STUDIES IN HUMANITIES
CONFERENCE PROCEEDINGS
FALL 2022

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TITLE- CONSTRUCTING WOMEN AS A SUBJECT : GENDER AND DEVELOPMENT POLICY IN POSTCOLONIAL INDIA

BAVNEET KOUR

Bavneet Kour, Doctoral Research Scholar, Jawaharlal Nehru University, India

ABSTRACT

"The state is a site of contestation not only between different groups, of elites or underclass, but also different views of masculinity and femininity"- Blackmore 1989

In most nations, gender acts as a structuring principle of nationalism. The moral agency of women is deeply espoused within institutions like family, religion and the state. In India, this idea of culturally superior, 'ethical woman' was elevated to the extent where gender and questions around structural inequality became a site of nationalist silence (Chaudhari 1996; Singh 2001; Arya 2008). Further, development planning and policy post-independence was established as an authoritative, technicist domain residing outside of politics. This de-politicisation exercise, however, was directed at attaining deeply political objectives. "To evade central political questions about gender inequality and other notable issues", development policy, as Chatterjee rightly puts it, "was to be kept out of the squabble of politics" (Chatterjee 1997, 280). Treading beyond the conventional questions of impact, assessment and implementation within policy studies, this paper posits how feminist research must focus its attention towards the 'meaning making function' of policies and their centrality in social construction of groups. Using the tool of critical discourse analysis, the proposed paper will examine how policy proposals in postcolonial nations reinforce gendered categories and create new subjectivities around femininity and masculinity. In this vein, development policies become gendering practices that have considerable discursive and material impact on the lives of targeted women. The paper substantiates this claim by employing the case of Education, Healthcare and Employment policy in post-independent India. Through a discursive study of the Integrated Child Development Scheme - the biggest healthcare policy in India (also the world's largest community-based programme), the Balika Samridi Yojana - a prominent educational scheme and; the STEP scheme- it illustrates how policies create subject positions that shape interpersonal interactions and gender relations on the whole. Denouncing the traditional approach in policy studies, the paper achieves this by underlining the deep-seated interrelation between policy and politics using the category of gender. The role played by national political institutions and agencies along with women's movements (often connoted as state feminism) and, international economic organisations like the World Bank becomes crucial in this regard. Drawing from frameworks of Frank Fischer and Debora Stone in policy studies and poststructuralist and governmentality theories, the central purpose of the paper is to illuminate the politics of (presumed gender-neutral) development policies in postcolonial India and their subjectification effects in constructing/defining women as a policy category.

Keywords : Development Policy, Postcolonial state, State Feminism, Critical Discourse Analysis

GENDER AND DEVELOPMENT DISCOURSE IN INDIA POST-INDEPENDENCE : THEORETICAL UNDERPINNINGS

The two major periods in the Indian development trajectory can be described as - the period of state-directed planning post independence and, the 1990s shift towards a Neo-liberal economic policy. While the former was based on the Nehruvian socialist development strategy; the latter was concerned with an open economy with increased private ventures. Describing post-independent India, Nayak alluded to the triumvirate of socialism, planning and autarky (as cited in Spary 2019, 27). Development became the defining feature of post-independent India; in the words of Chatterjee, "a constituent part of the self-definition of the post-colonial state of India (Chatterjee 1997, 277). The developmental state literature in India focusses on various aspects of national development, state capacity and state efficacy in implementing development policy and augmenting national growth. In this vein, scholars have categorised the Indian state as either 'soft' (Myrdal 1968), 'weak-strong '(Rudolphs '1989), 'embedded' (Herring 1999) or 'pluralist with dominant propriety classes' (Bardhan 1990). However, none of these classical works have shed light on the gender-biased nature of state institutions, let aside development.

Chatterjee examines how nationalist leaders visualised the domesticity of women and their cultural values as symbolic of the superiority of India as opposed to its colonial counterpart. Women's subordinate status or unequal gender relations thus remained out of the purview of 'national development' (Chatterjee 1989, 236). While the pre-independent planning debates saw the senior nationalist leaders supporting progressive stances about gender equality, Chaudhuri notes how the debate almost disappeared in the post-independent context (Chaudhuri 1996). In 1939, a sub-committee was formed as a part of National Planning Committee to highlight Women's Role in Planned Economy (WRPE), devise a path for future planning and locate women's position in planning in India. Though the committee prepared a detailed report concerning women's issues like property rights, civic and economic rights, issues of dowry and widowhood; the report was completely overlooked by the Planning Commission while preparing its first blueprint for planning in India.

With the 1990s shift towards a Neo-liberal economic paradigm, there were debates about whether the liberalisation reforms were partial and 'incremental' (Harris and Corbridge 2000), achieved by 'stealth' (Jenkins 1999) or' insufficient '(Srinivasan 1993). Yet others questioned the very claim about withdrawal of the state and pointed towards the subtle (seldom notable) interventions by the state post 1990s. Gupta elaborates on the collation of post-colonial regulatory state practices and Neo-liberal practices post 1990s (Gupta 2001). He illustrates how Neo-liberal 'governmentality' involves subtle forms of state intervention and state penetration into the society with the help of its normalising techniques. The best exemplification is provided by the population control policies post 1990s. Using the case of Integrated Child Development Scheme (ICDS), Gupta notes how the Indian state has attempted to "control population growth rates by paying attention to the quality of population" (Gupta 2001, 109). While making his case for state surveillance as imbued in its processes of data collection and regulation; in other words, in the 'disciplining' of Anganwadi workers by the bureaucrats and the targeted women by the former; one can analyse the implicit reflections in his work on the 'invisibility of women in official documentation' (emphasis mine). In his ethnographic account, Gupta mentions plainly - "almost any type of record kept by the state-land titles, school records, bank accounts, postal savings accounts, electricity connections, loans-all recorded the name, age, residence, and sometimes caste of the father...Since women were less likely to attend institutions of formal learning, or to transact business at a bank or post office, they were far less visible in the official record" (Gupta 2001, 134-35). It was in this manner that women, who were traditionally excluded from the development discourse, became visible now, "as beneficiaries of state benevolence" (Gupta 2001, 110). In other words, the developmental invisibility of women finds visibility in the discourse on state protection, paternalism and welfarism. The following section illuminates this trajectory in greater detail.

GENDER AND DEVELOPMENT IN POLICY: THE EMPIRICAL REALM AND THE CREATION OF GENDERED SUBJECTIVITIES

The early years of independence was a disappointed phase for women's question. Despite the subcommittee on women formulating a detailed plan on women's role in planned economy, its recommendations did not find any reflection in the planning process post-independence. In fact, Ambedkar's appeal to grant equal inheritance rights to women was met with intense debate and fury during the Constituent Assembly Debates.

In the First FYP (1952-56), Central Social Welfare Board was set up and welfare work was carried out through voluntary organisations and trusts. The National Family Planning Programme was formulated during this period. With the objective of "reducing birth rate to the extent necessary to stabilise the population at a level consistent with requirement of national economy," women became the 'targets' of family planning. The Second FYP (1956-61) focussed on the development of Mahila Mandals to work at the grassroots level for agricultural growth and rural development, with a similar welfarist approach towards women. The Third, Fourth and Interim Plans (1961-74) laid down provisions for women's education, pre-natal and child health services and provisions for nursing/expectant mothers. It was during this period that, specific needs of women were recognised as different from men and focus was laid on women belonging to more vulnerable sections of the population. Improving literacy, education outcomes and women's health through awareness generation under the Family Planning Programme was stressed. Once again, however, the approach to family planning was "linked more towards stabilising the population growth with greater stress on women's participation in the programme rather than focussing on women's health issues" (Mitra 2019, 57). Till 1975, therefore, development policy relegated women to the status of mere 'beneficiaries' and 'targets' with no emphasis, whatsoever, on their individual agency as women.

A major breakthrough came with the Fifth FYP (1974-79) from which, state's approach towards women shifted from 'welfare' to 'development' (Report of Planning Commission 2010; Mitra 2019). From passive 'subjects' of welfare, they were to be seen as, active 'participants' in development. A separate chapter on 'Women and Development' in the Sixth FYP (1980-85) elaborated, "the low status of women in large segments of Indian society cannot be raised without opening up of opportunities of independent employment and income for them… the demographic features of female population like excessive mortality in female children resulting in persistent decline in sex ratio, low rate of literacy, and low economic status stress the need for greater attention to the economic emancipation of women" (Sixth Five Year Plan 1980). In a similar vein, the Seventh FYP (1985-90) focussed on the creation and strengthening of income-opportunities for women. Various wage and self-employment programmes were created in the informal sector, after the Shramshakti report suggested the need for protective state intervention. The Support to Training and Employment Programme for Women (STEP) was one such scheme that emerged in this backdrop and stressed on self-reliance and economic independence of women through participation in income-generating activities. It can be argued that this shift to 'development' was in consonance with the shift, in the global discourse, from 'welfare approach' to 'anti-poverty approach' within WID. The latter saw the cause of women's problems in underdevelopment, rather than subordination. In this regard, its thrust area remains - income generation (mostly small-scale) and self-employment opportunities for women. The underlying assumption being that it is income rather than gender inequality that is responsible for women issues.

The next leap came with the Eighth FYP (1992-97) in the backdrop of economic reforms of 1990s. Adopting a strategy of 'empowerment,' it was stated "Women must be enabled to function as equal partners and participants in development and not merely as beneficiaries of various schemes" (Eighth Five Year Plan 1992). In this vein, the thrust area of planning throughout the 90s and early 2000s was to ensure adequate employment opportunities and credit facilities for women, often with the help of local Self-Help Groups. Various urban and rural wage employment measures were initiated under schemes like Swarna Jayanti Gram Swarozgar Yojana (SGSY), Swarna Jayanti Shahari Rozgar Yojana (SGSRY) and the Urban Self-Employment Programme (USEP). While education, health and nutritional programmes were also initiated during this period, they were specifically targeted at the low-income groups and; the major focus was on

increasing efficiency and productivity. As also evident in the vocabulary of 'efficiency approach' within WID, the rhetoric of 'inclusivity' masqueraded the obsession with high growth in India, an objective that would be incomplete without the participation of leftover fifty percent of human resource.

As a result, while the plans post 90s claimed of having adopted the 'empowerment approach,' empirical analysis of development policy reflects how it was, more often than not, an amalgamation of the 'anti-poverty' and the 'efficiency' approaches. While the empowerment approach takes cognisance of all three roles of women (the productive, the reproductive and the community management role) and seeks to enhance women's consciousness through bottom-up mobilisations and participation; development planning and policy framework in India has predominantly visualised 'women' from a productive lens, more so since the liberalisation reforms of 1990s. The problem, as identified within these perspectives, is located either in women's poverty (hence, self-employment measures under the anti-poverty approach) or; the inability or wastefulness of women as resources for economic growth (thus the focus on micro-financing and credit facilities using Self-Help Groups). In both cases, it is the economic and productive aspect of women's lives that is being stressed. As noted by Dewan, the underlying assumption of these employment generation initiatives is that families are poor because women do not work (Dewan 2011, 20). In this regard, gender inequality gets reduced to the question of income inequality. Consequently, all this relegates women to the status of passive objects than active subjects in development policy, contrary to what is sought by the empowerment approaches or GAD.

It is notable that while these assisted employment opportunities could challenge the gendered division of labour within the household, they operate under the inherent assumption of 'free-time' for women; in other words, by disregarding the existing household, reproductive and care work of women. Even in cases where this care and community managing role is recognised, it merely becomes a tool for recognising women's trustworthiness as loan bearers. Secondly, most of these income-generating opportunities are themselves gendered and offer sex-specific occupations. For instance, the Support to Training and Employment Programme for Women (STEP) aims at increasing the employability of women through skill training in women specific arenas like handlooms and handicrafts; traditional crafts like embroidery and zari work; gems and jewellery etc. Other schemes Swa-Shakti programme in 1998 and the Swayamsiddha programme in 2001 also offer credit facilities in similar arenas, thus ratifying the traditionally defined roles of women. The Rashtriya Mahila Kosh or the National Credit Fund for Women which was established in 1993 to augment socioeconomic change, became the nodal agency for funding such schemes.

In each of these policies, while the aim is to increase the economic participation of women, it comes without challenging the existing gendered division of labour and the subservient, small-scale roles for women. Rather than altering the roots of patriarchy, these schemes legitimise the location of women in their traditionally defined roles and positions. As a result, it can be argued that while the existing approaches to women's development cater to the practical gender needs of women, unless women's employment translates into greater autonomy, strategic gender needs are still far in sight (Caroline Moser 1989). Both efficiency approach and anti-poverty approaches disregard the existing social relations of gender, the fact that patriarchy cuts across class, caste and racial divisions and that, economic empowerment cannot be a panacea. This explains the difference between these approaches and the equity approach, while also illustrating why the latter has been absent from the Indian development trajectory so far.

THE CASE OF HEALTHCARE, EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT POLICY IN INDIA

To examine the empirical realm of development policy and to determine how policy proposals in postcolonial nations create gendered subjectivities, this section will provide the case of healthcare, education and employment policy in India. The rationale behind choosing these is that - these three policy arenas help analysing the split in social and economic policy. They also cater to both the productive (employment policy) and social reproductive sphere (healthcare and education) of women. Furthermore, these three arenas have been the primary spheres of women's visibility in policy (even during the 'welfarist

phase' from 1950s-70s). A study of these policy arenas will aid in understanding how policies are politically constituted and how they constitute women, as a result.

Methodological Approach : To study the construction of women within these policy documents, a critical discourse analysis approach will be used. This approach aids in understanding the language that lies 'beyond the sentence' within the policy document. In other words, it assists in analysing how language helps in the construction of social groups and through it, social realities. The underlying aim, as Foucault reminds us, is not to determine the truth or the reality, but to examine how power and power relations (manifested in these policy documents) instead *create* the truth.

For discourse analysis of policy documents, Carol Bacchi's WPR (What's the Problem Represented to be?) framework will be used (Bacchi 1999, 2000, 2012). This will help in identifying not just the forms of 'problem construction' but also, assist in understanding the 'subject positions' (Foucault 1982) engendered by selected policy documents. The specific questions chosen from the WPR approach for studying the construction of women in policy are - Firstly, what is the problem described in a specific policy or policy proposal? Secondly, what assumptions or presuppositions underlie this specific problem representation and what are the underlying policy silences? Third, what effects (in terms of subject positions and associated gender roles/relations) are created by this form of policy representation?

The Integrated Child Development Scheme (ICDS) : This is the largest flagship schemes launched by the Government of India in the year 1975. It is directed towards ensuring protection, welfare and development of children and nursing mothers. The stated objectives include - "to enhance the capability of the mother to look after the normal health and nutritional needs of the child through proper nutrition and health education"; "to lay the foundation for proper psychological, physical and social development of the child"; "to reduce the incidence of mortality, morbidity, malnutrition and school dropout." (ICDS 1975). The scheme includes within its ambit, six services namely immunisation, pre-school non-formal education, supplementary nutrition, nutrition & health education and; health check-up and referral services. Within the scheme, various 'Nutrition Counselling' and 'Child Care sessions' are organised to help caregivers and mothers acquire new cooking skills, feeding, hygiene, health and caring behaviours which, are shown to be successful for rehabilitating underweight children. It is also notable that the Nutrition and Health Education (NHEd.) service constitutes a central element of the scheme wherein, women (in the age group of 15-45 years) are provided information on their health, nutrition and developmental needs.

Furthermore, the ambit of the scheme has widened over the years with the inclusion of multiple other sub-schemes and policies within it. The *Scheme for Adolescent Girls (SAG)* is one such case. It recognises adolescence as the threshold period between 'childhood' and 'womanhood,' thus mandating the need for holistic development through mental, emotional and physical well-being of adolescent girls (the targeted age group being 11-14 within this policy). The objective, as stated in the policy document, is to empower these girls "to enable them to become self-reliant and aware citizens." This, it seeks to achieve through its twin components of - Nutrition and Non-nutrition. While the former includes provisions like take-home ration or hot cooked meals for out of school (11-14 years) girls; the non-nutrition component of the scheme aims at improving the 'home-based skills' (emphasis mine) and life-skills of these adolescent girls by providing them counselling and guidance on 'family welfare' and 'childcare practices.' Later, this scheme was broadened in its ambit and was renamed as the *Kishori Shakti Yojana* (KSY) with increase in its target group coverage (from 11-14 years) to 11-18 years. While enlisting the imperatives behind the introduction of this novel initiative, the Ministry of Women and Child Development notes that- "Programmes aimed at improving the nutritional and health status of adolescent girls and promoting self-development, awareness of health, hygiene, nutrition, 'family welfare and management' (emphasis mine), it is well recognised, could significantly improve the health and nutritional status of 'women' and 'children'" (MWCD). The objectives, thereby expanded, include - "To train and equip the adolescent girls to improve/ upgrade home-based and vocational skills"; "To promote awareness of health, hygiene, nutrition and 'family welfare', 'home

management' and 'child care,' and to take all measure as to facilitate their marrying only after attaining the age of 18 years and if possible, even later." All this is aimed to "encourage adolescent girls to initiate various activities to be productive and useful members of the society."

Analysis: Using the WPR approach, it is notable that the problem identified within this policy document (and the associated sub-schemes within it) is that, menstruating women's lack of awareness about their health and nutritional needs, childcare, adequate home skills (financial and otherwise) and 'family management'; existing alongside her limited vocational training for productive (employment) sector is obstructing both child welfare and national development on the whole. The policy proposal seeks to resolve these aforementioned 'problems' through - state responsibility for immunisation and immediate healthcare needs of the new mother and children (both nourished and undernourished); childcare training to the mother to enable her in efficient 'home management' combined with her enhanced decisional capabilities for undertaking (future) family planning. For, it is the latter that will ensure the twin needs of effective child caring and women's participation in productive labour. The underlying policy objective/assumption is that - investing in women's healthcare and holistic needs will, instrumentally ensure both national growth and child welfare (and thus, human resource development). The noteworthy policy silences and the contestable issues in this case are - the pre-established link that the policy document draws between womanhood and motherhood (in the case of SAG, 'womanhood' is deemed coterminous with 'motherhood') establishing the latter as an inevitable part of a woman's life; the fact that 'family welfare' or 'family management' are essentially women's responsibilities thus reinforcing the public-private divide. Further, the presumed understanding that women (and adolescent girls in their later years) will spend their incomes earned through 'productive-useful' employment on their child's welfare normalises unpaid care work as "a product of maternal altruism" (Bricked and Chant 2010). In this regard, the policy creates an essentialised female subject who is both moral and has natural maternal instincts. More notably, by passing off aspects like 'childcare,' 'child welfare,' 'family welfare' and 'family management' as *development needs* of women (adolescent girls and mothers) it risks, what Wilson and Kandiyoti would remind us, "relabelling the effects of inequality as empowered choice" (Wilson 2013: 85; Kandiyoti 1988).

Results/Effects On Gender Relations - The policy document clearly reinforces the existing binary of reproductive female bodies and productive male bodies. It is equally notable here that this binary is convincingly dissolved when it comes to the need for productive female labour force participation for national growth. Even though the proposal concedes the existing tension between the 'productive' and 'reproductive' role of women (hence, the focus on delayed marriage under KSY, family planning etc); it deems the latter as inevitable and does not provide any balancing mechanism. In other words, while the proposal establishes the requirement for enhancing productive role for women; it does this without disturbing the disproportionate burden of her pre-existing 'reproductive' and 'community managing' roles. Lastly, there is no mention of healthcare or nutritional needs of non-menstruating (before 11 years) or post-menopausal (after 45 years of age) women within this largest healthcare policy proposal for women in India. Even the recent *POSHAN 2.0 scheme* which later encapsulated both SAG and Roshan Abhigyan within its respective ambit, only the nutritional needs of adolescent girls, pregnant and lactating women are addressed.

The Balika Samridhi Yojana : This is a prominent educational scheme in India that was launched in the year 1997. As the name suggests, it aims at ensuring prosperity (*samridhi*) of the girl child. The stated objectives include - "to change negative family and community attitudes towards the girl child at birth and towards her mother"; "to improve enrolment and retention of girl children in schools"; "to rise the age at marriage of girls" and; "to assist the girl to undertake income generating activities." The various provisions and benefits under this scheme include - a grant of Rs 500 at the birth of a girl child followed by annual scholarship for her retention in school till she attains 18 years of age. The final amount (along with the

acquired interest) is given to the beneficiary on her 18th birthday (if unmarred). The proposal mandates that - "in the event of the girl getting married before attaining the age of eighteen years, she shall forgo the benefit of the amounts of the annual scholarships and the interest accrued thereon and shall stand entitled only to the post-birth grant amount of Rs.500/- and the interest accrued thereon." A detailed list of provisions specifies various amount information and the underlying conditions for availing them.

