comparing with other sources, this study aims at analysing three short stories based on the three opposing war memories that became public after 1918. First, nationalist approaches legitimising the war effort, some of which close to the ideals of the upcoming dictatorship of the *New State* regime; second, moderate visions, which acknowledged the war effort but also emphasised the human and economic costs that such war effort entailed in those years; third, pacifist writings, some of which by anarcho-unionist authors who clearly objected to the conflict.

Despite the reservations that this literary genre may raise with regard to the question of the interpretation of the war, all the more so because it "lacks the scope to investigate individual and social lives in all their dimensions", the fact is that the three short stories chosen go beyond the characteristics of the genre (Korte, 2007, p. 11). In this sense, they integrate elements of memoir, diary, and playwriting. On the other hand, the information they provide is very interesting and relevant to understand and, at the same time, question this historical period.

The Nationalist Approach

The early years of the conflict, even before Germany declared war, saw a series of short stories and poems published in the influential magazines *Ilustração Portuguesa*, *Atlântida,* and *A Águia* (Dias, 2018). The aim was to make some of the peculiarities of the new conflict known and at the same time prepare the minds of people for possible Portuguese intervention. Other common topics at the time, echoing the allies' propaganda, were the "Prussian militarism" and the "rape of Belgium." For example, the Portuguese

poet and pedagogue João de Barros (1914, pp. 5-7) wrote an extensive ode dedicated to "my friends in Brussels," contrasting "the clear cities, where life was filled with laughter" with the "heaps of ash, airless tombs," as "Barbarians' eyes show no kindness". In the same vein, a teacher of the Instituto Superior de Agronomia [School of Agronomy] dedicated some verses to "King Albert of Belgium" in *Ilustração Portuguesa* magazine, in an effort to balance his Republican sentiment with his admiration for the "honour and pride [of this] chosen soul" (Silva, 1915, p. 678).

Following Germany's declaration of war in March 1916, interventionist writings mushroomed and some first-hand accounts of the Western Front were splashed in the press, describing in greater detail what was happening in the trenches. Journalists, for example, many of whom later compiled their chronicles into books, illustrated "the soul of landscapes [that] flies with those fugitive birds, lost in endless desolation in the billowing smoke of war" (Castro, 1918, p. 9). On the other hand, despite the censorship imposed on the correspondence exchanged between soldiers and their families, some letters from the front were even published in newspapers, as was the case of a captain who worked with the aforementioned Hernâni Cidade and whose letter to his father was published in *Notícias de Viana* unbeknownst to him. In his writings, the officer mentioned that "amid a heap of ruined or completely razed houses, there stands a life-size crucifix [...] faith, belief, are the richest gifts a man can possess" (Silva, 1991, pp. 53-54).

The end of the conflict and the lifting of censorship gave rise to a vast wealth of publications, in particular memoirs, diaries, poems, and plays. These texts were almost always written by officers since most soldiers were illiterate. Although information about the experiences of the latter is important to understand the conflict, recent research by Marques (2014) has shown it is in the works of fiction or memoirs that the *zeitgeist* is perceived.

The nationalist approach is without a doubt one of the most expressive elements. This vision brought together the nationalist and historicist discourse on the "golden age" of the late Middle Ages, in which the victory in the Battle of Aljubarrota against the Castilians

and the beginning of the Age of Discoveries stand out. Although this nationalism is not exclusive to royalists or republicans, or even to the dictatorship's ideological thought, it is anchored in a heroic perception of the dawn of nationality and colonial legacy, going beyond the various Portuguese political regimes of the 20th century (Matos, 2008). In any event, some sectors of society identified more and more with the illiberal right, crystallised in the past, and began to identify the present with national decline, while at the same time projecting a future revival of the motherland.

Note should be made of the short story *Cartas de um Serrano* (Oliveira, 1930) [Cards from a Mountain Man] published in the same year in which the foundations of the *New State* regime were laid and in which the Catholic Church acknowledged the so-called 1917 "Fátima visions." As regards the title of this short story, the first word is a pun, because "cartas," in Portuguese, can mean both "playing cards" and "letters." As for the second part of the title, "Serrano," or one who is a native of the "serra" [mountain], was the name given to Portuguese soldiers in the First World War, as many of them came from the more rugged and mountainous rural areas in the hinterland. As regards the book cover, two elements must be considered: first, against the backdrop of destruction on the Western Front, a kneeling soldier lays down playing cards before a crucifix; second, a war cross stands out in a sky shrouded in fog with the bust of the Republic at its centre, in a clear reference to the "eye of Providence."

How do we interpret this combination of Catholic symbology, civil religion, and perhaps even occultism? In fact, the final years of the First Republic saw a certain rapprochement with the Catholic Church, or rather a "return to the sacred," as a result of the impact of the war and a reconfiguration of civil religion (Winter, 2014, pp. 204-205). The phenomenon was certainly common to all belligerent countries, but it had peculiar characteristics in Portugal since it occurred in the context of an anticlerical republican regime, which nevertheless made concessions. The corollary of this reconfiguration occurred in the symbolic Batalha Monastery, where the Unknown Soldier was buried in 1921 (Correia, 2015, pp. 360-363).

While the cover of *Cards from a Mountain Man* could be viewed as somewhat enigmatic, the content of the story was even more esoteric. It tells the story of Sérgio, a soldier who "had faith in God. He kept his eyes fixed on his homeland, the Fatherland in his soul, and his mother and his fiancée in his heart." His *cartas*, however, were not intended for family members (letters), but rather to serve as a somewhat nationalist liturgy (of playing cards). When confronted by a superior who urged him to pay more attention to an outdoor mass, Sérgio would assure him that the playing cards were his "mass book." And he would explain his argument, matching each card of the deck to various figures from the History of Portugal, the Bible, and Classical Antiquity, and also to landscapes, buildings, values, and even sacraments. For example, the three of spades corresponded to "three men of action," Francisco de Almeida, "Viceroy of India, an amazing warrior," João Passos, "revolutionary leader" in the liberal wars, and Mouzinho de Albuquerque, "the great African fighter" of the 19th century; the seven of diamonds represented the seven hills of Lisbon, the seven castles on the Portuguese flag, and the seven cities in the early days of Portugal. It should be noted that most of the historical figures were from the "golden age" of the late Middle Ages and the Age of Discoveries, although some figures were from 19th century liberalism. At the end of this "long demonstration" of "saints and heroes," both the officer and a chaplain who had approached them acknowledged: "they thought you were an ungodly man, but you are a believer" (Oliveira, 1930).

More than being a mere exercise on some esoteric vision of the country – note the mystic nationalism of the book of poems *Lusitânia* (Beirão, 1917) or *A Mensagem* (Pessoa, 1934), among so many other examples – this odd short story illustrated the political and religious crossroads in the last years of the First Republic and of the transition from the Military Dictatorship to the *New State* regime. Its author, linked to the performing arts, gave a nuanced image of the First World War: he referred to religious practices in the trenches, but gave no account of the stressful daily life of the conflict. He thus subscribed to a nationalist vision that authors linked to the *New*

State would later pursue. For example, poet António de Freitas Soares, who was totally aligned with the regime, not only named a sonnet "Salazar's birthday," but also wrote about the "epic of Toledo," that is, the resistance of the nationalist bloc to the siege carried out by the republicans during the Spanish Civil War. In his book *Gratidão* [Gratitude], an anthology of poems published in the *Notícias de Guimarães* newspaper, the author exalted the "noble Lusitanian workers," only briefly referring to the "laments of trembling widows" (Soares, 1936, p. 43).

The Moderate Approach

In general, it can be claimed that the moderate approach prevailed among those who wrote about the First World War. Note that many intellectuals, some of whom left for the trenches in Flanders and to outback Africa, had supported Portugal's participation in the conflict. Their subsequent testimonial sought to justify the 1914-1916 interventionist approach, especially considering the difficulties then faced on the battlefields of northern France and Mozambique. But ultimately, this stance was based on the fact that the country had secured the main objective of the war: keeping the Portuguese colonies.

Some of these writings at times showed some tragic-comic elements, as well as apparently contradictory feelings of outrage, irony, tenderness, nostalgia, and *saudade* (a feeling of longing). One of the most interesting examples is the illustrated story *João Ninguém, Soldado da Grande Guerra* (João Nobody, a Soldier of the Great War), by Captain João Menezes Ferreira, a Flanders veteran. The author Sousa (2014) who, in an exhibition commemorating the centenary of the war, was called "captain of arts", stands out as one of the most interesting personalities writing about the tragic events of those times. Strictly speaking, his tale is a mosaic of many elements, almost a synthesis of the art of writing about the First World War in

Portugal, starting with the name of the main character, João Ninguém [João Nobody], which has a double connotation. First, to the propaganda of the war period: in 1916, the army distributed the book *Cartilha do Povo* [People's Primer] to the soldiers, a text that tried to explain in plain language and in the form of a dialogue the reasons for the Portuguese participation in the war. In this short story, the characters had the most common male first names at the time, João Portugal, José Povinho [José People], and Manuel Soldado [Manuel Soldier] (Cortesão, 1916). Secondly, the surname of the main character, "Ninguém" [Nobody], pointed to the many anonymous soldiers in the trenches and the very mythology built around the Unknown Soldier. In this respect, and although without the same literary and informative value, the author later wrote a small book of verses about the war on the African Front and the lampshade containing the "homeland flame," an artistic object built to watch over the soul of the Portuguese Unknown Soldier (Ferreira, 1927).

Besides the many engravings and illustrations made by the author, some dating from wartime, which were humorous, tragic, and informative, the simple tone of the text, sometimes colloquial, should be emphasised. The fact is that it was intended for various audiences, including children: "the 'Boche' was, in those troubled times of the Great War, a very ugly man with a scraggly beard and large glasses to pretend he was a wise man" (Ferreira, 1921, p. 17). In this regard, it should be noted that most children's literature about the war lacks fluidity in writing. As a rule, the writing was complex, with the authors expecting the parents to read first and then explain to their children the message of the text (Monteiro, 2015).

As far as humoristic elements of the story are concerned, the text closely follows André Brun's memoirs or some plays of the early 1920s, when it highlighted the importance of the language issue (Neto, 2021, p. 118). In other words, "João Nobody is illiterate" and has experienced accelerated acculturation, having developed a slang, the so-called language of the "pas compris" [Language of not Understood]. The latter included words and expressions of the French and British allies: "it was there that you finally met, for the

first time, your comrade *Camone*, with whom you would alter live the dark days of the *trincha*[2]" (Ferreira, 1921, p. 26). Still, on the subject of this (inter)national humour, see the description of the birth of João Nobody:

> In the southernmost tip of Europe, in a country where things from abroad come many years too late, a Methuselah with a long white beard, a retired former Discoverer of the Worlds, lives with his grandson, a young man who spends his days sleeping in celestial happiness [...]. The "bearded man," who is never seen without his sailor's dress uniform, is called Portugal and his grandson, [...] now in his grey uniform of drafted recruit, is called "João Nobody," a modest fighter in Africa and France who, like a shadow, will later walk past among his purified brothers in arms, the "Tommies" and the "Poilus."
>
> (Ferreira, 1921, pp. 18-19).

After many adventures and emotions about almost every aspect of the Portuguese participation in the war, the death of the protagonist in La Lys was felt as if it were the *death* of the Portuguese army. The text suggests it, introducing the most tragic elements in verse. Several poems appear throughout the short story. On the final pages, some illustrations of decorations (war crosses) were intercalated with drawings and illustrations of cemeteries, in a cross-like game of symbols that sought to balance duty and bravery with sacrifice and loss:

2 - "Camone" was the name given by soldiers to their British counterparts from the expression "come on," while "trincha" was the diminutive used for "trenches," a word with fewer syllables and which, in this form, more closely resembled the British and French allies' "trenche" and "tranchée."

My mother gave her son
to Portugal to be a soldier:
nothing more can be expected of those
who give what is most precious to them

(Ferreira, 1921, p. 60).

This "moderate" vision was also reflected in one of the most important poetry books about the conflict and perhaps the theme of the poem dedicated therein to Menezes Ferreira is no coincidence: "The First Death" (from Flanders) (Rocha, 1924). Although the verses were on a very common theme in Portuguese poetry, the death of soldier António Gonçalves Curado on 4 April 1917, the personalisation of the addressee and of death in times of industrial slaughter emphasised.

The Anti-War Approach

Although the pacifist sentiment and anti-war perspective were not the prevailing opinions, they did inspire some authors, especially in theatre plays. In this respect, it is worth noting the League of the Great War Veterans (LGWV), an organisation founded in 1921 with the dual purpose of "uniting veterans […] and providing those who were disabled in the campaign and the widows and orphans of those who died in the war with the material support to which they are entitled" (Carvalho, 1926, p. 1). It was in the context of the LGWV, with the aim of raising funds for the destitute of the war, that a number of plays were written, published and, in some cases, performed.

The veteran Eduardo Faria, who worked for *A Guerra* magazine and was its main editor from 1929, wrote three plays about the return from the war and the social integration challenges faced by the war veterans. In *E, Quando a Guerra Acabou* [When the War Ended], Faria (1932) spoke of post-traumatic stress, setting two

unnamed characters on stage in a psychiatric hospital. In the play *Quem me Der Ver* [I Wish I Could See], an author akin to the anarcho-syndicalism movement took it one step further and imagined a conversation between only two characters (again nameless): a girl blind from birth and a veteran. The latter, blinded by shrapnel, confessed that he had first let himself be blinded by nationalist propaganda in order to "kill my peers." Then, he described the three colours of war: "thirst for wealth," "greed for money," and "desire for domination." Shocked by all these revelations, the girl had second thoughts about her greatest yearning of all: the title of the play, "I wish I could see" (Mântua, 1932, p. 15).

Similarly, in addition to *A Guerra* magazine, the LGWV published other magazines, exposing situations of poverty and neglect, recalling important dates such as 11 November and 9 April, and adding a page of literary criticism about the books on the Great War that were being published. Note the review of the novel by Erich Maria Remarque, considered an "admirable book" or the prevalence of the formula "damn the war," which nevertheless never deterred a total rejection of the conflict, but rather a resignation in the face of what had been an inevitability (Cidade, 1929, p. 6). Hence the question never put forward directly, but often suggested in these texts: when political power exalted the symbolism of the Unknown Soldier, was it really giving due importance to the other unknown soldiers who had to make headway with their lives after having experienced so many horrors?

As far as the literary genre of the short story is concerned, several collections expressed the disenchantment of the times, such as *Os Sacrificados* [The Sacrificed] (Grave, 1917) and *Maldita Seja a Guerra* [Damn the War] (Carvalho, 1925), addressing multiple perspectives: the reflection of the soldiers on the Western Front before the ruins of Reims or the destruction of the landscape; love triangles formed due to separation issues; and characters that represented nationalist and pacifist values. However, it was perhaps the book named *Contos Amargos da Guerra* [Bitter Tales of War] (Ornelas, 1932, 1933), published in two volumes, that better

expressed this third approach. The book covers were terrifying: in the first volume, rising from a trench amidst a tangle of shattered barbed wire, a skeleton in uniform pointed a rifle with a fixed bayonet; in the second volume, in a remarkable simplification of the first volume's cover, a skull with some broken bones wore a helmet and an iron cross attached to its buckle, appearing to be screaming.

As we all know, the Great War inspired an ambiguous literary genre that varied between memory and novel, facts and fiction. The author, Sergeant Carlos Ornelas, a veteran from the Azores, combined all these genres and even added some dramatic features to the text, recreating a controversial episode of the Portuguese participation in the war: the João de Almeida case. João de Almeida was the only Portuguese soldier shot during the war for attempted desertion, but it was not proven that he intended to pass information to the enemy. Moreover, João de Almeida's name was later cleared by the current President of the Republic, Marcelo Rebelo de Sousa. In any case, it was a "symbolic and humanitarian act," since this "moral rehabilitation" does not include "either a reappraisal of the facts or the grounds for conviction, or the grounds for compensation or a pardon of the sentence" (Villalobos, 2017).

The text by Ornelas, named *O Último Dia do Condenado* [The Last Day of the Condemned Man], is influenced by the short stories by Vítor Hugo, Jules Boissière and, ultimately, Plato's *Fédon*, since they all deal with the theme of waiting for death. In a way, one can also think of Humphrey Cobb's almost contemporary novel *Paths of Glory*, adapted by Stanley Kubrick into a film with the same title, which is a powerful critique of the (Great) War.

But, whatever the argument, the text by Ornelas is more concise and sparing, having only five characters. The protagonist, the Condemned man (Mário), was accused of espionage "when there is no one who is able to prove the charge […] of keeping some compromising papers – papers that are no more than a simple chorographical chart of the position in all sectors" (Ornelas, 1932, pp. 52-53). As he continues to reflect on his fate, the Condemned man rereads his wife's letters and talks to the few people who had

come to be with him in his final hours: his lawyer and another prisoner. Despite the naturalist aesthetic, the text contained some expressionist and even existentialist elements: a soldier imprisoned for cowardice, but suffering from shell shock, sang a *fado* during the court-martial.

However, it was in the final moments that the drama revealed its relationship with other anti-war texts of the time: alienation, anonymity in life and death, and the apparent resignation of society. In other words, the distance between the Unknown Soldier of civil religion and commemorations and the many unknown former soldiers, some of whom were victims of a slower death imposed by abandonment and oblivion. That is why Mario, confronting the firing squad, refused to say his name, assuming, at last, the role they had assigned him: "it is I, yes, it is I, the Condemned." And while his lawyer lamented the misdeeds of justice, "soldiers protested" and the "prisoner [suffering from shell shock] and the jailer took off their helmets and stared at the ground" (Ornelas, 1932, p. 76).

Conclusion

This brief digression into Portuguese literature on the First World War aimed at highlighting the three stances that emerged in the 1920s and 1930s regarding the 1914-1918 conflict. The first stance, keeping to the official optimism regarding Germany's declaration of war in 1916, stressed the importance of the Portuguese participation in the war, seeking to emphasise nationalist mythology. This vision, drawing on the late Middle Ages and the Age of Discoveries, began to identify the First Republic with the idea of national decline. No doubt this vision will have been fed by the economic difficulties and the social unrest of the post-war period, by the anticlerical position of the republican regime, by the return to the sacred, and by the international context itself, in which fascisms emerged. From this point of view, the strange short story *Cartas de um Serrano*, more than advocating the emerging dictatorship or Catholicism, proposed an unusual combination of nationalist,

religious, esoteric, masonic, and republican elements. In a word, while it integrated symbolic-nationalist mysticism and said little about the real conditions in the trenches, it ended up mirroring the Portuguese political-cultural transition of the late 1920s.

For its part, the moderate attitude was predominant. Its authors did not hide the horrors of war, but accepted them in view of the objectives underlying the Portuguese participation in the conflict, especially the maintenance of the African colonies. *João Ninguém* was perhaps the short story that best interpreted this second stance. Filled with illustrations, short poems, a sense of humour, and a deep knowledge of the trenches, the text by Meneses Ferreira combined many contradictory feelings. In this sense, it gathers together various genres (children's, poetic, and memorialist), that is, a true microcosm of war narratives in Portugal.

Regarding the third stance, the theatre perhaps best interpreted the pacifist and anti-war sentiments. The fact that the LGWV sponsored some of these plays is symptomatic. It would seem that the nature of the dramatic writing and the circumstances of the performance would allow the characters to speak more freely about their experiences, questioning the audience. Still, several short story collections responded to the challenge, of which *O Último Dia do Condenado* is of note. Based on a real case, the author dealt with a problem also present in the novel/film *Paths of Glory*. Its final pages, with the execution of the protagonist, which proclaimed the triumph of anonymity and of the citizen destroyed by war, were very typical of 20th century literature.

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Dobrawa Lisak-Gębala

The Fading Background of Thanatosonic Testimonial Poems: On Paratexts and WWII Media Culture

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From the standpoint of Polish collective memory, a historical phenomenon that deserves to be called "the Great War" is World War Two. For almost eight decades, despite the fluctuating ideological bias of the mainstream discourse, the wartime verse created between 1939 and 1945 has proved a well-promoted part of national culture. Not only has it functioned as a must-read within the school curriculum, but it has also appeared in many anthologies and reeditions issued since the end of the war. As time passes, this drive towards the revitalization of the legacy may paradoxically result in de-historicizing it. When we read first-hand testimonial poems printed on flawless pages and embalmed in the role of national memorials, it becomes easy to forget the particular circumstances of their creation. Thus, acknowledging historical, social and material conditions of verse-crafting significantly modifies the reception. This article aims to unearth some vital elements of the fading background of WWII poetry. Since I narrow the field of interest to thanatosonic poetry, it is also justified to announce this endeavour as the amplification of the fleeting echoes of the past (Bijsterveld, 2015).

I borrow the term "thanatosonics" from Martin Daughtry's work (2014). In this neologism, Daughtry combines the Latin-derived word "*sonic*" with the name of the mythological master of death because he intends to render the unity of sounds and life-threatening violence as a key feature of wartime auditory culture. When we loosely apply this notion in the examination of poems about war (also those created by later poets), it can simply result in tracing sonic motifs connected with combat sites and civilian zones under attack or occupation. Presumably, the authors may elaborate on available cultural clichés hence posing any questions about the background is not necessary in these cases. However, according to the already revealed assumption, I concentrate on wartime poems that are instantaneous responses to cruel reality and can function as first-hand testimonies of private experiences. This methodological approach allows the unfolding of many additional aspects of thanatosonics that underpin wartime literary output.

First of all, it is necessary to realise that such testimonies are anchored in the somatic experience of earwitnesses (Schafer, 1977, pp. 8-9). They convey the trembling of bodies exposed to omnipresent thanatosonic violence, as well as the affective and cognitive reactions to it. Thus poems become embodied testimonies (Richardson, 2016). Yet the profile of sound-related experiences of the involved persons may be manifold. It depends on their roles, among which the roles of the soldier, the civilian and the prisoner are definitely noteworthy. It is also related to their position within the topography of the war area. To map the possible positions, Daughtry (2015, p. 76-102) develops a four-zone spatial model. The safe, outermost circle of "the audible/ inaudible" means the possibility of separating oneself from the terror of war, "turning a deaf ear" to it. Moving towards the centre, we come across "the narrational zone" where frightening sounds of violence are quite clearly perceptible although they do not pose a direct, physical threat to the listeners. Hence, the witnesses are able to create precise "audionarratives" about close events. The two next zones, in turn, are connected with authentic endangerment. The "tactical zone" mobilises the survival skills while people positioned within it

have to apply fight or flight scenarios. The innermost zone of maximum vulnerability is tagged "the trauma zone". An extreme experience unfolds so quickly here that it cannot be fully grasped by the shocked participants, who become "traumatic inauditors" (Daughtry, 2015, p. 95).

Since my interest lies in thanatosonic poems, the idea of the narrational zone proves the most adequate, especially when we think about it also in temporal terms. The narrational moment in this relatively secure asylum allows the creation of a brief testimony; however, the author can be still in danger because of the dynamics and changeability of wartime events. As we may learn from many first-hand poems, the powerful need for witnessing often engulfs also recent experiences from the trauma and tactical zones. Hence, what recurs in numerous testimonies is the motif of the significant, "highly qualitative" silence either still pulsating with wartime sounds or getting denser in anticipation of the outburst of noise (Bailey, 2004, p. 26). The above-mentioned tendencies become evident in the case of poems written in Polish during WWII, which will serve as examples in a further part of this paper. The methodological approach that enables one to discover the positionality of the authors and thus to retrieve the fading background of their works will be based on paratextual analysis, as developed by Genette (1997).

Today wartime texts can be found in many printed versions. When contemporary readers are confronted with them, it is even possible to fulfil the cultural script of reader-oriented reception. Yet the often included authorial peritexts (i.e. paratextual elements inside the book), such as captions indicating places and dates, signatures, meaningful titles or epigraphs, anchor the poems in particular situations. First-hand thanatosonic texts provided with such historical links are not simply literary works; therefore, we have to modify our basic assumptions to grasp the full network within which they were created, propagated and endowed with meaning. Although such texts are neatly arranged in verses and often prove artistically crafted, we should take a step backward toward their origin. In other words, we should treat them also as documentary poems, to recall the term used by Susan Gubar in the

context of the Holocaust verse (Gubar, 2003). At "the threshold of the text", there is a trace of an authentic experience not to be ignored – the main emphasis will be thus put on the original authorial peritext that entails responsibility accepted by the author (Genette, 1997, p. 9). Of course, thorough research including adjacent historical sources (allographic epitexts, in Genette's terms) can often shed even more light upon the origin of a poem, yet the strategy of close reading the main text along with authorial peritext, as mutually reflecting phenomena, enhances the testimonial value of the poetry itself. In doing so, we give an ear to the echoes of thanatosonic violence and we approach bodies subjected to it.

Numerous representative examples of authorial peritexts informing about tragic circumstances may be found in the anthology of English translations entitled *The Auschwitz Poems*. The caption "After selection in Birkenau, 13 Oct 1944" in Jan Maria Gisges' poem "A Forgotten Route", which addresses the sinister audiosphere of the camp ("In the camp hum is growing quiet"; "Shouts are swinging / in the air yet / and there is a smell of blood") is a case in point (Zych, 2011, p. 157). Equally meaningful is the peculiar signature "P 67 173", which is the tattooed prisoner number of another author – Kazimierz Wójtowicz. It might be interpreted as an instance of "cryptic onymity" (Genette, 1997, p. 42). The fact that this dehumanising "name" was imposed by victimizers underscores the tragic situation of the author and precisely indicates his position within the war area. Wójtowicz repeatedly used the camp number in captions defining also date and place. An example of it is "P 67 173, Auschwitz, February 1944" in "At the Sunset", where the speaker draws a stark contrast between the recent piercing screams of the victims and the stony silence of the horrified survivors:

The world is burning with bloody clouds
Desperate scream
does not affect horizon
Extermination darkness is falling over the prisoners…
Fascism's night is nearing
murder
death

Heart is not grieving
faint, powerless…
Nobody is crying
absent are here wife, children
At sunset time – stooping trees are silent
Silence worships sepulchral death of millions (Zych, 2011, p. 423).

Such examples of the instantaneously created camp verse, as a rule, address recently witnessed atrocities and recall screams, groans and gunshots. The evoked circumstances can be ascribed to the trauma or tactical zone, which are intermingled because of the constantly shifting border between them. As many other wartime poetic testimonies prove, vigilant listening became a survival skill in all types of places of detention. Works originating from Nazi or Soviet prisons often notice the attentively followed footsteps of the sentries. Such is the case with the anonymous poem "A Letter", which was published in the underground, deliberately misdated anthology *Duch wolny w pieśni* [*Free Spirit in Song*] (Sawicka, 1942, pp. 55-57). Addressed to the speaker's mother, the text conveys additional information because of the caption: "A poem by a 17-year-old political prisoner, sent from prison in November 1941". In this context, the work's title designates not only the epistolographic genre, but also the form of perilous communication based on smuggled letters.

According to Genette, it is the titles that establish the particularly important type of peritext. In wartime Polish verse, we can find many more examples of titles that reveal the practical context of the poems' circulation. They often contain words such as "a letter" or "a song" (in the case of authentic songs performed by camp prisoners, soldiers or partisans). On the other hand, a multitude of situational descriptors is noticeable – for instance, "execution" or "alarm". Such examples can be found in the volume *A Call from Warsaw* (1944) which contains poems "Execution in Środa", "Execution in Gostyń", "Execution in Wawer" (by unknown authors) and Antoni Słonimski's "An Air Warning for the City of

Warsaw", originally titled "Alarm". When a precise caption with date and place follows such a title, the historical background proves retrievable on the basis of the authorial text alone. Interestingly enough, if the network of situational details is weaved so densely, the lack of a signature does not pose an analytical problem. In the anonymous thanatosonic poem "Surrender", we can easily indicate the position of earwitnesses thanks to the title and the notice "Lviv 22 Sept 1939", which points directly toward the poem's historical circumstances. On that day, the commander of Lviv surrendered the city to the Soviets. The unknown author aptly uses the convention of a third-person speaker to picture all twists and turns of intersubjective perceptions of inhabitants placed in the narrational zone. Thus, the employed communal perspective renders this text a valuable source to scrutinise wartime auditory practices. Moreover, what becomes granted is the access to affective responses of the community of Polish citizens, for the scraps of dialogue are intertwined in the poetically reported story. The precise course of events, the whole scope of carefully followed wartime sounds and cascades of emotions are all used to reconstruct the here-and-now of the memorable moment:

They poured out onto the empty streets
From cellars – from shelters – –
From eye to eye rapid lightning shoots
Of questions unuttered – –

The crowds ask amidst sudden silence
Numbness and torpor –
Are bombs booming? Why does no one hear?
Where are the airplanes?

Windows aren't rattling… Why have anti-aircraft
guns fallen silent?!
… People are so quiet – the whole street
Is screaming – with silence!!

A hundred hearts leap up with an awful hunch
And die in agony – –
Terrifying silence tolls as if
A hundred bells were tolling!

... Then the sound: they're coming! Steps dully rumbling
Ever closer – wider –
Hearts quivered with the sudden comfort:
It's us! Our soldiers!!

... The whole unit marching down the street –
It's us! Our boys!
The crowd stared at – in silence – with frightened eyes:
They were all – – disarmed!!!...