Analysis: The problem identified within this policy proposal is that - lack of financial support is centrally responsible for negative attitude of family and community towards the girl child. In this regard, the proposed solution is that state financial assistance can prevent families from viewing girl child as a liability and; at the same time, allow retention of the girl child in school thus attaining twin goals of compulsory education (under Article 21-A) and stalling marriage till she reaches the legal marriageable age, i.e., 18 years.

Results/ Effects: It is notable that the proposed policy document, with its objective of ensuring 'prosperity' for the girl child, provides a comprehensive list of financial details and conditions applicable for availing the financial assistance. However, there is no provision specifying job opportunities or prospects post 18 years of age. Thus, it can be argued that, the policy is simply a provision to stall marriage, with no provisions on ensuring quality education or vocational training for job suitability post high school. In this vein, even if the family eventually decides to utilise the received financial grant for marriage of the beneficiary, it might be passed off as 'prosperity' enhancing. Again, though the proposal does not encapsulate any job enhancing prospects for the girl child after 18 years, it does concede the inherent tension between 'marriage' and 'productive participation' of women and hence, the need to delay marriage (though the latter is still deemed inevitable). In this regard, purpose of educating the girl child is centrally, to delay her marriage and; by extension, enable her to 'self-empower' herself by finding prospects for productive employment.

The STEP Scheme - The Support to Training & Employment Programme for Women (STEP) was launched as a Central Sector Scheme in 1986-87. The programme aims to make a significant impact on women by upgrading their skills for self and wage employment. It includes - 'providing access to credit, awareness generation, gender sensitization, nutrition education, sensitization of project functionaries.' Thus, the larger objective is "to ensure self-reliance and empowerment of women by enhancing their productivity and enabling them to take up income generation activities." The target groups within this scheme include- wage labourers, unpaid daily workers, female headed households, migrant labourers, tribal and other dispossessed groups. Most notably, the targeted sectors include - apparel; beauty and wellness; agriculture; dairying; Fisheries; Handlooms; textiles; tourism and hospitality; Handicrafts, Khadi and village Industries; Sericulture and; conventional sectors like toy making and painting.

Analysis : Unlike the aforementioned educational and healthcare policies that aimed at ensuring prosperity and development of the girl child without specifying any provisions for productive employment; this policy proposal addresses the employment needs of women. However, in doing so, it clearly provides a strict, limited arena for exercising the productive role for women. It must be noted that the demarcated sectors are mostly traditional women-reserved sectors like handicrafts, tourism and hospitality, apparel, khadi etc. In this vein, it reaffirms the binary of women working in mostly private, 'near home' jobs while reserving the 'harsher' public sector for *tough* and *better capable* men. In establishing this 'soft skills-hard skills binary' and the pre-existing 'public-private divide' in employment, the policy proposal clearly results in creating 'gendered essentialism.'

POLITICS OF GENDER DEVELOPMENT IN INDIA: INTERFACE BETWEEN NATIONAL POLITICS & WOMEN'S MOVEMENT

Women's placing in development policy is deeply influenced by the existing socio-political context and specific articulations of the feminist movement, both nationally and globally (Calman 1989, 940). In a

similar vein, it is notable that most of the developments concerning women in India have been a function of existing political developments and advancements in women's movement. While the former has mostly exhibited a uniform patriarchal, paternalistic attitude towards the women's question (Kosambi 1999, 98); variations in the latter have invariably influenced the policy paradigm in India.

The period from 1950s to 1970s saw the influence of a socialist economy committed to the goals of nation-building and growth with redistribution. During this 'welfarist' phase, women were seen as either 'mothers' and 'childbearers' or; 'beneficiaries' of state policies and 'targets' of family planning. Scholars have contended how this approach of welfarism increases dependency of women on the state rather than offering them autonomy and independence (Wallace and March 1991; Moser 1993). Despite these contentions, however, 'welfarism' as an approach was followed (and continues to some extent even today) as it is politically safe and allows the traditional roles to remain intact. By the mid 1970s, a shift in approach from 'welfare' to 'development' took place when a Committee on the Status of Women, constituted under pressure from UN, submitted its report 'Towards Equality.' The report brought to the fore, for the first time, the subservient position of women in religious and family life; in healthcare and legal aid; economic, educational and political life. As noted by Mitra, "Towards Equality brought forward the disconnect between the 'Indian planning exercise' and the 'women's question in India', voiced by the different strands of women's movement in the country" (Mitra 2019, 51). It was after this report that the government started taking inputs from members of women's movements. Later, there was a shift from 'welfare' to 'anti-poverty' approach in 1970s and; to 'efficiency' approach in 1990s. Most notably, the 'equity' approach that seeks to structurally address the issue of gender inequality and cater to the strategic gender needs of women was never adopted. In fact, even when 'empowerment' became the buzzword of all policies post liberalisation, none of these policies structurally addressed the issue of gender inequality. These policies aimed, more often than not, at a partial addresal of practical gender needs. In this regard, GAD remains a far-fetched reality in the Indian development policy. The latter not only recognises the threefold role of women but also questions the subordination of women in these roles. Not restricting itself to mere interventionist measures, GAD advocates for power shifts and regards the state (and not civil society as in WID) as the primary agent for implementing structural changes. Meanwhile, though the Eleventh and Twelfth FYP (2007-17) claimed of reflecting a shift from 'social development perspective' to 'rights perspective,' this was in line with the larger 'Rights-Based Agenda' initiated by the Indian state post reforms (Harris and Corbridge 2013; Ruparelia 2013). The rationale lay, as Chatterjee puts it, "in the conditions of electoral democracy which make it unacceptable and illegitimate for the government to leave the marginalised populations... for that carries the risk of turning them into dangerous classes" (Chatterjee 2008, 23). Therefore, while rights-based schemes like MNREGA spurred female labour force participation and guaranteed them right to employment for the first time, ensuring gender equality was never an explicit goal of the scheme (Das 2014).

Calman draws a distinction between the 'Rights wing' and the 'Empowerment wing' of women's movement and reflects on how the former has always had an upper hand in national politics. The Rights wing, as she describes it, is centrally concerned with moving measures impacting women's heath, education levels and legislations related to dowry and rape; in other words, it aims at ensuring equality under law and prohibition of discrimination and violence against women. The wing includes not only factions from oppositional political parties like Janata Party's Mahila Dakshita Samiti and Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA) but also, communist factions like CPI's National Federation of Indian Women (NFIW) and CPI-M All India Democratic Women's Association (AIDWA). A major drawback of this wing, however, is that it does not challenge the existing social relations of gender and restricts itself to merely narrow legalistic interventions; in other words, a demand for practical and not, strategic gender needs of women. As Calman herself puts it, "rights wing of the movement is for the most part determinedly un-feminist in the Western sense in that it refrains from positing a conflict between women and men; it does not even present itself as a challenge to gender roles, fearing that such an image would mark the movement as overly influenced by the West and as attacking the family that, in India, enjoys a place on a high pedestal" (Calman 1989, 943). The empowerment wing, on the other hand, has a considerable rural base and aims at bottom-up mobilisations for empowerment of both rural and urban women. Self-Employed Women's Association and Annapurna Mahila Mandal are a few examples. While the Rights wing is driven by the cause of ensuring

civil rights; providing socio-economic rights and political empowerment to women from grass-roots is the central objective of the empowerment wing. The incorporation of the rights wing, with a simultaneous sidelining of empowerment wing in the national policy framework, clearly illustrates why development planning in India remains constricted to the WID perspective even today.

Anoher important consideration is the underlying paradox of women's development trajectory. It is noteworthy that the rhetoric of 'inclusion' and 'empowerment' features at a time when the state is already seen as retreating from most sectors, social policy in particular. When allocation for lower sections is already low, the sustainability of women-centric schemes becomes highly questionable. Reading into the Eleventh FYP (2007-12) and its potency in addressing this question of gender inequality, Mitra cautions "While the overall plan provides projection to achieve a certain GDP growth over the period, the approach to inclusiveness is fraught with adhocism in policy measures directed at plugging gaps in order to prevent the neediest sections from falling out of the growth process. The plan… recommends a temporary programme rather than developing a long-term policy to eliminate it completely" (Mitra 2019, 62). Using a gendered analysis of the Neo-liberal reforms in India, Mukhopadhyay also illustrates how SAP's are structurally biased against women in- firstly, ignoring women's reproductive aspect; and secondly, in cutting down on social security and labour rights causing a disproportionate impact on women, who are mostly concentrated in the less secure, lower-paid informal sector (Mukhopadhyay 2003, 9). The economic fallouts of the latter also result in increased workload for women at the household level.

CONCLUSION

While most projects in developing countries identify the existing sexual division of labour, they hardly attempt to alter this gendered division. Rather, policies related to taxation, employment and childcare become the most visible sites for legitimation and enforcement of the existing gender stereotypes. Introspection of development policy in India reflects a similar trend. From 'mothers' and 'child bearers' in 1950s to 'instruments for economic growth' in 1970s and 90s, women have lacked independent agency of their own. The policy discourse in India has, more often than not, visualised them in the binary of reproductive (within *welfare* approach) and productive (within *development* and *empowerment* approaches) beings; without developing mechanisms for balancing the two or redistributing the burden of her conventional roles. As a result, while practical gender needs are partially addressed by the state, the goal of achieving strategic interests seems very distant. This has also been influenced, as highlighted in the paper, by the nature of interface between national politics and women's movement from time to time.

In this regard, there is an ardent need to adopt the GAD perspective in development policy to make women as "agents of change rather than passive recipients of development assistance" (Moser 1993,4). It is equally crucial to tread beyond the narrow interventionist measures within WID and; challenge the existing structural inequalities and social relations of gender. Giving voice to the 'empowerment wing' of women's movement, allowing bottom-up mobilisations and participation, amending the existing taxation and inheritance laws can be a few ways to initiate the desired change.

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DARK FLOWERS AND SURVIVORS

DIANA WOODCOCK

Ph.D., VCUarts Qatar

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this paper and presentation is to share poems that have been inspired by various women I have known personally or have been encouraged by their legends, words and actions. I have worked with women from around the world, observing them and listening to their stories – some of which I have incorporated into these poems.

INTRODUCTION

For several years now, I have been compiling a manuscript that includes poems inspired by one goddess and various women I have known personally or been inspired by – the Chinese goddess of compassion, one female Sufi master, an Afghani poet/victim of domestic violence, prostitutes, a Navajo-San Carlos Apache First Nations Indian woman, Arab women, Tibetan and Catholic nuns, and others. I have worked with women from around the world, observing them and listening to their stories – some of which I have incorporated into these poems. My first full-length collection of poetry, as well as my first two chapbooks, focused on human rights issues. With *Dark Flowers and Survivors*, I have zeroed in on women in particular.

Afghani poet Nadia Anjuman Herawi (Nadja Anjuman) died at age 25 under highly suspicious circumstances. Loving literature, she – like many others – risked death by reading censored writers and daring to write the truth. Surviving the nightmare reign of the Taliban, this acclaimed Muslim poet died by the hand of her own husband.

DARK FLOWER

For Nadia Anjuman, who died November 4, 2005; the title of her collection of poems, published 2005, was

Gule-Dudi, meaning 'dark flower'

People who believe in absurdities will eventually commit atrocities. – Voltaire

One more woman dead—her husband

confessing to the beating but not murder.

I took it hard, another poet's voice snuffed out.

Just twenty-five, mother of a six-month-old,

famous among Herat's female poets.

May he rot in hell. How will her daughter feel

when she's old enough to know the truth?

Six years since the Taliban's fall,

still the violence. Someone blogs,

He was only following the Qur'an;

Mohammad taught husbands to beat

their women into submission.

With a FEATHER,

I scream back.

Believe absurdities, commit atrocities.

Times like these I pray, Please call me home.

I lack the stomach for this world's madness.

A Lakota friend quotes: Religion
is for people afraid to go to hell,
spirituality for those who've been there.

I curse Basra, Kufa, Fustat—
all conquests of all religions.

Nadia, you dear dark flower,
if you can you hear me, please
comfort me in this dark hour.

WOMEN'S VOICES

Sometimes I listen to
Turkish music, Bahar,

Kordes Turkuler, even though
the tempo's too fast, too

brash, because I need to feel
at last a little unsettled,

a bit rattled by discordance—
the voices of women from

Turkish, Armenian,
Kurdish borders calling

out to me. Language
mysterious, but no

mistaking their message.
Same in every dialect:

absence of love and respect

the ultimate atrocity.

A French Renaissance writer, Christine de Pizan's life (1365-1430) was remarkable because of what she was able to do in a time when women had no legal rights, were considered a man's property, and were not allowed to have a voice. She managed both. Her writing allowed her family to survive and gave her the means to create not just for money, but for her own purposes. She worked to refute the negative ideas that scholars were spreading about women in the Renaissance and showed at least the elite women of her time how they could navigate successfully in what was a man's world. She wrote some of the very first feminist pieces of literature. She became the first woman in Europe to successfully make a living through writing.

SINNERS AND TEMPTRESSES (A PANTOUM)

Sinners and temptresses they considered us.
They said a woman lacked a soul.
Thank God Christine de Pisan made a fuss.
Many women spoke up – they were bold.

They said a woman lacked a soul.
So when just to let it be?
Many women spoke up – they were bold.
When to not let things just be?

So when just to let it be?
Where does our first job end?
When to not let things just be?
Where does our second begin?

Where does our first job end?
I hear myself asking my class,
Where does our second begin?
We must fight injustice at last.

I hear myself asking my class,
How can we work for peace?
We must fight injustice at last.
We can't settle for lives of ease.

How can we work for peace?

Thank God de Pisan made a fuss.

We can't settle for lives of ease.

Sinners and temptresses they considered us.

VANI BRIDES OF PAKISTAN

In the photograph we sit

side by side, only hands and eyes

uncovered—enough to tell

we're young and lovely—three

sisters fallen victim to Vani:

promised to the enemy; blood feud

settled by forced marriage, we brides

to spend our days as slaves paying

for a male relative's crime.

Illegal, it happens all the time.

But we three will resist though

the other side insists their honor's

been insulted: sisters must be handed

over, or fighting will result in

two hundred-plus deaths.

Father's on our side,

insisting we hide and continue

our studies. *My daughters*

are innocent, he insists, refusing

to let them squelch our dreams.

If unsuccessful in resisting,

we'll burn ourselves alive.

Law, religion, family's on our side.

In 2010, the Anaheim Police Department (APD) vice detail in Orange County, California, realized that most of the prostitutes it had contact with came from similar backgrounds. Analysis of their common circumstances and reasons for prostituting caused investigators to believe that they were sex trafficking victims. Human trafficking is using force, fraud, or coercion to recruit, obtain, or provide a person for sexual exploitation. This shift in perspective produced an innovative approach to addressing the problem. In over

100 arrests, most of the women expressed that prostitution was not their career of choice. In a 1998 study, 88 percent of the prostituted women surveyed stated that they wanted to leave the sex trade industry.

After Reading Abani's *Becoming Abigail*,

I began to count my encounters with prostitutes:
the ones I trailed for days in Patpong, cursing men
who'd traveled halfway round the world to sleep with them;

the ones I found crouching in that awful hidden corner
of Kamput—brothel drawing Thai soldiers
like a magnet, a dragnet in a refugee camp

where no woman was a tramp, selling her body
for food; the ones I've counseled in my
own country, runaways turning up at the Oasis House

after nights and days on the streets—the ones
whose uncles, brothers, fathers raped them.
Every contact along the way reiterating the fact

that *there but by God's grace go I.* Chiyo-ni
wrote haiku with her prostitute friends,
sharing with them society's fringe—

ironic privilege the sacrilege of the world's oldest trade,
nun and prostitute collaborating against societal
restrictions, 18th-century Japan.

I'm evoking all these encounters and
associations in the light of a Harvest Moon,
Feast Day of our Lady of Sorrows who

knows all about yesterday's, today's, tomorrow's
pain. Let others pray for victims of war and natural
disasters; everyone must pick and choose.

I'll concentrate all my thoughts on aging girls

caught in the snare—women withering behind
locked doors. Some pray to Buddha, some to

Kuan Yin—mercy goddess, others to Jesus and Mary.
Soliciting gods and goddesses to spare them
from another day's punishment, they would be

flames in their chambers, drawing in men like moths
to burn to crisps. Brave women who do not cringe—
their best revenge—from the blunt blade, stealing

the strength of the enemy by remaining composed—
draining every last drop of venom till he lies weak
and exposed. Thus they triumph over evil.

I've moved among the most cultured, gifted,
elite. But only when I've walked the beat
with prostitutes has love lifted me.

PUBLICATION CREDITS

EXPLORING POST/COLONIAL FEMINISM IN ACHEBE'S *THINGS FALL APART*

HALEIGH KLAUS-BELKA

ABSTRACT

This paper explores the post/colonial elements of Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* using post/colonial and transnational feminist analytical methods. The basis of the argument lies in Dr. Sara Suleri's "Woman Skin Deep: Feminism and the Postcolonial Condition." Suleri argues that female postcolonial authors narrow their writing to appease to western academia instead of using their real, lived experiences to discuss feminism. This paper argues that the male perspective in Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* illustrates the roles and treatment of women in pre-colonial and colonized I(g)bo societies. Themes discussed from *Things Fall Apart* include life in the home, conditions of children, the barring of women from policital and societal decision making, a distate for female attributes, toxic masculinity, and the hidden political matriarchy.

INTRODUCTION

Coco Chanel once said the most courageous act a woman can do is to think for herself aloud, but what does one do when that simply isn't possible? When imperialist Britain stormed the world, they not only demanded and stole resources and labor, but they also stole the voices of those being colonized; this reign lasted from 1870 to 1960, and a good deal after the reign lost traction, those that were colonized began to write back to the empire to reclaim their voices. The purpose of this paper is to explore the best means of articulating the interpretation that Chinua Achebe's novel *Things Fall Apart* – first published in 1958 – details I(g)bo society and ideals while also illuminating the destruction and heartache brought forth by the British conquest. The intention of this study is to show how and why, in greatly enlightening the world on African ideals and struggles, Achebe's novel acts on informing the world of the African woman's condition during Britain's formation of the Southern Nigeria Protectorate. For background purposes, the Southern Nigeria Protectorate (1900-1914) was a merger between the Niger Coast Protectorate and Royal Niger Company to continue British rule of Nigerian economics. The theoretical lens this post/colonial interpretation uses is transnational feminist. The rationale of such a feminist approach is to explain why *Things Fall Apart* is itself a feminist text in its explorations of women as depicted in Umuofian society. Through exploration of post/colonial elements of Achebe's themes in *Things Fall Apart* using transnational and post/colonial feminist analytical methods, discussion of the male perspective illustrates the roles and treatment of women in pre-colonial and colonized I(g)bo societies in their homes, the conditions of their children, the barring of women from political and societal decision making, a distaste for the female attributes, and the matriarchy hidden beneath it all.

BASIS OF ARGUMENT – SULERI'S "WOMAN SKIN DEEP: FEMINISM AND THE POSTCOLONIAL CONDITION" VS. ACHEBE'S DEPICTION OF THE REAL-LIFE AFRICAN WOMAN

The basis of the post/colonial feminist argument for this paper lies in Dr. Sara Suleri's 1992 publication of "Woman Skin Deep: Feminism and the Postcolonial Condition." In the publication, Suleri (1992) argues that female postcolonial writers narrow their writing to appease to western academia instead of using their lived experiences to discuss feminism in these settings. In this scathing review of authors such as Trinh, Suleri (1992) states, "The dangers represented… [are] that finally they will represent the profession as both their last court of appeal and the anthropological ground on which they conduct their field work" (p. 765), and she goes on to argue that authors such as Trinh leave room only for limited and scaled down written experiences of the female postcolonial condition. As well as this, Suleri concludes her argument with stating that the postcolonial female experience can and should serve as the metaphor that postcolonial woman should write under. While it is not the focus of this paper to summarize the entirety of Suleri's argument, Suleri's points regarding the post/colonial feminist novel can serve as a basis for discussion of *Things Fall Apart*. In her publication, Suleri makes excellent points in how post/colonial female authors tone their writing to fit into westernized academia and end up losing integral parts of their stories to hold credibility, but because Chinua Achebe is a male, his story does not suffer or try to meet up to westernized academia's expectations. In fact, in not being a woman and writing the women as – essentially – background characters or cannon fodder to the main character, Achebe displays a brutally honest depiction of the mistreatment of women in Umuofian society, thus *Things Fall Apart* is inherently a feminist text.