... And the whisper broke out – grew – grew – swelled
Just like an explosion –
Whitened lips to whitened lips passed on:
"Sur – ren – der!!!"...[1] (Skwarczyńska and Żuławski, 1944, p. 8).

Shades of silence are gradated and turn out to be equivocal. So do the approaching footsteps – firstly interpreted as belonging to the triumphant Polish soldiers, and subsequently recognized as horrifying indices of defeat. This is why the whispered, petrifying news about the surrender is compared to an explosion.

To collect the whole array of historical information including the author's name and position, the chronotopic data and further details of the evoked situation, it is often necessary to compare different versions of the same text and trace the changes in peritexts. Due to the high rank of the Polish wartime verse and the effort of many researchers and archivists such as Chojnowski (1970),

1 - All translations, if not attributed otherwise, are by Wojciech Drąg, a researcher in the project "Poetical thanatosonics – on the grounds of Polish literature (1939–1945)".

Szczawiej (1974) and Czachowska, Maciejewska and Tyszkiewicz (1984) the titanic work of deciphering the names of authors of primarily anonymous, conspiracy publications, when possible, is already very advanced, if not completed. Also, the database of wartime and early-post-war, authorised re-prints is available. The discovery of the significant authorial and editorial changes prompts the examination of both documentary and thanatosonic aspects of many poems. The representative example is connected with modifications of Maria Castellati's poem, which may be regarded as a precise, documentary account of the reprisal action organised on 23 October 1943 in Warsaw by communist clandestine soldiers, Castellatti herself among them. As early as 30 November, the first version with the enigmatic title "Retaliation" was issued anonymously in the underground newspaper *Walka Młodych*. Even though the poem reports on the action in detail, it does not provide any information that could possibly put anyone in danger and jeopardise further activities[2]. As a testimony assignable to the tactical zone, this documentary poem concentrates on the dynamics of the bomb attack and the adrenaline-infused reactions of the participant. The pregnant silence, punctured with gentle sounds, eventually explodes within a "thunderclap":

Empty street. Foggy twilight.
Disrupted rhythm—steps on the pavement.
The car.
The tree.
The gate.
The fence.
And that house. It's here, round the corner.
The hand on the door handle.
One step.

2 - It is worth mentioning the poem "Wyrok wykonano" ("The sentence was carried out") by a Cracow-based poet and underground soldier, Eugeniusz Kolanko, which was published in the issue 202 of *Biuletyn Informacyjny* and signed with a pseudonym. This text precisely reports the execution of a traitor, in which the poet himself took part. Fellow activists regarded the authenticity of the poem as hazardous bravado and recklessness (Sierotwiński 1988, vol. 2, 27).

The curtain clasped in two semicircles.
The blue smoke cleaves eyesight.
The spoon is shining.
The epaulette is glittering.
Someone's dark hand on the table.
The newspaper—Führer Volk und Freiheit.
The tall brunet has clinked the glass.
In both of those over there.
Now.
The muscle has hardened.
How slowly it goes, like in a dream—
Someone's paying. The faint jangle of a coin.
Someone has looked up. The laughter has frozen.
Parted lips. A cigarette between them.

And the spark from the ceiling
trembles and zigzags with a dry crackle.

At last, a thunderclap and you have dropped dead,
oh, you villains, you scoundrels and scumbags!

The hand on the door handle.
Close the door,
may it get battered by the howl of Hilfe!
washed down by the wave of thick blood
and drowned by a scream.
Until it is still

The swish of bullets by the ear.
The gate,
the corner.
the street
the roadway
the square
the avenues.
The megaphone—the black, bitter crowd.
(the wind rocks the lighthouse as if it were a bell).

The stone-hard voice descends—
—today
a hundred
Poles
were
shot.

Oh, you villains, you scoundrels and scumbags,
Hence the thunderclap, hence you have dropped dead!
(Castellatti, 1945, pp. 20-21).

Right after the end of the war, Castellatti's poem was reprinted in three different publications (Czachowska, Maciejewska and Tyszkiewicz, 1984, p. 81). In the individual volume *Pole Mokotowskie* [*Mokotów Field*], the text's documentary value is additionally confirmed because an excerpt from another issue of *Walka Młodych* (9 Nov. 1943) is embedded underneath the poem. It informs factually:

"Young people's fight"

On 23 Oct. a bomb was thrown into a German "Nur für SS und Polizei" office in Nowogrodzka Street in Warsaw. The place was completely demolished. Sixteen Germans were killed, and over thirty were injured. In the resulting fight, three people were killed: a policeman, a Gestapo agent and an SS man. Our group did not sustain any losses (*Walka Młodych*, 9 Nov, 1943) (Castellatti, 1945, p. 21).

The succinct style of such a quoted notice cannot compete with the multisensual, vivid staging of the action in the re-creation of individual experience. However, when documentary and poetic contents are juxtaposed, many dimensions of the past event can be grasped at once, and the thanatosonic poem can be read as a thanatosonic testimony.

Documentary information may be delivered not only through the means of titles and captions, but also thanks to detailed epigraphs. Their role is highlighted by Genette (1997) who states that "dedicating a work is a public act that the reader is … called on to witness" (p. 134). Such authorial peritexts in poems by soldiers were often dedicated to the memory of recently deceased comrades; thus, these works can be conceived of as continuations of the epitaph genre. Moreover, they may be compared with cenotaphs (Balcerzan, 1976, p. 37). A representative example can be found in the output of Mieczysław Ubysz, a poet-soldier who fought in the Warsaw Uprising. At that time, he devoted himself to propagandistic activities as a speaker of a street megaphone patrol. His friend, Wojciech Mencel (pseudonym: Janowicz), embarked on identical tasks. Mencel's death on 13 September 1944 was a hard experience for Ubysz, who decided to commemorate his fellow soldier with the poem "Divine Judgement" dedicated "to the late Wojtek Janowicz" (Sierotwiński, 1988, p. 140). The text was meant to be immediately popularised in the morale-boosting oral communication, which explains its lofty tone. According to this attitude, the speaker addresses the death of a fellow insurgent euphemistically: "You were kissed by the bullet's melodious chirping / Three times" (Ubysz, 1945, p. 14).

An even more glorifying tone can be detected in poetical epitaphs written by the members of the Carpathian Rifle Brigade (Bielatowicz, 1944b). What is particularly noteworthy is the double commemoration of 17-year-old volunteer Zbigniew Pieniążek, the first Polish soldier deceased during the defence of Tobruk. The first poem, entitled "The Gravestone" and dedicated "to the late officer cadet Zbigniew Pieniążek", was composed by Bolesław Kobrzyński. The final stanza of this poem stages important sonic motifs:

> And one day when we come back together, with a song,
> When ears are no longer exposed to bangs and salvos,
> Your voice will sound to us, when we are on watch, alone,
> Like a legend, commanding from the Tobruk cross.
> (Written on the day of death, 10 Oct. 1941) (Bielatowicz, 1944b, p. 49).

In addition, all authors in this volume are identified also with abbreviations indicating their military assignment (e.g. "cadet, antitank battalion" in Kobrzyński's case). This information, just like revealing the camp number by Wójtowicz, allows precise positioning. The second work mentioned is authored by Marian Hemar. His poem "Virtuti Militari (On the Death of Cadet Pieniążek)" (ibid., 35-37) is followed by a detailed factual notice about the circumstances of Pieniążek's death and his posthumous decoration with the Virtuti Militari war order. Again, like in Castellatti's poem, the author decided to embed a non-poetic report below the main text to strengthen the documentary facet of the content. This gesture has safeguarded the factual value of the poem for future readers.

Contrastingly, in the case of poems that primarily circulated mainly within oral communication during conspiracy "poetic concerts" in occupied Warsaw, even maximally reduced epigraphs proved sufficient to designate a specific situation. The community was composed of listeners, to whom the recent tragic events were all too familiar, and responded with a tacit understanding. Thanks to their accounts (allographic epitexts), it is possible to decipher the particular historical context. For instance, the epigraph "For those hanged on the balconies of Leszno Street" in Zbigniew Stolarek's poem "Kukły" ("Dummies") was perfectly readable for the inhabitants of Warsaw. As the chronicler Stanisław Sierotwiński explains, on 11 February 1944, the Nazis organised a public execution to lower the morale of the Poles and intensify the terror (Sierotwiński, 1988, p. 13). On the balconies of a building at Leszno Street, 27 inmates from the Pawiak prison were hanged. The crowd was allowed to observe the whole scene from the other side of the street. The thanatosonic layer of Stolarek's enigmatic poem presents the sinister, petrifying silence of the bystanders:

> In a neat row, deaf dummies, mute mannequins –
> squeaking ropes… The squeak glides over the greyness of the day.
> The sky hangs low and stifles the clouds' bluish song,
> like…
> – like what?!…

– You see… They are swaying and swaying in the silent row
– while that woman from the crowd is unable to laugh
or suppress a deaf sob with her cupped hands…
– whence the weeping?…

Why did she fix her vacant eyes above
and with her parched lips keeps whispering "my son…"
– That dummy hanging comically under the rope
has probably assaulted her eyes with evil sleep.

Tell her: she should shake the rope
and the mannequin will spill laughter and yellow sawdust…
– Why are the ropes wailing like the tragic choir?…
why are the dummies smeared with a bluish colour?…

– Look!
It's not laughter lurking in the gaping eyelashes
– it's not the dummies …
it's!
get away!… (Szczawiej, 1974, p. 981).

This work features the peculiar entanglement of wartime auditory practices for it vividly stages the sudden tactical reaction. After the speaker realises that he is looking not at the mute mannequins but at corpses that are swinging on the squeaking ropes, a burst of fear appears, which immediately results in his will to flee. Additionally, thanks to the documentary epigraph, the poem becomes a kind of cenotaph for the anonymous dedicatees – a symbolic grave for those who were buried in unknown locations. Hence, the relation between the text and the body (or rather bodies) becomes even more complex in this case.

It is precisely the peculiar "economy" of multidirectional flows and exchanges between verbal representations and bodies that proves vital from the vantage of poetical thanatosonics. Firstly, the poems as embodied testimonies convey painfully experienced sounds; secondly, the said cenotaphic aspect has to be taken into

account. It may be realised in two oppositely directed ways. The text can function as a symbolic grave created by a poet for recent casualties, which is especially important in the case of Holocaust victims turned to ashes, when "there are no bodies to mourn" (Gubar, 2003, p. 178). In this instance, we may consider the poem the embodied testimony of affective resonance with sounds and co-related silences of the fellows' death. The other possible option is connected with the author's death and the function of a cenotaph posthumously ascribed to the saved output upon the arrival of the envisioned death, pictured previously as overwhelming and approaching wartime noise.

These do not exhaust the whole repertoire of body-text relations to be considered in the context of first-hand thanatosonic testimonies because another crucial aspect is connected with the peculiar WWII media culture. The written poem was often a proof of guilt, so it might have entailed the death penalty. Therefore, the renaissance of both "oral cultures" and "aural mnemonics" was essential in many war areas (St. Clair, 2019, p. 353). As there was a strict ban on writing in camps or prisons, the poems were often created and memorised at the very same time, so the body remained the only medium preserving the content. Also, the propagation could function without paper and writing because inmates shared memorised poems which propelled the camp resistance and propaganda. Voice, including a whisper, is thus another medium to be considered. What can serve as an epitome of this aspect is the archive of Aleksander Kulisiewicz (1965), who described his experiences in a preface to collected camp works and in interview (authorial epitext, in Genette's terms). As a prisoner of Sachsenhausen Lager (where "The discovery of the smallest scrap of paper would mean death"), Kulisiewicz, being gifted with an extraordinary memory, managed to memorise a plethora of poems and songs in different languages (Kulisiewicz, 1965, p. 9). Thus, he also saved the disembodied voices of those who perished, which sets a stunning example of thanatosonic representation. His own works ("directed syntheses", "documents" and "reportages", as he calls them) were often created in difficult, or even liminal situations:

"squatting for several hours with raised hands (the so-called 'kniebeug'), in a hopeless march ... and next to a time bomb that could explode at any moment" (ibid.). During the years spent in the Lager, the trance-like, muted repetition became a form of Kulisiewicz's private struggle. When his embodied archive was eventually written down after the liberation, it spread over 716 pages of a manuscript (Strzelewicz, 1984, pp. 112-113; BBC, 2019). Later on, he collected and tape-recorded poems and songs by survivors from different camps (for instance, Kazimierz Wójtowicz's works).

The said circulation based on the body and hushed voice is comprehensively described by Michał Borwicz, an ex-prisoner of the Janowski Camp in Lviv and a researcher who collected and examined camp poetry (Borwicz, 1946, pp. 35-38; 68-69)[3]. In another example of authorial epitext, he argues convincingly that improvised verse-crafting, often based on the *contra factum* technique, helped inmates to preserve human dignity. On the other hand, he claims that prisoners desperately wanted to leave any trace of their experience. Hence, many methods of preserving scripts were invented; for instance, hiding manuscripts underground near crematories, creating secret archives under the rubble, writing at the very last moment in lethal danger or even scattering sheets on the way to the execution site (Borwicz, 1946, pp. 73). What has to be recalled here is the poetic output enclosed in the famous Ringelblum Archive, hidden in milk cans under the ruins of the Warsaw Ghetto (Kassow, 2007). Yet again the cenotaph facet is involved because sometimes the texts lasted while their authors were killed.

Another authorial epitext that is worth mentioning is the preface "To an Unknown Reader" written by *Konzentrazionlager* survivors Henia and Ilona Karmel. Significantly, they associate the genesis of camp poems with both hasty wall inscriptions and desperate cries:

3 - Borwicz is the author of a doctoral thesis in French *The Letters of Those Sentenced to Death under German Occupation: 1939-1945* (Paris, Sorbonne, faculty of sociology).

> When we look at them [our poems] right in front of us, the images come again: inscriptions upon the walls of prisons and camps, scrawled at the last moment by people who already died. Cries for help, calls for revenge, a sentence terminated at midpoint, maybe only a name and a date, the terror of those days marked clumsily by a weakening hand upon a hard indifferent wall. Today only half-readable traces remain.
>
> These poems are exactly that: inscriptions on a prison wall. They are feeble efforts to preserve a record. ... These poems, and thousands of other creations, form one cry only: "Remember" (Karmel and Karmel, 2007, p. XV-XVI)[4].

Additionally, Ilona Karmel in "An Open Letter to Julian Tuwim" encapsulated the meaning of their output in these words: "This is an ordinary, primal cry, the rattle of one being choked" (Karmel and Karmel, 2007, p. 98). Through the prism of these words, the voice of prisoners seems the last means of resistance.

The above-recalled WWII media practices of the oppressed whose bodies were under strict control resemble "singing to the upturned pots" by American slaves, who were equally deprived of the possibility to voice their despair aloud (Smith, 2004, p. 371). Even though camp and prison poems were frequently written down and entrusted to more stable media, these means often proved evanescent. When inmates had no access to paper, they scratched their output on the walls of prisons or wrote them on birch bark, as in the case of labour camps in Siberia (Terlecka-Taylor, 2011, p. 8). Such untypical surfaces and instruments have to be taken into account. Lech Piwowar, who was among Polish captives executed by the Soviets in Kharkiv, used tiny sheets of cigarette paper. His poems

4 - It is noteworthy that the Karmel sisters' poems were memorised not only by them but also by other inmates. The texts were written down on hazardously collected scraps of paper and finally sewn into clothes before the death march which the sisters hardly survived.

permeated with "the echoic auditory haunting" (Daughtry, 2015, pp. 271, 273) by sounds of 1939 battles were smuggled out by Józef Czapski and published in 1944 (Bielatowicz, 1944a, p. 5).

To some extent, a similar situation unravelled during the occupation because it was simply safer not to carry or store any written proof of forbidden activities. At that time, secret collective declamations and singing were of undeniable propaganda and community-building value. Zbigniew Stolarek's poem is a representative example here as a work popularised in oral communication. On 31 July 1944, one day before the outbreak of the Warsaw Uprising, it was self-published (typewritten with carbon paper) in the individual volume *Ciosy* signed with the pseudonym of Zbigniew Szary. However, almost the whole edition was soon burnt (Czachowska, Maciejewska and Tyszkiewicz, 1984, p. 90). In addition, we have to remember the technological extension of the oral aspect at the time of lifting the bans. For example, radio stations and loudspeaker patrols successfully functioned during the Warsaw Uprising in 1944. Many poets used to write texts in a blink, and these works were brought to a microphone or loudspeaker right away. Hence, these declamations co-created the wartime soundscape, which is the case with poems by the aforementioned Mieczysław Ubysz. It means that, for instance, the noise of explosions staged in a thanatosonic text could actually accompany the poem's creation and performance, yet for experienced wartime auditors it remained a signal to look for a shelter.

To conclude, the proposed method of analysis of wartime poetry deserves to be called "close listening", rather than "close reading" (despite the figurative meaning of auditory vigilance in this undertaking). The bound paper edition turns out to be only the last stage in the prolonged struggle to voice up and save the crucial experiences. This struggle stretches from the first efforts to restore the voice after the shock, through piecing together words and memorising them, then, reciting the poems in secret or propagating them aloud, to the final attempts at creating cenotaphs due to life-threatening circumstances. These practices cannot be encapsulated in the Horatian phrase "exegi monumentum", even though some

aspects are shared. What is at stake in the case of wartime verse is the desperate preservation of individual and collective experiences, also those connected with responses to thanatosonics. The suspension of the "print-oriented bastardy" of the notion of literature allows us to treat such poems as no longer "acousmatic" (St. Clair, 2019, p. 353), that is separated from the source of sounds, in Pierre Shaeffer's (2011) terms Thanks to a paratextual analysis and the scrutiny of media culture, we can trace the fleeting echoes of voices emerging from the WWII horrifying dins, or its sinister silences.

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Anna Bradshaw

Reconciling History through Photography in W.G. Sebald's Austerlitz

> "With photography a new language has been created. Now for the first time it is possible to express reality by reality. We can look at an impression as long as we wish, we can delve into it and renew past experiences at will." - Ernst Haas

When considering the reconciliation of one's past, culture, and identity, what comes to mind? For W.G. Sebald's protagonist, Jacques Austerlitz, it is his family. *Austerlitz* is one of the most provocative 20th century novels, not only because of the way it is written, but for *whom* it is written. What makes *Austerlitz* so profound is that it *is* anybody's story. *Austerlitz* is the fictional story of Jacques Austerlitz, a man who embarks on a journey to uncover his origins - where he came from and who he is. Jacques was one of the many children separated from their families in Prague via the Kindertransport, the British organized rescue effort of children from Nazi-occupied territory (i.e. Germany, Austria, Czechoslovakia, and Poland) that took place between 1938-1940. For many of the children, the homes they were adopted into were caring and comforting. But for Austerlitz, his foster family is comprised of righteous, religious zealots who abuse him mentally and physically. At the tender age of fourteen Austerlitz sets off on his own, never to return.

Though he manages to create a life for himself, the sense of belonging is a luxury that is never afforded to him; he carries on, doing his job and existing, but is rarely satiated. Nearing middle-age, Austerlitz meets the narrator of the novel, a journalist. Through the

journalist's interweaving of narration and Austerlitz's dialogue, he retraces the fatal ride he took as a little boy. We, the readers, are *told* this story not only through narrative, but through photographs, which are as much a part of the story as the words on the page. It is here I assert that Sebald's *Austerlitz* reconciles the past by uniquely utilizing multimodal texts, mainly photography, to bridge the gap where truth and memory intersect. I further claim that one can close read photography, like text, going beyond the written word because photography, especially in *Austerlitz*, demonstrates the ineffability of language, proving the essentiality of photography in resurrecting lost narratives. This is to say that, within the novel the photographs serve as text where literature cannot elucidate, a connecting thread that aids in reconciling not only Austerlitz's past, but of countless others. It is through this rhetoric we are attempting to reconcile the past, not resolve it. To resolve the past would be to find closure, a solution, but that is not the aim of this novel; it is to coexist with a past that haunts, a past filled with trauma, to find *harmony* in dissonance.

To begin, Sebald presents the reader with the word "Austerlitz", which has no origin or meaning, other than being associated with the battle of Napoleon (a point brought up in the novel), adding an ironic twist to the protagonist's journey. When broken down, however, we can see how the word "Austerlitz" provides clues to a possible origin and connection to Austerlitz's character. In German, the word "auster" means oyster, which in latin etymology "oyster" refers to a power of change. The word "litz" is German for a wire composed of individual copper strands braided together. Through this etymological association of combining the analogy of the power of change and the braiding of strands (essentially, electrified cables)—the various images within the novel acting as puzzle pieces—we can see how Austerlitz and the themes of history and memory are intertwined.

There has been much scholarship in comparing *Austerlitz* with Marianne Hirsch and her theory on postmemory, and Roland Barthes's notions of death and photography. However, although I will also be incorporating their scholarship into my thesis, I will be focusing on reconciling the past through means of memory

rhetorically and holistically rather than in terms of death. To comment further on this, in James Wood's introduction in the novel he speaks of Sebald's way of "saving the dead, by giving the unrecognizable individuals in the photographs a voice" (Sebald, Bell, and Wood, 2011). In this way Woods concentrates on the Gothic aspect of the dead. This is why, for the purpose of this paper, I choose to view Sebald's work as a saving of the faces, focusing on moments in time, to give "them" a narrative that drags them out of obscurity *into* validity by inadvertent recognition and reflective acknowledgement. Yes, the dead call out to us, but through mixing photographs of the identified vs. unidentified, we are giving "them" a voice, a narrative that transcends the book's narrative by connecting the "has-been-there" to reality. The histories of the dead are no longer lost, but added to the collective memory of the Holocaust by intertwining them with our own. If you take away the written narrative you are left with the text of the photograph. They are uniquely Jewish, but they are also uniquely not—they are you, me, your mother, your friend, your friend's rugby team.

The photographs in the novel create a multilayered effect, yet we don't get the full sensation, the full essence of Austerlitz because it is still told through the narrator. But, if we take the photographs themselves, we get a snippet of the truth "in its own words" when Austerlitz speaks to us through the text; the photographs themselves take away the superfluous lens, laying themselves bare and open by *being* text. The pictures have no linear or chronological order, which is, in fact, the point of many of these photos. "To speak of photographs as thinking or thought, however, demands that we, in viewing them, will be swept up into a new, nonverbal temporality that is radically other" (Olsen, 2013). A picture has no chapters or sentences, it is a continuous thought within a snapshot of time. In order to reconcile our past we must be able to recognize time as a human construct; photographs simply document that moment and it is up to us to place them in their proper time frame, which is equally befuddling, challenging, and rewarding. In my essay, I hope to add to the continuing conversation of using text in various forms to reconcile our history and add to the collective memory of the Holocaust.

Katie Fry's essay, "Lost in Time and the Heterotopic Image in W.G. Sebald's Austerlitz", focuses on the claim that *Austerlitz* fails as a mnemonic tool, stating "Austerlitz's contact with objects from his past more often fails to assist him in recalling, understanding, or coming to terms with forgotten experiences" (Fry, 2018). However, I argue against this due to the ability of the novel to go beyond being simply a mnemonic tool; photography *can* be seen *as* text as a means to bridge the gap between memory and truth. To better elucidate my meaning, I will be looking to Andre Bazin's "Ontology of the Photograph" to elaborate on the power of the aesthetics within photography and Barthes's "Rhetoric of the Image" to explicate reading an image.

Fry further argues that latent image can be delivered from its purgatory without intervention, using Marcel Proust's theory of involuntary memory. I argue that Sebald uses photography to do exactly that: to reawaken Austerlitz's memory. Memory is indeed, pocketed with images that are equally vivid and vague; oftentimes recalling those memories can only be brought into clarity or to the forefront of our minds instantly through smell, touch, or image. In Sebald's novel, photography is the medium *and* the mediator between Austerlitz's buried past and his subconscious need to find the truth about who he *really* is.

As stated previously, like most scholarship on the work of *Austerlitz*, I return to Marianne Hirsch's notions of postmemory and trauma. In one segment of Hirsch's essay she argues, using the two pictures of Austerlitz's mother, Agata, that we imagine and materialize our own history to coincide with pictures of the past. Essentially, "images…amount to no more than impersonal building blocks of affiliative post memory" (Hirsch, 2013). At one point in the novel, Austerlitz quotes his history teacher: "Our concern with history is a concern with preformed images already imprinted in our brains, images at which we keep staring while the truth lies elsewhere, away from it all, somewhere as yet to be discovered" (Sebald, Bell, and Wood, 2011). It is with Hirsch's idea of impersonal building blocks that I have a point of contention: photographs are more than just "our truth" for the lens is objective—truth can be

found in photographs—providing a way for the "our" and the "I" to intersect, to create a *personal* connection because they provide a way to make the intangible tangible, and the real more real, because of their "being there-ness".

Examples to support the intersectionality of photography, memory, and truth lie in Richard Crownshaw's "Reconsidering Postmemory: Photography, the Archive and Post-Holocaust Memory in W.G. Sebald's Austerlitz" and Patricia Hill's "Texts as Photographs, and Photography as Texts: Lalla Romano and the Photographic Image", with the exception that in regards to Hill we are specifically looking at photographs rather than both photographs and paintings. Much like Barthes's arguments in *Camera Lucida*, Hill (2007) also asserts that photographs emphasize the *existence* of its subject, thus making photographic rhetoric valid as literary rhetoric in its textual utility and meaning: "...photo-text challenges the reader to continue the creative work of 'reading an image', creating living stories from the papery remnants of the past" (Barthes and Howard, 1981). Photography is the through-line that connects memory and narrative, but whereas Hill sees photography as only a concept, I argue that in *Austerlitz*, photography offers much more: it is the space where truth, memory, and narrative intersect, thus allowing us to see photography *as* text. Hill's essay also focuses on how gendered—male and female—gaze can dictate the text that surrounds the photograph. However, for the purposes of this paper, gaze is regarded in terms of identity to one's past. In Crownshaw's essay, he argues that photography acts as a conduit to postmemory and traumatic experiences, "the photographs are haunted by the subjects they bring back to life—haunted and haunting for those who view them" (Crownshaw, 2004). My argument seeks to add another layer to this by showing that we can also reconcile our past through the conduit photography provides by giving agency to the viewer to connect with their past.

Since the advent of the photograph its connection to the individual, realism, and story has been traversed. What makes the photograph different from other images such as paintings and cinema is its ability to capture moments, which mitigates subjectivity because the hand of its creator is less apparent and holds less sway.

"Photography liberates painting and sculpture from this contradiction by offering a reproduction of reality with which they cannot compete. The fact that no agency is involved in the fundamental photographic process marks photography as… genuinely…realis[tic]" (MacCabe, 1997). Therefore, photography is the most objective out of the three forms of image.

The photograph has the ability to yield uncanny authenticity, yet it maintains a sense of mystery that often eludes the use of words. It is this ineffability of the photograph that plays on the inexpressibility of language; that is to say it transcends language. The narrator and Austerlitz, himself, come to understand and explore how photography goes beyond the trope of "worth a thousand words" to language. "Now and then a train of thought did succeed in emerging with wonderful clarity inside my head, but I knew even as it formed that I was in no position to record it, for as soon as I picked up my pencil the endless possibilities of language, to which I could once safely abandon myself, became a conglomeration of the most inane phrases. There was not an expression in the sentence but it proved to be a miserable crutch, not a word but it sounded false and hollow" (Sebald, Bell, and Wood, 2011). Aside from owing to the fact that words are beyond his reach, the narrator comes to admire Austerlitz's ability to use photography as a means to express himself in a way that transcends language.

There is also a nod to Percy Shelley's concept of the fading coal; of the idea losing its effectiveness in the moments between the idea entering the mind and the action of putting it to paper. Indeed, the photograph—being a moment in time that is captured within that "transitory brightness"— accomplishes what the narrative or spoken word cannot. The ineffability of language is thus exposed, the photograph serving as a narration beyond the narrative. As Barthes explicates, we are able to move past the symbolic message to an anthropological, literal message that offers both a perceptual and cultural message (Trachtenberg and Meyers, 1980). This lexical message that the photograph provides transcends generations to maintain connection via realness—i.e. "being there"—that penetrates through as a system of the articulation of language. The language of

the image is not merely the totality of utterances emitted, it is the totality of the utterances received (Trachtenberg and Meyers, 1980). It is these utterances emitted and received that I believe exceed the synonymity of language to capture the ineffability of it, offering its viewers a more meaning-filled and impactful statement.