THE THREE WIVES: POLYGAMY, NWOYE'S MOTHER, OJIUGO, AND EKWEFI

While *Things Fall Apart* intends to focus upon Okonkwo's life and struggles in Umuofian society, the novel incidentally includes much discourse on the actions and treatment of his three wives – his first wife, Ekwefi, and Ojiugo. While the purpose of this paper is not to argue that polygamy is wrong in any way, it is worth bringing forth that polygamy in *Things Fall Apart* is used as a way to suppress and oppress the women in these marriages; this is highlighted in the marriages of Okonkwo to his three wives. In "Problematizing Polygyny…", Powell (2008) makes the point that Achebe utilizes his, now historical, novels to focus on men in postcolonial Africa leaving the postcolonial woman sidelined and as the "other". According to Powell

(2008), "… because Achebe does hold such a high-profile position in African studies, his gender-determined blind spots demand careful scrutiny. The apparent dismissal of women's issues in Achebe's early novels suggests a 'first things first' approach to nationalism, an approach which dictates that Africans deal with national problems before they move on to 'less important issues,' such as gender politics on local levels" (p. 167). Once again, polygamy in *Things Fall Apart* is **not** brought to the attention of readers to convince that it is "bad" or unbeneficial in the community, but it **is** brought to the attention of readers to highlight that, though this portrayal is historically accurate, the portrayal does demonstrate that African women are subordinate to not only African men but also to the colonizing powers of Britain.

To reiterate, as stated by Islam (2019), "… there have been vigorous debates in a number of colonized societies over whether gender or colonial oppression is the more important political factor in women's lives" (p. 13) and this has led to a division between feminism and political activism. The gender-system displayed in *Things Fall Apart* demonstrates that women's needs in society are not only not met, but women also are allowed no decision-making powers within their societies. As Powell (2008) put it, as feminist scholars, it is our duty to recognize polygamy as a "multidimensional custom with deep roots" (p. 176), but we must also ensure that we are diligent towards the empowerment of all women. Colonial oppression in Africa for all peoples is recognized and noted, but feminism in *Things Fall Apart* is the question at hand here.

From early in the novel, the role of women in Umuofian society is made clear to readers; women are intended to get married, live on their husband's compounds in huts near their husband's other wives, bear and tend to their children, tend to their husband's needs, farm produce outside of the husband's yams, and so forth. To some, this may seem like a tedious way of living, but Ejikeme (2017) presents that it has been argued that "pre-colonial I(g)bo societies were based on a dual-sex system in which rights and responsibilities were organized on the basis of sex" in turn leaving women with more independence than they would have upon the introduction of the "single-sex system" by the British colonizers. In this sense, it should be noted that "independence" is not equal to that of not being subordinate to others or having political freedoms, but this independence allows women more opportunities to play a role in society via farming and/or social interactions.

In *Things Fall Apart*, the motives and feelings of the wives must be assumed in most cases due to the inability to speak against their husband and the narration of the novel primarily focusing on Okonkwo. Spivak (2010) argued, "… the ideological construction of gender keeps the male dominant… if … the subaltern has no history and cannot speak, the subaltern as female is even more deeply in shadow" (p. 41). While this is believed and accepted within this paper, it can also be argued that the subaltern woman speaks through varying avenues from the male – Achebe's – perspective.

An analysis of the three wives' actions leads readers to believe that the women, for lack of a better term, have each other's backs and speak through their actions. Okonkwo's first wife – she does not have a name she is introduced as, just his first wife or Nwoye's mother – protects the children and the younger wives on the compound. Not only does Nwoye's mother ensure that her children are fed and cared for, but she also ensures this for the children of the other wives. Outside of caring for the children and other wives, there is not much that can be said about Nwoye's mother; throughout *Things Fall Apart* she is rarely mentioned as doing anything other than feeding, cooking, or caring for the children, but that does not mean that the silent do not speak in their own ways.

Early in the novel, readers are introduced to the severe punishment that women of Umuofia face if they displease their husbands which leads into discourse of the voice of Nwoye's mother and the actions of Ojiugo. During the Week of Peace, a time that is supposed to be carefree, Ojiugo leaves the compound to have her hair plated, but she did not return to the compound in time to prepare the afternoon meal for her husband and children. Upon realizing that Ojiugo is missing, Okonkwo approaches Nwoye's mother and asks where Ojiugo is and if Ojiugo had asked her to feed her children. Nwoye's mother lies to Okonkwo by telling him that Ojiugo had asked her to feed the children, but Okonkwo sees through the façade. Achebe (2017) writes, "… when she returned he beat her very heavily… His first two wives ran out in great alarm pleading with him that it was the sacred week" (p. 29). In a valiant effort, Nwoye's mother shows courage in lying to her husband, but her efforts do not soften the blow for Ojiugo.

In a panic, Nwoye's mother makes a last-ditch effort in protecting Ojiugo from Okonkwo's rage, and she succeeds only because of the circumstance of the beating taking place during the Week of Peace. It is argued that the women of *Things Fall Apart* do understand their circumstances and take care of one another because they are the victims of oppression and suppression under a patriarchal rule (Islam, 2019). Though Nwoye's mother and Ojiugo remain mostly silent during the instances of abuse and anger, Achebe demonstrates that the pre-colonial women of I(g)bo society used what little power they had to protect one another. To further this, according to Yaw-kan (2022), "silence is understood to be a non-verbal communicative and/or performative act" (p. 3) and that this silence is not only a form of non-verbal communication, but it is also a part of the patriarchal tradition found in African societies (p. 15). In this instance, Nwoye's mother breaks the status quo, but Ojiugo's silence towards Okonkwo's violence speaks volumes.

To further the alarm induced by this scene, Achebe (2017) describes Okonkwo's anger as "justifiable" (p. 29) reinforcing the idea that this is the norm in Umuofian society. Upon hearing Nwoye's mother's screams, the neighbors alert Ezeani, the priest of the earth goddess, and he arrives at the family's compound before nightfall. Ezeani states, "You have committed a great evil… Your wife was at fault, but even if you came into your obi and found her lover on top of her, you would still have committed a great evil to beat her" (Achebe, 2017, p. 30). For his crime of committing an act of violence during the Week of Peace, Okonkwo is ordered to bring a female goat, a hen, a length of cloth, and a hundred cowries to the shrine of Ani the following day. In the interaction with the priest, it is notable that Okonkwo is not being punished for his apparently justified act of violence against Ojiugo, but he is being punished for disregarding the Week of Peace.

Of the three wives, Ekwefi is the most outspoken and can be seen as a counter to the other two wives. In her description and aside from being the most headstrong, Ekwefi is set aside from the other wives in that she had lost nine children before birthing Ezinma (Achebe, 2017, p. 77). With the heartache of losing so many children before her, Ekwefi shows great maternal prowess in protecting Ezinma, and this is demonstrated in Ekwefi's defiance of the priestess. After Ezinma falls ill for the first time since she was a babe, the priestess shows up on Okonkwo's compound to take Ezinma to Agbala, and Ekwefi demands that she travel with the two. The priestess barks, "How dare you, woman, to go before the mighty Agbala of your own accord? Beware, woman, lest he strike you in his anger" (Achebe, 2017, p. 101). Despite societal expectations, Ekwefi trailed the priestess through the night, and upon arriving to the cave of Agbala, she swore that, "if she heard Ezinma cry she would rush into the cave to defend her against all of the gods in the world. She would die with her" (Achebe, 2017, p. 108). According to Kaunda (2021), "Indigenous rituals and rites are an important area for women's engagement…" (p. 92), and women who have not participated in these rites can be ridiculed among their peers. That said, the trailing of Ekwefi to Agbala's cave is unheard of because, as previously mentioned, she was not the one called upon, and it was believed that she should suffer greatly for appearing before Agbala under said conditions.

As well as this direct defiance of Agbala's priestess, Ekwefi also defies the rules of marriage in Umuofian society. Before Okonkwo, Ekwefi had married a man named Anene because Okonkwo could not afford her bride price, but after two years of marriage, she had run away to Okonkwo. With defiance and autonomy in decision making taken into consideration, Ekwefi's character embodies the idea that the pre-colonial dual-sex system allowed women in Umuofian society greater independence though living under patriarchal rule comparative to the single-sex system of the British.

Although one of the main objectives of this paper is to highlight the elements of Suleri's argument that can be countered through careful feminist post/colonial analysis of *Things Fall Apart*, it is to be acknowledged that certain aspects of her scholarship do nonetheless support the analytical concerns and arguments of this discussion. For example, because of the way Ekwefi's maternal attitude is depicted and how vastly different she is represented than the other wives, it could be argued that Achebe's descriptions of Ekwefi are an act to misconstrue the experience of the postcolonial woman leading into the "anthropological ground" that is being argued upon (Suleri, 1992, p. 765). While the depiction of Ekwefi can be seen that way, it is much more feasible to notice that this section of the book is used to "take the heat" off of Okonkwo after the brutal descriptions of him beating his wives previously in *Things Fall Apart*. Though Ekwefi is a more

"westernized" female character in the novel, it must not be overlooked that she is also brutalized by Okonkwo twice within the first part of the novel. In the first instance, Achebe (2017) writes, "As a matter of fact the tree was very much alive. Okonkwo's second wife had merely cut a few leaves off it to wrap some food, and she said so. Without further argument Okonkwo gave her a sound beating and left her and her only daughter weeping" (p. 38). Same as the incident of Okonkwo beating Ojiugo, the other two wives plead with him that it is enough, but he does not stop until he is satisfied. Shortly after beating Ekwefi, Okonkwo decides to go hunting, and Ekwefi makes a hushed comment about Okonkwo's lack of hunting skill, to which he shoots at her. Following this, Okonkwo "… threw down the gun and jumped into the barn, and there lay the woman, very much shaken and frightened but quite unhurt" (Achebe, 2017, p. 39). Though there are lapses in *Things Fall Apart* where it may seem that Achebe is writing towards westernized academia, it is countered by the chilling honesty found in the numerous descriptions of the brutality used to suppress and oppress the women in Umuofian society.

OKONKWO'S DAUGHTER WHO SHOULD HAVE BEEN A SON: EZINMA

Outside of the wives, the other notable woman who lives within Okonkwo's compound is his daughter Ezinma. It is stated that, "Okonkwo was very lucky in his daughters. He never stopped regretting that Ezinma was a girl" (Achebe, 2017, p. 172). While Ezinma carries much of the headstrong likeness of her mother, Ekwefi, she varies from her mother in the fact that she is solely obedient to her father. Ezinma, in her teen years, is described as having moments of frustration where she is angry and can "bear no other person but her father" (Achebe, 2017, p. 173). Spivak (1985) argues that "… the native 'subject' is not almost an animal but rather the object of what might be termed the terrorism of the categorical imperative" (p. 248). This categorical imperative, or unconditional moral obligation, is present in the way that Ezinma views and treats Okonkwo; unlike her mother, Ezinma listens to and follows every word that her father offers, and she influences her other sister to do the same leaving Okonkwo consistently wishing that Ezinma had been a son. It is notable that, during these teenage years, African society had already begun its transition into the Southern Nigeria Protectorate. Along with the categorical imperative, Spivak (1985) also argues that "so intimate a thing as personal and human identity might be determined by the politics of imperialism" (p. 250. Knowing this, one must consider whether Ezinma holds the headstrong likeness of Ekwefi, or if she is sliding into the category of marginalized women in Umuofian society who abide by the patriarchy. While it is apparent that Okonkwo holds a fondness for Ekwefi that he does not for his other two wives, he has placed Ezinma on a pedestal in comparison to his other children, and this idolization is due to her "masculine" traits that her father is so fond of.

A PRODUCT OF IMPERIALISM: EZINMA VS. NWOYE

In relation to the events of the story, it can be argued that Ezinma is a product of imperialism because the following of her father's every whim begins to take place after her brother, Nwoye – or Isaac –, abandons the family to join Christianity. After meeting the British missionaries/colonizers, Nwoye was immediately infatuated with the new religion – "It was the poetry of the new religion, something felt in the marrow… He felt a relief within as the hymn poured into his parched soul" (Achebe, 2017, p. 147) – and, though he was forsaking his father, he was happy to leave Mbanta and his family behind – "Nwoye did not fully understand. But he was happy to leave his father" (Achebe, 2017, p. 152). It is notable that after Nwoye has abandoned his family then it is mentioned that Ezinma could have been the perfect son that Okonkwo had always wanted; in a sense, Ezinma is viewed as the "savior" child used to restore family values and high-societal standing – "Many young men and prosperous middle-aged men of Mbanta came to marry her. But she refused them all, because her father had called her one evening and said to her: 'There are many good and prosperous people here, but I shall be happy if you marry in Umuofia when we return home'" (Achebe, 2017, p. 173). Yaw-kan (2022) states, "The females who are the victims of this objectification suffer psychological trauma, fear and anxiety. They are however, pre-established by the tradition of society to remain mute and submissive" (p. 8). As mentioned previously in the discussion on Ekwefi, Ezinma witnessed Okonkwo

beating and shooting at – nearly killing – her mother, and like her mother, there was nothing she could do about it besides cry; it is clear in this instance than Ezinma, like her mother and Okonkwo's other wives, has suffered severe psychological trauma by the hands of her father. Using Yaw-kan's and Spivak's research, it is clear that Ezinma has an unconditional moral obligation to Okonkwo after the loss of his son to colonizers, and she remains within this mute moral obligation due to the psychological trauma she faced in her youth.

THE BARRED WOMEN: POLITICS IN UMUOFIAN SOCIETY

On a grander scale outside of the husband's compound, women in Umuofian society are barred from decision making. Communal ceremonies, though through the name hint that all members of the community should be present, consisted of the Umuofian men coming together to make decisions regarding laws and other items of concern. Achebe (2017) writes, "It was clear from the way the crowd stood or sat that the ceremony was for men. There were many women, but they looked on from the fringe like outsiders" (p. 89). From this description, it is apparent that in the Umuofian patriarchal society, women are the other and are not permitted decision making authorities. Ejikeme (2017) argues that women in I(g)bo society experienced frustration in being excluded from political decision-making (p. 309), and this is apparent in the way women gather like "outsiders" around the ceremonies.

Unfortunately, the trend of women not being permitted in political and societal decision making continues even after the colonizers have invaded the I(g)bo villages. The following day after Okonkwo and the village elders are released from prison, there is a village meeting concerning the District Commissioner and the British missionaries. Achebe (2017) writes, "When Okonkwo and Obierika got to the meeting place there were already so many people that if one threw up a grain of sand it would not find its way to the earth again… The first man to speak to Umuofia that morning was Okikia, one of the six who had been imprisoned" (p. 201-202). Of the nine villages in attendance, not one woman was mentioned being present let alone being able to speak on the devastation taking place within their communities. From 1929 to 1930, a woman's war was taking place in southeast Nigeria and eighty women lost their lives (Ejikeme, 2017), yet in I(g)bo societies, this agency towards being politically involved was ignored, and this is demonstrated in Achebe's work despite having studied "at Nigeria's premier university" and his "gathering of oral data" (Ejikeme, 2017, p. 310). As well as this, according to Ayodele, Asantewaa, the Queen Mother of Ejisu of Ashanti people, led a 4,000 men army against British colonizers in 1896 (Ayodele, 2022). As it has been argued, *Things Fall Apart* represents a historically accurate description of the treatment of women, so it must be assumed that this barring of women from political and societal decision making is accurate to I(g)bo post/colonial times despite the history of women in politics in Africa.

Okonkwo's Distaste for the Female Attributes

Throughout the novel, Okonkwo has made clear his stance on women; he holds disdain for his father for being *agbala* – "… a playmate had told him that his father was *agbala*. That was how Okonkwo first came to know the *agbala* was not only another name for a woman, it could also mean a man who had no title" (Achebe, 2017, p. 13) –, treats other men without titles in an abhorrent way – "Without looking at the man Okonkwo had said: 'This meeting is for men.' The man who had contradicted him had no titles" (Achebe, 2017, p. 26) –, and after killing his son Ikemefuna, he falls into a depression and belittles himself for his emotions referring to himself as acting as a woman – "'When did you become a shivering old woman… you, who are known in all the nine villages for your valor in war? How can a man who has killed five men in battle fall to pieces because he has added a boy to their number? Okonkwo, you have become a woman indeed" (Achebe, 2017, p. 65). Ahmad and Baig (2015) have pinpointed the masculine attributes found in *Things Fall Apart*. According to Ahmad and Baig (2015), "Masculine attributes are: strength, bravery, sexual aggressiveness, unemotional, independence, dominance, competitiveness, decisiveness, egotistical, and adventurous" (p. 559). Through Okonkwo's actions, feelings, and the retellings of the many battles he has taken part in, it is clear that Achebe wrote Okonkwo – and many of the other male characters within *Things Fall Apart* – with these defining male attributes. These attributes found in the male characters leads into the

grounds of toxic masculinity, or as Ahmad and Baig call it "hyper-masculinity", in which men use their dominance and aggression to assert power; this is made clear in the way that, as previously discussed, Okonkwo treats his wives and children. Ahmad and Baig (2015) argue that the masculine attributes found in Okonkwo are the norm for men in Umuofian society and are constructed by the society (p. 569).

UCHENDU, THE MOTHER SUPREME, AND TOXIC MASCULINITY

Despite this, and in a stark comparison to Okonkwo, Uchendu, Okonkwo's maternal uncle, informs readers that the current view of women in Umuofian society has not always been so – or at least not so within some compounds and villages. After accidentally murdering one of the members of his village, Okonkwo and his family are sentenced to seven years exile in Mbanta, his mother's homeland. Here, he meets his uncle Uchendu, and Uchendu places his many years of knowledge and lived experience onto Okonkwo.

One of the revelations that Uchendu shares with Okonkwo is the idea that "Mother is Supreme." Uchendu asks Okonkwo why the child belongs to the father, yet is named Nneka, or Mother is Supreme. Okonkwo does not know the answer to this, nor does he know the answer why women are returned to their homeland to be buried instead of being buried with their husbands and families. Uchendu's answer to these questions is long, but all of it is necessary to illuminate the point he is making to Okonkwo. Uchendu says,

Then listen to me… It's true that a child belongs to its father. But when a father beats his child, it seeks sympathy in its mother's hut. A man belongs to his fatherland when things are good and life is sweet. But when there is sorrow and bitterness he finds refuge in his motherland. Your mother is there to protect you. She is buried there. And that is why we say that mother is supreme. Is it right that you, Okonkwo, should bring to your mother a heavy face and refuse to be comforted? Be careful or you may displease the dead. Your duty is to comfort your wives and children and take them back to your fatherland after seven years. But if you allow sorrow to weigh you down and kill you, they will all die in exile… Have you not heard the song they sing when a woman dies? *For whom is it well, for whom is it well? There is no one for whom it is well*. I have no more to say to you (Achebe, 2017, p. 134-135).

Though Uchendu aims to enlighten Okonkwo on the importance of the mother in society, this excerpt from the novel also stands as an example of the importance and power of the women in Umuofian society – the matriarchy hidden beneath the patriarchy. As previously mentioned, Southern Africa had a history of matriarchal politics that was forgotten and/or suppressed by the patriarchy. Ayodele (2022) states, Queen Amina of Zazzau, or the warrior queen, "waged a 34-year-old war on the neighbouring communities and towns as a way of expanding her territory". This expansion of Zazzau, a state within Nigeria, was due to and successful because of a woman. Uchendu highlights to Okonkwo that while men may hold the riches in society, the men would not have the power that they hold without their wives and mothers though the once-known matriarchy had been forgotten.

Along with introducing the matriarchy system in Umuofia, Uchendu also challenges the idea of toxic masculinity, or the use of dominance and aggression to assert power. After the Abame village killed a man belonging to the colonizing party, the Abame village was destroyed leaving few survivors. In a discussion with Okonkwo and Obierika, Uchendu states, "Never kill a man who says nothing … 'There is nothing to fear from someone who shouts.' Those men of Abame were fools" (Achebe, 2017, p. 140). Ahmad and Baig (2015) argue that violence, aggression, and warriorship are key components in the representation of masculine characters, but Uchendu discredits these beliefs held by Okonkwo. Uchendu is a successful man in his tribe; he had six wives, a minimum of twenty-two children, and he displays emotional strength (Achebe, 2017, p. 135). According to Ahmad and Baig's research (2015), Uchendu displays all the traits of a masculine character except the violent tendencies, and he, in some reader's opinions, is one of the most enjoyed male characters in *Things Fall Apart*.

Returning again to Suleri's (1992) argument, Achebe – though it is clear he favors machismo in his main characters – made the conscious decision to place Uchendu into the story to counter the ideals of Okonkwo; not only this, but Uchendu is placed into the story during a pivotal moment where there is no return for

Okonkwo: he is to face his actions and grow, or he is to meet his demise. Though Okonkwo does not take much from the teachings of Uchendu, the feminist themes found in part three of *Things Fall Apart* are clear.

CONCLUSION

This paper has explored the post/colonial elements of Chinua Achebe's themes in *Things Fall Apart* using a transnational and post/colonial feminist analytical methods. Using Suleri's research, it is understood that Achebe, in being a male, depicts the post/colonial women's experience accurately as they are used as plot devices and are side characters to Okonkwo's main story. The discussion contains that of the male perspective in relation to the treatment of women, the roles of women, how women in Umuofian – I(g)bo – society have been silenced due to the patriarchy, the role of the female savior child, the barring of women from political and societal decisions, and the idea of the matriarchy all within *Things Fall Apart*. As stated by Spivak (2010), "… the mode of production narrative is the final reference, these women are insufficiently represented or representable in that narration" (p. 21). This is true because, while Achebe's story is historically accurate, he fails to represent the African woman's urgency and drive; though Achebe provides readers with a sincere, yet cruel, depiction of African life for women, it is lacking in the matter of Achebe not providing the inner-monologue of the three wives or female children akin to the representation of the inner-workings of Okonkwo, his male children, and other important males within *Things Fall Apart*. This paper deduces that *Things Fall Apart* is, in many respects, a foundation of an ideological disagreement. While it represents a post/colonial text written by a male author in which women are not represented to the degree to which they would be later in novels by contemporary Nigerian women authors, such as Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, it still constitutes a groundbreaking post/colonial novel of the 1950s where patriarchal stereotypes are challenged by representations of matriarchal communities and males who contradict patriarchal norms.

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STATISTICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS OF ISLAM AND FEMINISM IN MOROCCAN NEWSPAPERS

NAJWA BOUYARMANE

Najwa Bouyarmane, Assistant Professor

Faculty of Law, Economics and Social Sciences, Mohammedia, Hassan II University of Casablanca, Morocco

ABSTRACT

One of the multidisciplinary aspects of this article is feminism and Islam. Before dealing with it as an integral part or not of the journalistic discourse statistical analysis; this attempt to have a closer understanding of feminism as a social movement and as an ideology, is considered as important.

Feminism is a range of political movements, ideologies, and social movements that share a common goal: to define, establish, and achieve political, economic, personal, and social rights for women. This includes seeking to establish educational and professional opportunities for women that are equal to such opportunities for men. Feminist theory, which emerged from feminist movements, aims to understand the nature of gender in equality by examining women's social roles and lived experience; it has developed theories in a variety of disciplines in order to respond to issues concerning gender. Numerous feminist movements and ideologies have developed over the years and represent different viewpoints and aims. Some forms of feminism have been criticized for taking into account only white, middle class, and educated perspectives. This criticism led to the creation of ethnically specific or multicultural forms of feminism, including black feminism, and intersectional feminism. Feminism or the liberation of women seems to be a topic of international concern. The following study aims at closely making a statistical discourse analysis of a Moroccan newspaper article by mainly focusing on Islam and feminism.

Keywords: discourse analysis, feminism, Islam, newspapers, Morocco

TRANSLATION OF THE ARTICLE "VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN: A HUMILIATION FOR WOMAN AND AN ALIBI FOR MAN" FROM ARABIC INTO ENGLISH

A non-final statistical repost about the violence exerted on women has come to record 224 cases of all sorts of aggression according to the cases submitted to the Union through the period extending from the beginning of January 2006 till the middle of the current month.

The head of the Union of Work for Women on the occasion of the world's commemoration on the 25 February of every year, the International Day of combating violence against women, said: that this phenomenon has started to elicit a lot of concerns in our country regarding the recorded results.

And has stressed that it is a shame that Morocco as a Muslim country, knows such figures which reflect the growth of the phenomenon of violence against women; calling on the refusal to take for granted that the problem is not alarming, insisting that violence exists in Morocco, and that we should resist it (counter it, confront it) by all possible means.

The recent reports of the Help Centers affiliated to the Union of Work for Women, revealed that violence against women in Morocco does not make a difference between housewives, engineers, the educated and those having a high status. So that physical violence ranks first among other various aspects of violence exerted against Moroccan women.

The listening Center affiliated to the Union of Work for Women in Rabat, has revealed a year ago that policemen, soldiers and highway police rank second with a 2.3 % rate in relation to violence against women, after the unemployed who reach the rate of 44,62 %, while the workers and employees rank after with a 9,64 % rate, whereas those having various small trades and the migrant workers come last on the board of enumeration with an ,41% rate and 6,46% besides the retired and the teachers with 5,44% and 2,46%.

The Union of Work for Women considers that the government has still a long way to go through to bring justice to woman and put an end to the hand of tyranny that prevents her of her rights, considering the initiative in this matter as an encouraging work, yet it is still timid as it has stressed the importance of pushing towards a change in the way of dealing with this question from character of voluntary and conscience raising to a complete institutional work, says the Union of Work for Women, the largest non-governmental organization defending women's causes in Morocco.

The director of the Union said that the number of Centers affiliated to her, which are about 20 centers; spreading through the cities of Casablanca, Rabat, Fes, Tangier, Tetuan and Oujda, has successfully received dozens of women throughout the year in a complex psychological state.

A previous report of the Union of Work for Women about the activities of the Aid Centers affiliated to it in both Casablanca and Rabat has revealed results that can be seen (described) as important in relation to the revelation of social, economic and psychological circumstance and cause of the growth of the phenomenon of violence and its various aspects against woman in Moroccan society.

INTRODUCTION: IDENTIFICATION OF THE ARTICLE

The article **"Violence against Women: a Humiliation for Woman and an Alibi for Man"** is identified in journalistic terminology as an "Op. Ed", which is an abbreviation of "opposite the editorial page".

It is a written prose piece, like an essay, typically published by a newspaper or magazine which expresses the opinion of a named author usually not affiliated with the publication editorial board. Op. Eds are different from both editorials (opinion pieces submitted by editorial board members) and "letters to the editor" (opinion pieces submitted by readers). It is published on a page of a newspaper where varying opinions are expressed by columnists, commentators and essayists.

An Op. Ed piece derives its name from originally having appeared opposite the editorial page in a newspaper. Today, the term is used more widely to represent a column that represents the strong, informed and focused opinion of the writer on an issue of relevance to a target audience. The specific elements to be considered in a good Op. Ed article are:

A framework of analysis. It is a matter of intellectual honesty and discipline but it is also a marketing tool.

An intellectual problem. It means a problem that needs to be solved by reasoning. The problem should arise from the news, or from some larger public concern.

An analysis and argument

A conclusion where the problem should be solved. There should be a call to action. The call to act does not have to be directed necessarily to the person who actually reads the newspaper. But it should be aimed at someone within the general sphere of influence, who might plausibly take the action being recommended.

The range of tone or style used in these articles can be contemplative, conversational, descriptive, experienced, informative, informed, introspective, observant, plaintive, reportorial, self-effacing, sophisticated or humorous, among many other possibilities.

It should have: clarity, coherence, unity, and simplicity. The voice and tone can be conversational, but would sometimes require an authoritative voice. There may be recourse to direct quotations and paraphrasing for accuracy. In addition to the consistency of opinion throughout the Op. Ed or column, the writer should credit all sources, though formal citations are not necessary.

As an Op. Ed is an opinion piece that freelance writers may find themselves writing on behalf of a client, such as a non-profit or business, the Op. Ed is a chance for the organization to garner some publicity for themselves and to perhaps sway public opinion about an issue. "It is one kind of article or piece opinion that freelance writers who specialize in journalism writing may find themselves producing"[1] says Allena Tapia, a freelance writing expert. This can be an instance of what is called "ghost writing for the freelancer, written in answer to a piece of news or to another opinion within the newspaper"[2].

In the following section, I will assess to what extent the above mentioned criteria in Op. Ed articles are met by this article chosen for study, namely **"Violence against Women, a Humiliation for Woman and an Alibi for Man"**, written by Mohammed Sliki, a freelancer, and published by *Al Ahdath Al Maghribia*.

The article **"Violence against Women: a Humiliation for Woman and an Alibi for Man"** is taken from *Al Ahdath Al Maghribia*. Founded in 1999 and published in Arabic by "Entreprise Maghrebine de Media", it is headquartered in Casablanca and its editor-in-chief, Mokhtar Laghzioui is known for his outspokenness on several taboo subjects in Morocco. It is qualified as a daily Moroccan tabloid, typically popular in style and dominated by sensational stories and lurid news, usually heavily illustrated with many pictures and short, simple reports. It is designed to appeal to a mass audience or readership, sometimes vulgarly sensational with: big headlines, a lot of pictures and light articles on popular subjects, featuring stories of violence, crime or scandal and other less serious news items.

Al Ahdath Al Maghribia was established by Mohammed Brini and other socialist dissidents. Strongly critical of Youssfi's government *Al Ahdath Al Maghribia* became one of the largest selling daily, with a circulation of 120.000. The success of this newspaper is said to be due in part to the letters of the editor, which often discuss taboo subjects. Although the paper has an independent socialist political leaning, it is

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[1] Allena, Tapia. "Oped - What it is and How to Write It". https://www.thebalance.com/oped-what-is-it-and-how-to-write-it-1360714. (2017).
[2] Ibid.

close to the socialist Union of Popular Forces. The newspaper is controversial for pioneering many genres of stories not pursued before by other newspapers. It is both high and low brow, offering articles of both philosophy and personal advice columns.[3]

Discourse Analysis of "Violence against Women: a Humiliation for Woman and an Alibi for Man" by Mohammed Sliki

Statement 1
A non-fictional statistical report about the violence exerted on women has come to record 334 cases of all sorts of aggression according to the cases submitted to the Union through the period extending from the beginning of January 2006 till the middle of the current month.

Before starting the analysis of the article, we should consider the title: **"Violence against Women: a Humiliation for Woman and an Alibi for Man"** which can be seen as a statement formulated to attract the attention and interest of readers in general, and female readers in particular. Such a title is itself an identification of the newspaper from which it is taken, *Al Ahdath al Maghribia*, as a paper whose editorial line is social, and feminist as it is concerned with a social, phenomenon which presumably Islamic, or Islamist newspapers like "Atttajdid" and "Almahajja" do not deal with in the way *Al Ahdath Al Maghribia* does. The article in question, although it makes a rather timid reference to Islam, when it qualifies Morocco as a "Muslim country", attempts to stress its objective and factual and somehow secular stance from the very first sentence, by including numbers and such terms as "statistical report" that "has come to record 334 cases", and dates: "through the period extending from the beginning of January 2006 till the middle of the current month", "the current month" to be inferred from the date of the publication of the article. Still, the use of the passive voice in the 1st sentence denotes imprecision and lack or accuracy.

Statement 2
The head of the Union of Work for Women, on the occasion of the world's commemoration on the 25 February of every year, of the International Day of combating violence against women, said: that this phenomenon has started to cause a lot of concerns in our country under **the light of the recorded results.**

[3] Information taken from: Aziz Douai. "In Democracy's Shadow: The 'New' Independent Press and the Limits of Media Reform in Morocco". Oshawa: University of Ontario. *Westminster Papers in Communication and Culture* (2009) (University of Westminster, London), Vol. 6 (1): 7-26. ISSN 1744-6708 (Print); 1744-6716 (Online).

This sentence like the preceding one, alongside with information, strives at being precise and factual by clarifying the identity of "the Union" which appears in the first sentence, although the recipient would expect this identity to be given in the first line when "the Union" is cited. This may be seen as a journalistic strategy to arouse the reader's curiosity and the make "him" and more probably "her", wonder what is this Union that cares and works for women's welfare and well-being. The precision is also reminded through the date of the 25th February and its identification as "the International Day of Combating Violence against Women".

Yet the other components of the sentence are characterized by vagueness such as "phenomenon", "concerns", and "the recorded results".

Statement 3
She underlined that it is a shame that Morocco as a Muslim country, knows such figures which reflect the growth of the phenomenon of violence against women, calling on the refusal to accept that the problem is not alarming, insisting that violence exists in Morocco, and that we should confront it by all possible means.

The use of the term "Muslim" in the phrase "Morocco as a Muslim Country" is very significant. First, it is the only time in the article where there is a reference to Islam. But this reference provides no further analysis or explanations by quotations that would explain why such violence against women "is a shame" in a Muslim country. The reader understands that the article is not about Islam and feminism, but aims at being a socio-political analysis of a given phenomenon. The term "Muslim" is itself neutral and "politically" more correct than the use of such terms as Islamic or Islamist.

The last component of the statement 3 is also important when it uses the pronoun "we" which can lend such different interpretations as:

"We" Can be the editorial board and the readers, establishing an emotional bond between the two parties, and thus securing the sympathy and hence the interest of the readers.

"We" Can be the editorial board only, hence elevating the journalists' function above the readers', and establishing a relationship of inferiority and dependence on the parts of readers expected to be passive recipients of news-makers.

"We" Can be a reference to civil society in general.

"We" Can be a specific reference to the Union of Work for Women.

Statement 4

> **The recent report of the Help Centers affiliated to the Union of work for women, revealed that violence against women in Morocco does not make a distinction between housewives, engineers, the educated ones, and the ones with a high (social) status.**

This sentence is important in the composition of the article of **"Violence against Women: a Humiliation for Woman and an Alibi for Man".** Starting from this sentence, we can see that the article follows the reversed pyramid of the exposition of news, moving from the general to the specific. With the statement 4, the reader starts to understand that the focus of the article is maybe as much **"Violence against Women: a Humiliation for Woman and an Alibi for Man"** as "the Union of Work for Women" and it is a politically feminist and propagandist bias. It is including women from all social strata, aims at addressing itself to a large panel of women, all the more that unlike the instances in the preceding sentences characterized by vagueness, here we have detailed information about the women victims of violence and their social identity.

Statement 5
So that physical violence ranks first among other aspects of violence exerted against Moroccan women.

This sentence is simultaneously precise and imprecise. It puts forth "physical violence", with the implication that the other forms of violence are either less important or less current, presumably the "psychological" forms of violence. The article does not choose to dwell on either, because this is not its focal interest.

Statement 6
The listening Center affiliated to the Union of Work for Women in Rabat, revealed a year ago that policemen and soldiers rank second with   **a 82.2% rate in relation to violence against women, after the unemployed who reach the rate of 44,62% while the workers and the employees come after with a 9.64% rate, whereas those having various small trades and the migrant workers come last on the board of enumeration with a 8.41% and 6.46% rate besides the retired and the teachers with 5.44% and 2.46%.**

Reaching this paragraph, the reader starts to realize that the focus of the article is not primarily the violence exerted on women, be it physical or psychological. We notice the sustained repetitiveness of "the Union of Work for Women', and its listening Center, both acclaimed for their endeavor to help women, backed up by a detailed statistical account of the social classes involved in this violence against women. The lengthy enumeration of the percentage of violence is justified by the following paragraph. It is a preliminary step

before launching an attack against the government's a laxity in that matter. The implication is that the Union of work for women is doing much more than the government.

Statement 7

The Union of Work for Women considers that the government has still a way to go to bring justice to women and leave the hand of tyranny that prevents her from getting her rights considering the initiative taken in this matter as an encouraging act, yet it is still timid, or it has underlined the importance of pushing towards a change in the manner of dealing with this question from its character of being voluntary and conscience raising to a complete institutional work, says the Union of Work for women, the largest non-governmental organization defending women's causes in Morocco.

We notice again the repetition of "the Union of Work for Women". The reader starts if not to grasp, rather to notice that it is the subject matter of the article, rather than violence against women. Per se, this gives the article a political and ideological stamp which was not delectable from the title or the first paragraph. Hence the anaphoric dimension of the topic, which means that the reader has to go back to the text in order to be able to understand the writer's ultimate intention, i.e. publicizing "the Union of Work for Women". Hence the context of the article becomes clearly political. This inference is substantiated by the following sentence which proffers an unambiguous criticism of the government's dealing with this question and its incapacity "to bring justice to women". This deplorable situation is conveyed through the insertion of a metaphorical expression "lift the hand of tyranny that prevents her from getting her rights". Yet, the metaphor is all the more vague that it does not identify whose tyrannical hand prevents woman from enjoying her rights, almost suggesting that the government itself has a hand in the matter.

The Union of Work for Women in this part of the context starts to gain more value and power than the government, since it is invested with the power to judge the government's inability to deal effectively with this problem, "considering its initiative…timid".

The long sentence constituting this statement is made by a series of statements that start with the repetition and end with the glorification of the "The Union of Work for Women", "The largest non-governmental organization defending women's causes in Morocco". The note of triumph detectable in this sentence positions the Union of work for Women in a state of opposition to a government whose treatment of this question is not effective.

Statement 8

The director of the Union said that the number of centers affiliated to it which are about 20 centers, spreading through the cities of Casablanca, Rabat, Fez, Tangiers, Tetuan and Oujda, has successfully received dozens of

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> **women throughout the year in a complex psychological state.**

We notice that the major syntactic components deal with the Union of Work for Women, not with violence against women per se. This confirms the perception that the article is essentially a publicity for the Union. The latter is said to have about 20 centers, in most Moroccan cities. The focus is still statistical and numerical:

There are 5 major cities

20 centers

Dozens of women

Throughout the year

The various components of the sentence reach a crescendo before the end of the sentence. The culminating point is reached at "throughout the year". The last component "in a complex psychological state" is in a note of decrescendo, or diminuendo. In addition to its being the only component that acts as a reminder of the discourse topic, which is **"Violence against Women: a Humiliation for Woman and an Alibi for Man"**, it is characterized by vagueness. There is a discrepancy between the topic and the discourse content. In relation to the topic, the reader would expect an elaboration of the "complex psychological state". Such elaboration is not provided as the topic and the context are about the Union of Work for Women rather than **"Violence against Women: a Humiliation for Woman and an Alibi for Man"**

Statement 9

A previous report of the Union of work for women about the activities of the Help Centers affiliated to it in both Casablanca and Rabat has revealed results that can be considered as important in relation to the revelation of social, economic and psychological circumstances and causes of the growth of the phenomenon of violence and its various aspects against women in Moroccan society.

This final part of the article comes as an ultimate confirmation of the reader's perception, growing as the propagandist discourse for the Union of Work for Women. It concludes on a note of triumph for what the union has achieved, and is indirectly exposed as a reminder of the laxity and inefficacy of the government in dealing with the issue of violence against women in Moroccan society.

This last part of the article is particularly characterized by vagueness and imprecision. This is conveyed through the absence of illustration or explanation when it says "a previous report", "veiled results that can be described as important", "circumstances and causes", "the phenomenon of violence and its different aspects".

"VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN: A HUMILIATION FOR WOMAN AND AN ALIBI FOR MAN": STYLISTIC FEATURES

The article **"Violence against Women: a Humiliation for Woman and an Alibi for Man"** is accompanied by an illustration, drawn as a caricature, to illustrate the issue of violence against women.

The picture which is a caricature, takes a third of the page devoted to the article. The aim is to attract the attention of the reader along with the sensational title. It portrays the woman on whom violence is being exerted in a posture of defeat and the man, supposedly the husband, in a posture of superior strength and victory. The picture is meant like a final boxing round, after which the wife is knocked out, as indicated by the boxing gloves and the woman's losing consciousness after being knocked out.

The fact that she is thinking about the reformed family code, "Al Muduwana" is significant. It implies that the wife was asking for some right granted to her by the New Family code, or that she challenged her husband on the basis that the New Family Code would defend her.

The husband's answer is that he does not give any value to the revised "Muduwana", which can be of no help for the wife, for the husband is both stronger than the wife and the Muduwana together.

In this context, we have an indirect reminder that the New Family Code is useless in changing Moroccan patriarchal mentality, and that violence against women and the obliteration of their rights is ongoing. It stresses also that modernism and the modern version of "Al Muduwana" protect neither the traditional woman, nor, in particular the modern woman as illustrated by the picture of a woman wearing a modern dress, who was wrongly led to believe that both could give her privileges and rights. As a confirmation of the title, the modern educated women do not fare better than the ignorant ones, as far as violence is concerned.

From the analysis of the article entitled **"Violence against Women: a Humiliation for Woman and an Alibi for Man"**, the editorial line of the newspaper from which it is excerpted is revealed. The first noticeable characteristic are the very long sentences, with hardly any punctuation, which make one sentence, cover a whole paragraph. The second characteristic is that of repetitiveness, particularly of the name of "the Union of Work for Women", sometimes twice in the same sentence-paragraph, and seven times in the article.

The article, being essentially factual, is devoid of emotions but also of argumentation. It is also characterized by vagueness and imprecision. It denotes a lack of journalistic professionalism and even objectivity, for it mentions statistics and reports without mentioning their source of information. This apparent lack of professionalism can be explained by the potential audience/readers, to whom the article is addressed.

Al Ahdath Al Maghribia is known for being a newspaper relying on sensational information for a low middle-class readership which, in general are neither intellectuals nor highly educated. Hence, the liberty taken by the writer of the article who seems to address readers who do not bother about exact precision, authenticity and objectivity from such a newspaper as *Al Ahdath Al Maghribia*.