When we look at the photos of Austerlitz as a young boy and of the dead bodies on pages 131 and 183 of the novel, we see a boy that is alive and the skeletons of those who have long since departed this world. Aside from the stark contrast of aliveness, we can read the image as Barthes suggests by analyzing the "being there"-ness of these individual that Sebald is trying to convey, a story of time, death, innocence…and more. What truths do we discern in this glimpse of the boy, of the outfit he is wearing, the expression on his face, the color of his skin, his stance and posture? And of the photograph of the grave, what does this photo say about the individuals? Is there one? Are they adults? What is the ground like where they are buried? We can close read these photographs and allow them to reveal their utterances. Sebald demonstrates this himself in the novel through the narrator's close reading of the young Austerlitz, "I examined every detail under a magnifying glass…and in doing so I always felt the piercing, inquiring gaze of the page boy who had come to demand his dues, who was waiting in the gray light of dawn on the empty field for me to accept the challenge and avert the misfortune lying ahead of him" (Sebald, Bell, and Wood, 2011). Using the two photographs, Austerlitz is able to close read the delicate balance of his own life that is echoed by Susan Sontag, "photographs state the innocence, the vulnerability lives headed towards their own destruction, and this link between photography and death haunts all photographs of people" (Sontag and Rieff, 2013). This demonstration of reading the photographs as text enables the reader to discern elements of the novel that transcend the written word. Through Sebald's analysis we can see a linguistic message—an ability to ground in reality as a function of elucidation, "a coded iconic message or symbolic message" (Trachtenberg and Meyers, 1980). In this instance and in the instance of the photograph of the remains of the dead, Austerlitz and

the narrator are able to give a voice to the faces who are unable to speak for themselves, to provide a reconciliation, an ability to harmonize with the being-there of the individuals through the photograph. To understand further these utterances between memory and truth, we must also look to photography's ability to serve as aesthetic evidence.

Susan Sontag perfectly describes how photography changed our perspective, famously using Plato's cave as an analogy, not only in a linguistic or lexical sense, but in an aesthetic sense. "This very insatiability of the photographic eye changes the terms of confinement in the cave, our world. In teaching us a new visual code, photographs alter and enlarge our notions of what is worth looking at…They are a grammar and, even more importantly, an ethics of seeing…the result of the photographic enterprise is to give us the sense that we can hold the whole world in our heads as an anthology of images. To collect photographs is to collect the world" (Sontag and Rieff, 2013). To Austerlitz the miscellaneous photographs he takes "allowed me to ignore the fact that my life has always, for as far back as I can remember, been clouded by unrelieved despair" (Sebald, Bell, and Wood, 2011). The act of taking photographs provides a subconscious realization that there is a journey he must embark on—to find out who he is and where he comes from—to reconcile his past. Bazin remarks on this in his essay in the "Ontology of the Photograph", noting that the power of the aesthetic qualities of the photograph lie in its ability to lay bare reality, like a fingerprint that is unique in its contribution to the natural order of creation (Trachtenberg and Meyers, 1980). Therefore, the image allows us a glimpse into the objective realities that may cloud our memory, bringing clarity to points in our life that have been overshadowed by the grayness of time and emotion.

Some of Marianne Hirsch's most notable work is with generational postmemory of the Holocaust and photography. To explicate the intersectionality of memory, truth, and narrative in *Austerlitz* I'd like to return to her inclusion of French art-historian Georges Didi-Huberman's notion of "truth and obscurity, exactitude and simulacrum" (Hirsch, 2013). While all four of these ideas work

alongside each other, I propose that with the miscellaneous photographs in *Austerlitz* one can find truth *in* obscurity and exactitude *in* simulacrum. In this sense we are blending and bending time *and* the photograph to curate a moment of time that narrates a truth that is otherwise incapable of being. Austerlitz demonstrates the power aesthetic photographs have in the intersection of time, memory, and narrative when he rearranges his photographs, "Austerlitz told me that he sometimes sat here for hours, laying out these photographs or others from his collection…arranging them in an order depending on their family resemblances, or withdrawing them from the game until either there was nothing left but the gray tabletop, or he felt exhausted by the constant effort of thinking and remembering…I often lie here until late in the evening, feeling time roll back, said Austerlitz" (Sebald, Bell, and Wood, 2011). Here we can see how Austerlitz is finding familiarity (truths) to his past by using the obscurity of photographs to associate place *and* person with memory. It is precisely through this journey of finding familiarity that sends Austerlitz on a quest to uncover his past, ultimately leading to the discovery of his mother.

When Austerlitz eventually makes his way to Prague he connects with Vera, a family friend and Austerlitz's former nanny. Through her stories and various photographs, Vera provides Austerlitz with the means of filling the gaps of his forgotten childhood. The photographs act as a consumable object, a short cut to the past (Sontag and Rieff, 2013). As he is introduced to photographs of his mother, Agata, however, he is unsure of the person staring back at him, only knowing her to be his mother through Vera's confirmation and his own vague memories. There are wisps of his mother's presence that linger in his mind, these obscurities proving to be enough evidence of his mother's existence and connectedness to him to satisfy him.

It is this obscurity, the particulars in which Austerlitz is able to find his mother, that also resonates with Barthes in his book *Camera Lucida*: "And here the essential question first appeared: did I *recognize* her? I never recognized her except in fragments, which is to say that I missed her *being*…Photography thereby compelled me

to perform a painful labor; straining toward the essence of her identity…" (Barthes and Howard, 1981). It is through the viewing of photos and films of his mother that trigger Austerlitz's memory, grasping at obscurities to formulate truths, finding exactitude in simulacrum. "She looks, so I tell myself as I watch, just as I imagined the singer Agata, from my faint memories and the few other clues to her appearance that I now have, and I gaze and gaze again at that face, which seems to be both strange and familiar…" (Sebald, Bell, and Wood 2011). Though Agata continues to haunt Austerlitz, his re-discovery of her gives him the courage to seek out answers about his father and other family friends.

How Austerlitz is able to connect with not only his familial past, but his historical past through Hirsch's four notions echoes the sentiments of many of the Kindertransport children; searching and connecting through the aesthetic, becoming a cathartic and palpable experience of loss, absence, and reclamation. For the Jewish and those of the Kindertransport, the past is located in objects, images, and documents, in fragments and traces. "Austerlitz uses the example familial anchors, which individualizes and reembodies the free-floating disconnected and disorganized feelings of loss and nostalgia to attach himself to more concrete and seemingly authentic images and objects" (Hirsch, 2013). Austerlitz uses photography to create authenticity out of the unreliable narrator, a character that represents many individuals who have lost their identities, giving those like him validation.

It is this paradox of both the obscurity and truth which photographs provide that allow us to find veracity in them. However, because photographs are human products, they are bound to the laws of being human, which is being both flawed and subjective. On reconciling the universal and particular through photography, "Even if the universal and the particular are both always present in photography as a medium, the balance between the two is negotiated by the photographer. As Joel Eisinger asserted, photography, especially that which aims for objectivity, allows the photographer 'to capture particular truths while simultaneously transcending

them to reach a level of universal truth' (Putnam, 2015). This task of being able to balance both the universals and the particulars of an objective truth are, themselves, paradoxical in that it is through the flawed human creation of the photographic hand that the subjective is always present: "…there can be seen to be a persistent tendency for photographers to upset this balance, leading to the universalization or particularization of the creating culture rather than the creation of an objective image" (Putnam, 2015). Thus, it is impossible for a subject to ever be purely objective as it is through the human that we can even conceive of such a medium. But being that objectivity is also a human construct, the notion itself is problematic to prove, scientific proof being the closest form of objectivity.

Scientific proof is arguably one of the only indications that supports the notion that there is objective truth. So, can photographs be seen as scientific proof in the purest sense of objectivity? While this is debatable, the short answer is that it depends, or it is complicated. In regards to Putnam's argument, that the truth can be skewed by the photographer, I return to Sontag and her acute observations on photography, specifically the comparing of scientific versus moral in photography. "Some photographers set up as scientists, others as moralists. The scientists make an inventory of the world; the moralists concentrate on hard cases…each person photographed [is] a sign of a certain trade, class, or profession. All… subjects are representative, equally representative, or a given social reality—their own" (Sontag and Rieff, 2013). What makes a photograph not just art, but reality is its ability to capture the "has-been-there" in a medium that, as Sontag states, "confers importance, its irrefutable pathos acting as a message from time past, and the concreteness of its intimations about social class" (Sontag and Rieff, 2013). Sebald presents us with dynamic photographs within his novel that elevate his protagonist's story by means of the reality of social class in an historical context. The photographs, themselves, are as fictional as the story Sebald weaves, yet they are able to deliver to us a form of *real* representation, Sebald's blending of fact and fiction perhaps giving us more fact than fiction in the preservation of the faces and places.

James Woods remarks on the realness that Sebald gives us within Austerlitz's tale, one where the photographers of each of the photographs used testify a truthfulness within and despite the obscurity of their presence in the novel: "On the one hand, these photographs sear us with the promise of their accuracy—-as Barthes says, photographs are astonishing because they 'attest that what I see has existed': 'In Photography, the presence of the thing (at a certain past moment) is never metaphoric'" (Sebald, Bell, and Wood, 2011). We are left to wonder, then, are the pictures in *Austerlitz* seen as scientific or moral truths? I believe this is what Sebald is leaving up to the reader to decide. As for the sake of my own argument, I believe that it can be viewed as both — a moral truth of reconciliation, and a scientific truth of the depiction of lives added to the collective memory. It serves as verifiable proof of a moment, a passage in time, that occurred beyond reasonable doubt. It can stand on its own, and, in the case of this novel, serve to elucidate (or complicate, as others argue) the written truth.

Photography and the image give us more than just a glimpse at what *was*, they give us the real, the "is." Austerlitz presents the "is" in a way that equally confounds and liberates both the reader and the images themselves, giving new meaning to how narrative and image communicate with each other and the reader. "This failure of language to synchronize with images is something with which Austerlitz can acutely identify, and it inaugurates *through language* the beginning of his becoming-image" (Olsen, 2013). Sebald's innovative work begs us to ask, how do we find ourselves in these images? Whether we know who or what they are, taking that moment to let the images seep into us, to let the identities of the other speak, allows us to find solace in their reflection, building a more powerful collective memory, and a stronger reconciliation of our histories, traumas, and stories.

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Christina Mammone

The Image of Reconciliation: Evaluating the Depiction of Reconciliation and Forgiveness in Post-Conflict Sierra Leone Artwork

Art can be a powerful tool to convey emotions and in the aftermath of war, and other such atrocities, it can be used as a medium to articulate the complex array of feelings present within a society. Through art, post-war and post-atrocities societies develop a non-verbal narrative of their shared experiences which provides affected communities with a way to come to terms with what happened (Knight, 2014, pp. 82-83). Moreover, art can also be used as a method to promote reconciliation as it creates avenues of reconciliation from the individual level (Kapitan, 1997, p. 297). This was the case with reconstruction and rehabilitation efforts in post-war (2002) Sierra Leone.

Reconciliation was a large component of the post-war reconstruction efforts in Sierra Leone. Upon the war's conclusion in 2002 'out of a population of 5.2 million, 70,000 people were killed, 10,000 maimed (many with limbs cut off by rebels), and half the population forced to flee their homes' (Ferme and Hoffman, 2004, p. 77). Being an example of a New African War, all of the armed groups involved were complicit in the perpetration of war crimes (Turshen, 2019, p. 52). As a result, the war garnered significant infamy in its normalization of countless atrocities, perpetrated predominately by child soldiers (Mitton, 2016, p. 11). Due to the nature of the conflict and its high levels of child involvement, social

hierarchies were dismantled, and community relations were destroyed. Thus, during the post-war reconstruction and rehabilitation efforts, there was a considerable emphasis on community and societal reconciliation. One way in which reconciliation was promoted was through art, with art therapy incorporated into the psycho-social and trauma counselling of ex-combatants and the National Vision for Sierra Leone (NVSL) encouraging Sierra Leoneans to envision the country's future through creative means.

This article examines the narrative of reconciliation in post-war Sierra Leone artwork. Whilst the article will briefly discuss the NVSL and its use of art to promote reconciliation, it will predominantly address two under-studied separate pieces of artwork commissioned. The first: a comic strip produced as a part of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) Report: A Senior Secondary School Version– a learning resource meant to be used in classrooms. The second is a bas-relief located in the National Peace and Cultural Monument. Whilst both artworks attempt to convey a message of reconciliation and community healing, this article will demonstrate how the depictions of reconciliation in both works provide vastly different readings and interpretations of reconciliation. Thus, providing an interesting introspective into the narratives of reconciliation presented to recovering post-war societies.

The Civil War in Sierra Leone: A Brief History

In 1991 the small West African country of Sierra Leone erupted into a violent civil war, lasting eleven years (1991-2002). The war began for a combination of reasons, but the collapse of the economy and a complete absence of social services after consecutive decisions made by the All People's Congress (APC) government contributed significantly to the unrest (Davies, 2010, p. 69). The APC, a political party predominately made up of ethnically northern Sierra Leoneans, had assumed power in 1968 and over the subsequent decades had

dismantled the political system, ceased infrastructure development in much of the country and become increasingly focused on self-enrichment (Kandeh, 1999, p. 352). By the 1990s a majority of the Sierra Leonean population was forced to live in abject poverty, and inaccessibility to education and a lack of employment opportunities had removed any avenues for social mobility, which severely disenfranchised the youth population (Bellows and Miguel, 2009, p. 1145). Sentiments of anger towards the government were particularly strong, especially in southern districts, as people living in these districts felt intentionally abandoned by their government due to ethno-political affiliations to the opposition party – which had been dismantled several years prior (Truth and Reconciliation Commission, 2004a, p, 36).

In March of 1991, the Revolutionary United Front (RUF), led by Foday Sankoh with the support of Liberian head-of-state Charles Taylor, commenced fighting in Sierra Leone (Richards, 1996, p. 7). The RUF had intentionally positioned themselves along the shared border between Liberia and Sierra Leone, enabling them to travel between the two countries with ease. This was an important strategic decision as it allowed them to target towns within the southern districts, such as Kailahun and Pujehun, and present themselves as an anti-APC fighting force whose goals revolved around removing the defunct government (Gberie, 2005, p. 61). The RUF capitalised on the sentiments of the disenfranchised in these areas, resulting in civilian support and voluntary recruitment of despondent youths (Zack-Williams, 2001, p. 79). By May of the following year the first of three military coups occurred and a young military officer, Valentine Strasser, assumed leadership (1992-1996) (Davies, 2000, p. 362). In an attempt to gain the upper-hand Strasser invited the South African Mercenary Group Executive Outcomes to fight in exchange for diamonds (Howe, 1998, p. 314). The involvement of Executive Outcomes marked a noticeable shift in the RUF's approach, as they gradually became more violent against the civilian population and demonstrated more guerrilla fighting tactics (Day, 2015, p. 821).

By 1995 the RUF had shed their guise as a 'people's army' and had turned their guns on the civilian population, resulting in the establishment of civilian paramilitary groups made up of the various ethnic spiritual hunting groups, collectively known as the Civil Defence Force (CDF), the most well-known of which were the *Kamajor* fighters from the south (Muana, 1997, p. 79). The CDF were primarily established to protect their villages from RUF violence, however, they were equally as violent to the broader civilian population. In addition to this extra involvement, during this time loyalty within the Sierra Leone Army began to dissolve and dissident soldiers began terrorising the civilian population (Kaifala, 2016, pp. 227-229). Labelled as *sobel* (soldier-rebels), these fighters were complicit in the committing of crimes, the looting of villages and, at times, coordinating attacks with the RUF (Bellows and Miguel, 2009, p. 1146). The presence of multiple fighting groups severely altered the dynamics of the conflict and placed the civilian population in a heightened level of danger, no matter which group they interacted with.

1996 marked a second military coup where Strasser was outed and Brigadier Julius Maada Bio assumed the position of interim head of the government. During this time, he called for a presidential election and the signing of a peace agreement between the government and the RUF (Gberie, 2005, p. 94). The elections marked the beginning of a notorious period of extreme violence within the conflict as the ill-conceived election slogan, 'the future is in your hands', prompting the RUF to begin its own counter-campaign – one that included the forcible amputation of civilian limbs (Pham, 2005, p. 133). Through the statement 'no hands to fingerprint, no fingerprints to vote', the RUF maimed thousands of Sierra Leoneans in protest of Maada Bio's approach (MacKenzie, 2012, p. 34). Despite this violence, Sierra Leone People's Party Presidential candidate Dr. Ahmed Tejan Kabbah was elected as President, though this was short-lived as he was soon ousted in a third military coup, before being reinstated as president in early 1998 (Montague, 2002, p. 235). On January 6, 1999, the RUF launched their most violent attack on the Sierra Leone capital of Freetown. This attack, known as Operation No Living Thing, has

garnered a reputation as one of the most violent attacks within the broader conflict, with an estimated 6,300 dead and some 3,000 children abducted for child soldiering purposes (Maxted, 2003, p. 76). In spite of the attack, by late 1999 the RUF were forced into the signing of the Lomé Peace Accord (Alao and Ero, 2001, p. 121). Outside of providing the framework for establishing a Truth and Reconciliation Commission, the accord was heavily criticised for providing the RUF with blanket amnesties and giving Sankoh disproportionate power within the government (Alao and Ero, 2001, p. 122). Overall, it was unable to consolidate peace and violence recommenced soon thereafter. As a result, by 2000 the British military had become involved. They forced the RUF into signing the Abuja Ceasefire Agreement and this action reinstated the establishment of the TRC and led to the commencement of the disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration (DDR) process, which gradually demobilised the fighting forces (Peters, 2004, p. 12). Following this lengthy process, on Friday, January 18, 2002, President Kabbah announced the closure of the last demobilisation centre, marking the official end of the war (Penfold, 2005, p. 549).

Art in the Aftermath of War in Sierra Leone

The conflict in Sierra Leone was Extremely messy, affecting the lives of all Sierra Leoneans as communities were left in tatters, family dynamics forever altered and societal hierarchies disrupted. In response, throughout the post-war reconstruction and rehabilitation efforts, countless methods were used to promote social reconstruction and foster community reconciliation, particularly art.

Art was used in various forms throughout the post-war period. Firstly, art therapy was employed to assist with the psycho-social trauma counselling of former child soldiers. For example, Interim Care Centres regularly held drawing sessions to aid children in coming to terms with what they had experienced (Shaw, 2014, p. 312). Shaw (2014) writes:

> By learning to draw rocket-propelled grenades, to "speak out" their narratives of capture and to describe these through the language of trauma, child ex-combatants engage in a new work of memory intended to restore their childhood (p. 312).

Alongside this, art was also used to promote wider societal reconciliation. The Sierra Leone Truth and Reconciliation Commission (SL TRC) encouraged the use of art to reinforce collective sentiments and a shared vision of a post-post-war Sierra Leone (Truth and Reconciliation Commission, 2004b, p. 499). In chapter 8 of Volume 3B of the SL TRC report, the Commission directly addresses the creation of the National Vision for Sierra Leone (NVSL). In paragraph 2 the report states:

> Early in its mandate, the TRC decided to facilitate the construction of a "vision" that would act as a "roadmap" to work towards the needs of post-conflict Sierra Leone. The question that gave rise to the National Vision project was: What does the TRC envisage for Sierra Leone after 11 years of war? (Truth and Reconciliation Commission, 2004b, p. 500).

Through the NVSL, the SL TRC hoped to understand the expectations which Sierra Leoneans had for the future of the country (Truth and Reconciliation Commission, n.d.). This was done through the NVSL's calls for contributions by the public. On the call for contributions notice, the NVSL working group provided suggestions as to what potential contributors may use to base their vision.

- Describe the kind of society the contributor would like to live in;
- Suggest how to make Sierra Leone a better place to live in;
- Set out the contributor's hopes and aspirations for Sierra Leone;

- Describe where the contributor would like to see Sierra Leone in five or ten years; or
- Provide anything creative that inspires peace and unity – and pride in being Sierra Leonean (Truth and Reconciliation Commission, 2004b, p. 501).

The resulting works showcased a diverse group of contributors which included artists, civil society activists, students, ex-combatants (who had demobilised by this stage), and prisoners (Raseman and Zervos, 2012, p. 23). Oftentimes the NVSL working group travelled throughout Sierra Leone, hosting workshops at various institutions to provide as many people as possible with the opportunity to contribute to the NVSL. For example, the working group visited the maximum security Pademba Rd Prison in Freetown and provided art supplies for prisoners to contribute (Raseman and Zervos, 2012, p. 23). They encouraged contributions in a variety of formats and received written submissions, i.e. poetry and essays, visual contributions such as paintings, carvings and sculptures, and dramatic works, which included music and other filmed mediums (Truth and Reconciliation Commission, n.d.). In December 2003 the NVSL launched a six-month-long exhibition to showcase the submissions at the National Stadium in Freetown, which was strongly endorsed by both Archbishop Desmond Tutu and former Vice-Chairman of the South African TRC, Alex Boraine (Raseman and Zervos, 2012, pp. 23-24). Despite the high levels of community support and a push for the NVSL to become a permanent feature of the National Human Rights Commission, the project was abruptly concluded due to logistical complexities, minimal funding assistance (a common feature of the transitional justice process) and a fatal car accident that killed several members of the working group (Raseman and Zervos, 2012, pp. 26-27).

Nonetheless, images from the exhibition remain accessible on the official SL TRC website, and of those viewable, there is a strong emphasis on the importance of togetherness and a collective need to move forward (Truth and Reconciliation Commission, 2004c, p.

19). A shared Sierra Leonean identity was prompted during community reconstruction workshops and other community reconciliation events organised by non-government organisations. Despite these overarching themes, the artwork analysed here demonstrates very different narratives around reconciliation and the promotion of the one Sierra Leone identity.

The TRC Report: A Senior School Version

The first piece of artwork located in the *TRC Report: Senior Secondary School Version* can be viewed as counter to the message of reconciliation despite its position of pro-reconciliation in the publication. The SL TRC collected 7,706 testimonies from persons located in Guinea, Liberia and all of the districts and chiefdoms in Sierra Leone to provide not only recommendations but also one of the most detailed recounts of the war (Truth and Reconciliation Commission, 2004d, p. 4).The resulting report was published in four different formats, the full report: which included four detailed volumes accompanied by several appendices, *Witness to Truth – The Video Report*, to ensure accessibility of the report to the illiterate community members and two child-friendly versions. The child-friendly reports were the first-ever created child-specific TRC reports, demonstrating a need for the information and findings to be accessible to all members of society (TRWG, 2004, p. 1). The forward to the report explains its importance and desire to be accessible to young Sierra Leoneans:

> This report is groundbreaking in other respects, including the participation of representatives of children's groups in its content, language and design. [...] Children first charged the Commission to prepare a child-friendly report so that the children of Sierra Leone would be able to read and understand it, and others outside of Sierra Leone might better comprehend what the children of Sierra Leone experienced during the war (TRWG, 2004, p. 1).

To ensure that this was fully achieved this report was followed soon thereafter with the publication of the *TRC Report: A Senior Secondary School Version*. Outside of being a condensed version of the official TRC Report, this version was created as an educational resource and included comprehension exercises after each chapter (Sheriff and Bobson-Kamara, 2005, p. 17). The accompanying comic-style visual aids are of particular importance and are the art pieces most relevant to this article's analysis. Created by Mohamed Sheriff, co-author of the Secondary School Version of the Report, and illustrated by Simeon Sesay *SierraRat* visually explains the political turmoil leading to war as well as its violent events. Graphic depictions of violence are included in its panels, including forced amputations, child soldiering, forced abductions and torture (Sheriff and Bobson-Kamara, 2005, p. 45, 83). The story within the comic is particularly interesting as it follows a girl 'Ratchild', depicted as a rat, listening to 'Rat Oldman' explain the war – it was believed that this inclusion and style would encourage students to engage with the TRC's findings (Redwood and Wedderburn, 2019, p. 593).

On further inspection, however, the comic provides a subverted reading of the message of reconciliation, and this is primarily done through the decision of the comic to depict its characters not as humans but as anthropomorphized rats and cats with the rats representing all groups aside from the RUF who are solely depicted as cats. This was not the first war-related comic to use animals, as Art Spiegelman's *Maus* (1980-1991) replaced its humans with various animals to symbolise cultural elements and specific human natures (De Angelis, 2005, p. 232). While *SierraRat* maintained some similarities to this predecessor, differences remain as noted by Redwood and Wedderburn:

> Most obviously, both comics' central conflicts are between cats on the one hand, and rodents on the other. In Maus, each national or ethnic identity category is denoted by a different species: Jews are depicted as mice, Germans as cats, Poles as pigs, Americans as dogs, and so on. In Sierrarat, meanwhile, Sierra

> Leoneans are represented as 'rats', while the invading force from 'Liberat' are described as 'disgruntled Sierrarat people who left the country and turned to cats', in which latter guise they are portrayed throughout the comic (Redwood and Wedderburn, 2019, pp. 594-595).

As Redwood and Wedderburn identify that there is a clear distinction between *Maus* and *SierraRat* as all nationalities in *SierraRat* are depicted as rats, with the only variation being the RUF fighters who are depicted as cats (Sheriff and Bobson-Kamara, 2005, p. 10). When explaining the rationale as to why some Sierra Leoneans are depicted as cats, the comic explains how their anger turned them into cats (Sheriff and Bobson-Kamara, 2005, p. 5). One panel clearly states 'to worsen the plight of the rat people some Rat Soldiers and Rat Civil Defence Fighters also turned to cats and attacked rat civilians' (Sheriff and Bobson-Kamara, 2005, p. 6). This statement is referencing the CDF and *sobel* who also perpetrated war crimes against the civilian population. Despite the statement of the CDF and *sobel* also 'turning cat', within the entirety of the *SierraRat* comic the RUF are the only group depicted as cats inferring that they are the sole perpetrators of violence. In doing so the comic creates an alternative narrative of the war and presents the RUF as the only threat to the Sierra Leone people when, as described earlier, multiple groups were involved in the war's violence.

Consistently throughout the peace efforts and transitional justice process, there was an emphasis on the RUF as the primary perpetrators of violence, de-securitizing the other equally violent groups. This further ingrained the perception of the RUF as the only security threat, which consistently undermined peace consolidation efforts and caused issues. For example, in 1996 a ceasefire agreement collapsed when *Kamajor* CDF fighters intentionally targeted RUF camps during the ceasefire period (Peters and Richards, 1998, p. 185), and similarly, in 1999, a renegade splinter group became increasingly violent after their exclusion from the Lomé Peace

Accord. Their absence from the accord had significant repercussions on their post-conflict life, barring them from entry into the DDR process or any other rehabilitation processes available to ex-combatants (Utas and Jörgel, 2008, pp. 500-501).

Outside of creating an alternative narrative of the conflict within the TRC Report, Redwood and Wedderburn consider how the comic creates a binary idea of victim and perpetrator, good versus bad.

> The comic's presentation of these two subject-groups as different species reinforces these two identity categories by visually differentiating them. In other words, the comic's aesthetic vocabulary encourages the precise and immediate identification of 'perpetrator' and 'victim', and in so doing also produces the opposition between these two groups as the central division to be overcome in the transition towards reconciliation (Redwood and Wedderburn, 2019, p. 596).

While this binary understanding of victim and perpetrator is used to explain reconciliation, Redwood and Wedderburn (2019, p. 596) are critical of the cat and rat motif, arguing that it fails to properly demonstrate the complex moral and legal grey zone of victim and perpetrator-hood, particularly when considering child soldiers. Through the binary motif and the physical labelling of victim and perpetrator, the comic detracts from the fluid nature of victim and perpetrator-hood experienced during the war. Millar and MacKenzie both emphasise how there was not a linear progression from victim to perpetrator and at times a person could occupy both groups simultaneously (Millar, 2012, p. 724; MacKenzie, 2012, p. 42). Thus, the binary nature of victim and perpetrator-hood in the comic not only provides an alternative narrative to the lived experiences during the war, it fails to articulate the complexities associated with reintegration and reconciliation in the post-war setting.

Moving beyond Redwood and Wedderburn's analysis, the use of the motif can also be read as a subversion of the very message of reconciliation. In the final panel of the comic, despite an emphasis on reconciliation with words like 'unity', 'reconciliation' and 'never again' being used, the characters remain as rats and cats (Sheriff and Bobson-Kamara, 2005, p. 119). This suggests that the RUF fighters cannot return to being 'SierraRats' with everyone else, permanently othering them and excluding them from the positive effects of the reconciliation process. Moreover, their continued depiction as cats, predatory animals, maintains and emphasises that the RUF continue to be an ongoing threat to peace in the country. The message being presented is completely counter to the broader message being presented at the time, that Sierra Leoneans were all brothers and sisters who needed to work together to build a better future (Millar, 2012, p. 722). By othering the RUF in the comic, the TRC threatened the success of reconciliation, as the ongoing labelling and othering of ex-combatants has a lasting impact on long-term community reconstruction (McMullin, 2013, p. 413).

Reconciliation in the National Peace and Cultural Monument

In stark contrast to the *SierraRat* comic, the second piece of artwork, located in the National Peace and Cultural Monument, presents a clearer message of reconciliation and togetherness. In Paragraph 79, the TRC Report recommends the establishment of monuments as a form of reconciliation (Truth and Reconciliation Commission, 2004c, p. 19-20). However, due to funding limitations and cultural perceptions around remembrance only a handful of monuments have ever been created (Basu, 2007, pp. 245-246). The National Peace and Cultural Monument is unique and contradictory, as it was conceived as both a monument of reconciliation, whilst simultaneously existing as a War Memorial for the Sierra Leone Armed Forces. Basu argues that when entering the Monument, it is clear that it is a war memorial because it is filled with armed forces

iconography, despite this, there remain some elements that reflect its connection to the SL TRC and reconciliation (2013, 14). Located in the heart of the Freetown Business quarter the Monument is flanked by several buildings of importance, such as the National Museum (not to be confused with the National Peace Museum), Parliament House and the Law Courts (Basu, 2013, p. 7). The Monument is also shadowed by Cotton Tree, an important symbol of the Sierra Leone identity and another site of post-war reconciliation (Basu, 2007, p. 246).