This is probably not surprising since the writer of the article, Mohamed Sliki is a freelancer. Hiring freelance journalists by *Al Ahdath AL Maghribia* does not make either the journalist or the newspaper responsible for subjectivity, inaccuracy or lack of argumentation.

Concerning the interest of this article to the topic of the thesis, i.e. Islam and feminism, content and tone are congruent with the editorial policy and bias of *Al Ahdath Al Maghribia*, which align themselves with secularism and the liberalization of religious practices in Moroccan society. Its distancing itself from religion is obviously detectable from its hardly making any reference to Islamic teachings regarding the treatment of women, citing neither Quran nor the prophetic tradition which abound with such instructions and references. The neutrality of the tone endows it with some feminism. However, it is clearly an ideological feminism with more proper political interests of self-promotion (that of the Union of Work for Women) rather than really defending women's cause or promoting their rights.

The same stance of secularism and sensationalism is to be found in the next article, taken from **Al Ahdath Al Maghribia** as well, for the sake of comparison and the assessment and confirmation or refutation of the conclusive remarks concerning the secular editorial bias of this Moroccan newspaper.

Appendix 1: The Original Article in Arabic of "Violence against Women: a Humiliation for Woman and an Alibi for man'

لا يفرق بين ربات البيوت والمهندسات والمتعلمات وصاحبات المقام الرفيع

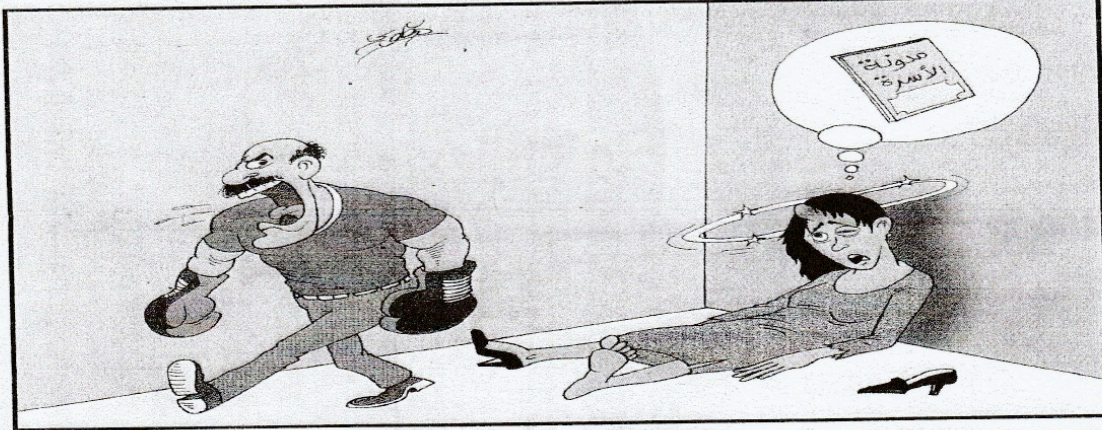# تعنيف النساء «حكرة» للمرأة وسبة للرجل

محمد سليكي

خلص تقرير إحصائي غير نهائي في العنف الممارس ضد النساء إلى تسجيل 334 حالة اعتداء بمختلف الأشكال حسب الحالات الواردة على الاتحاد خلال الفترة الممتدة من بداية يناير 2006 إلى منتصف الشهر الجاري.

وقالت نزهة العلوي، رئيسة اتحاد العمل النسائي، بمناسبة تخليد العالم في 25 نونبر من كل سنة، اليوم العالمي لمحاربة العنف الممارس ضد النساء، أن هذه الظاهرة أضحت تثير كثيرا من المخاوف ببلادنا على ضوء النتائج المسجلة.

وأكدت نزهة العلوي أنه «من العار أن يعرف المغرب هذه الأرقام التي تعكس تنامي ظاهرة العنف ضد النساء كبلد مسلم، داعية إلى عدم التسليم باعتبار المسألة غير مقلقة، مؤكدة أن العنف موجود بالمغرب، وعلينا متاهضة بكل الوسائل الممكنة ومخصناش نستكتو عليه».

وأبرزت تقارير مراكز النجدة التابعة لاتحاد العمل النسائي أن العنف ضد النساء بالمغرب لا يفرق بين ربات البيوت والمهندسات والمتعلمات وصاحبات المقام الرفيع، إذ يحتل العنف الجسدي الرتبة الأولى ضمن أشكال العنف المتنوعة التي تمارس في حق المرأة المغربية.

وكشف مركز الاستماع التابع لاتحاد العمل النسائي بالرباط قبل عام من اليوم أن رجال الأمن والجند والدرك يحتلون الصف الثاني بنسبة 2.82 في المائة من حيث تعنيف النساء بعد عديمي العمل البالغين نسبة 44.62 في المائة، وياتي العمال والموظفون في الصفوف الموالية بنسب 9.64 في المائة و 9.23 في المائة في ما يذيل كل من أصحاب الحرف المختلفة الصغرى والعمال المهاجرين صبورة التصنيف بنسبة 8.41 في المائة و 6.46 في المائة إلى جانب المتقاعدين ورجال التعليم ب 5.44 في المائة و 2.46 في المائة.

ويرى اتحاد العمل النسائي فإن الحكومة أمامها قطع أشواط كبيرة لإنصاف المرأة ورفع ما العنف المسلط على حقوقها، معتبرا ما بادرت إليه في هذا الصدد هو عمل مشجع. لكن لا يزال خجولا، إذ شدد على أهمية الدفع بالانتقال إلى طريقة التعاطي مع هذا الملف من الطابع التحسيسي التطوعي إلى العمل المؤسساتي المتكامل، علما أن «العنف كاين لعيالات، ماشنكتوش عليه»، يقول اتحاد العمل النسائي أكبر تنظيم غير حكومي يدافع عن قضايا المرأة بالمغرب.

أرقام مخجلة

أكد تقرير صدر عن اتحاد العمل النسائي بالمغرب أن مركز الرباط وحده وردت عليه 602 حالة متعلقة بمختلف الاعتداءات ضد المرأة خلال الفترة الممتدة من شهر يناير إلى نهاية شهر نونبر من العام الماضي، من أهمها الاعتداء الجسدي ب 192 حالة، والعقاب الغذائي ب 119حالة، ناهيك عن طلاق تعسفي ب 105 حالات، ومغادرة بيت الزوجية ب 85 حالة، إلى جانب مغادرة العائلة بنسبة 14.12 في المائة، والطلاق ب 6.31 في المائة، وعدم تسجيل الأطفال بدفتر الحالة المدنية ب 2.66 في المائة، ثم الاغتصاب وتعدد الزوجات واختطاف الأطفال ما بين 0.83 في المائة، و 1.56 في المائة.

وأضاف التقرير أن مركز الاستماع بالدار البيضاء استقبل ابتداء من فاتح يناير إلى شهر يونيو الماضي أزيد من 392 حالة عنف ضد المرأة، توزعت بين

في استقبال عشرات النساء على مدار العام في حالات نفسية معقدة. وكشف تقرير سابق لمنظمة اتحاد العمل النسائي حول أنشطة مراكز النجدة التابعة له بكل من الدار البيضاء والرباط إلى نتائج يمكن وصفها بالمهمة على مستوى كشف الأسباب والظروف السوسيواجتماعية والاقتصادية والسيكلوجية المتحكمة في تنامي ظاهرة العنف واختلاف أشكاله ضد المرأة في المجتمع المغربي.

العقاب الغذائي، الذي احتل الصف الأول ب 98 حالة، أي بنسبة 25.00 في المائة، يلي الاعتداء الجسدي ب 78حالة، أي 19.89 في المائة كنسبة معلنة، ثم مغادرة بيت الزوجية ب 36 حالة (9.18 في المائة)، ومغادرة العائلة بنسبة 2.29في المائة، وحالات تعدد الزوجات التي تجاوزت 8 حالات (2.04في المائة)، وطلبات الطلاق التعسفي التي تجاوزت 30 حالة (7.65 في المائة). واحتل الاغتصاب مركزا متقدما بتسجيله 18 حالة، إلى جانب العنف النفسي بنسبة 7.14 في المائة، والتهديد بالموت ب 12 حالة، دون أن ننسى عدم تسجيل الأبناء في دفتر الحالة المدنية بنسبة 6.22 في المائة.

العاملون في الأمن في طليعة معنفي الزيجات

كشف مركز الاستماع التابع لاتحاد العمل النسائي بالرباط أن رجال الأمن والجند والدرك يحتلون الصف الثاني بنسبة 2.82 في المائة من حيث تعنيف النساء، بعد عديمي العمل البالغين نسبة 44.62 في المائة، وياتي العمال والموظفون في الصفوف الموالية بنسب 9.64 في المائة، ويذيل كل من أصحاب الحرف المختلفة الصغرى والعمال المهاجرين صبورة التصنيف بنسبة 5.44 في المائة، إلى جانب المتقاعدين ورجال التعليم ب 2.46 في المائة.

وأشار مركز البيضاء خلال الفترة نفسها إلى أن أصحاب الحرف المختلفة يحتلون نصف المعنفين ب 55 حالة متبوعين بالمجهولين ب 40 حالة والرتبة الثالثة ينفرد بها عديمو العمل ب 33 حالة يليهم العمال بنسبة 12.60 في المائة والموظفون ب 24 حالة عنف، ومن ورائهم التجار البيضاء 8.82 في المائة والعمال بالمهجر ب 15 حالة ثم المتقاعدين ب 12 حالة عنف ضد الزوجات، فيما يحتل الأطباء والمحامون والمهندسون صفوف المعنفين نفسها 2.10 في المائة لقاء 1.26 في المائة. ويتقدم معدل سن المعنفين ب 25 سنة فما فوق بالنسبة إلى الرباط وما بين 25 سنة و 58 سنة بالنسبة إلى الدار البيضاء. وحسب التقرير ذاته دائما، فإن الأمين أكثر ممارسة للعنف ضد النساء بنسبة 52.51 في المائة بالرباط و 22 حالة بالبيضاء، متبوعين بأصحاب مستوى التعليم الابتدائي ب 23.59 في المائة والإعدادي والثانوي ب 9.74 في المائة والجامعي معدل 1.44 في المائة.

لا فرق بين ربات البيوت وصاحبات المقام الرفيع

تكاد التقارير الإحصائية الأخيرة لمراكز الاستماع التابعة لاتحاد العمل النسائي الناشطة في ميدان مكافحة العنف ضد المرأة ومحاربة التمييز أن تتطابق في خلاصاتها حول النتائج المتحصل عليها بخصوص هذه الظاهرة من خلال الحالات الواردة عليها على مدار السنة، ولاتختلف في الإشارة إلى أن العنف ضد النساء بالمغرب لا يفرق بين ربات البيوت والمهندسات والمتعلمات وصاحبات المقام الرفيع.

ويحتل العنف الجسدي الرتبة الأولى ضمن أشكال العنف المتنوعة التي تمارس في حق المرأة كما تؤكد ذلك أرقام مركز النجدة لمساعدة النساء ضحايا العنف التابع لاتحاد العمل النسائي.إذ خلص تقرير إحصائي غير نهائي في الموضوع حسب نزهة العلوي رئيسة اتحاد العمل النسائي إلى تسجيل 334 حالة اعتداء بمختلف الأشكال حسب الحالات الواردة على الاتحاد خلال الفترة الممتدة من بداية يناير 2006 إلى منتصف الشهر الجاري، فيما بلغ مجموع الاعتداءات التي طالت نساء المغرب ما بين 2004 و 2006 التي عرضت على مراكز الاتحاد 745 اعتداء متنوع الأشكال.

و عبرت نزهة العلوي عن قلق الاتحاد تجاه مستوى همجية بعض الأزواج الذين يلجاون على حد قولها «إلى كسر أذرع وأنوف وأيدي وضلوع شريكاتهم في الحياة بل وأحيانا تهشيم أسنانهن وإلحاق أضرار بليغة ببصرهن ووجوههن» مشيرة إلى أن الاتحاد أحدث مراكز الاستماع والمساعدة النفسية والقانونية للنساء ضحايا العنف.

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WOMEN LEADERSHIP IN HIGHER LEARNING INSTITUTIONS: MALAYSIA'S CHALLENGING PATH TO SDG 5

RAFIDAH ABD KARIM, RAMLEE MUSTAPHA, NURUL SHATIRAH ZAINOL

Rafidah Abd Karim, Dr, Universiti Teknologi MARA Perak Branch Tapah Campus, Malaysia, **Ramlee Mustapha**, Professor.Dr, Sultan Idris Education University, Malaysia, **Nurul Shatirah Zainol**, Miss, Universiti Teknologi MARA Perak Branch Seri Iskandar Campus, Malaysia

ABSTRACT

Education is an important factor in a society's human capital, social, economic, technological, and political development. SDG 5 of the 2030 Agenda aims to encourage women's full participation and equal leadership opportunities at all levels of political and economic decision-making. However, recent research shows that the gender disparity in higher education have long been recognised as a critical problem and closely reflects the ongoing gender inequality in the labour market. This paper explored the issues and challenges in regard to women leadership in Malaysian higher learning institutions for gender equality. A semi-structured interviews were conducted with five junior and senior lecturers from Malaysian public and private universities. From the findings, several themes emerged from the study. The findings show women in Malaysian public higher learning institutions faced challenges to become an academic leader and they emphasised that they also should be given more opportunities to hold top leaderships positions in Malaysian higher learning institutions. Therefore, the desire to work towards true gender equality within our academic communities and institutions is now required, with the hope that more measures will be developed beyond our universities, in our nations, and in our communities, toward the realisation of this human right our world.

INTRODUCTION

The Sustainable Development Goal 5 (SDG 5) was established by United Nations in 2015 and the main concern of this goal is to promote gender equality (Somerville & Pesantes, 2022). This agenda can be seen as another form of current effort that is developed to bring forward or to address women's issues. This claim was supported by Hirsu et al. (2019) where it was stated that this agenda emphasized on achieving gender equality and empowering all women and girls in particular, and its objective is to include more female opinions in discussions about gender issues. According to Peake and Nyasimi (2015), this agenda might bring in results to more social justice and gender equality and eventually create a setting where all women and girls can exercise their rights without facing prejudice. To summarize, the SDG 5 is a movement that was constructed by United Nations in order to recognize the problems and issues that hinder women from reaching gender equality and bring forward the efforts that can be done for women to empower themselves.

Under the SDG 5 construct, the Goal 5 target consists on nine specific targets to be realized which are: (1) ending all types of prejudice against women and girls worldwide, (2) abolish trafficking, sexual exploitation, and all other forms of violence against women and girls in both the public and private domains, 3) ending all harmful practices, including female genital mutilation, child marriage, and forced marriage, (4) acknowledge and value unpaid care and household work by offering public services, infrastructure, and social protection programmes, as well as by encouraging shared responsibility within the home and family as is appropriate for your country, (5) assure the equal opportunity for leadership at all levels of decision-making in political, economic, and public life, as well as full and effective involvement for women, (6) ensure universal access to sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights as agreed in accordance with the Program of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development and the Beijing Platform for Action and the outcome documents of their review conferences, (7) implement changes to ensure that women have equal access to economic resources, including land ownership and control, financial services, inheritance, and natural resources, in conformity with national laws, (8) increase the use of enabling technology, especially information and communications technology, to support women's empowerment, and (9) implement and reinforce sensible laws and policies that will promote gender equality and women's and girls' empowerment at all levels. Out of all Goal 5 targets listed above, the one that we will further discuss in this study will be on the fifth target (SDG5) assure the equal opportunity for leadership at all levels of decision-making in political, economic, and public life, as well as full and effective involvement for women. This specific target mainly focusses on the issues related to women leadership opportunity. Specifically, the opportunity and possibility for women to hold leadership position in higher education institutions and the challenges for women to achieve gender equality in the higher education field will be explored.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Gender Equality

Gender equality is a complex phenomenon that has given rise to numerous policies in countries all over the world. Women face discrimination regardless of where they live. It touches on all aspects of life, including health and nutrition, education, employment, and politics (Karim et al., 2021). European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE, 2019) stated that equality does not imply that men and women will become equal, but rather that each gender's rights, obligations, and opportunities will be independent of the other's gender at birth. It was also stated that gender equality emphasizes that both men and women's interests, needs, and priorities are taken into account, recognizing the diversity of various groupings of men and women, and that women should not be the only ones concerned about gender equality; males should also be fully involved. From this, it can be said that gender equality is clearly an issue that concerns both sides of gender parties and it is not a biased idea of taking sides of only one gender group.

The concept and idea of gender equality is well received and recognized globally nowadays, as reported in the study conducted by Horowitz and Fetterolf (2020), out of 34 nations that the Pew Research Center surveyed, 94% of people believe it is critical for women to have the same rights as men, with 74% saying it is extremely crucial. This shows that the persistent efforts done by the past researchers to spread the awareness about gender equality has paid off as people are starting to accept and understand the concept of it. However, the study of Belingheri et al. (2021) showed contradict findings, in which it was presented that gender equality is still far from being attained and remains across education, access to opportunities, or presence in decision-making positions. It was also described in the study that although efforts were done, the existing literature studies offer a limited perspective on gender equality issues especially regarding gender disparities in education, leadership, the percentage of women in top positions, diversity management, and gender wage inequality. This claim proves that despite many research were conducted that bring up the gender equality issues, there is still a gap in certain topics related to this issue, and among them are the topics on women's leadership opportunity and gender disparities in education. This demonstrates that more research works that focus on these topics need to be done, which indirectly supports the relevance of this current study.

Issues of Gender Equality in Malaysia

Women value gender equality more than men do in many nations, and although most people around the world support gender equality, at least 40% of respondents believe that men generally have greater possibilities than women in their nation when it comes to gaining well-paying employment and becoming community leaders (Horowitz & Fetterolf, 2020). This indicates that gender equality issues are affecting women more than they do to men, and that men tend to get more social benefits in the society compared to women. Women become the main target of violence and are more exposed to discrimination and stereotypes in the society. As reported by Ipsos (2018), sexual harassment, sexual violence, and physical violence are the top three problems that women face worldwide, and Malaysians acknowledge the same issues, with the exception of the third-most significant issue for women's equality is the sexualization of women and girls in the media. Figure 1 shows the comparison of gender equality issues faced by women in Malaysia and women from other countries around the world.
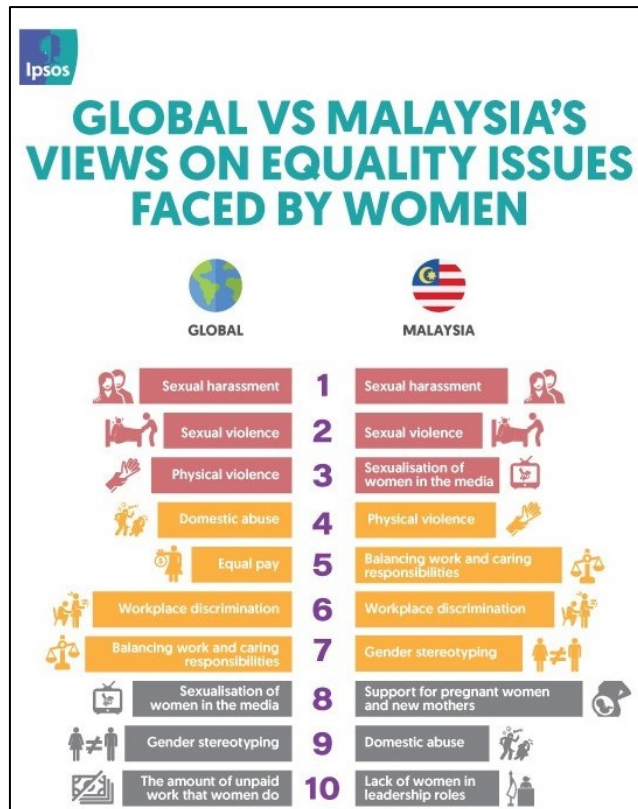
Source: Ipsos (2018)

Figure 1. Comparison of Equality Issues Faced by Women Globally and in Malaysia

Based on Figure 1, it can be seen that women all around the world including Malaysian women faced various kinds of issues that hinder them from reaching gender equality. Apart from the three most significant issues faced by women globally, including in Malaysia, women faced many other gender equality issues. Although women all around the world may face the same issues, however the significance of each issue differ. In global context, the issues related to domestic abuse, equal pay, and workplace discrimination are more significantly faced by women, while the issue of balancing work and caring responsibilities are less significant. However, in Malaysian context, the issue of balancing work and caring responsibilities are more significant than other issues, unlike women from other country. This shows that Malaysian women are facing inequalities more in terms of balancing work and managing responsibilities at home compared to other issues. When it comes to women leadership roles, unlike women from other countries, it was recorded that women in Malaysia are indeed facing issues in relation to this. The factors contributing to this problem should be explored and more solutions need to be proposed to ensure that Malaysian women are able to empower themselves and get the same opportunity as men, especially in holding top positions or leadership roles in the society.