The content of the Monument is filled with statues and bas-reliefs containing figures of historical importance, including Bai Bureh, Mama Yoko and Sengbe Pieh. Financed by Lebanese businessman Ezzat Basma, overseen by retired Major-General Alfred Nelson-Williams, and created by two Sierra Leonean street artists, Samuel Marco and Alusine Bangura, the content of the Monument is an interesting piece of art (Basu, 2013, pp. 13-14). The bas-reliefs are seemingly recreations of historical photos taken from the book *Sierra Leonean Heroes,* playing into traditional Sierra Leonean colonised patriotism (Basu, 2013, p. 14). However, Marco and Bangura have subverted these historical images by placing these 'heroes' in alternative African settings (Allie, 1990). Basu (2013, p. 19) explains how through the blending of these photos with traditional African elements in the envisioned backgrounds, the two artists redefined and decolonised elements of the national narrative.

Alongside these images of historical figures is a bas-relief that directly addresses reconciliation in the post-war setting. Within this Reconciliation panel, there are four main elements within the piece to analyse: the ex-combatant, the man in blue, the onlookers and the accompanying poems.

Firstly, considering the ex-combatant and the message of reconciliation. Unlike the *SierraRat* comic, in which the RUF is clearly depicted as the other, within the monument's image there are no clear indicators as to which group he is associated with, though it can be assumed that he is an RUF ex-combatant due to the composition of the piece. His face is deliberately turned away, so

there are no clear distinguishers to help viewers define his ethnicity or age group. The intentional ambiguity of his persons allows for the ex-combatant to occupy various identities and represent Sierra Leonean ex-combatants more broadly. Basu (2013, p. 23) points out that 'the "Reconciliation" panel shows the contrite figure of an ex-combatant lying prone at the feet of an older man whose hands have been severed'. The positioning of the ex-combatant in the panel is an accurate depiction of what occurred during the Reconciliation practice. In *Witness to Truth – The Video Report* there is footage of a RUF ex-combatant prone and begging for forgiveness at the feet of important members of the community (Witness to Truth, 2004). Given that Marco and Bangura were seen to incorporate existing photos into the bas-reliefs it is extremely likely that the ex-combatant is based on that footage or similar examples. Another interesting element of the ex-combatant is depicted with a toolbox alongside him. The inclusion of the toolbox symbolizes his return to the community and wider workforce, directly linking to part of the DDR's process. Ex-combatants were provided with skills training opportunities (United Nations, 2014, p. 171). Skills training is a necessary part of the DDR as it provides ex-combatants with avenues for income generation whilst simultaneously addressing potential 'skill vacuums' within the community caused by the war (Ellison, 2014, p. 195). By depicting the ex-combatant with the toolbox, the bas-relief creates the understanding that he is ready to return to his community and can be a valuable and contributing member to society. As echoed by Basu:

> Beside the ex-combatant is a tool box, which refers to the retaining schemes of Sierra Leone's Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration program and signals his willingness to contribute positively to society (Basu, 2013, p. 23).

This narrative reinforces the primary focus of the reintegration efforts. By demilitarising the ex-combatant and reskilling them, it is suggested that upon their reintegration they are to be treated as an

active member of society (Mac-Ikemenjima, 2008, p. 150). Moreover, by providing them with an avenue to be an active member of society, the reminder of skills training reduces community tensions and sentiments of othering (Buccitelli and Denov, 2017, p. 139).

Having discussed the ex-combatant, it is now important to address the man dressed in blue. Arguably, the man in blue is one of the focal points of the bas-relief as he is placed in a central, foreground position alongside the ex-combatant, with several indicators suggesting that he is a Chief. For example, he is seated while others around him stand or lay at his feet (i.e. ex-combatant) and he is the only person to be fully dressed in traditional garb, whereas everyone else is dressed in primarily modern attire. Another indicator of his position can be seen in his body language with his outstretched arms, forgiving the ex-combatant. This shares similarities to footage taken of a Chief in *Witness to Truth – The Video Report* who outstretched his hand to forgive an ex-combatant (Witness to Truth, 2004). However, in the bas-relief, the man in blue is unable to outstretch his hands because both hands have been severed at the wrists. As mentioned previously, during the war the forced amputation of civilian limbs had become a favoured tactic of the RUF (Jackson, 2005, p. 54). Whilst the RUF were generally indiscriminate in their practice of forced amputations, they intentionally targeted Chiefs as they believed that Chiefs were complicit in the disenfranchisement of the wider Sierra Leonean population (Richards, 2005, p. 578). During an interview with Richards, a CDF fighter sympathised with the RUFs' decision to target Chiefs, 'our chiefs and some elders were doing wrong to our young…some preferred to go and join the RUF, either to take revenge or to protect themselves' (Richards, 2005, p. 578). As such, the decision to depict the man in blue with both of his hands missing is an acknowledgement of the corruption of Chiefs and the consequence of their inaction and involvement in the high levels of community disenfranchisement.

Comparative to the man in blue are the five onlookers; placed in the background of the image, these people are watching on as the ex-combatant is being forgiven. These onlookers have a range of

physical injuries, i.e. amputated arms, with some holding crutches to further suggest the physical toll of the conflict. Basu (2013, p. 23) points out how all five onlookers have clearly defined faces exhibiting an array of emotions whilst watching the scene of forgiveness. Arguably, this depiction of the array of emotions demonstrated the reality of the on-the-ground situation in the post-war setting. Despite efforts to promote reconciliation and community healing, memories of the violence perpetrated were present often resulting in mixed sentiments around the promotion of such practices (Kovac, 2012, pp. 10-14).

The final aspect of the bas-relief to consider is that of the two pieces of text positioned in the centre of the image. The first piece of text is a poem, contained within a geographical outline of Sierra Leone, which reads:

We lost our homes
We lost our hands
We lost our limbs
We lost our loved ones
We almost lost this land
Never, never again!
Whatever part of us that functions will be used with
vigour to prevent history repeating itself.
Higher heights shall we raise our beloved country Sierra
Leone.

This poem highlights the near destruction of Sierra Leone through violent conflict and is a call to reconciliation action. This echoes similar sentiments provided to the NVSL during their submissions project (previously discussed), i.e. Ustina More's called *My Vision, My Home, My Sierra Leone* (Truth and Reconciliation Commission, 2004b, p. 500). In both poems, there is an emphasis on working together to better Sierra Leone (Truth and Reconciliation Commission, 2004b, p. 500). Moreover, the decision to have the poem placed over a painting of a sunrise emphasizes the importance

of rebirth and renewal of Sierra Leone in the post-war setting (Basu, 2013, p. 23). The second piece of text, which is presented directly below the first poem, is one written by the project's overseer Major General Nelson-Williams. It reads:

> There is so much in us that unites us
> Than divides us as Sierra Leoneans.
> We must recognize this fact
> And learn to live with one another.

Whilst brief, the statement is clear and concise in its messaging. Within the two sentences, Nelson-Williams presents two significant points: 'sameness' amongst Sierra Leoneans and the complexity of reconciliation. When considering the first sentence, the emphasis on unity among Sierra Leoneans is reflective of the narrative of sameness that was being promoted during the post-war restorative and rehabilitative phase (Millar, 2012, p. 723). The second sentence demonstrates an awareness of the complexities of reconciliation in the lived experience. As the conflict had severely impacted community dynamics the emphasis on learning to live with one another reflects the communitarian nature of Sierra Leone society.

Due to the nature of the war, there were considerable efforts in the post-war aftermath to promote the communitarianism of Sierra Leonean culture. This leads to the promotion of the Krio phrase '*bad bush nor dow for troway bad pikin'* (there is no forest for a bad child) which predated the conflict (Stovel, 2008, p. 306). Stovel explains how this proverb was popularized throughout Sierra Leone during the TRC period because it encapsulates the importance of community within the Sierra Leonean psyche (2008, 306). Moreover, because it alluded to the need for ex-combatants to return to the community it became a mantra during the SL TRC during the reconciliation process of the hearings (Kelsall, 2005, p. 379; Witness to Truth, 2004). Due to this importance, elements of the sentiment and the togetherness of the Sierra Leonean culture can also be seen through not only the poems present but the bas-relief as a whole.

Conclusion

When considering these two pieces of visual art and their messages of reconciliation, there is no definite answer as there is a lack of research into Sierra Leonean reception of the images and their messages. Thus, at present, there is no opportunity to consider or investigate the Sierra Leonean reception of these two images. When considering the *SierraRat* comic, it remains unclear as to whether the Secondary School Version was ever used in the classroom because the war continues to remain absent from the national curriculum and when considering the Monument Basu is seemingly the only person to have written on it. Nonetheless, the two artworks addressed in this article demonstrate two vastly different approaches to reconciliation. On the one hand, the bas-relief promotes forgiveness and the positive rehabilitation/reintegration of past perpetrators of violence, while the *SierraRat* comic simply provides an ineffective binary motif – cat vs. rat –to address the complex nature of the 'victim and perpetrator-hood' relationship. This is further reinforced by the identifiable ex-combatant of the bas-relief as opposed to the predatory cat representing the RUF in the *SierraRat* comic. Arguably, when considering the promotion of reconciliation in both works, the comic motifs provide an alternative reading of reconciliation, one that subverts the general promotion of unity and the Sierra Leonean identity, while the bas-relief addresses the complexities around reconciliation and focuses on the emotions associated with such a situation. Nonetheless, both pieces provide interesting introspective as to the message of reconciliation in post-war Sierra Leone artwork.

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Dalal Turki Alsharif

Living in Survival Mode: Complex Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder in Toni Morrison's Novels

Introduction

Some people believe that what does not kill you makes you stronger. In clinical psychology, what does not kill you makes you stressed, vulnerable, and maladaptive in the face of life's struggles. Humans are social beings that thrive on interpersonal communication for survival. The traumatic disruption of this communication can leave a person with persistent stress. Whether that trauma appears in a hate crime, a sudden death, or childhood abuse, the consequences can be harrowing. Many characters in the body of work by Toni Morrison (1931–2019) have been traumatised. Their distress factors vary from racial tension and child abuse to identity struggle, slavery, and other injustices. Studies have examined the traumatic experiences in Morrison's novels through a post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) lens. However, I have not come across a study that approaches the characters as victims of complex post-traumatic stress disorder (CPTSD), which is a distinct disorder characterised by chronic traumatization that occurs over an extended period. The repetition and inescapability of the trauma are not components of PTSD diagnoses. Thus, many of Morrison's characters can be re-examined from this point of view.

Background

In 2018, scholars identified CPTSD as a separate illness in the World Health Organization's *International Classification of Diseases* (*ICD-11*) (World Health Organization, 2021). This classification was added in response to the significant research published after Judith Herman (1997) differentiated trauma caused by a single incident from trauma caused by repeated episodes. After this classification was added, many scholars re-evaluated some cases that had been diagnosed under other categories, such as borderline personality disorder, anxiety, depression, or even PTSD. Nevertheless, as of this writing, the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* (*DSM-5*) has not classified CPTSD as a separate illness, still listing it under Disorders of Extreme Stress Not Otherwise Specified (DENOS) (American Psychiatric Association, 2022).

The *ICD-11* defines CPTSD as a disorder caused by chronic traumatization resulting from events of a threatening nature. Common symptoms of CPTSD, which are similar to those of PTSD, include reliving the trauma through flashbacks, avoidance issues, negative self-perception, relationship problems, depersonalization, addiction, and self-harm, among others (Vosmer, 2012, p. 499). For a long time, people with CPTSD have been wrongly diagnosed with PTSD because of this overlap in symptoms, and because of the recency of the CPTSD classification. However, despite the similarities in the symptoms, the type of trauma associated with each disorder is unique. PTSD follows a single traumatic episode, such as a rape, a robbery, or an accident. These events usually occur suddenly and unexpectedly. CPTSD, on the other hand, results from long-term relational-based traumatic events, such as those stemming from domestic violence, child abuse, refugee camp situations, and war. Due to the repetitive nature of these events, which occur chronically rather than as isolated episodes, sufferers usually anticipate the traumatic occurrences. Nevertheless, these victims of CPTSD are exposed to an inescapable trauma in which they feel trapped and helpless (Karatzias et al., 2018, p. 177). The following examples

clarify the difference between PTSD and CPTSD: a victim of an isolated rape may experience PTSD, but a victim who experiences repeated sexual assaults, such as someone who has been kidnapped and held prisoner, will more likely experience CPTSD.

This study examines the idea of traumatization in the works of Toni Morrison by examining the traumatised characters in three novels: Bride in *God Help the Child* (2015), Frank Money in *Home* (2012), and Minha Mãe in *A Mercy* (2008). I selected these novels because the idea of trauma in these works is underexplored and because the experiences of the characters in these narratives are more consistent with the factors and symptoms associated with CPTSD. Some studies have explored the symptoms of trauma in these works; some have even diagnosed the characters involved with PTSD. However, I focus on the distinguishing causal factors, which constitute the major difference between a diagnosis of PTSD and a diagnosis of CPTSD because the symptoms tend to overlap. Time plays a significant role in the differentiation.

Based on medical studies on CPTSD, Brewin (2020) described the diagnosis of CPTSD in the *ICD-11* within the context of previous assessments and treatments. He also distinguished CPTSD from other mental illnesses, such as PTSD and borderline personality disorder. Kozlowska (2020) studied the direct relationship between domestic abuse and CPTSD and investigated the degree to which practitioners were familiar with the distinction between PTSD and CPTSD. Additionally, Karatzias et al., (2018) analysed the relationship between negative traumatic experiences, emotional deregulation, attachment instability, and CPTSD. Their results indicated that the most crucial symptom of CPTSD was self-devaluation, followed by suppressing expression and attachment anxiety. Murphy, Dokkedahl, and Shevlin (2018) used the International Trauma Questionnaire (ITQ) to examine hyperactivation and hypoactivation as two separate constructs; they reported that those with higher levels of psychological problems and war experiences met the criteria for CPTSD. Moreover, Dorahy et al., (2013) examined relationship difficulties, guilt, and dissociation among sufferers of CPTSD and found that disruptions in

interpersonal relationships and dissociative symptoms were related to CPTSD. Finally, Vosmer (2012) discussed the use of group analysis for CPTSD and other mental illnesses by studying the common symptoms of CPTSD, such as hyperarousal and avoidance.

Trauma in the Works of Toni Morrison

Traumatic characters and events in the works of Toni Morrison have been well explored. For example, Schreiner (2019) argued that Morrison's *Sula*, *Beloved*, and *A Mercy* show African Americans' suffering and trauma from a generational identity point of view. Schreiner raised the issue of using names to link to roots in the face of a violent and oppressive past. On the other hand, Ma and Liu (2017) examined *God Help the Child* to show that the perception of self for the African American comes from a legacy of racial discrimination. In other words, the trauma that Bride experiences is inherited and generational. Based on a study of the relationship between trauma and fairy tale motifs in *Home*, Visser (2015) asserted that Morrison provides a positive closure to this novel's trauma. Wyatt (2017) on the other hand, proposed that "Morrison's novels show consistently large and compassionate patience for the lingering vicissitudes of trauma" (172). This trauma inhibits some of the characters from forming new relationships or from falling in love again. Finally, Bouson (2005) focused on the interracial violence in Morrison's fiction in general. She illustrated that trauma in Morrison's works results from both single life experiences and prolonged exposure to abuse and danger.

Bride

Morrison's *God Help the Child* opens with Bride's mother, whose real name is never revealed throughout the narration, casting aside self-blame, insisting "it's not my fault" (3). She believes something must be wrong after giving birth to a "midnight black" child whose parents are both dark-yellow skinned (3). Indeed, from

the moment of her birth, Bride is treated like a mistake; her pitch-black skin is a source of embarrassment to her dark-yellow-skinned parents. As a result, she is made to feel not only like a stranger to her family but like an unwanted being in general. Racism stabs so deep that it "lives just under the skin" of Bride from the moment of her birth (Ma and Liu, 2017, p. 19). Because the novel opens with words reflecting shame and guilt, it presents itself as a story of trauma. The more the narration evolves, the more the reader finds that Bride's trauma is not hers alone but, rather, is inherited and generational (Ma and Liu, 2017, p. 20).

Right after Bride's birth, her mother attempts to kill her, "just for a few seconds—I held a blanket over her face and pressed. But I couldn't do that" (5). Their mother–daughter bond is broken after the mother refuses to breastfeed her child. Because of Bride's dark skin colour, her father doubts his wife's fidelity, and ultimately he leaves his newly established family, quitting a marriage that had lasted nearly three years. Seen as a burden and disallowed from calling her mother "Mom," Bride is raised harshly by a strict, single mother who prefers to be called "Sweetness" by her own child. Despite the irony of the name, Sweetness refuses to touch her daughter's skin, which leads Bride to pray to receive a slap or a spanking just to feel her mother's touch. Eventually, she grows accustomed to seeing the look of disgust in her mother's eyes as the woman gives her a bath.

Bride's mother believes she has a logical reason for treating her child poorly, as living in a decent neighbourhood is already difficult enough for a dark-yellow person without a dark-navy-skinned child to complicate matters. Preferring not to attract undesirable attention, she believes that "being that black and having what I think are too-thick lips calling me 'Mama' would confuse people" (6). Sweetness justifies the way she treats her daughter as being part of raising a resilient Black female who can defend herself in a racist society. It is her job as a mother to raise a resilient female who can defend herself in a racist society. She clarifies that she does not feel comfortable about it, but it must be done. "I had to protect her," the mother says, noting that "she didn't

know the world... a world where you'd be the last one hired and the first one fired. She couldn't know any of that or how her black skin would scare white people or make them laugh and trick her" (41). Bride's mother stands as an example of Black minorities who are subjected to the "prevailing" white culture and suffer from "mental colonization," accepting racism as a permanent condition rather than fighting for change (Ramírez, 2017, p. 175).

In school, Bride faces bullies who call her names like "Coon. Topsy. Clinkertop. Sambo. Ooga booga" (56). Children throw bananas at her as they mimic ape sounds. Fearing expulsion from school, Bride does not complain, instead swallowing this "lethal virus" to continue surviving (57). As if she has not experienced enough trauma already in her childhood, Bride witnesses Mr. Leigh, the school's master, raping a young boy. Seeing an adult who is supposed to be a source of protection turn into a source of harm can be confusing for a child. Nevertheless, Bride's mother decides that Bride should not report what she saw to anyone to avoid possibly being expelled from school. Bride feels as trapped and helpless in her skin colour and in her world of adults who treat her badly because of it as she imagines this young boy feels as he is being assaulted.

Bride is given the name Lula Ann at birth; she changes it to Bride after growing up and leaving home. The choice of name represents this transformational stage in her life as she transitions from a dependent, helpless child into a successful, wealthy woman. She enters the realm of the socially acceptable bride, who traditionally wears white (Martín-Salván 2018: 4), as she begins dressing mostly in white, believing it best reflects her beauty. Choosing the colour opposite her skin colour, Bride grows through "the black woman's identity crisis" and reflects on how she wants to be perceived by the white population (Ramírez, 2017, p. 178). Appearance becomes an obsession for Bride.

Bride becomes an entrepreneur, starting a cosmetics company called "You, Girl!" She compensates for the neglect she experienced throughout her childhood by being a successful businessperson. One way or another, she achieves the "radical reversal of her initial position" as a child (Martín-Salván, 2018, p. 2). Bride's choice to

build a cosmetics company, which focuses on outer beauty, stems from the constant rejection she suffered as a child because of her skin colour. The complete narrative can be read as a fairy tale in which childhood rejection turns into social acceptance later in life (Ramírez, 2017, p. 174). As an adult, Bride's relationships with others are determined by her traumatic past. After leaving home, she cuts ties with her mother; she finds sending her mother money from time to time to be sufficient contact. Her attachment to Booker, her boyfriend, is excessive and unhealthy. She treats him like a sponge that sucks up her negative stories from the past. Although she confides in him, Booker senses an imbalance in the level of openness each displays in the relationship and decides to leave her quietly. The sudden, unexpected abandonment devastates Bride and shatters her self-image. "My life is falling down," she says. "I'm sleeping with men whose names I don't know … I'm young; I'm successful and pretty … So why am I so miserable?" (53).

Whether they are unintentionally harmed or victims of outright parental abuse, children still have little control over what they are subjected to by adults. They lack autonomy and authority over their environment. As she grows up, Bride's memory of past traumas begins to work against her. "Memory is the worst thing about healing," she explains (29). The root of Bride's trauma lies in the way she is treated by her mother, abandoned by her father, and bullied by her classmates throughout her childhood. She endures a great deal of pain regarding the parent–child tie that makes her vulnerable to feelings of "fault and blame." The trauma in Bride's life is not sudden but continuous, repeated, and expected. She lives through long-term, inescapable pain because, as a child, she is helpless in her world of adults.

Frank Money

Frank Money in Morrison's *Home* is the son of a poor family who grows up in conditions similar to those under which Bride is raised. Frank tries to survive life's difficulties in the town of Lotus,

Georgia. He often describes his hometown as the worst place to live. "Nobody in Lotus knew anything or wanted to learn anything," Frank recounts (83). The Moneys, despite their ironic family name, live in poverty. Frank remembers his daily life, walking around and eating trash from garbage cans or waiting in line for food donated by churches. As a Black family, they are regularly threatened by the police, as well as by the white community. Their impoverished home does not shelter them from "racial trauma" (Ibarrola, 2014, p. 133). Frank lives a life of fear as "men with or without badges but always with guns" storm in and force them out of their home (9). As a small child, he witnesses the destruction of their home when the whites expel them from their town.

Frank and his sister Cee are both targets of the abusive treatment of their grandparents, whose care they are in when their parents are busy, and both work two jobs. As a result, Frank develops feelings of isolation and betrayal that destroy his relationship with his parents. He is rendered helpless due to a lack of financial means and parental protection. At the age of seven, Frank witnesses a murder of an unknown person in his neighbourhood. "Never lifting our heads, just peeping through the grass," Frank describes, "we saw them pull a body from a wheelbarrow and throw it into a hole already waiting" (4). Dealing with this kind of trauma at this young age causes Frank to become even more terrified of his dangerous surroundings.

After making it through his traumatised childhood, Frank looks for a secure and warm place like home. His life's conditions worsen when he cannot find a job to improve his situation. He sees the army as the only refuge for his misery. He believes it offers an opportunity for a Black man to become involved in a white community. However, Frank finds this is a misperception. "An integrated army is integrated misery. You all go fight, come back, they treat you like dogs. … They treat dogs better," he says (18). Going to war leaves him broken and in agony. His fears increase under the violent threats of harm while at the war, and he is forced to kill people he does not even know. While at war, his two best friends die under his watch, which aggravates his problematic mental condition.

Memory is not Frank's best friend. "Everything reminded him of something loaded with pain" (8). Moreover, Frank is not able to escape the guilt of molesting and killing a little Korean girl. "I shot the Korean girl in her face. … How could I let her live after she took me down to a place I didn't know was in me" (134). He hides the fact that he is not proud of himself from everyone, feeling proud only of his loyalty while grieving over the death of his two friends. "I lied to you and I lied to me. I hid it from you because I hid it from me" (133). Hallucinations haunt him for a long time. His dreams feature blood and body parts. What makes *Home* a trauma story are Frank's repeated dreams about his past. Annoying images of people visit him in his dreams, and events he wants to forget but cannot wipe from his memory insistently return to disturb his peace of mind (Ibarrola, 2014, p. 112).

Returning from war, Frank is not stable enough to go home, so he is sent to what he calls "a nut house" and "the crazy ward" (11). Unlike the way he is treated in the army, the doctors here treat him kindly and ask him to stay away from excessive drinking. Knowing about his sister's problem with the doctor, Frank escapes from the hospital barefoot in search of Cee. At the time, Frank's sister Cee is an unhappy woman married to an abusive husband. Later, Cee works for a doctor who exploits her body for his medical experiments. Frank feels helpless because he can protect neither himself nor his sister from these tragic situations. His attachment to Cee is strong because each of them has needed the other to survive since childhood. Thus, like George Eliot's *The Mill on the Floss*, *Home* addresses "siblings' love, resilience and healing" (Visser, 2015, p. 160).

Home is a survival story about children who grow up in pain, but survive. Frank's psychological trauma can be traced back not only to the negative impact of war but also to his traumatic childhood. As a victim of prolonged, repeated abuse, he lives in fear of moments of terror reoccurring. He connects each present incident, even those only remotely related to violence, to a threatening past event. Since Frank experiences a chronic form of trauma, his intrusive symptoms persist in the form of flashbacks, nightmares, and daydreams as reminders of his childhood experiences.

Minha Mãe

Unlike Bride and Frank Money, who first experience trauma as children, in Morrison's *A Mercy*, Minha Mãe's trauma begins when she is a teenager and continues for the rest of her life. She recalls how, in Angola, their houses are burned down and people are tied together and moved from one place to another. She feels betrayed by the people of her own race, the Angolans who are guarding their own people. "The men guarding we and selling we are black. Their skin was confusing," she observes (191). On the voyage from Africa, in a failed attempt at escape, Minha Mãe pretends to be dead, desperately hoping to be thrown overboard. She considers that being attacked by a shark with its teeth clamped around her body would be more merciful than being held prisoner by white people with their chains tied around her body. Mina Mãe experiences the trauma and suffering of the "African Diaspora," expecting that the future will be dark from this moment forward (Moore, 2011, p. 9).

Minha Mãe is sold to the Portuguese lord D'Ortega to work in the tobacco fields. She and the other slave women are raped repeatedly by D'Ortega's men. Forced to rape the female slaves, the men apologize afterwards. Minha Mãe, entrapped by slavery, feels threatened by inescapable fears, pains, and troubles that she believes will continue for the rest of her life and her children's lives. Any White person has a licence to kill any Black person for any reason. Furthermore, even when they are converted to Christianity, slaves still have no access to heaven. They have access "to grace but not to heaven," the narrator says (116). Fear, though cruel enough, is not the only feeling a person traumatised in this manner experiences. A slave experiences a range of negative emotions, like helplessness and shame. The most devastating of these is the "mental defeat" and the "breakdown of identity" (Shrivastava and Yeldho, 2016, pp. 136-137). Minha Mãe's life seems as meaningless as any Black person's life in the land of the Whites. The traumatic events scatter the essential belief that the world is "meaningful and benevolent and that the self is worthy" (Shrivastava and Yeldho,

2016, pp. 136-7). “I was not a person from my country, nor from my families,” Minha mournfully recalls. “I was negrita. Everything. Language, dress, gods, dance, habits, decoration, song – all of it cooked together in the color of my skin. So it was as *a black* that I was purchased by Senhor” (194).

With the three words “I’ll take her,” the destiny of Florens, Minha Mãe’s daughter, is decided (27). Like Sophie in *Sophie’s Choice*, Minha Mãe must choose one of her children to give to a total stranger. The mother–child bond is terribly broken when Minha Mãe chooses Florens. She repeatedly tries to make her disappointed daughter understand that her intention is to save her from D’Ortega and his men. Minha Mãe feels that by orphaning her daughter, she is protecting her. She views the stranger as providing a better option than D’Ortega. “Because I saw the tall man see you as a human child, not pieces of eight. I knelt before him. Hoping for a miracle. He said yes,” Minha Mãe describes (195). She desperately hopes that this new family will be kind enough to let Florens learn how to read and write and have a better future. This “traumatic separation” between mother and child is “the primal scene of slavery” that is often repeated in Morrison’s works (Morgenstern, 2013, p. 15). Furthermore, not only does Minha Mãe not know who her daughter’s father is, she must decide the manner of separation. “I don’t know who is your father. It was too dark to see any of them. … There is no protection” (191). She must have contemplated many options for freeing her daughter from slavery before deciding to give her away.

Slaves in Morrison’s *A Mercy* are either suffering or recovering from trauma. Katrina M. Szczurek clarified that “to be an African slave woman in the colonies is to be crushed by the entire weight of the brutal hierarchical pyramid of class, race, and gender, which shows no mercy” (Gallego-Durán, 2011, p. 105). A female slave lives in captivity with no hope for escape. The suffering is daily, repeated, expected, and inescapable. The feeling of helplessness and loss of control over one’s life runs through the fabric of this novel. “We never shape the world she says. The world shapes us,” Morrison explains (83).

Conclusion

Despite the overlapping symptoms, the major difference between PTSD and CPTSD lies in the causal factors of the illnesses. Time plays a significant role because PTSD follows a single episode that occurs for a brief period, and it is usually sudden and unexpected. CPTSD, on the other hand, happens over an extended period; it is repeated, so it is usually expected. The three victims of trauma studied herein experience long-term, repeated traumatization. The suffering they undergo lasts for years, during which they feel entrapped with no hope for escape. Time plays a significant role in creating the depth of the trauma. A prolonged, repeated injury leaves deep scars in the human psyche. Such conditions must be addressed, especially since we now have more knowledge about this disorder in clinical psychology. A work of fiction can give us insight into real people's lives. This insight enables us to develop an opinion of a character as a representation of reality, whereby we apply the rules of reality to fiction. Thus, studying a fictional character's problem can raise awareness about the problem in real life.