Challenges Faced by Malaysian Women to Hold Top Positions in Higher Learning Institutions

Globally, many advances have been made to increase the quality of women's life and nowadays, women's involvement in societal roles are increasing. However, despite the increasing numbers of working women, they still face significant obstacles in obtaining managerial positions and are outnumbered by men where, as of 2016, for instance, 79.6% of men still held the majority of roles in organizations (Mokhtar, 2020). The comparison in the numbers of men and women at board level positions in an organization showed that women's involvement in decision making roles are increasing. However, although the increasing of women in decision making roles is a great sign for women's empowerment, it is still obvious and undeniable that

there is a wide gap in the opportunity for women to hold top positions in an organization. This phenomenon is an occurring issue in various career field, and higher educational sector is also not an exception. Dandan and Marques (2017) stated that many government commitments to integrate women into the development process and abolishing all forms of discrimination against them have been done, and while most of them are successful, it is not the case of higher education management and top leading posts. The claim of there is a gap in presence of women leaders in higher learning institutions is also supported by Badrolhisam et al. (2022) where it was reported that Malaysia still lags behind other nations in the proportion of female academics who hold senior leadership positions like vice chancellor, deputy vice chancellor, dean, and others. Figure 2 shows the distribution of senior position which are the Professor and Associate Professor positions in Malaysian Public Universities (Jamil et al., 2019).
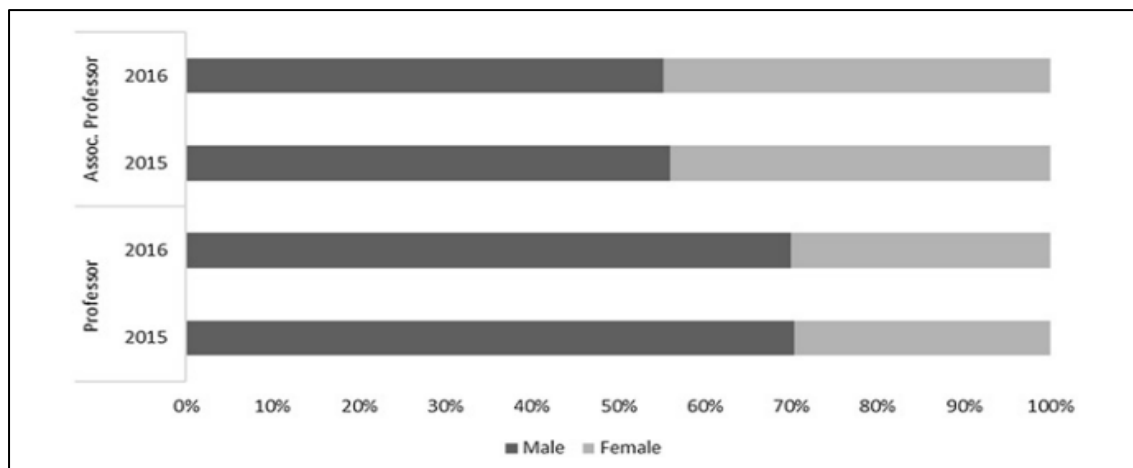
Source: Jamil et al. (2019)

Figure 2. Distribution of Male and Female in Senior Positions in Malaysian Public Universities

From this analysis, it can be concluded that men are more prone to be given the chance to hold the top management positions in Malaysian higher learning institutions. In finding out the factors that contribute to this gender disparity in top managements of Malaysian higher learning institution, the findings from the study of Almaki et al. (2016) is significant. The findings recorded that there are three major challenges faced by Muslim women leaders in Malaysia: (1) social and religious views, including gender roles, the denigration of women in leadership positions, the effects of upbringing and background, lack of trust from others, and an absence of liberty, (2) workplace conflicts such as managing various workplace personalities, work overload, a lack of leadership experience, and internal conflicts, and (3) personal issues which include integrating work and family obligations, family prioritization and support system. Badrolhisam et al. (2022) also highlighted on several factors that contributed towards the difficulties of women to climb up positions in which it was stated that women in higher educational institutions face many obstacles to advancement, including patriarchal attitudes, sociocultural biases, juggling job and family obligations, or personality traits like low self-confidence. The findings of the study also presented several traits that academic women should have to become a leader which are traits of self-determination, compassion, supportiveness and sociable traits. Therefore, we explored in detail the issues and challenges in regard to women leadership in Malaysian public higher learning institutions for gender equality, with three specific research questions:

Why women should have the opportunities to hold the top leadership positions in Malaysian Higher Learning Institutions?

What are the main barriers experienced by women aspiring to hold the top leadership positions in Malaysian Higher Learning Institutions?

How can more women hold the top leadership positions in Malaysian Higher Learning Institutions?

METHODOLOGY

The main aim of this study is to explore the issues and challenges in regard to women leadership in Malaysian higher learning institutions. The study employed a qualitative research design. The data for this study is collected qualitatively through the semi-structured interviews. This method enables researchers to collect open-ended data, learn about respondents' thoughts and perspectives on the issues of the study. This study is conducted in the setting of Malaysian public and private universities, in which the SDG 5, gender equality is explored. A total of five senior and junior lecturers from public universities and private university, were interviewed to attain their perspectives on women leadership in Malaysian higher learning institutions. All collected data are analyzed qualitatively through thematic analysis and the results and discussion of the study are presented in the next section. In this study, thematic analysis was used as the analytic approach. Thematic analysis is the study's association with the data gathered. As a result, it emphasises the approach's adaptability, which allows it to cope when data must be collected separately at different times (Miles & Huberman 1994).

Results and Discussion

The total respondents of the study were five (three female lecturers and 2 male lecturers) who came from various fields of study in the public and private higher learning institutions. The mean age of the respondents was 40 years old (30 –50 years old). Some of the respondents also hold the top positions in the institutions. The results of the semi-structured interviews from the thematic analysis showed that there were three themes emerged from the study. The three themes emerged from the qualitative analysis were (i)women qualities and skills sets, (ii) discrimination, stereotyping and family commitment and (iii) cultivate future women leaders.

Women Leadership Qualities and Skill Sets

Having female leaders in positions of influence to serve as role models is not only important for women's career advancement, but it also has broader societal implications for pay equity, changing workplace policies in ways that benefit both men and women, and attracting a more diverse workforce. Thus, a person needs a skill set which is a collection of knowledge, personal qualities, and abilities acquired through life and work. It usually combines two kinds of skills which are soft and hard skills. Besides, the good qualities are also important for achieving good life and success in work. While there is still a long way to go in closing the gender gap, being a good leader requires some talent, and for women in these positions, the position may be even more daunting. Women frequently need to prove themselves more than men and work harder to gain the respect of their peers. One thing is certain, women continue to be some of the best and most powerful leaders. Some qualities like strength, perseverance, adaptability, tenacity,and unhesitant to inquire are examples of qualities that women posses in leaderships. The findings presented the respondents' comments on the reasons why women should be given the opportunities to hold the top positions in the higher education in Malaysia.

Most of the respondents (Respondent N,Respondent R and Respondent M) felt that a good skill of planning and managing tasks and personal issues are one of the reasons why the women should have the opportunites to hold the top leadership positions in the higher learning institutions.

"Yes... because the women have good skill to planning and they can balance work and emotion..."

(Respondent N)

Likewise, Respondent R also highlighted that if the women were given the opportunity, they will provide a different perspective of leaderships. The respondent also gave comments on the negative perceptions about the women leadership should be changed because the respondent believe that the women possess a skill set and qualities for being a good leader in the organisations.

"Yes... In my opinion, when women become leaders, they can give and provide a skill set and different imaginative perspective. Furthermore... women leaders will bring forward changes in terms of structure and culture, which encourage effective solution...creative stance and unique realization can also allow them to study and reveal the details that may not miss by other people...however, women leaders should balance their emotions when making decision. They need to be cool and relax to avoid any conflict. The negative perspectives and bad thoughts towards women leaders must be changed..."

(Respondent R)

Respondent M said that the women have the abilities in decision making and collaborative skills.

"Brilliant thoughts...ability to make decisions, and can cooperate well..."

(Respondent, M)

In addition, the the Respondent Z and Respondent W felt that the women should not be discriminated for holding the top leadership positions in the higher learning institutions. The respondents said that the women should also be appointed as the top leader in the higher learning institutions for gender equality.

"Yes... Gender equality..."

(Respondent Z)

Respondent W added that the women can contribute the skill sets and good qualities in leaderships for the higher education.

"Yes ... SDG No 5 , Gender equality. Influence to shape the future of higher education in real time...contribute greater diversity of thought, problem-solving, and experience to organizations where they lead or hold decision-making positions..."

(Respondent W)

The findings depict that women have potential for holding the top leadership positions in Malaysian higher education as they possess leadership qualities and skill sets. In short, women make excellent leaders because they have some good traits such as they can balance professional and personal leadership skills, natural multitaskers, flexible, agile and the ability to recognize emotions in themseelves and others. Thus, these traits may lead to the women leadership momentum.

Discrimination, Stereotyping and Family Commitment

According to Saint-Michel (2018), the female leaders who self-describe as having highly communal or highly agentic attributes are rated as having more transformational leadership by their followers than male leaders. However, women may experience various types of discriminations such as prejudiced treatment in hiring or firing processes on account of gender being passed over for a promotion on account of gender; also known as the "glass ceiling" and getting paid less than a male employee who works the same job. Furthermore, stereotypes, about what women can or cannot do affect women's right to equality by forcing the society to give them certain roles and not allow others. This is inequitable treatment because the choice of the woman is not considered and she is not free to do what she wants. Some research has also found that role pressure in both the work and home domains has a negative impact on the other. As a result, the degree of participation in the home role creates difficulties for participation in work, resulting in home-work conflict. On the other hand, the degree of participation in the work domain can hinder performance on the family role, resulting in strain-based, time-based, or behavior-based work-home conflict (Huang et al., 2004). The following are the responses that the respondents answered for this emerged theme. The responses illustrated the challenges or the barriers that women faced which lead to lack of opportunities for women leadership in higher education in Malaysia.

Respondent W and Respondent N highlighted that women are treated disproportionately in the workplace and leadership roles.

"Gender biases and stereotyping work against professional women...lack of flexible work practices...societal expectations regarding gender roles ..."

(Respondent W)

"The most dominant barrier is hierarchy..."

(Respondent N)

The widespread belief that women are weak, emotional, lack assertiveness, and are less rational than men has put them at a disadvantage when it comes to exercising leadership roles in the workplace. Respondent M said that women's steoretype in terms of dealing with emotions and stress are also some of reasons why they are not being given the top positions in the organisations.

"...women's nature, emotions... and pressure"...

(Respondent M)

Respondent Z said the same response but the respondent mentioned about the cultural influence and the family commitment that hinder the women from holding the top positions in the higher education.

"Gender bias, cultural influence..., family commitment..."

(Respondent Z)

Next, the respondent commented the same answer which is the family commitment as the reason why the women have lesser opportunities to be the top leaderships in the higher education. Besides, the respondent gave a clear picture when the issue of time management was being highlighted in this comment.

"Family. Children and husband are their priority...they can get other effect if they can manage time for their husband and children well. So, they need to handle time management well..."

(Respondent R)

The overall results described that women faced some challenges or barriers in terms of gender bias, stereotyping and family commitment for achieving the top positions in Malaysian higher education. It was assumed that the differential family environment, parental socialisation, and gender socialisation in family lead to the development of gender stereotyping, which further emphasises traditional masculine and feminine gender roles. In addition, family has also a great importance in one's life, particularly in a female's life, its even greater as she is the one who bears more family responsibilities.

Cultivate Future Women Leaders

The final theme emerged from the findings was cultivate future women leaders. Women leaders are gradually closing the gender gap. Because of societal expectations and stereotypes, many women have struggled to find acceptance in the workplace in the past. Women, on the other hand, have made enormous strides in several previously male-dominated industries and are excelling in leadership positions. Women leaders have traditionally outperformed men in competencies such as professional relationship building, workplace integrity, and self-development engagements. Society rewards leadership traits such as independence, competitiveness, dominance, and objectivity, which are disproportionately found in men. However, in women, these typically masculine behaviours are frequently perceived negatively. Research clearly demonstrates the critical importance of women's economic well-being to the well-being of the family, community, and society. Slow progress on sustainability outcomes is also linked to systemic gender inequality and fewer women leaders. Thus, this theme presented the suggestions on how the women can lead and empower leadership in higher education. The respondents suggested several comments based on this emerged theme.

The Respondent N gave comment that more leadership training skills and courses should be provided for women for preparing to be the top leadship in the higher education.

"Women must join the leadership skill courses... and top management should give opportunities to then for sitting any positions in Higher Learning Institutions..."

(Respondent N)

Similarly, the Respondent W also said that more initiatives and promotions should be designed for empowering women in leadership styles and roles in the higher education.

"New and future initiatives to empower women into new and existing leadership roles in Malaysia...nurture women towards assuming leadership roles across all sectors and industries...redesigning the higher education system to drive home the importance of having women leaders in all rungs of society..."

(Respondent W)

Respondent R said that the particular council may play the role for providing more opportunities for women to hold the top positions in the higher learning institutions in Malaysia.

"By acknowledging the potential and needs that women leader possess within the national higher education...secondly, the need to provide and give chance towards women leadership...the Malaysian Youth Council (MYC) is the best platform to bring forward women's leadership as national women leadership..."

(Respondent R)

Finally, the Respondent M and the Respondent Z responded that the women should be given more opportunities especially to work with men in the top management of higher education.

"...by cooperating or working along with men..."

(Respondent, M)

"...just by merit and created opportunity..."

(Respondent Z)

For centuries, we have been discussing leadership, but we have focused on men's leadership experiences while ignoring the profound differences in workplace experiences between genders. Women leaders are transformational role models because they overcome many workplace barriers caused by gender biases. The results of the study showed that the overall respondents suggested that more training and courses on women leaderships should be introduced and provided to unlock more opportunities among women and for cultivating women leaders in the higher learning institutions in Malaysia.

CONCLUSION

The history of exclusion of women in higher education contributes to a lack of diversity in its upper levels of leadership, particularly at elite institutions. Women who want to be leaders in higher education must overcome barriers like gender stereotypes, institutional bias, and a lack of administrative support. This study aims to explore the issues and challenges about women leadership in Malaysian higher learning institutions for gender equality. The results of the study revealed that the three main themes emerged which were (i) women qualities and skill sets, (ii) discrimination, stereotyping and family commitment and (iii) cultivate future women leaders. Women have opportunities to hold the top positions in higher learning institutions in Malaysia because they have qualities and skill sets that contributes to good management and leadership roles. However, the barriers or challenges for bridging the gap for women leadership need to be deciphered for achieving the agenda of SDG 5(Gender Equality) in Malaysia. The results also suggested that women in higher education should be given more trainings and courses for leaderships. Hence, future women leaders can develop the soft skills such as imagination, accountability, humility, persistence, and flexibility while studying for the credentials needed to work in higher education. This study contributed to the current understanding of women leadership in Malaysian higher learning institutions for gender equality. More further research shall be conducted on the related study for the achievement of gender equality in higher education landscape.

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QUEER PORNOGRAPHY: WOMEN AND AFAB INDIVIDUALS' SEXUAL EXPLORATION THROUGH THEIR PORNOGRAPHY CONSUMPTION

SPENCIER R. CIARALLI

SPENCIER R. CIARALLI, Ph.D. Augustana University

ABSTRACT:

Queer pornography encompasses varying gender identities and sexual orientations exploring sexual pleasures and desire in multiple ways. Much of queer porn creates a "democratization of desire" where feminist, queer, LGBTQIA+ visibility contributes to a shift in the boundaries surrounding and regulating sexuality (McNair, 2002). Utilizing a queer feminist perspective, the present study examines how women and AFAB (Assigned-Female-At-Birth) individuals who have had queer sexual experiences may navigate their experiences of porn and their own sexual pleasures. The present study drew from qualitative life story data collected in 2019-2020 from 30 women and AFAB individuals (mean age= 30.8, SD= 6.63). 26 out of 30 participants (87%) identified within the LGBTQIA+ community. In this study, porn is an important part of many women and AFAB folk's sexual lives, as 29 out of 30 participants in the study remarked using it.

Findings suggest that the representation of self in porn is a form of sexual liberation for many participants. That is, that queer porn in particular, encourages participants to deconstruct traditional sexual scripts and gendered norms around what "typical" or "appropriate" sex may look like, and in fact encourages 1) sexual discovery and education, 2) communication with sexual partners, and 3) sexual fantasy. Therefore, participants utilize queer porn as a tool to create their own form of sexual liberation and active resistance to heteronormativity. However, this data also stresses the importance of creating accessible, queer inclusive sex education resources, as many participants found themselves relying on porn sites to learn about their bodies and sexual behavior. Furthermore, participants problematize the larger porn landscape, which perpetuates particular standards of beauty and attraction (e.g. white, cisgender, straight, thin). Consequently, these narratives point to the importance of finding porn that is representative of queer identified women and AFAB individual's interests and sexual desires.

Keywords: Queer; pornography; sexual liberation; pleasure; sexual behavior; LGBTQ

QUEER PORNOGRAPHY—WHAT IS IT?

Queer porn encompasses varying gender identities and sexual orientations exploring sexual pleasures and desire in multiple ways. Much of queer porn creates a "democratization of desire" where feminist, queer, LGBTQIA+ visibility contributes to a shift in the boundaries surrounding and regulating sexuality (McNair, 2002). In fact, McNair (2002) argues that this blurring of boundaries of public and private discourse assists in the breakdown of sexual hierarchies. Furthermore, Ingrid Ryberg (2012 pp. 27) has asserted that queer porn includes two objectives, which are "interrogating and troubling gender and sexual categories and aiming at sexual arousal." Akin to Ryberg, Lipton (2012) has argued that queer porn encompasses a diversity of bodies and genders (e.g. trans, fat), includes alternative pleasures (e.g. female ejaculation), and is made for a queer viewership.

However, research shows that much of pornography centers on violence and aggression towards women, and is targeted towards a (presumed) male audience (Carrotte et al., 2020; Bridges et al., 2010; Klaassen & Peter, 2015). Studies have also found that there is an entire genre of "lesbian porn" that is created and consumed by heterosexual men at the expense of queer women; this particular "lesbian porn" perpetuates stereotypes surrounding queer women, and leads to the sexualization and violence against queer women by cishet (cisgender and heterosexual) men (DeGenevieve, 2007; Russo, 2007). Consequently, not all LGBTQIA+ porn is inherently queer, and may in fact perpetuate heteronormative understandings of sexual behavior.

The violence and aggression in pornography, as Brunskell-Evans (2016) states, is quite literally selling and marketing the violation of women's bodies and boundaries. The appeal of violent porn, Jensen (2007 pp. 98) argues, may in fact be due to society's conception of masculinity as "rooted in a dominant concept of masculinity: sex as control, conquest, domination, and the acquisition of pleasure by the taking of women." This is not to stigmatize forms of porn that center on pain and humiliation fantasies, but rather, to address the lack of diverse representation within pornography that speaks to a system that is deeply entrenched in the objectification of women's bodies. Unfortunately, alternatives of erotic consumption such as queer porn are oftentimes not readily accessible on free porn sites, which Macleod (2018) notes is, in part, due to the prioritization of a male audience—a male gaze. Scholars such as Chadwick and colleagues (2018) found that although women across varying social identities (e.g. race, sexual orientation, age) in their study consumed pornography, the portrayal of sexuality in most porn encompassing only straight, white, thin, young women is concerning. The structure of porn, then, whether the content, cost, or accessibility, shapes one's possibilities of sexual exploration (in both erotic fantasy, and through their sexual relationships) (Gormezano et al., 2022). Despite these criticisms of the current state of mainstream pornography, select research has shown that many women consume pornography, and describe positive experiences with the material (Parvez, 2006; Weinberg et al., 2010). Gormezano et al. (2022 pp. 1216) argue that: "…porn and fantasy, as well as in-person sexuality, are distinguishable sexual spaces or domains that matter in their own right and have interests that branch and coincide across them." How may porn, then, influence queer identified folk with vaginas as they navigate their own, and potentially other partners, bodies? How may the consumption of QUEER porn influence their sexual experiences?

METHOD

This study collected qualitative data from a sample of 30 adult women and Assigned-Female-At-Birth (AFAB) individuals (mean age= 30.8, SD= 6.63) who were recruited in 2019 and 2020 throughout the Midwest of the United States. Participants were recruited through social media, predominantly through "women/femme" Facebook support groups. The recruitment inquiry asked for women 18-years-old and up to participate in a study that aimed to collect stories and experiences of women's sexual lives and pleasures. Because the study was examining sexual behavior and exploration as it relates to the vaginal and clitoral stimulation, as well as gendered sexual behavior as it relates to pornography consumption habits, having a vagina was a prerequisite for participation (though we recognize that not all women have vaginas and not all with vaginas are women). The age of participants ranged from 23-51. The sample included 18

participants ages 18-31, 10 participants ages 32-45, and 2 participants ages 46-59. For self-identified race and ethnicity, the sample included 21 white participants, 1 Chinese/Taiwanese participant, 1 Palestinian participant, 1 Syrian participant, 3 Black participants, 1 Latinx participant, 1 Vietnamese participant, and 1 Filipino participant.

For self-reported sexual identity, the sample included 4 straight/heterosexual participants, and 26 participants who identified within the LGBTQIA+ community. This included 12 bisexual participants, 2 pansexual participants, and a variety of other descriptors (e.g., bi-light, homoromantic). Participants reported a wide range of occupations, familial status, educational backgrounds, and religious affiliation (see Table 1).

For gender identity, all participants in this study were AFAB, in that all were assigned female at birth, though 23 participants currently identify as women and 7 do not identify as women. More specifically, our sample included 23 cisgender women participants, 4 questioning participants, 2 nonbinary participants, and 1 agender participant. All genderqueer/gender nonconforming participants felt comfortable participating in the study based on their experiences of growing up inaccurately labeled as a girl and based on their experiences having a vagina. Throughout the rest of this study, analysis will refer to participants as "women and AFAB individuals," as this was the agreed upon terminology among the participants.

All interviews were conducted by the author through an Institutional Review Board (IRB)-approved study (STUDY20190494). Prior to the interview, the author sent an information sheet that detailed the topic and content of the study, as well as the consent form via email. At the interview the author read through the documents, out loud, in person. Per the ethics board review, all participants provided verbal and written informed consent to have their interviews recorded and fully transcribed. Importantly, the participants were assured that they may stop the interview at any point, as well as choose to skip any questions they may not want to answer. Due to the sensitive nature of the topic, the author carried a list of resources such as mental health services or local LGBT centers for respondents to access. Identifiable information was removed and all participants received a pseudonym to maintain anonymity. Interviews in person and on Zoom ranged from approximately 1-2.5 hours, where respondents responded to guided interview prompts that pertained to their sexual history, sexual pleasure and practices, and feelings and attitudes about their sexuality and their body.

Five questions were asked in this study about participants experiences with pornography: "1) What are your thoughts on pornography?", "2) Have you used pornography to stimulate yourself or cum?", "3) Do you enjoy or dislike pornography? Why?", "4) If you enjoy pornography, do you have a preference of pornography you prefer?" and, "5) If you enjoy, how often do you watch?". Following these questions, there were prompts asking about participant's feelings and thoughts about their masturbation habits and sexual desires. Although the interview prompts were pre-scripted and guided, the interviews were conducted in such a manner that encouraged conversation, probes, follow-up questions and clarifications, and dialogue that transitioned into other areas of interest. More specifically, life history method was utilized, which highlighted participants' voices and used stories to draw out the social processes being discussed (Erdmans, 2007); this method allows for participants to guide the conversation and allows participants to represent themselves and co-construct knowledge (Geiger, 1986).

The study initially drew from a constructivist version of grounded theory to frame the analysis. This method requires an inductive process, with the collection and subsequent analysis of data conducted via identification of concepts, themes, and patterns that emerge from the data (Charmaz, 2002). Grounded theory is often understood as a methodological theory that allows findings to emerge organically during the data collection process. More specifically, responses in this study were analyzed qualitatively using a queer, feminist phenomenological oriented form of thematic analysis called "reflexive thematic analysis" (Ahmed, 2006; Braun & Clarke, 2006; Braun & Clarke, 2019). This form of thematic analysis makes room for the interface between the researcher's interpretive analysis of the data, the uniqueness of each researcher's perspective, and thoughtful engagement with the analytic process of looking at participants' narratives (Braun & Clarke, 2019; Byrne, 2022). To familiarize myself, I read the transcripts and took notes on how things were said. Memo writing occurred throughout the analysis, which allowed me a better understanding

of the data while also tracing the development of concepts and theory grounded in the data. This process enabled me to form a deeper understanding of the narratives, hypothesis, and concepts formed (Charmaz, 2002). I looked for patterns for how participants constructed themselves in relation to their bodies, pornography consumption, and their partners. I worked through these patterns, considered how narratives cohered (or did not cohere), until I settled on a set of three themes.

FINDINGS

Findings suggest that the representation of self in porn is a form of sexual liberation for many participants. That is, that queer porn in particular, encourages participants to deconstruct traditional sexual scripts and gendered norms around what "typical" or "appropriate" sex may look like, and in fact encourages 1) sexual discovery and education, 2) communication with sexual partners, and 3) sexual fantasy. Therefore, participants utilize queer porn as a tool to create their own form of sexual liberation and active resistance to heteronormativity.

1) Sexual Discovery and Education

What happens when there is a lack of access to resources pertaining to sex education for youth? Taylor (27, white, bisexual/queer, cis) prefers queer porn, however also she notes that this content was a way to learn about her body while growing up:

[Spencier]:   Why do think you prefer to watch lesbian pornography?

[Taylor]:   I think when I was younger, I liked watching women because I feel like it helped me understand my body better. I feel like it was easier for me to be like oh, they're doing this and this woman got off from doing this and that, so I feel like it helped me understand my body a little bit better, whereas like men/women porn, I'm just like, this has nothing to do with her, like this is all about him getting off basically. So, I didn't really relate to it in that sense. I think that was like a big, especially when I was younger, a bigger factor into like why I watched lesbian porn, because it was easier for me to just relate to that I think at a younger age…I think it's like that's vulnerability of like…I feel like men and women porn is just fucking gross half the time. I feel like it's constantly like—porn is typically targeted towards men and I think that it's always just like the terrible, like extremely rough, like guy shoving his dick down some girl's throat and I don't want to watch that. To me like that's not what my sex looks like, so for me I feel like the more like intimate porn is, and the more like just not like so like vulgar and like intense, like I feel like I find that easier in like lesbian porn than I do like if I'm looking for like a guy and a girl porn, I have to go through like five hundred videos before I find something that doesn't like honestly disgust me. So I think it's just the ease of it in a sense, like okay it's here, and like this is a little bit, like easier for me to find, like I only have to go through ten videos whereas on this end I have to go through like five hundred videos.

Taylor describes this preference for lesbian pornography as a point of representation, as it breaks down sexist boundaries surrounding women's entitlement to pleasure. She reflects that when she was younger, she used lesbian porn to learn about her own body, almost as a form of informal sex education, and quips that "men/women porn, I'm just like, this has nothing to do with her, like this is all about him getting off basically. So, I didn't really relate to it in that sense." This use of porn as a form of education is not uncommon, as past research finds that for some youth, consumption of porn provides a space to learn about their bodies and sexual interactions in ways that positively affect their lives (Attwood et al., 2018; McKenna et al., 2011; Miller et al., 2017). Queer porn, as noted, is not simply incorporating LGBTQIA+ individuals into erotic spaces, but also invites an array of body shapes and sexual behaviors. This in mind, for someone like Taylor

queer porn isn't simply about watching two women have sex. Queer porn is also about prioritizing pleasure for women, or for bodies like hers. Consequently, queer porn is serving multiples needs: as an educational resource, and then developing to serve her sexual desires that weren't necessarily being met by "typical" (i.e. heteronormative) pornography.

This use of queer porn as an educational tool is also witnessed in Anne's (28, Filipino-American, straight[4], cis) narrative, who emphasizes the role porn had in navigating sexual encounters with her girlfriend at the time:

[Anne] Hmm, I'm gonna say this is probably around when I went through puberty, so like early teens, twelve, thirteen, fourteen. Um, I don't, I come from a family that um, we don't really talk about things like that [sex]. Um, I wasn't taught about anything in regards to that, so I kind of happened upon it through things that I was watching or friends. And, I started watching porn at home. We had this like, in the basement we had the computer and like when my parents would be, I'd be very cognizant of when my parents were at work and not around, that's when I kind of started discovering things on my own, watching like porn here and porn there, and I think I downloaded a couple viruses onto that computer at one point. [CHUCKLE] But, that was just like sexual exploration for me. That's when it started. And then it helped me like when I was dating in high school, since I was dating Heather and she was my first real girlfriend. I could look things up like how to go down on a girl.

Anne remarks on being introduced to porn by a friend as a young teenager, and how this was one of her only resources to learn about sexual behavior. She points to her lack of sex education with quips such as "we don't really talk about things like that" or "I wasn't taught about anything in regards to that." Anne's narrative further illustrate the boundaries in place that prevent many young women and AFAB individuals from understanding their bodies, their partners bodies, and overall sexual health. In the limited sex education that is sometimes provided to students in public schools in the United States (the criteria and content varies depending on which state you reside in), only 10 states require some inclusive content with regard to sexual orientation (Guttmacher Institute, 2022). In fact, 3 states require negative, stigmatized information be provided when discussing sexual orientation, alongside a positive emphasis on heterosexuality (Guttmacher Institute, 2022).

It comes as no surprise, then, that folk such as Anne rely on online pornography sites to gather information around sexual behavior and their bodies. However, as previously noted, not all pornography represents bodies in diverse, inclusive manners. Furthermore, queer porn is not always readily accessible and free, and certainly shouldn't be the only resource on hand when attempting to learn about one's body and pleasures. Anne's narrative represents the power and use of queer porn as an educational tool, while further problematizing the systematic barriers in place that prevent young individuals from accessing a multitude of resources outside of the pornography industry.

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[4] Anne has had sex with women, as well as long-term relationships with women. However, Anne notes that she now identifies as straight, in large part due to her current long-term relationship with a man. I respect my participant's identification and will define Anne as straight throughout the rest of this analysis.

2) Communication with partner

Participant's narratives suggest that queer porn is not just about education, but also actively critiques the boundaries around what "typical sex" looks like. For example, Olivia (25, Black, pansexual, cis) asserts that she doesn't enjoy hearing men in porn, and therefore finds her sexual interests represented in queer porn:

[Spencier]:   And you mentioned you watch porn. What kind of porn do you enjoy watching?

[Olivia]:   I don't like hearing guys in porn. I prefer lesbian or solo girl porn. Or trans women that haven't   had their bottom surgery. It is still watching somebody be penetrated but without having to hear or see a guy. I noticed I look for women's body types that are similar to mine. I definitely get turned on by like, me being turned on in a way. Like, I would masturbate in the mirror. Like, I touch my own body because that turned me on. I would watch a lot of girl-on-girl stuff because watching a woman get pleasure, like, brings me pleasure. You know what I mean? I like women on women. I've even been watching some shit like, with women with strap ons fucking other women. I love watching women 69 or threesomes. I've been a little bit into like, some dom and sub stuff. Like...my partner and I talked about – like, we watched a video. And we talked about trying some things— fantasy wise.

Olivia enjoys a myriad of porn, ranging from women masturbating, to lesbian sex with a strap-on, and threesomes. Within all of Olivia's porn preferences, she is finding herself represented in queer porn. Whether with women sleeping with one another, or deconstructing boundaries as to what "appropriate" sexual scripts and gender presentation look like in the bedroom, Olivia creates her own form of sexual liberation and active resistance to heteronormativity by exploring her sexual desires through porn in fluid ways. Olivia is, as Ryberg (2012) argues, troubling gender and sexuality categories by consuming porn that defies heteronormativity.

Olivia addresses the joy in seeing herself represented in porn, and the joy in her own body's pleasure. Olivia's emphasis on seeing herself represented within queer porn points to an argument made by Cherie (2010), in that queer porn may be understood as working towards representation of authenticity: authenticity in gender, sexual orientations, desires, bodies, interpersonal interactions, and desires. However, Olivia also suggests that these porn clips are something she uses to engage in conversations with her partner, allowing them the language and space to explore new sexual desires. This aligns with past research which suggests that women's consumption of pornography may be linked with an increase of sexual and relational satisfaction for both individuals in a relationship, albeit these studies were limited to only heterosexual couples (Bridges et al., 2011; Muusses et al., 2015; Poulsen et al., 2013). Another study by Smith, Attwood, and Barker (2015) found in their sample that many couples used pornography to enhance their erotic life, as both an educational tool to communicate their sexual desires and fantasies, as well as a tool to watch together and increase arousal. Regardless, Olivia's sexual exploration is more than simply consuming queer porn, but also embedded in how she implements this knowledge into her own sexual life, perceptions, relationships, and behavior.

Charlie (32, white, bisexual, cis) further reifies the role of queer porn in communicating sexual desires with a partner, stating:

[Charlie]:   Yeah, we actually—it's kind of cool. We use pornography to show each other more about what we like. I watch a lot of girl on girl porn and it looks completely different than typical porn. It centers women's pleasure and looks different. And like, there was a lot of stuff that he likes that I had no idea that he liked that is like off the charts. Like I would not have ever even known the terms for some of the stuff. So, he used pornography to like show me. He would like send me his favorite clips or whatever, each thing

that he likes, and he'd be like, hey, this is, you know, blah, blah, blah, whatever. I like it. And I'd be like, oh, okay, now I understand what that means, like or what you do with that, because I was like I have no idea what the fuck that means. So, I think that was really interesting. I think—we watch it a lot on our own, but we also watch it a lot together.

3) Sexual Fantasy

Thus far, my narratives show queer porn being used as an educational tool as well as a resource to communicate desires to sexual partners. However, as Mack (28, Syrian, bisexual, cis) shows, queer porn may also be understood as a way to develop sexual interests and explore one's desires, as well:

[Spencier]:   Hm-hmm. Do you have any typical genres or preferences or go-to's that you like to watch for porn?

[Mack]: Yeah. So genres—it started off with lesbians. I never even—like for years I only watched lesbian porn. I'd never even thought—like I didn't—it wasn't really attractive to me seeing—I wasn't attracted to the men in pornos at all. Like I still am not, but every now and then…So it went from that to watching—like when I wasn't allowed to watch porn or when I was under 18, I would look up girls making out, like that was how innocent it was. And then, once I started going on porn sites, it was like girls full-on having sex with each other. And lately I've been watching DVP, which I would never want done on me, but it's like really hot to watch. I've also been watching—

[Spencier]:   Do you want to explain what DVP is?

[Mack]: Oh, yes, double vaginal penetration. So that's more than one penis in a vagina, whether it's a toy or another person, another dick. But I think what I realized why I like that is when—so it's a MFM, male-female-male, and what I think I really realized I liked is when the guys—the males are bisexual, so when they're also interested in each other, besides just the female in the videos, I think that's where I'm at now. I've been watching—ooh, I forgot what it's called when two dicks jerk off to—Frottage. Yeah. Frottage. It is when two penises rub up against each other a bunch until—and that can be also with a female performing oral on both of them together at the same time. So that's where I'm at now with my porn interests, but it's kind of cool seeing how it keeps changing, starting off with lesbians to frottage and DVP. It's pretty intense.

Mack provides a powerful image of the cumulative, longitudinal effect of queer porn exploration. Mack reminds us that sexual desires and fantasies are not static, unchangeable variables. Our sexual desires and fantasies shift, build, and deepen—akin to our overall selves. As Mack dives into her sexual exploration through queer porn, she finds her tastes and preferences develop, ranging from lesbians to frottage. Queer porn, then, with its diverse, wide-ranging selection of bodies and sexual behaviors, provides Mack the opportunity to indulge in self-discovery in a way that simply isn't possible with what one may deem "typical" or "standard" porn. What is particularly surprising within this data, however, is that folk such as Sam (28, Palestinian, straight, cis) who identify as straight, ALSO utilize queer porn to discover their sexual fantasies and desires:

[Sam]:   I like women on women. I've even been watching some shit like, with women with strap-ons fucking other women. I love watching women 69 or threesomes. I've been a little bit into like, some dom and sub stuff. Like… George and I talked   about – like, we watched a video. And we like, talked about like, trying some things. Like, fantasy wise. Like, his – I definitely, you know, like, if I made a weird

sound, he'd be like, oh, my God, are you okay? Like, I definitely felt safe enough to talk to him about that kind of stuff. I've definitely these last few months have been really open with myself. Like, putting myself first. Like, in a lot of ways including sexually. You know? Like, I was like, honest with him from the get go, like, what I liked and what I didn't like. And usually, I would never say anything like that. Or, I'd fake a lot of fucking, you know? I faked it a lot with Wayne [ex-partner] until I figured out how to use, you know, the situation – I would be turned on. But like, vaginal just...you know...I wish it did—but it just—it never made me feel the same way as like, clitoral stimulation has.

Sam exemplifies Gormezano and colleague's (2022) argument on the importance of analyzing sexual fantasy, as this may not always align with one's sexual behavior or desires with a partner. Consequently, when we only examine an individual's sexual behavior with partners, we are provided only one piece of a multi-dimensional, technicolored fabric of their sexual lives. Undoubtedly, areas such as sexual behavior and fantasy intersect and inform one another, as Sam mentions her diverse porn consumption prior to divulging me in her changing sexual encounters that are beginning to explore and center her sexual desires. This in mind, Sam's story reminds us of the importance of queer porn for a wide array of consumers, as well as the need to center sexual fantasy in future sexual behavior and desire analyses.

Sawyer (30, white, bisexual, cis), on the other hand, illustrates how queer porn provides us access to fantasies we DO want to potentially enact with our bodies, as well as the different ways one may consume queer porn, itself:

[Sawyer]:   I've never been a -- like most men would masturbate while they watch porn. I've never been like that. I've never had the urge to do that. I just like watching it for the -- I like watching it because it's something that -- what I watch is what I want to do. A lot of "femdom" stuff.

[Spencier]:Do you want to explain what that is?

[Sawyer]:   Yeah. Basically the woman being the dominant -- but only with another woman, though. That's my fantasy, at least. But I just—I have this fantasy that I've never gotten to do yet which is probably technically impossible but I actually want to have that first POV [point of view] of getting my dick sucked by a girl. I've always wanted that. I want that POV. I don't know. But I remember there was one video that I always go back to and it is this woman completely bound and just vibed into oblivion. She's wearing this red corset and she's just, she's -- what's it called -- there's a cupping that is used. And basically that is just— it's like an acrylic suction cup that is put on her nipples and put on her clitoris and other places on her body. Obviously, to increase blood flow and all that, and up the sensitivity. And then just using vibrators on the cups, which transfers to her. But that is just, I don't know, that is the one that I go back to. I've probably seen it a dozen times. Like every year or so, I'll just want to watch it because that's something that I've wanted to do, too. Like, being the person doing it, not getting it. Not receiving. Yeah. I don't know.

Sawyer watches femdom queer porn for visual excitement, as she fantasizes herself in the role of a dominatrix who is eliciting sexual pleasure in a women. Sawyer's use of queer porn "queers" or undoes the typical use of pornography by informing me she doesn't physically masturbate to porn. This suggests that measuring sexual pleasure encompasses more than genital stimulation or interaction with the material body, and in fact, encompasses a wide range of senses too often overlooked in sexuality research. Additionally, Sawyer illustrates multiple "uses" of sexual fantasy. For example, Sawyer is: 1) fantasizing herself with a dick being sucked; something she doesn't think is currently possible with her body, and thereby enacts through her imagination and fantasy "play" and 2) through fantasizing herself in a dominatrix role, which isn't her typical sexual interaction with her partners, but something she envisions

she may like to play out with a partner someday. Sexual fantasy then, may be used for establishing future physical actions with one's body or sexual partners, or may simply stay within the realm of fantasy. Notably, my participants show that their use of queer porn has provided the opportunity to discover, or perhaps play with, their own sexual fantasies.

DISCUSSION

Queer porn is an important part of my participant's sexual lives, as 29 out of 30 participants in my study remarked using it. Participants such as Olivia and Taylor point to the importance of finding porn that represents their interests and sexual desires. This paper serves as a space of navigating both struggle and joy throughout their sexual exploration of queer porn. Participant's noted difficulties in access to information and representation of sexual behavior and their bodies, while also expressing excitement when discovering a new aspect about their sexual selves. Taking this wholistic approach is imperative, because we fail to capture queer women's and AFAB individuals' lives, experiences, and thoughts when we only portray the trauma and oppression they face. Bakare-Yusuf (2013, pg. 29) argues that "women's sexual and embodied agency is potentially more threatening and disruptive to a hetero-patriarchal controlling logic than a focus on danger and violation, hence its repression and suppression." By this, she means that although addressing issues of sexual violence and power are undoubtedly important, not including the desire, sexual pleasure, and eroticism in women's lives perpetuates the narrative that women are passive victims who need protection from their sexuality.