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Snigdha Nagar

"Funes De Memorious" and *Slaughterhouse-Five*: A Study in the Importance of Forgetting

Introduction

Memory studies traverse the borderland between neuroscience and literary criticism. In recent years, many studies have been conducted on dementia and Alzheimer's – illustrating the era's preoccupation with prolonging its working memory. The cryptic workings of the human mind and how it processes events and experiences have come under scrutiny in almost all fields of study, be it neuroscience or social sciences. With this complex mechanism, ideas, images and sensations are stored, sometimes for a short duration and other times for aeons. Forgetfulness is a normal human response to our finite cognitive ability and limited temporality. Though often dismissed as a vice, a failure or a loss, as British anthropologist Paul Connerton argues in his essay "Seven Types of Forgetting", it is a complex phenomenon with subtle nuances of meaning and implications (Connerton, 2008). My paper discusses forgetfulness as a boon to human cognition, knowledge and even memory. To do so, I have chosen two texts where forgetfulness acts as an absent presence in its central characters who are blessed, or as I would argue, cursed with prodigious mnemonic powers (in the case of Funes), and perfect recollection and perception (as in case of Billy Pilgrim). The paper also examines the idea of forgetting in these texts, and explores how in case of trauma (both physical in the

case of Funes and psychological, in the case of Pilgrim), forgetting is not just a defence mechanism essential to the individual but a social and cultural mandate that helps victims of trauma and injury acclimatise to 'normal' life. Memory helps narrativize human experience by allowing past, present, and future time to coalesce, often in inaccurate ways, to tell a significant story.

Memory and Temporality

Unlike in the case of real life, in memory and literary narratives, it is possible to take creative liberties with time. The temporality of life is unrelentingly linear, whereas, within the scope of a literary text, 'reality' may be more free-flowing and less constricted. Life, as it exists within a narrative, may shift between past, present and future, drawing meaning out of human experiences across time.

> What comes later in a life draws its significance from what came earlier, but only in the dead letter of a narrative can what comes earlier draw its significance from what comes later. Life can be read backward, not forward (Schwarz, 2010, p. 273).

Something comparable is done daily through the medium of memory. The definition of memory as put forth by Bergson in *Matter and Memory* and Kourken Michaelian's comprehensive summation in "The Epistemology of Forgetting" would suggest that though memory is intricately linked with temporality, it is not solely preoccupied with past events.

According to Bergson (2007), memory works like an inverted cone which implies movement and connectivity between past and present. Remembering a lived experience, therefore, often involves an active, dynamic re-living instead of passive spectatorship. Bergson further says that memories descend this cone from the past to the present perception (Bergson, 2007). Individual perception,

therefore, is an outcome of the viewing of the present through the screen of past experience (Bergson, 2007). Our perception, in other words, is always already drawn on a palimpsest of past experiences instead of a blank canvas. Memory, then, becomes a means of connecting our present with our past by drawing significance from one in order to understand the other. Bergson's definition of memory, therefore, implies that an individual's experiences of the past and present are interconnected. The very act of thinking, then, is not possible through pure memory alone but is a mixture of memory of both past and present filtered through human temporality. To paraphrase the famous words of Mark Twain, human perception of events, as well as thoughts regarding them are the result of memory plus time (Willett and Willett, 2019, p. 149). The pivotal nature of time's role in memory is also evidenced in definitions provided by critics besides Bergson.

Kourken Michaelian's definition of memory is somewhat similar to that of Bergson's, although more influenced by neuroscientists like Christopher Cherniak, who view memory as a structured, organised and hierarchically arranged filing cabinet. Retrieval of memory then is a process through which a query is made, and the relevant section of the brain sends forth available and relevant files (Michaelian, 2011). Michaelian's preoccupation is not so much with how the past and present coalesce within memory but rather how recollection and forgetting work in tandem to make remembrance possible. A mind that never forgets would then be like a hoarder's filing cabinet, and searching through it would take progressively longer. Michaelian further says that such a memory system would be unable to fulfil its primary function, which is to produce the information necessary for the present scenario "(1) in manageable quantities and (2) in a timely manner" (Michaelian, 2011, p. 415). In Michaelian's view, therefore, forgetting is not contradictory but rather complementary to memory.

Bergson also talks about the importance of time in his classification of two types of memory - 'image memory' and 'habit memory' – for the latter, time is essential, as the body draws on previously acquired and accumulated knowledge, and for the former,

the time does nothing but distort original images (Bergson, 2007). For both Bergson and Michaelian, therefore, memory gains significance through the framework of temporality.

Taking the ideas of memory stated by both critics forward, the paper draws its central hypothesis. Mnemonic distortions and temporal distance from events lead to a holistic understanding of events and are crucial for acquiring knowledge and perspective. Therefore, the difference between viewing the event in the present and gaining perspective on it lies in achieving distance from it, be it spatial or temporal, or both. Time and its passage, therefore, work as an agent of memory and its understanding and reconstructions instead of impediments.

That forgetting is an essential tool for narrativizing an event, especially a traumatic event, has been hinted at by Bill Schwarz in his essay, "Memory, Temporality, Modernity: Les lieux de me 'moire." Schwarz talks about how forgetting is not just a natural process that helps distinguish the significant from the insignificant experiences but also how often, in case of traumatic or unpleasant past experiences, forgetting is preferable to committing events to memory. Schwarz presents the example of Ursula from *Women in Love* to highlight how the past often becomes a burden on the present, and the future, and oblivion becomes desirable and even necessary to live unfettered in the present (Schwarz, 2010). Just as Ursula craves autonomy from her past, Billy Pilgrim, too, in *Slaughterhouse-Five*, vainly attempts to assuage his past guilt and trauma under the asylum of fatalism. Billy enjoys the freedom to traverse the vast temporal landscape of his life at his own will, which robs him of his ability to look away from his trauma completely. While Billy chooses not to dwell on past events, his temporal distortions, which result from distortions in his psyche, bring him back to the slaughterhouse where he was held prisoner during the bombing of Dresden. For individuals with pasts that are starkly different from their present, the jarring sense of discontinuity often needs to be resolved if one is to survive. Failing to reconcile with the present often puts individuals at odds with their present community, and forgetting is a strategic social response to this problem which helps the individual acclimatise to their current situation.

Memory and Community

Memory is, therefore, inextricably linked with one's social existence. Halbwachs introduces the idea of social memory as providing the framework for individual memory. He theorises that all individual memory is created, preserved, and retains meaning through social interactions and activities. "Despite the fact that it is always the individual who "has" memory, it is created collectively" (Assmann, 2011, p. 22).

Jann Assmann elaborates on this idea by referencing critics and memory theorists, from Halbwachs to Hans Blumenberg, who question the very possibility of individual memory. Assmann posits that the human mind has a tendency to forget those events that are incompatible with the narratives of the present (Assmann, 2011). Assmann references Halbwachs' *On Collective Memory* to show how it is impossible for the brain to keep a record of events that do not fit into the framework of the present day. Memory, then, works through reconstruction. The past is recreated in accordance with the present social reality. "The past is continually subject to processes of reorganization according to the changes taking place in the frame of reference of each successive present" (Assmann, 2011, p. 27)**.** Memory is, thus, not reliable, solid and fixed. Rather, it is fluid and changeable depending on social and political requirements (Assmann, 2011). Change is contrary to the idea of stability and durability, which is longed for by all social groups. For this reason, social groups and communities often attempt to overlook changes so that history may be viewed as a continuity. "The subject of memory is and always was the individual who nevertheless depends on the "frame" to organize this memory" (Assmann, 2011, p. 22). Assmann, like Halbwachs, posits that memory can be individual; however, the community and the socio-political present of an individual do determine how memory is viewed. The ongoing debate between who possesses centrality in the case of memory, the community or the individual, is significant as it determines not just how and what is remembered but also often which parts of history are forgotten and why.

Assmann goes on to consider the merits of this theory put forward first by Halbwachs as it is able to theorise not just memory but also forgetting. If memory depends on social and cultural consciousness for its framework, forgetting happens when specific fragments of the past become incongruous with the now existing structure of social and cultural life.

> Forgetting is explained by the disappearance of these frameworks or a part of them, either because our attention was not in a position to fix itself on them, or because it is focused elsewhere. . . . However, forgetting . . . or the deformation of certain recollections, is also explained by the fact that these frameworks change from one period to another (Assmann, 2011, p. 23).

Since forgetting, like memory, is a social phenomenon, and since one can only understand the past through the referential framework of the present, one's inability to forget might put one at odds with the community surrounding them. Furthermore, it may make the present seem incongruous and jarring and coming to terms with or even attributing meaning to the changed present may pose additional challenges.

For Funes and Pilgrim, despite their extraordinary memory, their enhanced perception of time and space only works to alienate them both from their respective social groups who look at the same events with partial recollection and who reconstruct their past experiences to comply with the present narratives of their lives. Pilgrim's memory is a haunting study of PTSD and wartime trauma. Living all time simultaneously, he is unable to fully reconcile between the two contradictory realities that exist around him – that of the wartime chaos and the peace of mundane everyday life. This makes it difficult for him to establish genuine relationships with those around him who, unlike him, have been able to view the events in linear continuity by overlooking, ignoring or forgetting certain realities of the past. Billy Pilgrim is forced by his acute inability to view time linearly, to view the contrary socio-cultural

frameworks of wartime violence and the calm that preceded and followed it. Whether or not Billy's outlook on life and time are elaborate coping mechanisms, they alienate him from the rest of society. Unable to attribute value to events that generally gain their import through social and cultural context, Billy ends up an exceedingly desensitised individual.

How Does Memory Work in *Slaughterhouse-Five*?

Kurt Vonnegut's *Slaughterhouse-Five* is a critique of war and the trauma it leaves in its wake. The novel contains Vonnegut's take on the ongoing philosophical debate between free will and fatalism. It also contains, according to Lawrence R. Broer, Vonnegut's commentary on the effect the senseless brutality and violence of war has upon a man's soul (Broer, 2012). The refrain used by the protagonist and borrowed from Tralfamadore, 'so its goes,' has often been cited as a fatalist acceptance of the condition of man in war as absurd and pointless. Even in the novel, Billy's own attitude is of one who is resigned to his fate. Furthermore, the war has left him emotionally and psychologically disturbed. Writing upon the palimpsest of all war literature and pacifist literary reactions to the atrocities of the Dresden Bombing and the holocaust, Vonnegut looks back at his experience even though he believed that the very act of recollection was detrimental to one's well-being (Broer, 2012). Despite the risks involved, memory and retelling involve the first step towards healing from experiences fraught with trauma and pain. While Vonnegut seems to hint that memory acts as a hindrance to one's wellbeing, it is altogether too human to remember. This is evidenced through the example of Lot's wife, who was told not to look back upon the suffering of others – "But she did look back, and I love her for that, because it was so human. So she was turned into a pillar of salt" (Vonnegut, 2020, p. 16). Though 'looking back' extracts a heavy price from the individual who re-visits and recollects a memory seeped in grief, it is also something that is 'so human,' that it can ultimately not be avoided.

The story of Lot's wife underlines the idea that reminiscence and nostalgia often come at a cost. The cost could imply the reliving of the pain of which the memory retells or, as in the case with Billy Pilgrim, the loss of the present. While Billy's last name, 'Pilgrim, ' references a crusade towards something holy and pure, his narration and his journey are quite contrary to a pilgrimage. He cuts a sorry figure, often unheroic and docile and not in charge of his own fate. His experience of war, specifically surviving the Dresden bombing by being trapped in a slaughterhouse, leaves him prone to hallucinations. He is convinced that he was the victim of alien abduction, after which he begins to understand his already existing gift of being 'unstuck in time' (Vonnegut, 1999). This means that Billy Pilgrim is able to view his past, present and future simultaneously. Therefore, the novel adopts a non-linear narrative structure that jumps across time and space and yet perfectly encapsulates a retelling of suppressed traumatic events, mental and psychological breakdown, and the sense of alienation and guilt. Despite the apparent advantage that this ability is meant to provide, Billy often chooses to live in certain moments where he is happiest. His emotional and temporal escapism is referred to by a critic as 'childlike ignorance' which stunts his personal growth. Billy becomes an oddity, a comic figure which is a mockery of the iconic American war hero (Gallagher, 2012). Some critics like Broer have, however, focused on the autobiographical element in the novel and discovered that Vonnegut, through his narration, re-visits just the events that Billy attempts to avoid. Broer suggests Vonnegut looks back at the grim realities of war through his characterization of Billy Pilgrim so as to add distance between himself and the events that he recalls (Broer, 2012). Vonnegut demonstrates that in case of trauma, sometimes it is necessary to look back; however, in doing so, he protects himself from the brunt of the past by hiding behind layers of fiction and psychotic hallucinations of alien abduction. The Tralfamadorians who kidnap Pilgrim do not believe in human agency and free will. They believe that moments – past, present or future – are always structured and unchangeable, the only thing people can do is choose ignorance over a painful reminder of their own helplessness. This philosophy helps to absolve Billy Pilgrim and, by extension, Vonnegut of the guilt that he felt for his

own part in the war. Vonnegut's guilt is survivor's guilt as he survives the bombing of Dresden, all the while distinctly aware of belonging to the same side that caused the atrocity. The Tralfamadorians' view of destiny helps Vonnegut, to some degree, to perhaps absolve himself from the responsibility for the death toll that he witnessed first-hand.

Pilgrim's ability to stick to his happier memories has been considered a heroic act, therefore, not for Pilgrim himself but for Vonnegut, who points out the folly in ignoring or forgetting a momentous, if terrible past experience – "Billy …may choose to close his eyes to unpleasantness but Billy's regress is Vonnegut's progress" (Broer, 2012, p. 74). Billy's ability to view the events of his life simultaneously instead of chronologically undervalues the part war played in his life. Billy is able to achieve a degree of emotional freedom from his wartime experience through a fatalistic knowledge of his own temporality – the idea is that war is inevitable and everything that he has experienced has always already happened. Despite Billy's apparent omnipotence, he is far from being the master of his own fate, reality or freedom. Billy's vast perception of his own existence has filled him with complacent acquiescence to destiny.

Arnold Edelstein also sees Vonnegut's vision of Billy Pilgrim as commentary on fatalism.

> [T]he theory of simultaneity of all time and its implication of a thorough going determinism in which man is totally incapable of changing his condition do seem to constitute either an avoidance of responsibility or a metaphysical horror story. . . we are bugs trapped in the amber of an unalterable special display of simultaneous moments that only seem to succeed each other (Edelstein, 1974, p. 128).

Vonnegut suggests that man has no control over the events that transpire in one's life, and even with complete knowledge of these events – they cannot be altered or improved in any way. The novel focuses not on the past but rather simultaneously on the past, present and future of Billy Pilgrim. Due to his ability, Billy is unable

to give his wartime memories years of reflection; instead, he is always already living the war. Billy cannot find peace and acceptance the same way that the author himself does in writing the novel. In an interview, he admits that the act of writing the novel was therapeutic (Broer, 2012). The act of narrating a traumatic past is an act of autonomy, one has no control over the event that is past, but in the retelling, one can, through the use of language, control the structure of the event. This act of narrativization of a traumatic memory would not have been possible for Vonnegut without, first, a certain degree of forgetting, which made the horror of the past less overwhelming and second, temporal distance, which helped him organise the framework of the novel.

The question of how memory functions in the face of trauma is by no means a new one. The same question was explored by Alberto Cacicedo, who explores the role of trauma in Vonnegut's work. Cacicedo points out that forgetting had a significant role to play in the inception of the novel itself. Vonnegut confessed in an interview that "[T]here was a complete forgetting of what it was like[. . .] the centre had been pulled right out of the story" (Cacicedo, 2010, p. 360). Vonnegut's failure to recollect the events of Dresden's bombing inspired him to take up what he believed was the ethical responsibility to open up. This explains why the narrative of *Slaughterhouse-Five* is bookended by chapters that are in the first person. For Vonnegut, this book was autobiographical – a responsibility as well as a conscious step towards healing. Cathy Caruth examines the way 'traumatic memory' behaves as opposed to 'narrative memory', and in doing so, she cites Freud's belief that memory, which is repressed, is often subconsciously re-lived and re-experienced continually. It is only when the memory is retold through language that the passive suffering turns into active cognition and acceptance (Caruth, 1995). While Vonnegut's difficulty in remembering the incidents of the Dresden bombing attests to his willingness to repress trauma, his ability to create the character of Billy Pilgrim and re-visit the historical events of his past through the filter of science fiction and fabrication underlines his own ability to find acceptance.

How Does Memory Work in "Funes the Memorious"?

In "Funes de Memorious", Borges' repeated mentions of the word 'remember' followed by a series of past details and events that he struggles to put together in the narrative helps highlight the disjointed and chaotic images that constitute memory. This also serves as an interesting contrast to the subject of the story – Funes and his own power of memory which is, unlike that of the author, perfect, detailed and unaltered by the passing of time. Thus, the story begins with the author's flawed attempt to reconstruct and reassemble his memory of the character in question as precisely as he can. His inaccurate memory is immediately highlighted at the onset of the story as he cannot even place an accurate time stamp on the events transpiring within the story besides the time of day "an afternoon" and an approximation of the time of year "in March or February" (Borges, 1944, p. 148). All the while, his own flawed memory acts as a foil to Funes' perfect one, further underlining the fact that human memory is flawed, fallible and finite. Borges' story is his own exploration of philosophical themes of mortality, time, and how the human mind constructs meaning out of the experience and conveys it through language.

That time and temporality was an essential part of Funes' extraordinary powers of perception is established during the first encounter in the story. Borges' cousin, Bernarelo Juan Fransisco, asks Funes what time it was and without missing a beat, Funes answers. Funes as an individual, seems even at the start to have an extraordinary innate perception of time. Borges's own limited ability to perceive is highlighted in the fact that he does not find anything significant in this encounter. It was pointed out later by his cousin that Funes was apparently known around the town as an asocial oddity for his exceptional talent of knowing exactly what time it was at any point in the day and for remembering the names of everyone in the town.

Borges then skips forward to the subsequent encounter, which happens three years later when Borges returns to town. Borges' non-linear structuring of the narrative once again sets the ground for a

comparison between the author's memory and that of Funes'. Borges' perception of events is structured in a hierarchical order of 'beginning, middle, and end' and 'most to least significant.' Further, he possesses the mnemonic ability to draw from the wellspring of his entire life experiences, exactly those fragments that pertain to the current retelling. Both these talents we discover that Funes does not possess. Borges receives the news of Funes' accident and subsequent paralysis and that he had a newfound uncanny ability to recall, reproduce and recount perfectly every passing moment, and it produces in him 'an uneasy magic' (Borges, 1944, p. 149). The juxtaposition of the 'magic' of limitless memory with the word 'uneasy' highlights that though infallible memory may appear to be a gift, subconsciously, Borges knows otherwise. On occasions which highlight Funes' extraordinary ability to remember, it is hinted that the normal human response to finite perception and mnemonic powers is not awe but rather anxiety, discomfiture and disquiet.

Funes' infinite ability to perceive provided him infinite mobility across time and space, even as his body is paralyzed by the accident that gave him this very ability. There is a sense of understated irony here that a man who can perceive the mobility and changeability of time with it was rendered physically immobile – his body then became an impediment to his ability to perceive the vast universe that lay outside the four walls of his own bedroom. He becomes a prisoner essentially within his own body even as his mind expands to capture and retain infinite details around him indefinitely.

The final encounter between Funes and Borges entails Funes requesting Borges in a formal letter for a book in order to learn Latin. This episode raises an interesting debate about language acquisition through rote learning and semantic memory alone. Although Funes was handed the most difficult of the texts on Latin, he managed to gain proficiency in the language within a very short span of time simply by storing the words in his mind like a virtual thesaurus. Interestingly, Borges indicates that Funes' ability to remember everything perfectly impedes his capacity for thought. Human cognition for Borges relies heavily on the particular as well as the general and universal. Knowledge is seen as an ability to

make abstract connections between that which is general and that which is universal. Thinking, for Borges, requires the innate ability to sort through memory for essential details while at the same time ignoring insignificant particulars and then putting these together to create new meaning.

Michael C. Corballis states that memory is indeed crucial to language acquisition and use. However, he goes on to state that semantic memory alone is not enough for language – it requires **"**Working memory for sequential production and understanding, implicit memory for grammatical rules, … and episodic memory for communicating personal experience" (Corballis, 2019, p. 1)**.** Since working memory, by its very definition, is temporary, and Funes lacks the ability to forget, it stands to reason that language is not an ability that he should possess. Borges states something very similar when he says that thinking relies on remembering specific relevant ideas while at the same time pushing others to the background. Since Funes is incapable of pushing certain images and observations to the background, thinking is no longer possible for him. "I suspect, however, that he was not very capable of thought. To think is to forget differences, generalize, make abstractions. In the teeming world of Funes, there were only details" (Borges, 1944, p. 154). Borges, of course, contradicts himself by allowing Funes to learn not just Latin but English, French and Portuguese without the capacity for thought. He lives, as Borges points out, in a vertiginous world where he was a "solitary and lucid spectator of a multiform, instantaneous and almost intolerably precise world" (Borges, 1944, p. 153). Reality became for him; in Borges' own words, an indefatigable pressure and his memory became at once both a treasure trove that safeguards every passing moment as a collection of images and a superfluous "garbage heap" that hinders his assimilation into society (Borges, 1944, p. 152).

The author's final encounter with Funes is enveloped in darkness – Funes has gone past the point where he needs light to perceive. His sense of perception has become so encumbered owing to his ability to remember everything; he can 'see' through his mind and memory. Blindless and light actually carry an ironic relevance

for Funes. Ironically, Funes believes that he was blind before his accident, "He told me that before the rainy afternoon when the blue-grey horse threw him, he had been what all humans are: blind, deaf, addle-brained, absent-minded" (Borges, 1944, p. 151). However, the reader notes that it is after the accident that Funes deliberately blinds himself literally and cuts himself off from the outside world. Not only does he lie in darkness frequently, but he also dismisses or ignores things that do not agree with his own perception of time and space. He closes himself off both physically and cognitively to the real world.

Funes' inability to forget also results in his inability to attach social and personal significance to particular spaces and events. Besides temporality, space plays a significant role in memory and forgetting. This can be evidenced by the fact that inhabited spaces provide an anchor for memory, as do the objects around the space. These spaces not only contribute to memory but also to the identity formation of the individual, as in the case of a childhood home, school corridor, first apartment etc. These spaces are laden with social significance, and the idea of permanence, nostalgia and safety offered by them are determined by social factors. For Funes, spaces no longer hold any value as he constantly perceives changes within them. For him, it is the details, the particulars, that take up significance and not the larger idea.

Funes is able to summarise the accident that paralyzed him without a hint of trauma or regret – his focus is more on the minute visuals of the say, like the 'blue–grey horse' (Borges, 1944, p. 151). The influx of sensory perception that he feels on a regular basis makes it difficult for him to distinguish between the inconsequential details and sensations of emotional and psychological import like pain and pleasure. In the case of Funes, the perception of tangible objects supersedes that of the intangible, immaterial and abstract ideas such as pain. The shape of the clouds and the colour of the horse becomes more important than the pain and his own trauma, if any, at his reduced mobility. Funes evades the trauma that a memory of this nature accompanies. This, however, is not because of a mature understanding and acceptance of the events but rather because of his inability to afford the incident its due significance. So overrun is

his mind with details that he has no time to attribute any emotional or socio-cultural meaning to individual incidents. He seems to perceive everything and process nothing.

Funes' death at a young age further indicates Borges' belief that infinite mnemonic ability was an impractical gift that the human body could not sustain for long. The congestion of the lungs, as critics like Donald Shaw and later Jon Stewart point out, is symbolic of his condition as it indicates that Funes' body, like his mind, had become incapable of filtering out the relevant from the irrelevant. Funes' memory does not contribute to knowledge building or prepare him, as is the purpose of memory for future events. This is because, as Jon Stewart points out, for memory to be useful to human beings, it needs to be strategically interspersed with forgetting.

> [O]ne must necessarily sacrifice precision in perception since one must overlook and ignore certain perceptual differences in order to think abstractly. Thus, all knowledge ironically requires ignorance or forgetfulness or perceptual particularity (Stewart, 1996, p. 84).

Conclusion

> Telling stories about the personal past thus turns out to be a most complicated business, sometimes veering towards lies, sometimes veering towards truths, indeed deeper ones than generally meet the eye (Freeman, 2010, p. 274).

Mark Freeman's essay on the memory and narrative concludes with the assertions that the idea of 'truth' and 'lies' within the context of a narrative relies heavily on the tenuous idea of 'reality' which in turn is dependent upon 'the inadequate dynamics of human temporality.' In fact, the reality is continuously being created. By virtue of temporality – the curator of memory has an opportunity to

bring to life the events of the past with newness of meaning. This is very similar to Bergson's own theory of memory. It is ultimately the act of forgetting by the human mind that creates a sense of newness and allows one to look back into past experiences with a fresh sense of cognition and understanding.

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Stefano Rossi

Intrusive Yesterdays: Ghostly Apparitions and the Burden of the Past in Wilfred R. Bion's *A Memoir of the Future*

Born in India on 8 September 1897 and sent to England in 1905 to attend preparatory school at the early age of eight, Wilfred Ruprecht Bion (1897-1979) is one of the most prominent psychoanalysts of the twentieth century. For his being a leading figure of the psychoanalytic panorama of the last century, seldom is his name mentioned in the literary sphere. Indeed, if Wilfred R. Bion is sometimes referred to when exploring the twentieth-century literary universe, most of the time it is in relation to Samuel Beckett (1906-1989), who sought psychological help in 1934-1935, owing to a severe anxiety aggravated by depression. Therapist of Beckett for roughly a couple of years at the Tavistock Clinic in London, Bion is not here considered in his role as a psychoanalyst, yet as the author of *A Memoir of the Future*, a trilogy in which the British analyst retraced the highlights of his life, summarised – though in a chaotic way – his very complicated clinical thought, and recalled his first-hand experience as a soldier of the Great War and as an analyst in the Second World War, during which he worked hard to try to rehabilitate countless British shell-shocked soldiers.

I look here at Bion's trilogy as a work in which the British analyst resurrected and gave new voice to numerous souls that he had encountered and seen die on the battlefield. Discussing thus the direct involvement of Wilfred R. Bion in the global conflagrations

and putting an emphasis on the notion of 'ghostliness', this article sets out to interrogate the recurrent incursion of Bion's gory 'yesterday' into his 'today', a time haunted by innumerable spectral figures that, resurfacing from the gulfs of Bion's traumatised memory, obstruct the subject's natural flow towards 'tomorrow'.

One of the greatest psychoanalysts of the twentieth century, in his very long career Bion dealt with the most extreme cases of mental pathology. This allowed him to map regions of the human psyche unknown even to Freud, as emphatically argued by the US analyst James Grotstein (2000, p. 281). What prompted the British analyst to venture into the most profound and obscure abysses of the human psyche was the devastating impact of the two World Wars, which had shattering repercussions on the human mind at a global level. As data clearly show, the number of soldiers and civilians affected by mental disturbances grew exponentially during the first half of the twentieth century and it was in this gory historical frame that, representing a turning point in the history of mental medicine, psychoanalysis became a beacon for many. Understanding the twentieth-century mind "as one driven to the edge by the traumas of an atrocious history", Lindsey Stonebridge has underscored that the "modern war, the marriage of technology with barbarism [...], has become highly charged emblem of a moral, psychological, and existential paralysis of thought" (2009, Stonebridge cited in MacKay, 2009, p. 204). Within and without the human mind, the world had been torn to shreds and trauma and war neuroses very quickly became a plague.

Among the hundreds of thousands of traumatised selves, afflicted and alienated by the unfathomable violence and brutality triggered by the conflicts, was a very young Wilfred R. Bion. Eighteen years old at the outbreak of the First World War in 1915, Bion enlisted immediately, moved by a fervent patriotism, the same that moved thousands of other young British men. Initially rejected by the draft office, he was eventually able to join the army at the beginning of 1916, and was soon sent to the Flanders Fields. The terrible experience of the war, and especially of the Third Battle of Ypres, from 31 July to 10 November 1917 and, later, of the Battle of

Amiens, from 8 to 11 August 1918, destroyed his psychological stability completely. The descriptions that Bion offers of the battlefield in his war-diaries are destabilising and, not unfrequently, really moving. The war undermined his personality; his perception of the world and of the time of existence was radically disrupted. On the battlefield, Bion lost his psychological integrity and contact with his own self. What his war-diaries reveal quite clearly is a devastated psyche tormented by disturbing memories and ear-splitting cries of pain. Bion's mind is replete with memories of mud, blood, stinking water, mutilated bodies, and images of rotting corpses beside which he was compelled to crawl in the trenches.

In *War Memoirs 1917-1919*, Bion (1997) recounts that, once he arrived at Ypres, what he could hear was just terrific fire and "it had begun to rain – the rain that was to wreck the whole Third Battle of Ypres. The horizon was simply lit up with gun flashes and flares of all colours" (p. 17). Only two months after the conflict had started, "the ground was absolutely torn up, and roads were blown into pieces. No signs of trenches remained at all. The shell-holes were filled with stinking rain water" (Bion, 1997, p. 22). Similarly, in *The Long Weekend*, Bion (1982) remembers the mind-shattering experience of Ypres and disconsolately admits that "the menacing street of Ypres can return to me and leave a strain of foreboding on the brightest day" (p. 124). On this issue, the Belgian psychoanalyst Rudi Vermote (2019) has asserted that, during that atrocious battle, "185,000 soldiers lost their lives only to win two or three kilometres. The front line was a quagmire of corpses, with a small track made of twigs bound together with wire" (p. 214).

Bion encountered death on many occasions on the battlefield; he very well knew what trauma was and he was very familiar with shell-shock disorders. Like for many other combatants, fear became a permanent presence in his days: "fear there certainly was, fear of fear was. The inability to admit anyone produced a curious sense of being alone in company of a crowd of mindless robots – machines devoid of humanity" (Bion, 1997, p. 204). As reported in *War Memoirs* by Francesca Bion, second wife of Bion from 1951, her beloved husband

> had entered the army at the age of eighteen soon after leaving school. He was catapulted, like millions of others, from schoolboy to combatant soldiers in a few months. The horror of that war inflicted on such young men did not contribute to their maturity. It destroyed their youth and made them 'old' before their time. [...] It was clear that war continued to occupy a prominent position in his mind when, during the first occasion we dined together, he spoke movingly of it as if compelled to communicate haunting memories. The nightmare [...] still visited him occasionally throughout his life. He grew old and remembered (Bion, 1997, p. 2).

Faced with the boundless ontological and environmental devastation wrought by the war, the human mind lost its balance. The dehumanising and alienating repercussions of the conflict ruthlessly corroded the psychic serenity of countless subjects, pushed them towards oblivion, and disoriented them in terms of space and – above all – in terms of time. The organisation and temporal sequence of the unfolding of existence crumbled: past, present, and future time merged into a vortex of disconnected and confused images. As the US historian Dominick LaCapra (1998) has put it, trauma places "identity in question to the point of shattering it" (p. 9): the self collapses under the unbearable weight of haunting memories that arise from the traumatic moment. In a mind that has suffered a trauma, the past can become highly intrusive, the present increasingly blurs, and the future loses every sense and possible attractiveness.

This is most likely what happened to Bion, whose inner self seems somehow condemned to what the Italian philosopher and analyst Umberto Galimberti (2017), has suggestively called a 'retrospective gaze' a gaze that paralyses the self in time and relegates it to a dead-end present (p. 304). Besieged by spectral figures that re-emerge from the thick shadows of his tremendous past, Bion's

mind appears utterly unable to get rid of the innumerable reminiscences that hold Bion back and, metaphorically speaking, chain the hopeless subject to a 'yesterday' that is obsessively presentified. Notwithstanding that the British analyst endeavours to embrace his future, he constantly gives the impression of being hostage to an unforgettable past and to the unsurmountable trauma attached to it. As is often the case in several psychopathological disorders, such as anxiety, depression, dissociative disturbances, schizophrenia, within a traumatised mind, "the unity of temporality is devastatingly disturbed: people are frozen in an eternal present in which they remain forever trapped, or to which they are condemned to be perpetually returned" (Stanghellini et al., 2019, p. 350). In the form of a myriad of spectres, the past of a traumatised subject blends with the present and the dividing line between 'yesterday' and 'today' is in danger of vanishing.

Regarded as an incorporeal entity that reappears from the past, the ghost and its phenomenology become thus central to my discourse. Conceived as an immaterial product of one's own disturbed and disturbing memory, the ghost is here understood as the re-*present*ation – or *present*ification – of a traumatic experience which, by means of one's memory, returns, repetitive and highly destructive. Though utterly disembodied, the ghost embodies a heritage that the haunted subject can very hardly get rid of. As Jacques Derrida (1994) pointed out in *Specters of Marx* (1993), the ghost consists in nothing but 'a paradoxical incorporation' (p. 157), an uncanny vision that constitutes the repetition, to borrow Freud's words, "of something familiar and old-established in the mind", "something that ought to have remained hidden but has come to light" (Freud, 1919, p. 241).

By disrupting all the dichotomous categories that are conceived by ontology, the diaphanous figure of the spectre does not belong to the discourse of 'being' of living beings. Due to the fact that the spectre does not respond to any binary category contemplated by ontology – e.g. life and death, presence and absence, embodiment and disembodiment, – Derrida (1994, p. 63), ended up theorising the notion of 'hauntology' a term that finds its root in the verb 'to

haunt', namely to re-appear from the past causing suffering and disorientation in the witness. By shattering the self's coordinates of space and time, the spectral entity makes "the living consider the precarious boundary between being and non-being" (Shaw 2018, p. 1). Given the ambiguous nature of the spectre, its (non-)essence can be grasped perhaps more easily, to pick up on Katy Shaw (2018), by looking at the ghost as a "repetitious compulsion to return" (p. 7). Indeed, by means of repetition, the ghost never allows the subject's past to be disremembered once and for all. The past is continuously agitated; the present is perennially under attack; the memory is constantly at work, it never rests, always about to escape the subject's control and bring to the surface disturbing images and feelings that are intrinsically connected to the traumatic event.

As Shaw (2018) has claimed in *Hauntology*, by questioning any concept of history and any possible notion of pastness, "the specter rejects any solidification of the past" (p. 8). Similarly, Jonathan Boulter (2020) has suggested that the ghost "is always a reminder, a remainder, of a past, of some trace of the past: the shade, while and absent presence, is always a symptom of history" a history that is incessantly re-*present*ed) (p. 190),. The absent presence of the spectral entity brings the subject back to the traumatic moment, whose destructive power is always the same, without ever changing in intensity. It is no coincidence that in *The Long Weekend*, Bion (1982) pointed out that "the old ghosts, they never die. They don't even fade away, they preserve their youth wonderfully" (p. 264). Like a legion of ever youthful Dorian Grays, the spectres that dwell in Bion's mind retain their appearance; intact, they do not fade away. Vivid in the mind of the haunted subject, they do not lose their lustre and, although years roll by unstoppably, Bion continues to remember with extreme clarity. Every attempt on his part to forget the faces of the comrades that died on the battlefield appears futile.

In a transcription of a tape recording of 8 August 1978, Bion quotes 'The Passing of Arthur' by the British poet Alfred Tennyson (1809-1892) and, by mixing images from Tennyson's poem and harrowing pictures of the battlefield, he recounts that,

> 'The faces of old ghosts look in upon the battle', Tennyson said about that last strange battle in which Arthur took part before he travelled on his journey to the Vale of Avilon […]. Once more the world has reached the same kind of place in its journey around the sun which it occupied in the battle of Amiens (8 August 1918), which was said by Ludendorff to mark a black day for the German army. The ghosts look in from the battle again; Asser, Cartwright, and Sergeant O'Toole, the poor fellow who complained that he was only an orphan, with his protuberant ears, his red flushed face, his feelings of depression and anxiety, and his confiding to me that this battle on which he was about to embark together with the rest of the tank crew […] would be his last. He was, of course, quite correct: very soon after the battle started, Cartwright's tank received a direct hit, and the entire crew were killed. When I came across it, the bodies were charred and blackened, and poured out of the door of the tank as if they were the entrails of some mysterious of a primitive kind which had simply perished then and there in the conflagration […] (1992, p. 368).

On the battlefield, in the midst of mud, stinking water, blood, lifeless bodies and agonising selves, the enthusiasm that drove Bion to enlist soon turned into terror of breathing, of being seen and being hit: his was a paralysing dread of being still alive. Like hundreds of thousands of other soldiers, what Bion readily commenced to feel was an impelling need to return home. Nevertheless, once the war was over, he realised that nothing would be the same as before. On the battlefield Bion learned that 'there is no release from that warfare', a suggestive sentence that is repeated three times in the trilogy, once in each volume, as a mantra or a warning for generations to come. As remarked by P.A., acronym for 'psycho-analyst' and one of Bion's alter-egos in *A Memoir of the Future*:

> Had I realized – been compelled by some dreadful wound to realize – that such a belief was nonsense, I would have dodged the danger. Nobody told me – nor would I have understood them if they had – that war service would change utterly my capacity to enjoy life. Are we, even today, prepared to tell our children, or our children's children, what price they would have to pay if they served their fellows? Are we to tell them not to do it, that it might cost them too much? What would it cost them if they did not serve their fellow men? (1991, p. 508).

What becomes clear from these lines is a pervasive feeling of disillusionment and bitter repentance. In this passage Bion notices – with no little resignation – that memories of the conflict never ceased to haunt him. Ruthless and violent, the raw images of the conflicts and the smell of death attached to them never abandon him. As a matter of fact, that the war changed his life and his perception of the world in a radical way is the sorrowful realisation which is often found in Bion's writings.

Focusing now on the second volume of Bion's trilogy, very curiously entitled *The Past Presented*, namely a past that returns obsessively and uncontrollably, it is in this volume that Bion introduces a character named Apparition, "a shattered ghost of a beggar woman" that "slowly becomes apparent" to the sight of Rosemary, one of the main protagonists (Bion, 1991, p. 374). Bion (1991, p. 375) informs his readers that Apparition is "a symptom of a diseased mind", of a mind vitiated by trauma. The vexing result of a 'mental indigestion' (Bion, 1991, p. 375), Apparition bluntly admits that, by re-emerging from the gulfs of the memory of its victim, its primary purpose is to disturb Rosemary's slumbers. To pick up on Freud, Apparition is the inconsistent presentification of an 'uncanny' past that still dwells in the depths of Rosemary's mind.

Persecuted by disembodied and intangible entities that re-emerge from the past and give new life to terrifying memories in the living, a great deal of Bion's characters have to struggle hard

against their evil pasts. Along with Apparition, in *The Past Presented*, Bion gives voice to a large number of other diaphanous entities that populate his mind, comrades that had fought with him on the Flanders Fields. In this respect, P.A. confesses that he is "still penetrated by the memory of brave men whose name did not live for evermore" (1991, p. 396). The men who persecute P.A. are soldiers, a group of dead spirits, whose name has been forgotten, but the memory of their faces remains alive in his mind. According to the analyst, what is left for those who lived long enough to experience the future is just a shattered memoryscape, haunted by a dead 'yesterday' that is still so frighteningly present. Bion (1991, p. 450) observed that, for those that were able to survive the atrocities of the war, it was "the peace that finished them off". The analyst seems here to imply that it was not the conflict itself that destroyed him and encumbered his future: it was the aftermath and the ghostly memory of explosions, of countless corpses on the ground, of aerial bombardments and gas-shells that in fact consumed him, day after day.

In a note to Bion's war diary, Francesca Bion reported that, in the early 1970s, her beloved husband was sorely tempted to read some passages of his war diaries for the first time after almost fifty years. On that occasion, Francesca jotted down that the memories of Wilfred came "flooding back, reinforcing his dislike of his personality and poor opinion of his performance as soldier. He says, '…I never recovered from the survival of the Battle of Amiens. Most of what I do not like of you [MYSELF] seemed to start then'" (1997, p. 198). The experience of Amiens, along with that of Ypres, had broken any sort of link between Bion and his own inner self. It is no surprise that, since then, Bion (1982) used to refer to himself as an "insignificant physical and moral space" (p. 279), persecuted by his past and incapable of proceeding in time.

Among the numerous ghosts that haunt Bion and inhabit his trilogy, there is Auster, a fellow who died on 11 August 1918 during the battle of Amiens. The spectre of Auster is itself persecuted by ghosts: it seems that, in Bion's view, ghosts do not disappear even after the death of the haunted subject. Along with Auster, there are

Keen, Quentin, Cliff, and Stokes. Keen is a ghost of a man whose legs and arms were amputated during the conflicts; Keen remarks: "luckily the last arm did for me – I died" (Bion, 1991, p. 289). The use of the adverb of manner 'luckily' is highly significant in this context. As suggested above, it seems that, for Bion, the fact of dying during the conflict was certainly better than being forced to carry the atrocious memory of the conflict and of the corpses that one saw on the battlefield. As for Quentin, Bion (1991) informs his reader that Quentin is a "modern disguise for the name of a soldier who 'broke down' and never recovered" (p. 652). As concerns Cliff, very likely an abbreviation for Capt. Clifford, he was a dreadful man who lost his life close to Bion and returns to revitalise Bion's memories of the fight. Likewise, Stokes, "a South African, in the days when it was still possible for such a man to fight against oppression" is a ghostly entity that torments Bion's slumbers (1991, p. 472).

If the ineluctable weight of memory does not allow the evolution of the self over time, suicide is presented by Bion as a possible way to silence the deafening voice of memory and an escape route from the futility and tediousness of an existence indelibly marked by trauma. The fact of meditating upon suicide delineates an inability – or strong disinterest – of the self to face what comes next. In *The Suicidal Mind*, the US psychologist Edwin Shneidman (1996) remarked that, being the result of an interior and prolonged dialogue, suicide "is the desire to reduce tension by stopping the unbearable flow of consciousness" (p. 17). Shneidman (1996) assumed that "suicide is best understood as moving toward the complete stopping of one's consciousness and unbearable pain, especially when cessation is seen by the suffering person as the solution – indeed the perfect solution – of life's painful and pressing problems" (p. 130).

Hence, stopping one's own consciousness is the desperate solution for the sufferer who can glimpse no alternative on her/his existential horizon: "pain is the core of suicide. Suicide is an exclusively human response to extreme psychological pain, the pain of human suffering" (Shneidman, 1996, p. 132). It is in *The Dawn of Oblivion* that Robin tells of a companion that, suffocated by the unbearable burden of his 'yesterday', committed the extreme act of self-liberation from the tediousness of time:

> A young fellow who *did* [original emphasis] surrender. It seemed to me he was in a hopeless position and was right to surrender. He never recovered from the discovery that he saved his life rather than die for his country. I knew him when he was a charming young man – little more than a boy – but after his surrender his capacity for gaiety was … well, I can only describe it as 'dead'. He never recovered; he became more and more depressed, introspective and withdrawn till finally he could not stand and killed himself (Bion, 1991, p. 506).

To conclude, when the trauma of the past appears insurmountable, 'yesterday' can spoil the subject's élan vital up to the point of driving the haunted self to ponder the possibility of its own demise. As the French psychiatrist Éugene Minkowski maintained in *Lived Time* (1933), when the past besieges the present, the self's comprehension and organisation of the time of existence is disintegrated. Minkowski (1970) argued that the past very often "does not appear to us as devoid of life; expressions such as 'living in the past' or 'reliving the past' are witness to that" (p. 151). Applying these lines to Wilfred R. Bion, his past is far from gone or devoid of life. As *A Memoir of the Future* and his war-diaries quite clearly reveal, Bion's present is full of dead selves that, metaphorically speaking, breathe, recount, become visible and haunt their victim. Bion's atrocious 'yesterday' is a time that presses – insistently and disturbingly – against the doors of his 'today'. Recalling what Man, a character of the trilogy, says in this regard: "in a mind stuffed with memories, there is room for nothing more". This means that whenever the past obscures the present, 'today' loses its natural projection towards 'tomorrow', time stops, and all turns into obsessive replication.

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Samantha Sechi

Beyond Form: the Subject Embedded in the Flow of a Spatiotemporal Continuity in the Works of Daniele Del Giudice, Peter Handke and Jean-Philippe Toussaint

Introduction

In the latter half of the 19th century, Paul Cézanne proclaimed, "You have to hurry if you still want to see something. Everything disappears" (Handke, 1991, p. 116). This statement reflects the crisis of modern rationalism, which brought about a profound shift in the perception of the world and its objects, redefining their representation in space and time. This change marked the beginning of a new approach to depicting reality. The advent of industrialisation, in particular, destabilised the traditional social order, including the normative systems that had long served as frameworks for understanding nature (Boehm, 1988).

As a result, the subject faced a world with blurred contours, where visibility was no longer anchored in the concreteness of form or in phenomena described as objective or positive. In this context, Gottfried Boehm (1988, p. 11) asserts, "Nature does not show itself, only art makes it visible", suggesting that reality ultimately detaches itself from the constraints of optical principles. This perspective introduces a concept of nature that is more fluid and dynamic than that of traditional aesthetics. Rather than being confined to

conceptual representations, nature finds expression through art, which serves as a novel means of representing the present. In doing so, art unveals aspects of reality that elude conceptual understanding—the contingency of time.

In "The Lesson of Mont Sainte-Victoire", Handke refers to Cézanne as "the teacher of mankind in the here and now" (Handke, 1991, p. 109). The question of the gaze raised by the painter profoundly influenced not only 20th-century painting but also the literature of authors such as Rilke, Woolf, Hemingway, and others, who explored aesthetic questions involving visual thinking or perception as a constitutive principle of literary space. Since 19th-century positivism had alienated reality into a function of knowledge and scientific mastery, Cézanne sought to convey a sense of reality in his paintings according to the concept of "natura naturans" – perceiving nature involved in a process of continuous becoming – by giving duration to the image. The places Cézanne wanted to transpose in his paintings were indeed places endowed with a precarious beauty that risked disappearing. Similarly, the narratives of Daniele Del Giudice, Peter Handke, and Jean-Philippe Toussaint take the perspective of transforming reality, addressing the question of time in terms of duration, in which form develops within a flow of spatiotemporal continuity. In this view, the world becomes an emergent reality that unfolds from the gaze of the perceiving subject, as visual phenomena appear and form in narrative time.

Considering the question of representation as a visual matter involves examining how objects appear within the phenomenal field of the subject. This necessarily shifts the question of visibility from an ontological issue to a phenomenological one. Cézanne now announces the disappearance of objects in light of a transformation affecting the visibility of the subject, since questioning an objectifying perception raises the question of the representability of form, which now loses its materiality. I aim to show that the disappearance of objects does not symbolise destruction but leads to visibility beyond the plenitude of form that enables the object to be considered as inscribed in duration. I thus explore the nature of this spatiotemporal

continuity and engage with different notions of temporality such as historical, experienced, linear and circular time to understand how the object ceases to be represented as a concept in favour of a presentation depicting form in all its phenomenological diversity.

Does the Postmodern Era Symbolise Destruction?

Is the beauty of the world leading to its destruction? Has destruction become an intrinsic element of history? These are among the most important questions Sebald raises in his work "On the Natural History of Destruction" while examining the crisis of memory and transmission of values in post-war Germany. The destruction of German cities at the end of the Second World War strongly impacted German society and literature, erasing any sense of cultural belonging and identity. Due to the violence of these historical events, consciousness in the modern present could no longer grasp past experiences as synthetic units since logocentric language could no longer provide authentic testimony to destruction. Consequently, the reality of destruction was mythologised and implicated in the conflict of "a contradiction between the present, utterly desperate situation and the attempt to incorporate the remnants of a humanist interpretation of the world into a new, albeit negative, synthesis" (Sebald, 2004, p. 70). The inability to find metaphysical meaning in destruction eventually led to a "self-censorship symptomatic of a lack of conceptualisation" making scholars question Kant's transcendental epistemology as well as the concept of a totalising reality that does not consider the contingency of time (Daros, 2020, p. 33). Beauty, in the sense of a harmonious world, inclinces to its dissolution. This is the major conclusion Daniel Payot draws in his work "Après l'harmonie", claiming that the aporia of modern art is the subject of "a split from which we suffer, torn as we are between the phenomenal contingency that our receptive faculties offer us and the formal stability that our active faculties seek to establish, between the receiving world-being that is our sensual existence and the productive world-being that we actualise as beings of understanding" (Payot,

2000, p. 84-85). The subject is thus confronted with an image of a world in ruins, one that has lost its harmony due to a critical stance toward traditional aesthetic and humanistic values that have historically shaped the question of representation and its relationship to time. This critical perspective enables scholars to question the subject's embeddedness in a teleologically oriented flow of history and its relationship to death in terms of duration.

Breaking Free from Historical Time

The novels of Del Giudice, Handke and Toussaint are characterised by indeterminacy, as their characters are marginalised beings who have lost their cultural and historical anchorage. Whether it is Barnaba, who redefines his relationship with the outside world after suffering from blindness and for whom a visit to "The museum of Reims" (1988) produces a reflection on inheritance and the transmission of cultural values, or Sorger, in his desire to appropriate an untouched nature with its "primordial forms" as a necessary endeavour for a "Slow Homecoming" (1979) to the Western world, or the Toussaintian character who, due to his inability to inscribe himself in the flow of time, experiences a fragmented reality leading to "The Disappearance of the Landscape" (2021) – all these experiences are marked by uncertainty vis-à-vis knowledge of the past through which the subject can no longer define himself.

Indeed, for Handke, historical time represents a non-time that breaks with the concept of an identity shaped by historical heritage. For instance, the second chapter entitled "Space Prohibited" of the novel "Slow Homecoming" describes "[...] [Sorger's] return to the Western world [...] as dreamless, [as he were] born into a planet without atmosphere (karst and grotesque emptiness) [...] not alone in the world, but alone without a world; [...] timeless" (Handke, 1979, p. 87). His return to the Western world is mainly represented by dark metaphors associating the catastrophe of the Second World War with "the night of the century", thus with a darkness that is often described as a heavy mass that crushes the Handkean

character. "[His] sense of inexpiable guilt" evokes a feeling of alienation from the outside world that prevents the subject from recognising himself as a descendant of the past (Handke, 1979, p. 36). Consequently, Sorger portrays himself as an externalised being, unable to "take account of time along with the places" and therefore identifies himself with a void deprived of its substance (Handke, 1979, p. 21). Thus, for Handke, identity cannot be understood genealogically and thus not through mere belonging to the history of a culture, just as the notion of spatial belonging is not determined by the inheritance of values passed down from generation to generation. The Austrian author questions the transferability of ideological values that are supposed to apply to all people of a certain culture since these values are timeless and force the subject to recognise himself in a system that has been imposed on him and thus prevents him from developing his individuality. Thus, the Handkean character seeks a "pure" place that he can call his own and explores, in his capacity as a geologist, the Alaskan wilderness and the forces involved in forming the landscape. Only when the subject walks through the landscape does he arrive at an authentic experience of space that enables him to grasp the world as an entity of a constant becoming: "Sorger was buoyed by the thought that the months he had spent observing this wilderness, learning (approximately) its forms and their genesis, had made it his own private domain. Destructive as they may have been (and still were) in the objective world, the forces that went to make up this landscape, in becoming present to him along with the great flowing water, its eddies and rapids, without mental effort, through the perceptive process alone, were transformed by their own laws into a benign inner force, which calmed him and gave him strength. He believed in his science, because it helped him to feel whatever place he was in" (Handke, 1979, p. 15).

Just as the Handkean character cannot develop a sense of time, Toussaint's works are fundamentally characterised by the dialectic between a sense of inner immobility and the incessant flow of time leading the subject irretrievably towards death. Indeed, the Toussaintian character is constantly searching for a moment of immobility. However, this moment of immobility harbours an oxymoronic notion since it does not denote the absence of movement

but the absence of a perspective of movement that divides time into inner and outer time. The subject lives in a present that appears to prolong itself infinitely (subjective time), while in reality, time is continuously passing (objective time). Thus, the subject in "The bathroom", living from day to day in the monotony of an uneventful daily routine, is devoid of any sense of time. The profound "quietude of [his] abstract life" conceals deep anguish that disrupts the subject facing the menacing nature of external time, which leads him, unknowingly, towards the dissolution of the world, and thus towards death (Toussaint, 1985, p. 15). A distinctive feature of the author's narratives comprises implicit references to Pascalian philosophy that shimmer through the lines to evoke linear time as "[...] the natural distress of our weak and mortal condition, and so miserable, that nothing can console us, when we think it over" (Toussaint, 1985, Quotation borrowed from the "Pensées" of Pascal's philosophy in "The Bathroom", p. 87). Unable to feel his presence in the world and constitute himself as a homogeneous being, the Toussaintian character relies on the intermediary of a mirror as his only means to perceive himself as projected in the present. However, the mirror merely gives him a fragmented vision of his existence that figures him as an immutable being: "I observed the surface of my face in a pocket mirror and, in parallel, the movements of the hand of my watch. But my face did not show any sign of change. Never" (Toussaint, 1985, p. 12).

Time therefore becomes an external component unable to reflect the spatial involvement of the subject, which explains the discrepancy between the watch's hand rotating round the dial and the subject's sense of inner immobility. In "The Disappearance of the Landscape", the character further claims "[having] long since lost the concept of time and the idea of chronology, [feeling that he] has been there for centuries, perhaps disembodied, having become immaterial, as he were a simple, acute, painful and agonising consciousness" (Toussaint, 2021, p. 22).

The Handkean and Toussaintian characters both experience existence as a void which deprives them of their substantiality and finally leads to the destruction of all apparent connections with the

past and thus of all cultural belonging crucial to the subject's identity. This destructive dynamic of time renders the image of "[a] night [that] became a solid body pressing against the windowpanes from outside" just as the Toussaintian character contemplates the world outside the window as an immutable reality since "it is still the same landscape that [he] [has] been looking at for months (Handke, 1979, p. 36). The variations are very slight, related to the hours of the day [...], [feeling] the monotony of the hours" (Toussaint, 2021, p. 10-11).

The fact remains that the destructive force of linear time raises not only the question of the visibility of the image but also that of the materiality of objects. Hence, Del Giudice (1988) refers to blindness as a "paralysing fever" (p. 4) that destroys corporeality in "In the Museum of Reims". The novel articulates a certain "urgency of the gaze" as Barnaba's blindness rapidly progresses, creating a tension between the museum's itinerary, which culminates in the contemplation of the painting "The Death of Marat", and the imminence of the moment when the character's sight will be extinguished. Consequently, the character struggles to establish a relationship with the outside world since he experiences blindness as a gradual loss of objects that are about to become blurred and risk disappearing from his field of vision. It is noteworthy that the loss of sight identifies as a material matter since it affects the shape of objects, while the blurring of visual phenomena in space necessarily implies a change in their materiality: "[...] it was precisely the distant vision that was the first to diminish, that quickly blurred, became a kind of indistinct edge, then an indistinct and clear opacity. I felt this opacity, I suffered from it as from a sweat, as from a paralysing fever, as if it were not only a disease of the eyes but of the whole body; [...] But when I come close enough to distinguish the figures, until I [am] almost touching them, I lose the sense of the whole, and if I take a step back, the step which is said to be that of the painter, I can no longer make out the outlines. [...] I know that at any moment I can plunge into complete darkness [...]" (Del Giudice, 1988, p. 7-14).

The fear that the subject's reality might dissolve into blackness pervades the entire narrative, reflecting the anxiety over the imminent disappearance of objects from the subject's phenomenal

field. Moreover, this form of progressive blindness metaphorically evokes not only a change in the perception of space but primarily a change in how the subject relates to objects. Del Giudice defines blindness as a "disease of the whole body" because perception raises the question of form that enters a process of destruction the further the subject progresses on his initiatory journey, just as Toussaint places his characters in a paradoxical state of inner immobility in the face of the destructive force of external time that implies the disintegration of the body.

In "The Disappearance of the Landscape", Toussaint's protagonist is thus paralysed, sitting in a wheelchair in a flat in Ostend due to an accident he cannot remember. Cut off from the outside world, the character lives in a monotony that deprives him of any sense of time, in which "the days follow one another identically" in a present that appears to stretch into infinity (Toussaint, 2021, p. 11). Even more importantly, the character's memory loss becomes an identity crisis that prevents him from recognising himself in the continuity of a historical heritage: "I have no memory of the accident. Was I hit by a car? Or was it a fall? Did I fall down the stairs? [...] I don't know. I have no pain, no physical suffering, but an astonishment – an unshakeable astonishment. I no longer know exactly who I am, who I was, rather" (Toussaint, 2021, p. 9). The Toussaintian character lives from day to day in a monotonous reality, which is external to him as he passively assumes the role of a spectator observing the outside world through his bedroom window. The topos of the window, frequently used in Toussaint's narratives, represents an insurmountable barrier between the subject's gaze and external reality, creating a distance between the two in terms of a radical opposition.

Perception appears a contemplative act as Toussaint questions the relationship to the outside world through a subject who fixates on reality through the window as if he were examining a painting: "My window is a painting [...]. Sometimes I feel as if I am in a museum, staring at this large, immobile painting I have in front of me without being able to take my eyes off it", according to Didi-Huberman's claim that "always, before the image, we are before

time" (Toussaint, 2021, p. 12; Didi-Huberman, 2000, p. 9). The art historian implies a notion of temporality which is abstract, inaccessible and external to the subject, failing to inscribe himself in the flow of a spatiotemporal continuity.

It follows that historical time prevents the subject from understanding reality as a process of constant becoming in which the subject participates, creating a discrepancy between experienced and objectified time. The subject then remains immobile in front of the observed object and is deprived of any possibility of relating to it.

The World after the Catastrophe: Destruction not for the Sake of Destruction

Although the narratives of Del Giudice, Handke and Toussaint acknowledge the destructive force of objectified time since the subject's phenomenal field of view gradually loses its total visibility, they do not insist further on displaying a world that has unravelled, nor do they aim to show that literature has become an instrument for representing destruction.

Del Giudice argues that "for those who started writing in the late 1970s, words [...] seemed like entities already fully explored in all their facets, be it that of foundation, that of deconstruction or that of transgression implemented by a certain nineteenth-century literature. In my opinion, [literature] did not have to try to close the caesurae but, on the contrary, preserve the marks of crisis, the signs of precariousness. There was absolutely nothing to destroy" (Giudice cited in Daros, 2016, p. 9). The imminent disappearance of things, as announced by Cézanne, evokes a certain "urgency of the gaze" since reality appears to metamorphose into nothingness. However, literature does not aim to destroy; this is because, in postmodern times, literature can still represent reality and describe its own time. The difference lies in how literature uses language to narrate the present. In this regard, Handke reflects on the function of arts in depicting reality and states that death or destruction will no longer be

the main subject of his works: "It has long been held that reality means hard times and disastrous happenings; and that the arts are faithful to reality when their central and guiding content is evil or man's more or less ridiculous despair over evil. But how is it that I can no longer bear to hear, see, or read such thoughts? Why is it that as soon as I myself write a single complaining sentence, a single sentence accusing myself or others—unless there's a sacred fury in it!—I literally see red: though, on the other hand, I shall never write about the good fortune of having been born or about consolation in a better world to come. Mortality will always be my guiding principle, but never again, I hope, my central theme" (Handke, 1991, p. 38-40).

Similarly, Del Giudice, rather than insisting on emphasising the limits of the narrative instrument, aims to exploit "the power of an image, its active role [...] [that emerges] from still life. Because these inconsistent remains that are floating around in our heads are capable of action, and it is this capacity for action that [he is] looking for. [...] It means that you can generate action with 'corpses', even if it's not easy, and that's just one of the difficulties you encounter at the border between the visible and the invisible" (Del Giudice, 1993, p. 128). The aim, then, would be to make use of the energy emanating from these images, which the author describes as cadaverous, to create a general sense of how things are.

The same is true of Toussaint's narratives, where the destruction of corporeality not only evokes the destructive force of the flow of time that drives the subject to death but primarily appears as a metaphor for the destruction of materiality that enables the subject to overcome the dichotomy between inner and outer time: "Motionless. Sensitive to movement, only to movement, to the exterior, manifest movement, which was moving in spite of my immobility, but also to the inner movement of my body which was being destroyed, an imperceptible movement to which I was beginning to devote exclusive attention, which I wanted to fix by all means" (Toussaint, 1985, p. 51).

The mortal condition of the human being appears to shape the subject's fate, which he cannot escape, except during moments of complete seclusion in which the Toussaintian character

completely isolates himself from the outside world. Therefore, he prefers to retreat into closed spaces to escape the heterogeneous nature of time. The destructive force of external time is countered by moments of inner withdrawal of the subject, which enable suspension of the dissolution of the body through a counter-time to dynamic immobility.

For Toussaint, the inscription of the subject in duration occurs in a homogeneous temporality, as form unfolds and develops in the time of discourse. The movement of forms thus becomes simultaneous with the movement of time while the subject "takes refuge in the delightfully blurred and regular world that [his] mind constantly offered him, and when, supported by [his] resting body, [he] warmly retreats into [his] thoughts to evade reality" (Toussaint, 1988, p. 31).

Specifically, the works of Del Giudice, Handke and Toussaint depict destruction not only for its own sake but also as a possibility to overcome the conceptual character of form to expand the subject's phenomenal field of view to larger spatial expanses beyond the field of total visibility. Handke thus argues that the purpose of writing is to open the gaze and that the narrative emerges from the places perceived by the subject's gaze: "Indeed, I am very attached to space, place, the meanders of a river, the perspective between two trees. [Whenever] [a] place is close to my heart, a narrative begins. [...] I believe that it is space that creates the phrases [...]" [1].

The aesthetics of narrative take on an anthropological function, as the movement of the gaze and the movement through space occur simultaneously, serving as the driving force propelling the narrative forward. The perception of form is then immediate and embedded in a presence that continuously actualises, since observing the object involves destroying its conceptual character and experiencing the emergence of the form at the instant of its manifestation. The subject's gaze thus participates in the formation of form that unfolds in duration and where, consequently, duration is expressed in terms of spatial extension through the becoming of the form developing in the subject's visual field beyond the form. Consequently, spatialisation becomes a mode of temporalisation, figuring time in terms of duration.

Opening in the Image

To be in the image is to be in the world. Handke conveys this as a message in "The Lesson of Mont Sainte-Victoire", in which the subject projects himself into a painting where the real becomes present. The path around the mountain represents a lesson with a double purpose, as the image adopts a plasticity that the subject can penetrate through imagination while simultaneously questioning the concept of total visibility, which opens to the invisible. Indeed, in the Kunsthistorisches Museum in Vienna, the subject examines the painting "The Great Forest" by van Ruisdael and notes that "the feeling of vastness is reinforced by a peculiarity of 17th century Dutch landscapes: Small as they are – they catch the eye, with their expanses of water, dune and dark foliage [...], gradually begin to grow as one looks at them. The trees stand and grow noticeably" (Handke, 1991, p. 170-171). These resemble the paintings of "The Museum of Reims", which appear to involve the spectator as they "go outwards, embrace one and take you inwards" (Del Giudice, 1988, p. 13). Didi-Huberman claims that the space "[...] [is hollowed out] to become a place of retreat and immediacy that concerns the gaze itself: a looking into [...] as opposed to any object-seeking gaze (a looking at)" (Didi-Huberman, 2001, p. 41). The progression of the narrative simultaneously proves to be a progression into the interiority of the subject, who has freed himself from his body to dive into virtual depths. When the subject triggers imaginary moments, it ceases to fix reality through the window (a looking at) in favour of an inner meditation that connects a sequence of images contained within each other (a looking into). Handkean narratives are enlarged to the point that they step out of their frame and pull the subject inside as if one could walk into the image. Thus, the boundaries between inwardness and outwardness become blurred. The mutual relationship developing between the perceiving subject and the perceived image affects the concept of subjectivity, which becomes inseparable from the perceived object.

Del Giudice ascertains a correlation between an imagination operating in the invisible and the mutation of the nature of the subject, claiming that literature that becomes a visual reality implies the emergence of a way of being from a way of seeing, which leads to changes in the subjectivity of the observer. As Barnaba walks through the museum in Reims, he is guided by a second character named Anne, who describes the paintings to him. Her descriptions are rhythmicised by periods of silence that allow Barnaba to let his imagination run free. The museum visit culminates in front of the painting of the Death of Marat, which experiences a "double death" as Anne deconstructs the absolute and immutable character of the representation of a historical fact while contributing to changing the relationship between text and image. Since language does not serve the image, and vice versa, the sentences provide movement and duration as the image is actualised the moment it is perceived.

Barnaba states, "For him, images belonged to the family of the staging, of dreams and of theatre, [...] but it was always the situation that made him curious, the infinite threads that emanate from the story and make it possible to imagine 'the before' and 'the after', everything that is not in the picture" (Del Giudice, 1988, p. 35). History unfolds in the flow of a spatiotemporal continuity that is homogeneous, beyond any dialectical thinking that contrasts the subject with the object, inner time with outer time or a mental image with an image of reality.

For the character in "The Disappearance of the Landscape", invoking the past remains an impossible undertaking, as memory is fragmented by temporal disruptions that hinder the reconstruction of a linear continuity of past events. At times, narrative passages emerge recalling distant memories that appear to break into the story and superimpose themselves on the present. These are moments in which Toussaint's character manages to "break free from the reality in which he has been stuck for months" through "intense efforts that enable him to [escape] into the imaginary" to free himself from the immobility into which the accident has forced him (Toussaint, 2021, p. 13). It is then "at the edge of memory and imagination [...] that the city of Tokyo suddenly appears [to him], far away in the rectangle of

the window, strewn with mysterious lights that have just lit up on the horizon“ (Toussaint, 2021, p. 15). Nevertheless, this apparition borders memory and imagination, making it impossible to distinguish between reality and fiction. Thus, the subject is suspicious when fragments of memory enter his mind: “These apparitions or visions, these hallucinations, are perhaps only reminiscences of my books, especially the novel set in Tokyo that I wrote here in this room some years ago, [...] distant literary evocations emerging in my wounded, scattered and disconnected memory“ (Toussaint, 2021, p. 15-16). Since the city of Tokyo appears in the rectangle of the window through which the subject views the outside world, the mental image in the form of memories and the image of reality – in this case determined by the field of vision – overlap, becoming indistinguishable. Linear time is then opposed by a counter-time that allows the subject to reconsider and actualise the past in a present moment through visual thinking, which manifests in duration.

However, the evocation of the past is not intended to be a reconstruction of the event through memory but implies another form of return where the subject relives the places of his past from an instant embedded in the present, from which a circular temporality arises. In this case, the return implies a displacement in space which differs temporally from the initial position of the subject.

Fiction and reality become closely related as soon as the narrative no longer aims to represent a reality: It becomes the object of reality. In this case, the narrative describes reality as it unfolds. Toussaint claims the subject is not in reality but in literature. They are in a reality inherent in literature, in the sense not of an objective reality to be contemplated but a meta-reality enabling the constitution of the narrative to be experienced.

Conclusion

In summary, destruction not only symbolises negation of reality or literature confining itself to stating the impossibility of representing the world but also a change in the subject’s relationship with the

outside world in that the disappearance of objects requires readjustment of the gaze. Breaking free from historical time generates an amplified spatiality inscribed in duration that allows the subject to experience space by themself, which is all the more authentic as the recognition of an event already experienced and recalled to the consciousness in terms of a posteriori reconstruction. For Del Giudice, Handke and Toussaint, imagination enables the destruction of the conceptual character of form to open the gaze to wider spatial expanses beyond the field of total visibility. In this sense, destruction is not intended as the disappearance of objects in the subject's visual field but contributes to amplifying reality towards dimensions remaining invisible to the eye. This impression of vastness is created by "a close-up" of the subject's gaze on the perceived object so that the subject's gaze is inscribed in the infinity of detail, resembling a "zoom" function that does not place the viewpoint in front of the perceived object but projects it into its interior.

Thus, the subject, projecting themself into the perceived object, explores a spatial depth and thus participates in form formation. Leaving historical time implies that the subject is no longer in opposition to the external world. They are no longer in front of the image as in front of time but in the image inscribed in duration. The linear character of historical time is opposed by a counter-time in terms of a homogeneous temporality that unfolds in space and inscribes the present in a process of incessant actualisation that conceives reality no longer in terms of a stable ontic but from a perspective promoting phenomenological diversity.

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Lucy Hamilton

De-colonial Temporality: A Stylistic Approach to Countering Discursive Authority

Introduction

My novel, *The Widening of Tolo Highway* (Hamilton, 2022), is an exploration of 'outsideness' and marginality in the globalised post-colonial city of Hong Kong. British protagonist, Anna, returns to Hong Kong, where she lived in 2014/5, to seek out Kallum, a local teenage activist, fearing he has been targeted by a triad gang for his involvement in the pro-democracy protests. It is a story of return; set in 2017, Anna moves through Hong Kong remembering her 2014 experiences and attempting to make sense of them. Focalised from Anna's perspective as she re-explores Hong Kong, it draws on Guy Debord's foundational investigation of psychogeography: 'the study of the precise laws and specific effects of the geographical environment, whether consciously organized or not, on the emotions and behaviours of individuals' (Debord, 2008 [1955]). Revisiting familiar spaces, Anna's memories materialise in the present, prompting her search them for clues of Kallum's whereabouts that she may have previously overlooked.

Post-Colonial Hong Kong Writing

Written and narrated by a British expatriate about a former British colony, the novel is an experiment in de-colonial writing. My writing seeks to disrupt the discursive hierarchies typical of Hong Kong writing by non-native writers such as Martin Booth (2004), James Clavell (1966) and Paul Theroux (1998). My approach is de-colonial in that I aim to represent my protagonist's experience of Hong Kong without positioning her, or myself, as an authority over the space.

Ania Loomba (1998) summarises a typical process that underpins discursive hierarchies in colonial contexts. Loomba (1998) writes:

> [V]ast new worlds encountered by European travellers were interpreted by them through ideological filters, or ways of seeing, provided by their own cultures and societies (p. 72).

Through representation and "translation" of these unfamiliar worlds, the interpreter (character, narrator and writer) assumes authority over the space. This authoritative perspective is characteristic of prominent late-colonial and post-colonial English language Hong Kong novels, which typically depict a protagonist 'adventurer' who 'penetrates and takes possession of lands' (p. 73). This trope is exemplified in Booth's 2004 novel, *Gweilo: Memories of a Hong Kong Childhood*. Booth's child protagonist enters Hong Kong as a bewildered outsider but leaves the novel having mastered the complex social and topographical landscape. The child physically and symbolically 'look[s] down on' (p. 21) local people and places; after occupying various vantage points, such as upper decks of trams, balconies, and The Peak, a symbol of colonial status and grandeur, he sings 'I'm sitting on top of the world' (p. 89), and asserts, 'I knew there were boundaries in life and roughly where they lay' (p. 110). Mapping power structures and societal relationships, Booth reasserts the claimed panoptic authority of the colonial voice.

The relationship between spatiality and authority is also explored by Sarah Mills in her discussion of women's travel writing in colonial and post-colonial contexts. Mills' (1991) points out that such writing is read as 'primarily 'realist'' and that these representations of space are not analysed as 'textual artefacts, but rather as simple autobiographies' generally considered outside of 'critical studies of colonial discourse'(p. 4). It is this critical study of perspective and subjectivity that my writing attempts to foreground; *The Widening of Tolo Highway* should not be misunderstood as an attempt to objectively represent Hong Kong through the eyes of non-native traveller. To avoid this, Mills' prognosis suggests that work needs to be done to foreground the interrogative dimensions of narratives of space by female writers.

Spatial representation can be considered a form of mapping in that 'maps claim to be objective and scientific, but in fact they select what they record and present it in specific ways' (Loomba, 1998, p. 78). These maps, writes Loomba, 'are historically tied in with colonial enterprises'. As Mills' (1991) argues of travel writing,

> The distinctions we make when we 'read' the world are those which society has constructed and instilled in us through representations, and they do not depend on structures in the world. This is particularly true of the colonial and post-colonial period where what the writer 'knows' and 'sees' is determined through large-scale discursive constructs (p. 10).

My novel thus embarks on a deliberate "un-mapping", a foregrounded questioning and disruption of the discursive authority of both character and writer, that aims to prompt parallel questioning from the reader.

It is my protagonist's *inability* to master and "map" the city's complex spatial, temporal and political landscape that drives the narrative. In part 1 of this paper, I outline my stylistic representation of this inability, using dual timelines and a third person narrative perspective to foreground Anna's subjectivity and ignorance. Part 2

discusses how I position the writer as equally ignorant, unable to resolve or validate Anna's experiences and judgements, or to "guide" the reader (either through narrative commentary, irony, or resolution) in their critique.

As Hyo Kim (2008) argues, the 'questioning power' of a text lies in its ability to 'sustain irresolution, escape the logic of representation and ironically absorb and expose the reader's hidden demand for a certain correspondence'. This irresolution manifests at both macro and micro levels of my novel. In terms of the overarching plot, the possible connections between Kallum, the triad member, and an injured boy who recurs in Anna's flashbacks, remain unconfirmed. At a micro level, when representing Anna's perspective, I use stylistic devices to foreground Anna's blind-spots and ignorance as she navigates Hong Kong's cultures, languages and topography. The novel thus invites the reader to question Anna's perspective, without signalling answers or signposting "correct" readings of place, time, and plot.

This careful positioning of writer, narrator, character, thus reflects an attempt to illuminate the complexities, contradictions and impossibilities that underpin representation. The narrative situates the reader inside this interrogative space, in which the *perceiver* rather than the *perceived* is foregrounded. Focusing on empathy, irony and discursive authority, this paper compares elements of my own creative methodology with other literary representations of perspective and discusses their possible effects, particularly in post-colonial spaces.

Narrative Authority and Post-colonial Point-of-view

Roy Bridges (2002) argues that narrator-travellers are 'key actors' and 'opinion formers' who 'produce' different representations 'of places, peoples and events'. As Patricia Johnson (2010) writes, 'the scapes that emerge … affirm status' by implying that the narrator is 'competent, able to judge the other, [and] certain' that they know

'how to risk, negotiate, manage and translate other cultures'. It is this notion of representational competence that I wish to challenge in my narrative.

Roger Fowler's outline of narrative point-of-view is illuminating in a post-colonial context, particularly with regard to the writer. Fowler (1977) writes:

> In the novel, there may be a network of voices at different levels, each presenting a distinct mode of consciousness: the I-figure narrating, the characters, the implied author who controls both narrator and characters, and who often takes a line on them (p. 76).

His description of discursive 'levels' and authorial 'control' points to an implied hierarchy. This hierarchy not only concerns the relationship between the narrator and character (whose 'mind-style' may be represented by the narrator (p. 103) but also with the status of the creator, and her positioning of these figures in the reader's mind. The status of both character and writer are symbolically important in my novel, as both are British expatriates trying and failing to "make sense of" the topographical, political, and inter-personal landscape of a former British colony. It is de-colonial only if the narrative foregrounds this failure and thus negates the implied elevated status of character over space, narrator over character, and writer over narrator.

Part 1: Deauthorising Protagonist

Foregrounding Anna's subjectivity was a primary concern when deciding between a first person and third person narrative framework. On one hand, it is important that the reader empathises with Anna enough to reflect on her interactions and experiences. Paul (2017) has linked the 'cognitive understanding of empathy' to first-person narration whereby the reader has 'another person's first personal perspective, or some salient part of it, subjectively

presented to [them]' and thus 'understand[s] some dimension of what it is like to be that person, or how that person understands a given situation'. First person narration, he argues, thus provides 'a distinctive sort of understanding and the ability to make certain ethical and moral judgments' (Paul, 2017). At the same time, however, in my novel this 'understanding' is potentially problematic. In the sense that empathy 'motivates tolerance for alien points of view', it may lead readers to 'tolerate' or overlook potential flaws in Anna's perspective (Paul, 2017). For this reason, the reader's empathy for Anna must be carefully regulated to avoid naturalising Anna's judgements.

Third Person Distance

To encourage the reader to question Anna's perspective, I opt for a third-person narrative framework. In this way, Anna is always 'she', a character in a novel, as opposed to the 'I' of a travel writer, whose gaze might be less inviting of de-colonial critique. While Anna focalises the narrative, guiding the reader to see the setting and action when she sees it and the past when she remembers it, the third person structure distances the reader. Where the travel writer scrutinises the object or place, the third person perspective positions Anna herself as the object of scrutiny. While the narrator still adopts salient features of Anna's mind-style, the third person framework upholds a critical distance between reader and the space as Anna sees it.

This is exemplified in the following scene: upon returning to Hong Kong, Anna takes a taxi past the site of the 'wishing tree', where in 2014 she and her mother had participated in the ceremony of throwing oranges into its branches. In the memory, Anna's mother 'marvels at the tree' and exclaims, 'I'm amazed the weight of them doesn't kill it!'. The narrative proceeds:

> It had. This one was plastic. But they [Anna and her mother] had pretended it was real (Hamilton, 2022, p. 250).

This third person framework foregrounds Anna and her mother as subjective perceivers. Where a first-person rendering of this memory: 'This one was plastic. But *we'd* pretended it was real' would encourage the reader to empathise with Anna and to see the tree as she does, the third person narration presents the tree and Anna as side-by-side objects. The reader sees Anna pretending, in contrast to sharing the pretence. While both styles reveal that the tree is fake and that Anna is idealistic, the first-person perspective encourages the reader to adopt Anna's idealism, whereas the third person perspective encourages the reader to notice and critique this idealism.

Narrative Duality

Another central component of my methodology is an unnerving duality of narrator and protagonist, produced by an apparent "layering" of perspectives. This duality is similar to what Pascal (1977, p. 25) has called the 'dual voice' produced by free indirect discourse, 'in which both the narrator's and an experiencing character's point of view appear to be present (Bray, 2007). However, while Pascal (1977) refers to a 'subtl[e] fusing' of these two voices, whereby 'vocabulary, sentence structure, and intonation' reflect two perspectives 'simultaneously' (p. 26), in my narrative, the distinction between these two voices is more rigidly upheld. This section discusses stylistic methods that reinforce this duality, and its particular importance in Anna's descriptions of setting and people.

This duality is established temporally in the novel's dual timeline. As Anna re-explores the space she experiences *déjà vu*-like flashbacks, where the past appears to materialise in the present. The interplay between these two perspectives is illustrated when 2017-Anna revisits the neighbourhood of a family she used to work for and remembers the first lesson. Watching herself as a character inside these materialised memories, 2017-Anna[1] critiques her past

1 - Here onwards, I distinguish between '2014-Anna', which refers to narrative representation of Anna's point of view in 2014, and '2017-Anna', which refers to the character when she has returned. 'Anna' (without the time-marker) refers to the character in general.

actions. For example, remembering an awkward handshake, the narrator reflects:

> Anna watches herself stick out a hand, wishing she hadn't (Hamilton, 2022, p. 166).

Here, 2017-Anna cringes at the handshake; her present critical perspective indicated through the phrasal verb 'stick out', which suggests she sees the action as clumsy. The temporal structure thus enables the present character to "see" and thus critique her past self.

At the same time, this sense of self-critique simultaneously manifests in the experiences of 2014-Anna. Coloured by the thoughts of her 2017-self, the version of Anna inside the memories seems to feel as self-critical as 2017-Anna watching the memories. This is illustrated in the previous example. While it is 2017-Anna who actually 'watches' the handshake, in the subordinate clause it could be either 2014-Anna or 2017-Anna 'wishing she hadn't' given the handshake. Such dual-self-critique is common in these remembered scenes.[2] For example, in the following memory, 2014-Anna demonstrates her Cantonese to Kallum, a native speaker:

> '*And at the school, I ask the children, "djo-mae-ahh?"*'
>
> *[Anna] hears herself bragging and wishes [Kallum] would stop her. But he laughs again and says it properly. She's glad she doesn't copy* (Hamilton, 2022, p. 46).

Again, it is unclear whether is it 2014-Anna who is 'glad' that she manages to control her bragging, or 2017-Anna who is 'glad' that she didn't continue to embarrass herself. As these memories are the products of 2017-Anna's imagination, her present cognitive state colours the imagined "thoughts" of characters inside them.

2 - In the novel, longer passages of 2014-Anna's point of view are italicised, and I have maintained this typeface within this paper for clarity.

The dual-temporality, in addition to the slightly distant third person narrator who appears to watch-over 2017-Anna, facilitates a layering of critical perspectives. This layering is exemplified in a scene where 2017-Anna 'watches [2014-Anna] move tentatively across the drive towards the houses'(Hamilton, 2022, p. 166). This moment captures 2014-Anna's caution about visiting a new family along with her uncanny "awareness" of being judged by the present 2017-Anna, who is simultaneously watched by the third person narrator. The reader thus experiences: (1) the narrator watching Anna; (2) 2017-Anna watching 2014-Anna; (3) 2014-Anna's self-consciousness. In this narrative space in which neither protagonist (past or present) nor reader can settle into a single, stable perspective. Situated in this uncomfortable space, the reader is encouraged to be equally introspective, questioning not only Anna's perspective but also their own.

Part 2: Deauthorising Writer

The Problem of Irony

In addition to signalling the limitations of the protagonist's perspective, my methodology also aims to disrupt the authority of writer. This centres around my interrogation of the typical structures of narrative irony, in which the writer is typically positioned as omniscient and implicitly "superior" to character, narrator, reader. Focusing on narrative "levels" that produce or enable this irony in third person narration, the following section outlines my approach to destabilising this typical hierarchical relationship. Firstly, it is important to distinguish between 'the concept of verbal (or rhetorical irony) and its literary extension narrative (or structural) irony' (Butler, 2016, p. 52). My focus is on the latter variation, in which the writer guides the reader in their critique or judgement of the character.

In third person narrative (particularly free-indirect style), there are typically four distinct levels of awareness. The "lowest" two levels, which comprise the 'dual voice' of free indirect discourse can be understood as the character, who participates in the action (reflector), and the heterodiegetic narrator, who accesses and represents the character's thoughts (Pascal, 1977, p. 26). Bray (2014) writes that this second voice can 'be posited to exist 'on a higher level' to the character, suggested by the "birds-eye-view" it offers (p. 349). As Muecke (1969) outlines:

> [I]rony is a double-layered or two-storey phenomenon. At the lower level is the situation either as it appears to the victim of irony (where there is a victim) or as it is deceptively presented by the ironist (where there is an ironist). At the upper level is the situation as it appears to the observer or the ironist (p. 19).

This is illustrated in the commonly cited example of narrative irony, the opening sentence in Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice* (2003 [1813]): 'It is a truth universally acknowledged, that a single man in possession of a good fortune, must be in want of a wife' (p. 3). Here, the narrator voices this 'truth' precisely to highlight the distance between the characters who firmly believe it and the more ambiguous reality.

The third level is occupied by the reader, who, to detect this irony, must notice 'some kind of opposition between the two levels, an opposition that may take the form of a contradiction, incongruity, or incompatibility' (1969, p. 20). The reader is encouraged to uphold the hierarchical relationship between the character and narrator, navigating any disparities between what the character "thinks" and what the narrator "knows". Bray (2014) thus argues that it is, at least in part, the reader who creates this 'dual voice', based on their 'pragmatic interpretation of textual elements' (p. 349). Emmott (1997) similarly argues that 'narrative processing' is largely determined by the reader's 'weighing [of] probabilities' rather than by 'decoding a text by a process of rule application and deduction' (pp. 164, 174).

The final level is occupied by the writer, who must make assumptions about the reader's cognitive processing of the character and narrator duality in order to produce an effective narrative. These four levels: (1) character; (2) narrator; (3) reader; (4) writer, are represented hierarchically in the graphic below.

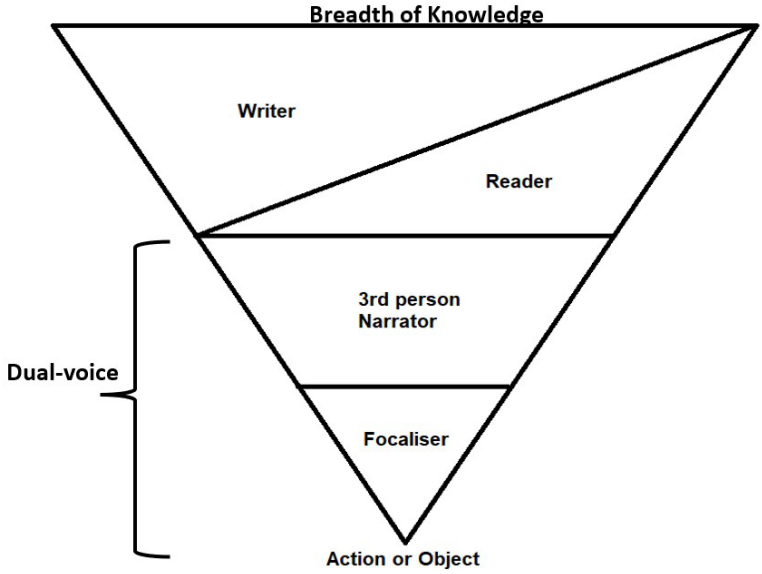

Figure 1: Hierarchy of focalised 3rd person

It is this layering that underpins the distinctive tone of third person omniscient narration which, as Pascal (1977) claims, 'may be heard as a tone of irony, or sympathy, of negation or approval, underlying the statement of the character' (p. 26). Each of Pascal's tones depends upon each layer having a broader understanding than the layer below it.

This may be understood hierarchically:

1. A character has limited access to a "truth";
2. The third person narrator "voices" this ignorance through the 'personalized aspects of a character's subjective expression' (Brooke, Adam and Graeme, 2017);
3. The reader detects this 'tone of irony ... by the skilful disposition of the context [or] tone of voice' (Brooks, 1976);
4. By orchestrating the reader's interaction with textual elements, concealing or revealing incongruities between victim and ironist according to the reader's assumed ability to detect them, the writer comprises the highest level of awareness.

This hierarchy functions similarly if the text elicits 'negation or approval' of the character's thought or action (Pascal, 1977); guided by writer, the reader adopts an authoritative stance to judging the extent to which the character can be blamed or excused for their ignorance.

This hierarchical layering is illustrated in the classic example of free-indirect style: Chopin's 'The Story of an Hour' (1894). When the protagonist, Mrs Mallard, receives news of her husband's death, she mourns briefly, before retreating to an upstairs room to reflect on her newfound sense of independence and freedom. The majority of the narrative is comprised of Mrs Mallard's self-reflection. In the end, however, she is confronted with the truth: her husband is still alive, the shock of which kills her. Chopin's careful positioning of character and narrator guides the reader to recognise irony at specific points in the narrative while eliciting various responses, which may range from sympathy to condemnation of Mrs Mallard's naivety.

Following Mrs Mallard's initial period of mourning, Chopin's (1984) free indirect style immerses the reader in the protagonist's world view:

> There would be no one to live for her during those coming years: she would live for herself. There would be no powerful will bending hers in that blind persistence with

> which men and women believe they have a right to impose a private will upon a fellow-creature. A kind intention or a cruel intention made the act seem no less a crime as she looked upon it in that brief moment of illumination. And yet she had loved him — sometimes. Often she had not. What did it matter! (p.49).

Here, the character's mind-style colours the third person narrative. The narrator thus voices the internal contradictions and self-corrections ('she had loved him – sometimes. Often she had not.') and reckless exclamations ('What did it matter!'). The character's short-sighted perspective is juxtaposed with the perspective of the more "distant" narrator. Capturing Mrs Mallard's flawed belief that she is experiencing a 'moment of illumination', the narrator is implicitly aware that this experience, built on a false-truth, is precisely the opposite. While the reader, like Mrs Mallard, does not learn to truth until the story's climax, Chopin invites the 19th Century reader to begin to recognise the Mrs Mallard's limited perspective and either sympathise with or critique her assessment of reality.

The narrative hierarchy is reinforced when protagonist and reader are confronted with the "truth" that it has all been a mistake and that Mr Mallard is still living:

> Some one was opening the front door with a latchkey. It was Brently Mallard who entered, a little travel-stained, composedly carrying his gripsack and umbrella. He had been far from the scene of the accident, and did not even know there had been one. He stood amazed at Josephine's piercing cry; at Richards' quick motion to screen him from the view of his wife. But Richards was too late. When the doctors came they said she had died of heart disease — of joy that kills (p. 49).

While the passage begins from Mrs Mallard's limited perspective, uncertain of the 'some one' who is opening the door, the scope widens when Mr Mallard's identity is revealed. By confining the reader to Mrs Mallard's limited point of view and then shattering this perspective, Chopin forces the reader to experience the gap between character (victim of irony) and ironist. The reader is thus invited to retrospectively recognise the layering of perspectives that has underpinned the entire narrative.

Post-colonial Irony

In a post-colonial context, narrative irony is a particularly effective strategy for challenging dominant perspectives. By highlighting the limited perspectives of characters who occupy or have occupied positions of societal or discursive authority, irony is frequently used to invite an immersive interrogation of these perspectives. This is exemplified in Toni Morrison's *Beloved* (1987), set in Ohio around the American Civil War, which tells the story of Sethe, a runaway slave, who is hunted by her former master. In Chapter 16, Morrison (1987) shifts between narrated action and the free-indirect representation of a slave owner thoughts. In the following examples, Schoolteacher, the slave owner, is the ironic subject, whose flawed perspective is voiced by the narrator:

1. 'Caught red-handed, so to speak, [the runaways] would seem to recognize the futility of outsmarting a whiteman and the hopelessness of outrunning a rifle.' (p.85)
2. '[The runaways] unhitched from schoolteacher's horse the borrowed mule which was to carry the fugitive woman back to where she belonged…' (p.85)

In example 1, the verb 'recognize' denotes Schoolteacher's belief in an apparently objective truth (the 'futility' of a slave's attempt to outsmart him). Similarly, in example 2, the suggestion that the fugitive slave 'belongs' with the slave owner denotes

Schoolteacher's racist belief. Recognising the gap between these beliefs and reality, Morrison positions the reader to navigate and condemn slaveowner's ignorance. Morrison's use of narrative irony thus effectively subverts colonial discursive power-structures, where the slave owner is positioned at the bottom of the narrative hierarchy constructed by the writer.

In my novel, however, as a British writer, writing about a former British colony, my methodology aims to show the limited perspective not only of the character but also of the *writer*. The use of narrative irony would therefore be antithetical to my methodology, since it depends upon the writer occupying the highest level of the narrative hierarchy, having access to a "truth" of which the character is ignorant. As a British writer navigating post-colonial Hong Kong, my narrative aims to avoid positioning the writer as able to represent this space with any authority. In the final section of this paper, I discuss my stylistic methods of negating narrative irony and structurally representing my own limited perspective.

Countering Irony

While my narrative foregrounds Anna's limited perspective, as writer, I do not presume to know the degree to which her understanding or space, place and culture is limited. My novel is de-colonial only if it demonstrates that the writer is equally as ignorant as the protagonist. Where in *Beloved*, for example, Morrison uses irony to highlight the slave owner's incorrect judgements and beliefs, I refrain from signalling whether or not my protagonist is incorrect in her readings of place and time. I encourage readers to *question* Anna's point of view, without offering answers.

This unguided questioning is exemplified in the following scene in which Anna remembers when she and her mother encountered a begging monk:[3]

3 - The italicised text represents the memory itself, before the use of regular typeface indicates a return to the present when 2017-Anna reflects on her 2014 perspective and actions.

> *Anna … sees her mother double-glance at a brown-robed figure sitting cross legged on the pavement. A wooden bowl is resting in his lap, out of the way of clumsy pedestrians. Soon, they will walk past him, and Anna knows that her mother will stop to give him something, and not yet familiar with the currency, will give more than she intends…*
>
> *'Real monks don't beg,' Anna intervenes.*
>
> *How does she know that?*
>
> *She thinks for a second. Someone had told her.*
>
> *But in the space that followed, Anna too begins to question. She had believed it straight away, without challenge, committing it to memory for future use. Repeated out loud, it sounded ridiculous.*
>
> *Real monks don't beg. And Anna had lapped it up. Though it might have been true, she is ashamed to have dispensed it without first checking her facts. But she insists, her mother listens, and she insists on it again. She cannot lose on this detail; it is such an insight.*
>
> Anna realizes now that she still has not checked and probably never will. She can only hope it is true because, in the end, she gave him nothing and, on her advice, neither did her mother (Hamilton, 2022, p. 116).

In this scene, there is no signposted truth. While 2017-Anna observes 2014-Anna 'believ[ing] … straight away without challenge', 2017-Anna 'still has not checked'. The statement can only be judged as possibly incorrect; the reader is told only that 'it might have been true' and that 2017-Anna 'hope[s] it is true'. While the reader may judge Anna for not 'checking her facts', this passage does not indicate that the writer knows these facts.

This scene is representational of the relationship between character, narrator, writer and reader throughout the novel, and is mirrored in the denouement. While Anna believes she has solved the central mystery of the story, the connections she has drawn between characters remain unconfirmed, and the story ends with Anna and reader questioning the extent to which she has 'forced them together, weaving their lives into a story they'd never read' (Hamilton, 2022, p. 251). Like Anna, the reader makes assumptions and deductions about places and people in an attempt to construct a coherent plot and progress towards resolution, but which remain ultimately unconfirmed by the writer.

Conclusion: The Self-conscious Space

Experiencing two subjective perspectives, 2014-Anna and 2017-Anna, and with limited guidance from the writer, the reader is left to navigate Hong Kong for themselves. Like Anna, the reader occupies a self-conscious space of both searching and self-critique. If de-colonial writing is centred around a questioning of perspective and representation, the power of my methodology is its ability to establish a space for this questioning. The success of my methodology will, however, be determined by the novel's reception. I outline my stylistic experimentation so that, in relation to this reception, components of my methodology may be evaluated.

Other innovative methods of representing Hong Kong as an elusive and unique space are exemplified in Dung Kai-Cheung's experimental fiction-theory hybrid, *Atlas: The Archaeology of an Imaginary City* (2012), as well as novels by Xu Xi (*Unwalled City*, 2001; *Habit of a Foreign Sky*, 2010; and her more recent metafictional work, *The Man In Our Lives*, 2016) and Janice Y.K Lee (*The Piano Teacher*, 2009; *The Expatriates*, 2016), among many others. Each of these works uniquely interrogates the effects of globalisation, de-colonisation, repatriation and localism on Hong Kong space, psyche, and writing.

This paper does not, therefore, aim to be prescriptive or suggestive of how a writer should approach post-colonial writing, nor is it a comprehensive stylistic analysis of the novel. By targeting perspective and discursive authority, this paper naturally overlooks other considerations such as aesthetic choices and unconscious qualities of style. My hope is only that, by highlighting the possible effects of certain stylistic choices, namely point-of-view and narrative irony, on the implied authority of character, narrator, reader and writer, I can make a positive contribution to de-colonial critical and creative writing about Hong Kong and other post-colonial cities.

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Orazio Maria Gnerre

Multiculturalism and Cosmopolitanism: Two Faces of the Same Coin?

Introduction

"Cosmopolitanism" and "multiculturalism" are words we often identify in public discourse and political debate. They have been heavily loaded in moral terms, so it is difficult to discuss them in an objective way. However, it is necessary to do so, in light of their influence on contemporary society, as well as their modern ancestry, which therefore influences the age in which we live. We must realise how these two terminologies reflect the needs of a political and social nature, that is the duty to create models of coexistence in a historical era that requires the rapprochement of different peoples and human groups. If certain forms of ecumenism and grouping were in place already in the epochs in which some peoples developed the capacities sufficient to build vast geographical empires, modernity has created the words to appeal to social phenomena with their names, producing debates on the best way to ensure certain developments in associated life. Obviously, however, whenever an attempt is made to define a common ground for dialogue through specific terminologies and languages, a mechanism for evaluating words comes into play that informs and determines them according to specific interests and categories of thought. It thus becomes important to also consider the order of the language that expresses a word, understanding how it fits it into its logical structure and what are the value

premises that must be considered. Thus "cosmopolitanism" is not a neutral concept, but must be considered in its effective use. We can, in our opinion, trace two preeminent meanings, as we will see in the next pages. We must also confront it with the question of "multiculturalism", in order to understand to what extent these key words of world coexistence are compatible.

Globalisation or Globalisations?

That of "cosmopolitanism" is a concept that, in recent centuries, has had a great importance in the political and moral discourse of the Western world, and which today has extended its relevance to the whole globalised world. The beginning of the question, placed in terms of modern political discourse, is frequently traced back to the dissertations of Immanuel Kant on coexistence between peoples and the best way to set up international relations (Kant, 2003).

When we talk about cosmopolitanism, there are values and principles of an ethical and moral nature which it is impossible not to take into account, especially in relation to all the philosophical questions raised by the phenomenon of globalisation. The problem in question, like the most significant ones today, is that of international coexistence, but can it also be posed in terms of "how should one live in the contemporary globalised world?". Beyond this, the question of cosmopolitanism raises, since it was born from the human mind, profound questions about the political and institutional systems that govern peoples, about the moral limits that should be imposed on territorialized political authorities, without mentioning the concept of nation and of its link with its radicalization in chauvinism, on the place that identities assume in a globalised world, and – last but not least – on the goodness of the globalisation process. But even in this case: what kind of globalisation are we talking about? Since also in this case there are no specific definitions or models of planetary development and international relations in a completely interconnected world whose skies are

indiscriminately ploughed by the satellites of many states which, on the one hand, share tables and discussions in international organisations, and on the other hand are often competitors on the economic, military and worldview levels.

Just to give an example: in 2017, Chinese President Xi Jinping gave a speech of capital importance to understand the contemporary world and the values at stake during the Davos forum (Xi, 2017). In this speech he highlighted how China, one of the most important political actors in the present context, is more than favourable to globalisation, and also to market globalisation. Nonetheless, it sees globalisation first and foremost as a necessity that develops from the evolution of technology, in a relationship similar to that between structural foundations and superstructural outcomes in Marx's thought (Marx, 1970), which influences the guiding ideas of this country, and unlike the moral-idealistic approach to globalisation present in the American public discourse.

"From the historical perspective, economic globalisation resulted from growing social productivity, and is a natural outcome of scientific and technological progress, not something created by any individuals or any countries. Economic globalization has powered global growth and facilitated movement of goods and capital, advances in science, technology and civilization, and interactions among peoples" (Xi, 2017).

Beyond that, China proposes a highly structured vision of globalisation, unlike that oriented to the values of the West, a globalisation in which the role of states, in their plurality and decision-making autonomy, can control both centrifugal phenomena at the political level and centripetal ones at the economic-capitalist level.

"The point I want to make is that many of the problems troubling the world are not caused by economic globalisation. For instance, the refugee waves from the Middle East and North Africa in recent years have become a global concern. Several million people have been displaced, and some small children lost their lives while crossing the rough sea. This is indeed heartbreaking. It is war,

conflict and regional turbulence that have created this problem, and its solution lies in making peace, promoting reconciliation and restoring stability. The international financial crisis is another example. It is not an inevitable outcome of economic globalisation; rather, it is the consequence of excessive chase of profit by financial capital and grave failure of financial regulation" (Xi, 2017).

It goes without saying that, in a confrontation between Xi Jinping and a Western decision-maker, we would have had very different visions and proposals about globalisation, influenced by the specific idea of international coexistence that has been formed in the West over the centuries and among its ruling classes. Indeed, to be completely honest, probably a European leader and the President of the United States, even if linked by the promotion of the same globalisation project, will have very distant ideas on the values that should guide globalisation.

This example, set in the present era which is that of advanced globalisation and its contradictions, was necessary to show two things: the first is the plurality of ideas that exist in relation to the "cosmopolitan" coexistence of peoples, and how these derive from long-standing political and cultural traditions from which it is impossible to disconnect. They form part of us as the foundation of the order of speech, and form the meanings of words and their perception. The second, on the other hand, is how, despite the globalisation of the world, the economic interdependence between the productive areas of global value chains, the establishment of international organisations and the sharing of peaceful and humanistic values worldwide, there is always a gap between us and the achievement of a substantial cultural levelling of humanity, since irreconcilable differences, ideological characterizations and the desire for autonomy persist among human groups.

Indeed, in a certain way this model has shifted to a more pervasive level today: in the face of an implosion of the boundary between "inside" and "outside" which in modernity constituted the dividing line of political units, this fragmentation of identity it has become ubiquitous, and we can find it in what remains of classical statehood.

The dissolution of the modern state and its clear boundaries has brought about the emergence of new forms of identity that constitute real bubbles of belonging in contemporary society paradoxically fragmenting even more what was a scenario already torn to pieces (Bauman, 2000). In other words, the discordant view of what globalisation should be and how one can be authentically cosmopolitan is part of humanity's irreducibility to a single point of view. You can find common languages and shared words, but they will always be loaded with different meanings by their receptors.

Cosmopolitanism as a Linguistic Problem

Furthermore, the problem of cosmopolitanism is also of a terminological and linguistic character. The use that is made of the term changes according to the context, and can have completely different nuances, which can lead to error in who uses it, coherently or instrumentally, or who opposes it. This type of question actually arises for all modern political labels, in line with that principle defined by the English thinker Gilbert Keith Chesterton the "logomachy", or rather the clash within the political arena over the meaning of terms, considering the words as bearers of an intrinsic meaning and not confronting themselves with the context in which they are pronounced or with the tradition of thought that expresses them (Chesterton, 2017). We will therefore try to get out of this scheme to understand the polysemic nature of the term and the plurality of its uses. Secondly, we will try to compare it with "multiculturalism", another contemporary political project that lives in the same tension between signifier and meanings.

What cosmopolitanism actually is is difficult to understand from the origin of the term in question: famously, the roots of the word derive from ancient Greek, and include the term "κόσμος", world or universe, and "πολίτης", that is citizen. It is clear how this concept can be interpreted as the idea of world / universal citizenship. A "cosmopolitan" is usually understood as one who interprets himself as a citizen of the world. The question of world citizenship

cascades down a whole other series of problems, of a political and philosophical nature, on what a πολὶς actually is, which is the name that the ancient Greeks gave to the city, meaning by it the concept of state, and on what it means, from the ethical point of view, to belong to a universal brotherhood that includes all humanity – in the whole cosmos, hyperbolically, not even just the planet earth.

We therefore see that two main doubts arise: one about the state and one about national belonging. We are used to seeing these two problems as intertwined, since modernity has placed before us, as a politically relevant example, only that of the national state. In other words, we have been made difficult to confront with examples of multinational states, stateless nations, and other interactions between these two conceptual models. Obviously there were political entities different from the national state model, but very often they drew some important structural elements from it. For example, the Soviet Union was designed to be a federation of republics, to which Lenin had simultaneously given autonomy from the Tsarist imperial rule. Thus, the Soviet Union developed a hybrid model between the multinational state and the federation of states (Tewatia, 1975). An analogous federal principle (although obviously guided by completely different ideas and practices) that was present among some founding fathers of the European Union, which against some ideas of state unification which also existed in the political underworld of the time, decided to proceed to a federation through economic unification. As the epigones of European federal thought recall – think of personalities like Altiero Spinelli– in reality the leap from economic unification to political federation has not even happened, despite the existence of the political decision-making centres of the European Union (Spinelli and Rossi, 2017). Contemporary China, instead, identifies itself as a multinational state (Duara, 2011). However, beyond the Chinese case and that of socialist Yugoslavia, in the Soviet and European cases we see the persistence of the structure of the national state, even in the face of political experiments so different from those of the West that they still generate debates on their sorts (Raffass, 2012).

Nationalisation, Cosmopolitanization, Modernization

In his text on the meaning of Europe, the sociologist Zygmunt Bauman asked himself the question of the complex relationship between national identity and national state, coming to the conclusion that the national state has been the model with which effective national identities present on extended territories which have been levelled or even cancelled, in the name of a uniformity in line with the rationalisation of modern life (Bauman, 2003).

"Shortly before the outbreak of the last world war, in my native country, Poland, a census of the population was brought. Poland was then a multi-ethnic society. Some areas of the country were populated by an unusual amalgamation of groups, ethnicities, religious beliefs, languages and customs. The goal of reshaping this amalgam with forced conversions and assimilations in order to obtain a homogeneous or almost homogeneous nation, along the false lines, let's say, of the French model, was perhaps strongly pursued by a part of the political elite, but it was a far cry from being universally accepted and from being sought in a coherent way, a project far from completion.

As is normal in a modern state, the census takers had been trained to think that every man or woman surveyed had to correspond to a nation to which they belong. They were given their instructions to ask every subject of the Polish state to declare their national affiliation (today we would say: their "ethnic or national identity"). In about a million cases the census takers failed to get an answer on this point: people questioned by them simply could not grasp the meaning of words like "nation" and "to have a nationality". Despite the pressure exerted (the threats and a truly titanic effort to explain the meaning of "nationality") the citizens surveyed stubbornly continued to give the only answers that made sense to them: "we are local", "we are from this place", "we are from here", "this is our land". Eventually those in charge of the census had to give up and add the entry "locals" to the official list of nationalities[1]" (Bauman, 2003, p. 15-16).

1 - Translated from Italian.

A rationalisation, needless to say, which derives in all respects from the principle of standardisation that was affirming itself at the production level with the industrial revolution and the machinization of the world. This type of process, unifying and standardising, on the one hand lived in a technical-utilitarian dimension, but on the other hand had aims of an ideological nature. If on the one hand it served to constitute territorial political units which would then have had to embark on the struggle against other national entities in phenomena such as colonialism, imperialist conquest and power politics (the Bismarckian *weltpolitik*), on the other it was often justified according to cosmopolitan principles of a historicistic nature. With the birth of the idea of "civilization" expressed in the singular, some states embarked on what were colonial enterprises claiming to be obliged to do so by the moral duty of leading peoples considered backward at a higher stage of social development. Likewise, this principle was also exercised in imperialism and in chauvinistic conflicts, when it was believed that some nations, formerly belonging to the same concession as the Christian peoples, were actually less civilised and barbaric. An example above all is the image that the Germans assumed in the eyes of Europeans during the First World War (and before of it for the British), where they were compared to the barbarian hordes of late antiquity and had therefore lost the status of civilised people.

"Kipling's pejorative use of the term "Hun" appears to have been intended as a response to Kaiser Wilhelm's infamous pronouncement. It certainly signaled his shifting antipathies during the early phase of the Anglo-German naval race. (As did the British generally, he had prior to the turn of the century focused his ire on the traditional enemies, France and Russia.) [...] As Paul Fussell observes in *The Great War and Modern Memory* of the "gross dichotomizing" characteristic of wartime propaganda, "home-front hate" was generated during World War I by British periodicals such as *John Bull*, which "coined the term *Germ-huns* and was fond of speculating whether the enemy was human"(Matin, 1999, p. 433).

This type of approach was obviously omnidirectional, and many political and state forces made extensive use of it.

Through a dominant historicist interpretation in the West, the idea of civilization as a universalistic point of arrival took hold and, although everyone filled it with their own model and meaning, it legitimised certain forms of political violence. The fact that in the era of imperialism and power politics the Western world was in agreement on the intrinsic finalism of the idea of civilization, but used this concept as a weapon against its adversaries, explicitly demonstrates that agreement on the importance of cosmopolitanism is not enough to actually produce a cosmopolitan condition. Perhaps it is starting from this borderline case that the conflictual element should be investigated as a consubstantial possibility with politics, as expressed by thinkers such as Carl Schmitt (2007) and Julien Freund (1983).

Of course, the nineteenth century produced other cosmopolitan hypotheses, such as that of Immanuel Kant (2003), who hypothesised the pacification between nations on the basis of mutual recognition. Nonetheless, the evaluative option prevailed, according to which every people had to be tested in their openness to the achievement of a common world civilization. If he had not been considered worthy, as the bearer of values and principles dissonant with a certain idea of civilization, he would have had to be brought back to reason and order with the tip of the sword and with the aid of the cannon. Paradoxically, the colonial idea of the "white man's burden" was based on concepts considered cosmopolitan: the inhabitants of the colonised regions, according to this idea, had to be inculturated and civilised in order to one day participate in the associated life of a humanity considered "superior". In fact, it is precisely in Kipling's famous poem that we read how the task to take on would be to force colonised peoples to progress: "Take up the White Man's burden — / And reap his old reward: / The blame of those ye better, / The hate of those ye guard" (Kipling, 1899).

There are some interesting pages in the work of Carl Schmitt, the German political thinker and jurist, in his book "The Concept of the Political" (2007), where he investigates the idea of "hostis

humanis generis", which translated from Latin means "enemy of humanity". He explains how the historically determined production of a natural law idea of modern Western man is closely linked to interventionist practices. He, well in advance of a similar reflection in the circles of the critique of capitalist globalisation, also said that this ideological complex would correspond to the moralistic justification of the expansionism of market society and of imperialist appetites. All this, in his opinion, had its origin in a fundamentally optimistic anthropological conception that had developed in modern Europe, according to which the differences between men, the possibility of conflict between groups, and therefore politics itself understood in the classical sense, they are all accidental phenomena and had no place in the fundamental nature of the human being. All these negative elements, according to these thinkers, would arise from accidental facts, and if the human being were deprived of the evil institutions that govern him they would in fact cease to be. By saying this, Schmitt reminds us, the division between inside and outside collapses, which is the very basis of every political argument, since politics start from the acknowledgment of differences. It is logical to derive from this principle the idea according to which, since there is a single moral law, the whole world can be unified through reason. Any element of dissonance with respect to this considered natural view of things should therefore simply be smoothed out. From this point of view, obviously, every people or social and political group that does not configure itself with its own idea of morality is necessarily considered an "enemy of humanity", and no longer as a simple political competitor with whom to confront as equals. The opposition to him takes place in a climate of crusade for the advancement of a portion of the world into universal morality. In other words, the citizens of a specifically determined state must be made citizens of the world.

What about Multiculturalism?

Is this option actually compatible with multiculturalism? Within the order of Western political discourse, cosmopolitanism and multiculturalism are often presented as two sides of the same coin.

"Multiculturalism is an attractive and persuasive notion. It suggests a human being whose identifications and loyalties transcend the boundaries of nationalism and whose commitments are pinned to a larger vision of the global community. To be a citizen of the world, an international person, has long been an ideal toward which many strive" (Adler, 2002).

Accepting one's origins seems to be a necessary step to subsequently become part of a moral unit that marries the same values and the same ways of life. If previously this type of approach was permeated by a thin veil of racism, heir to the idea we mentioned earlier of the "white man's burden", today it is argued that every original element brings richness to the world cultural dimension. If the intent is that of starting from different cultural bases to reach homologating results, however, the point of arrival does not necessarily prove to be the same, considering the increasingly profound fragmentation that is being expressed in our societies, in which it is not possible to identify a minimum common denominator to unite the population around a functional political idea. We live immersed, in other words, in what the Italian political scientist Damiano Palano (2020) has defined as "bubble democracy", a condition in which one is only apparently administered with the tools of classical representative democracy: in reality, public opinion is strongly divided from its interior between non-communicating group identities.

When the distinction between internal and external ceases to exist in political reality, and the pluralistic nature of confrontation between groups is abolished, the result is the explosion of the possibilities of cultural grouping within global society. This was the reflection of Zygmunt Bauman himself on

what he identified as "liquid identities", ephemeral belongings that are substantiated on secondary elements (sometimes for example cultural fashions or lifestyles) and which can be easily dismissed and reconstructed, in the absence of robust regulatory systems (Bauman, 2000). Often this dimension, when associated with ethnic origins, is called multiculturalism.

The question that should be asked, however, on the basis of the semantic meaning of "multiculturalism" is how much it can be associated with the multiplicity of ethnic origins existing in a given society, or how much it means rather the coexistence of different cultures. Obviously, also in this case the definition is neither simple nor univocal, since it depends on the interpretation of the person communicating the concept, and on those characterising elements that we talked about previously. Even its most authoritative promoters often understand that "multiculturalism" can hardly be considered a complete political doctrine (Parekh, 2000). However, if we were to understand multiculturalism with this second meaning, the one according to which it represents the coexistence of different cultural models, we must record how it cannot coincide with the cosmopolitan idea supported in contemporary times in the West. In this sense, multiculturalism would rather derive from the recognition of different ways of structuring thought, language and life, what we commonly understand as "cultures". The rigidity of the descriptive limits of cultures, nor their combinative impossibility, is necessarily inscribed in this distinction between cultural models, which can be by the way strong or weak. Rather, there is the attestation, or promotion, of the multiplicity of cultures.

Another Way: the Federal Cosmopolitanism of Giuseppe Mazzini

On the other hand, however, it would be too simple to assert an incompatibility between cosmopolitanism and multiculturalism, given that we have just taken note of the discrepancy that exists in the interpretation of these concepts. In this sense, we must note that

history has also produced multiculturalist interpretations of the concept of cosmopolitanism. One of these, for example, was that of the Italian radical thinker Giuseppe Mazzini, according to whom cosmopolitanism was the idea of love between peoples, who recognized that they were brothers in humanity.

This type of approach, close in many ways to the categories of Christian thought, did not conflict at all with the principle of belonging and cultural differences. Mazzini was in fact not only a thinker of cosmopolitanism, but also a thinker of nationalism (Mazzini, 2009). He was a staunch supporter of the European nationalist uprisings of the nineteenth century and took part in them.

"If by cosmopolitanism we mean brotherhood of all, love for all, lowering of the hostile barriers that opposing interests create for peoples, separating them, we are all cosmopolitans. But affirming this truth is not enough; the real question is how to practically obtain its triumph against the league of governments founded on privilege. Now, that "how" implies an order. And every order demands a specific point from which to start, and a specific end to which it aims. For a lever to operate, it must be given a foothold and a point on which its power is exercised. For us that first point is the homeland, the second is collective humanity[2]" (2009, Mazzini cited in Albertini, 1979, p. 32).

In his federalist idea, only by recognizing his own cultural ancestry could one proceed to a universal brotherhood on a federalist basis, where this brotherhood would not have abolished cultural differences at all, but would have preserved and enhanced them in a model that today we would define as "multiculturalist" and not "monoculturalist". To be precise, according to Mazzini, universal brotherhood was not possible without the recognition and preservation of the multiplicity of cultures. Monoculturalism would have been the outcome of a form of homologating chauvinism that he rejected, but also of spurious forms of cosmopolitanism (Viroli, 1995).

2 - Translated from Italian.

All this stemmed, in Mazzini, from an anti-individualistic vision of politics:

"The essential defects that the Italian revolutionary and patriot ascribes to individualism are utilitarianism (criticism of Bentham is frequent) and materialism, incapable, in his opinion, of founding both the notion of sociality and the notion of political obligation. An individual completely closed in his interests has implanted "selfishness in the soul": he will not only place himself in a "perennial struggle" with others, but will make the political edifice unstable because, too educated to look after his interests, he will become unable to think and work for the common good[3]" (Greco, 2021).

Mazzini's critique of the international despotism of certain states was based on the same principle as his rejection of a cosmopolitanism that would have denied diversity: both these phenomena would have annihilated, for the Italian revolutionary, the genius of the individual expressions of life of peoples.

Conclusion

Therefore, when asked about the interrelation of the concepts of cosmopolitanism and multiculturalism, the answer is not clear-cut: we reiterate the importance of the interpretation of the terms in question.

The concept of cosmopolitanism is by its nature elusive, and difficult to define univocally. Even if it is not possible for us to do this, we can easily learn the lesson of the Italian political theorist Giuseppe Mazzini, according to which one can distinguish between the interpretations to be given to this term. This may or may not lead us to accept his vision of relations between peoples, but it certainly makes clear the need to clarify and then take any kind of political decision or take a cultural position.

3 - Translated from Italian.

It is in this distinction between the meanings that we can insert a well-founded comparison with the concept of multiculturalism, which assumes great importance in this historical period, given the speed and magnitude of the encounter between different cultures, and the need, even if only practical, to found a paradigm of coexistence. It therefore becomes necessary to take a step back and question the terms and their meanings before using them in a superficial and potentially dangerous way.

To conclude, we return to supporting the importance of examining the objective outcomes as well as the terminological roots of the socio-political terms we use today, often lightly. Words, it is said, are never innocent, and their misuse often generates conceptual confusions whose repercussions, in the twenty-first century, can be global.

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This paper collection delves into the complex relationship between memory, crisis and cultural identity across various historical and geographical contexts. Through diverse scholarly perspectives, this book explores how cultural heritage, rituals and narratives shape and are shaped by moments of crisis and transformation. It examines the significance of spatial exploration and pilgrimage, the impact of media in war and conflict, and the power of artistic and literary expressions in reconciling past traumas. “Memory, Crisis and Culture” invites readers to reflect on the impact of the past on contemporary cultural practices and societal structures. This collection is essential reading for anyone interested in understanding the profound connections between memory, culture and the human experience.

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