However, alongside this multifaceted examination of my participant's navigation of queer porn and their selves, we must also be wary of creating a new context in which women and queer folk feel expectations or demands to embody 'agency and liberation' in particular ways. We must critically analyze women's and AFAB folk's sources of pleasure, joy, struggles, and disappointments to more fully represent narratives about their bodies, as well as ensure that the result of these narratives is not a new standard of appropriate sexual pleasure. By this, I mean that we must maintain ambiguity, diversity, and fluidness in measuring pleasure, even within the context of queer porn. Sexuality researchers must be cognizant that new boundaries around ways to experience pleasure are boundaries nonetheless. For example, an expectation to *always* be sexual and produce orgasms in particular ways fails to examine the stigma and newly constructed boundaries that, once again, provide scripts to women for how they may experience and navigate sexual pleasure. Consequently, the intent with this research isn't to provide an opposite, newfound script of sexual behavior for women and AFAB individuals (e.g. from sexual conservative to sexual deviant). Rather, the intent is to abolish the static boundaries of the script altogether; the ways we may use queer porn to further queer our understandings of sexual behavior and pleasure. Consequently, this research serves to complicate the ways we understand queer women's and AFAB individuals' sexual behavior as it pertains to the larger pornography and sexual behavior landscape.

It is important to examine how porn represents (or doesn't represent) women and queer folks' sexual lives, and as to how we can use this information to create diverse, representative porn and access to other forms of sexual education. Future research should delve into the importance of narratives of the queer self in pornography, and its connection to sexual liberation. Ryberg (2015 pp. 281) notes: "Thought of as an activism oriented towards means rather than ends, queer, feminist and lesbian pornography invites an embodied understanding of positions and experiences that differ from one's own and calls forth an ethics of shared embodiment, susceptible to otherness and respecting of difference." Consequently, queer porn may also be understood as a call to action.

Finally, this data also stresses the importance of creating accessible, queer inclusive sex education resources, as many participants found themselves relying on porn sites to learn about their bodies and sexual behavior. Furthermore, participants problematize the larger porn landscape, which perpetuates particular standards of beauty and attraction (e.g. white, cisgender, straight, thin). These narratives point to the importance of finding porn that is representative of queer identified women and AFAB individual's interests and sexual desires. Therefore, future studies should examine how porn represents (or doesn't represent) women and

queer folks' sexual lives, and as to how we may use this information to create more diverse, representative porn.

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Table 1. Participant Demographics

Name	Age	Race/ Ethnicity	Gender Orientation	Sexual Orientation	Education	Occupation	Family Status
Parker	35	Latinx	Questioning	Pansexual/ Polyamorous	Master's degree	Unemployed	Single, one child
Estelle	23	Black	Cisgendered	Fluid sexuality/ Heteroromantic	Some college	Bartender	Single, no children
Judith	32	white	Cisgendered	Straight	Master's degree	Speech Language Pathologist	Married, no children
Anne	28	Filipino-American	Cisgendered	Straight	Some graduate school	Student	Relationship, no children
Olivia	25	Black	Cisgendered	Pansexual	Some college	Nanny	Relationship, no children
Morgan	33	white	Cisgendered	Ambiguous	Some college	Service Industry	Relationship, no children

Gail	23	white	Agender	Bisexual/Queer/ Homoflexible	Master's degree	Hospice Social Worker	Relationship, no children
Phoebe	49	white	Cisgendered	Bi-light	Bachelor's degree	Customer Service	Single, no children
Emily	32	white	Cisgendered	Homoromantic/ bisexual	Bachelor's degree	Administrative Assistant	Single, no children
Valerie	36	white	Cisgendered	Bisexual	Bachelor's degree	Software Technician	Married, one child
Cam	41	white	Cisgendered	Bisexual	Master's degree	Health/Life Coach	Relationship, one child
Riley	25	Vietnamese	Nonbinary	Pansexual/ Polyamorous	Some college	Bartender	Relationship, no children
Liz	32	white	Cisgendered	Bisexual	Some college	Bartender	Relationship, no children
Brianna	27	white	Cisgendered	Bisexual	Bachelor's degree	Behavioral Therapist/Technician	Single
Taylor	27	white	Cisgendered	Bisexual/ Queer	Some graduate school	Social Worker	Relationship, no children
Quinn	26	white	Questioning	Bisexual/ Demi sexual	Some college	Real Estate Agent	Relationship, one child
Sawyer	30	white	Cisgendered	Bisexual	Some college	Unemployed	Married, no children
Emory	25	white	Cisgendered	Queer/Bisexual/ Gay	Culinary cert., no college	Service Industry	Single, no children
Fin	30	white	Questioning	Queer/ Homoromantic	Master's degree	Service Industry and Community Outreach	Single, two children
Pat	30	white	Questioning	Pansexual	Bachelor's degree	Unemployed	Single, no children
Mack	28	Syrian	Cisgendered	Bisexual	Some college	Service Industry	Single, no children
Westley	30	African American/ Black	Cisgendered	Bisexual	Master's degree	Artist	Single, two children

Name	Age	Race	Gender	Sexuality	Education	Occupation	Relationship
Gina	30	white	Cisgendered	Bisexual	Some college	User interface designer	Engaged, no children
Jamie	27	white	Cisgendered	Bisexual	Some college	Service Industry	Relationship, no children
Sam	27	Palestinian	Cisgendered	Straight	Associates	Health Care Worker	Divorced, no children
Felix	24	Chinese/ Taiwanese	Nonbinary	Bisexual	No college	Tech Company Worker	Relationship, no children
Kai	33	white	Cisgendered	Bisexual/ Pansexual	Some college	Freelance Photographer	Divorced, no children
Jorden	51	white	Cisgendered	Straight	Master's degree	Self-Employed (Ed. Consultant)	Divorced, one child
Aiden	33	white	Cisgendered	Bisexual	Bachelor's degree	Unemployed	Married, two children
Charlie	32	white	Cisgendered	Bisexual	Some college	Payroll Coordinator	Married, no children

"YERMA": AFFECTIVE SUBLATION IN THE PERFORMATIVE MOMENT OF GALCHAUR

ANIRBAN KUMAR

ABSTRACT

The paper introduces the performance of "Yerma", which was produced for stage in the year 1996 by the theatre group, 'Samanantar' in Allahabad, Uttar Pradesh, India. Written originally in Spanish by Federico Garcia Lorca in 1934, Yerma has been adapted into several languages and performed widely in India since 1969. Set against the backdrop of a rural space, "Yerma" is a play in lyrical form which weaves a parable of contemporary issues. It deals with themes such as taboo, infertility, chastity, motherhood and the sensual/sexual aspirations of women. The narrative plot of the play assists to give a panoptical view on helplessness, women have to bear in the face of maintaining societal codes and sanctity. In context of the performance, taboos that are associated with childless mother will become a nodal toroid, through which the performative moments in the play will be worked out, so as to bring forth questions related to adaptation techniques and focus on the debate of originality in theatrical adaptation. Covering a range of creative arts, including theatre, visual and cinematic expression of literature in A Theory of Adaptation, Linda Hutcheon draws out various approaches of 'applicability' with respect to adaptation. Taking cue from her seminal work, linkages between aesthetics and politics will be put affront to each other.

While referring to specific moments in the play, a corollary dimension of writing about theatre production will also be taken into account, that is, a retroactive engagement with the participants in the performance. By placing the interviews intermittently, in the course of the debate, the paper explicates on the concerns about the relationship of adaptation with that of affect. Taking examples from the said interviews and performative moments like that of 'galchaur' (Gossips), the paper will make an adjunctive move to enable an encounter of two concepts i.e. affect and sublation, so as to appear in simultaneity. Conjoining these two terms – affective and sublation is not to loosely bring together two different concepts whose geneologies have been disparate in their own right. Sublation is derived from the German verb Aufheben, whose etymological root means to pick up,to abolish, or to cancel. Whereas affect has its core in psychoanalysis which invites a wide net of sensory co-ordinates including emotions, therapeutic, tactile visuality and embodiment. Herein the concept of affective sublation will be brought forth that will correspond to the method of aesthetics in transgression. In effect portending towards a second move that is, of a differential sensory variable which can be withheld at the same time, while producing a representative syncopate in theatre.

Keywords: Adaptation, Aesthetics, Galchaur, Syncopate, Affective Sublation

"SEEKING PROTECTION: A DILEMMA OF FEMALE SEX-WORKERS' RIGHT TO HEALTHCARE IN IRAN

FATEMEH AZIZMOHAMMADI

ABSTRACT

The status of female sex workers is a very controversial and, of course, forbidden issue in the Iranian legal system. The complexity arises from Islamic Jurisprudential matters regarding prostitution. On the one hand, female sex workers are considered one of the vulnerable groups in society that need to be supported by governments, especially in healthcare services. On the other hand, prostitution has been criminalized in the Iranian legal system based on sharia. According to the fact that access to health is a fundamental component of basic rights and since the criminal law is not going to change that rule in short term, we need some theories and interpretations to justify their activities within the current legal framework. The main question in this research is: even though designing a legal framework in order to recognize and legitimate right to female sex workers' health, considering Islamic the law has been a difficult challenge for decision-makers in Iran, how could this fundamental conflict between prostitution, the basic right to health, and Sharia be approached and possibly resolved?

WOMEN, DISPLACEMENT, AND MIGRATION IN COVID 19

LEJLA MUŠIĆ

Associate Prof, Sarajevo University, Bosnia and Herzegovina

ABSTRACT

World Health Organisation had defined the Coronaviruses as: a large family of viruses, that cause illness, ranging from the common cold, to more severe diseases, such as Middle East Respiratory Syndrome, and Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome. 2019-nCoV is a new strain, that has not been previously identified, in humans." (available at https://www.who.int/csr/don/16-january-2020-novel-coronavirus-japan-ex-china/en/, accessed on July 19, 2020.) New York area,United states, until today, July 19, 2020, according to the famous New York Times journal, has 411 006 confirmed cases, and 32167 deaths(Available at:https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/us/new-york-coronavirus-cases.html, accessed on July, 19th, 2020). Nassau county, New York has over 42 594 cases in total. Even though that there are many educated women, they are not yet recognized, inside the Academia. Global pandemic situation influences negative consequences, in females droppings out of colleges/faculties. Gender dimensions of COVID 19 are involving economical differences, that influence female vulnerability, and feminization of poverty, globally, health care workers, (predominantly females), are at risks(even though there are more cases of male deaths, than females). Violence over the women in family, influences hardships in household, and family, greater number of girls dropping out of colleges, and faculties, especially from rural areas. Therefore, the supporting the girls and women educational empowerment programs, is still necessary because of repatriarchalization(Available at https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/33622, accessed on 19th July, 2020). Chines feminist, and activist Cai Yiping, in her *DAWN: Talks on COVID 19(2020, p. 3)*, *Chinese feminist's reflections on surveillance state,* emphasizes that: COVID-19 is not a great equalizer, it is a great amplifier.

Keywords: empowerment, gender equality, feminization of poverty,   pandemic

"Revealing, and intensifying the many struggles we have long undergone— inequality, patriarchy, violence, and discrimination, crisis of care, deficit of democracy, and governance, ecological un sustainability, and more. In addition to the climbing curve of COVID-19 cases, it is disheartening to see gender stereotyping of women, in the media. In the public domain, the contribution of women health workers is complimented, but their needs are far from recognized. Even worse, their merits are based on the perception of de-feminizing. In the case of private sphere, gender division of labour and women as the principal caregivers, are left intact, ideologically and practically. Furthermore, the epidemic exacerbates the harsh lives of people, who are already living in poverty, and are vulnerable—migrant workers, those in rural areas, gig workers, those with disabilities and HIV, amongst others. In the days of quarantine, lockdown, and social-distancing, the reliance on the internet—to access news, and information, stay in touch with family, and friends, for education, work and entertainment, and purchase groceries—has never been more prevalent." Great importance inside the sociology, is presented inside the professional associations, such as International Sociological Association, American Sociological Association, and Sociologists for Women in Society. International Sociological Youth Forum 2020, is postponed to February 2021, while as ASA, and SWS canceled in person meetings, and are to be held on line in August period 2020. Sociologists for Women in Society, holds on line meetings, and talks of support for members, in global pandemic situation.

Methodology: Comparative approach to analyses of texts, books, and multicultural feminism for theoretical approach, and analyses of interviews with scholars from different Universities in newsletters of professional Sociologists for Women in Society, American Sociological Association, International Sociological Association, etc), and daily Newspapers content (The New York Times), on line questionaries (students), interviews (professors that teach on line curses, Fulbrights, and scholars), on changes in methodology of learning and teaching, and coping with global pandemics, with special emphasis on female researcher position.. Analyses of the statistics given by the WHO (World Health ORGANISATION), UN Women series on Covid 19th, WUNRN(Women's UN report network), GLOBAL risk reports, European Institute for Gender Equality, OSCE, UNESCO, etc, for forming the global frame of the position for gender dimension of COVID 19th. Since there is the greater number of male deaths, and fatalities related to COVID 19th, the Gender based privileges as a form of discrimination, against males, will be defined, based on prominent male, and female authors works, in field of *Masculinity studies, and Gender and Development* (Kimmel, Lang, Hughson, Blagojevic). The importance of adequate understanding of gender dimensions, and equal presentation of male experience of death, accidents, fatalities, and unprivileged position, will be explained.

Significance 1. This project statement mainly focuses towards the empowerment of Girls and Young Women, to continue with their education, and to emphasizes the importance of monitoring the drop outs, and envisioning the strategies of overcoming the difficulties in gaining the education, for women and girls as vulnerable category. Gender privileged male society, of non equality, and experiences of marginalized males, will be explained.

Significance 2: Un Women Commission, had envisioned and published UN Women series, dedicated to COVID virus investigations, and analyses, offering the instructions how to act towards the most vulnerable category, women and young girls around the globe. Women at a forefront of COVid-19 response in Europe, and in Central Asia: "Partners pointed that women in vulnerable situations include single mothers, women survivors (or those at risk of violence), elderly women, rural women, women with disabilities, migrant women, refugee women, women seeking asylum, and Roma women. Their vulnerabilities increase dramatically, in pandemic conditions, especially regarding health, and ability to cope – given the increased isolation, anxiety and economic stress"(2020:5). Migration, and changes of place inside the global migration statistics, with gender bias, is important for the results. The WUNRN emphasizes the importance of hardship of the female in prison situation, and Third World Women, influenced by the COVID 19th Situation. Impacts of the COVID 19th threatening to accessibility to healthy food, food production, and healthy diet. (Available at:
https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/SOFI2020_EN_web.pdf, page visited on 19 July, 2020). the UN Women's Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific (ROAP) across Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Cambodia, Maldives, Myanmar, Nepal, Pakistan, Philippines, Samoa, the Solomon Islands, and Thailand had

conducted the surveys series on "how the pandemic has had gendered consequences in these nations. While preliminary data is available only for a few countries — Bangladesh (2,350 total respondents), Cambodia (1,164), Maldives (4,754), Pakistan (2,668), the Philippines (1,887) and Thailand (5,031) — it has shed light on how women continue to be affected, more than their male counterparts, during the pandemic."

Available at :(https://theprint.in/india/less-working-hours-higher-stress-drop-in-income-un-survey-shows-how-covid-affected-women/455432/, accessed on 19th July, 2020.)

Significance 3: Sociologists for Women in Society, inside the Newsletter, had published the interviews with different scholars, from different global Universities, across the world, on how to cope with pandemic, and what are the strategies of these University. The work will involve insight into this interviews, and evaluation of the results of findings. What does COVId represent for professors from different parts of the world, what are their experiences, how do they cope with COVID pandemic environment, and situation, around it, is design of baying the protection too expensive? Two excerpts examples: Associate prof, from Africa, in this short insight introduces her encountering the COVID (Sociologists for women in Society, RC 32 , Summer Newsletter, Volume 10:4), **Example 1:COVID-19: A Silver Lining for Ghanaian Academics?**

"The first time I heard of COVID-19 was the morning of Sunday January 26th, 2020. I was on my way to San Francisco en route to San Diego for the Sociologists for Women in Society's Winter Conference. I had stopped over in Washington DC from Accra to break up a rather long flight, and my friend who took me to the airport joked, that I was going to the part of the country, with the strange Corona virus. I spent a week on the West Coast and paid little attention to what was happening with the virus. Fast forward to mid-February 2020. Each morning, I would wake up to find members of my household eager to share the news about COVID-19 as it unfolded on television. It all seemed very far off from us and we often discussed the irony that the West and not Africa was the site of pretty bad news day after day. On Thursday March 12th, however, everything changed and pretty quickly. The Norwegian Ambassador to Ghana tested positive on that day. The next day, a student at the University of Ghana where I teach, who had been on an exchange program in North America also tested positive. The student and persons she/he had been in contact with were quarantined that day and the university closed the day after. By Sunday evening, the President of Ghana was announcing that all schools were to close down with immediate effect. As with other parts of the world, international flights were banned, a partial lock down was imposed although only for three weeks in Ghana and a new fashion sensibility developed in Ghana as face masks made out of African fabric started appearing on our streets." Prof from Spain discuss ed, the same(Sociologists for women in Society, RC 32 , Summer Newsletter, Volume 10:16), **Examples 2: Universities' telework, a multitask trap for**

female academics : "Female faculty found that what was unequal became worse since the volume of their two main activities grew. There are some common complaints: As usual, it was not possible to reduce teaching hours (average of 240 hours per year) without huge earnings reduction. Universities did not offer teaching time flexibility. Neither did they scheduled a period without class to learn digital teaching and digital meetings and reorganize their academic activities accordingly. Some universities, in what was perceived as a lack of trust, intensified mechanisms of control and accountability. This increased the faculty's load of work and the feeling of un insufficient recognition of the effort being made. Although some academic women found practical and rewarding to coordinate via video conference with their colleagues, they missed coordination tools and common criteria for benchmarking with them.. ". This research will involve comparative insight, and analyses of the student position, based on this form of professional descriptions.

For the purpose of this investigation, the online research was conducted. Quantitative method consisted of online questionnaires on theme of Covid 19 influences on educational challenges, and changes of academic lifestyles, and teaching methods. Sample group was Second year of Master studies in Sociology, at Sarajevo University, Department of Sociology, Faculty of Political Sciences, Sarajevo, in Bosnia, and Herzegovina. The results had shown following:

Question 1. How did COVID 19 influenced Your student life? What kind of the adaptions difficulties did You meet?

60% percent of examinees responded that COVID negatively influenced their life as a student. 40 percent responded that there are mostly positive aspects of online/ virtual teaching environment.
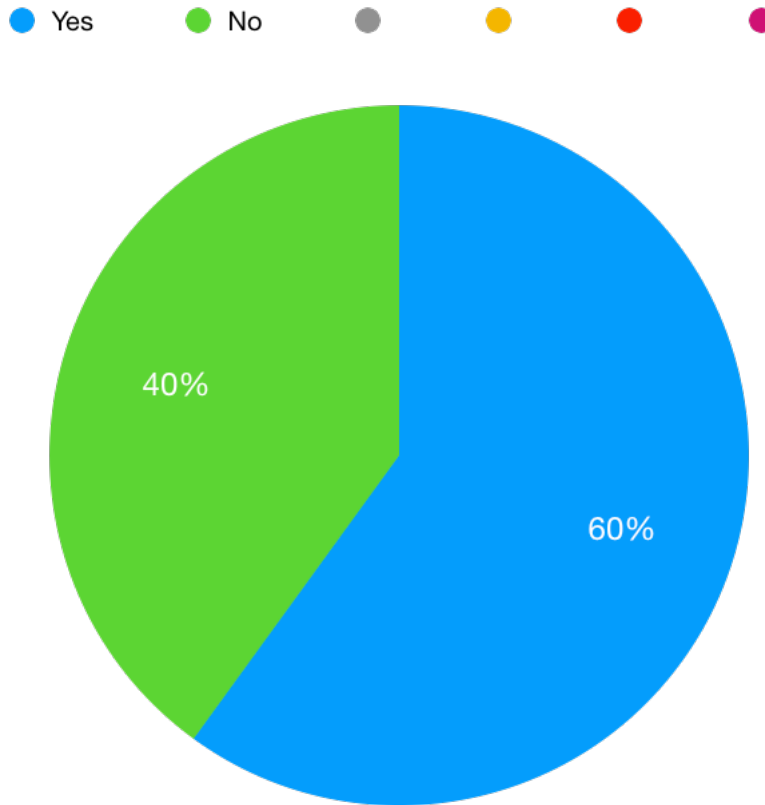

Figure 1. How did COVID 19 influence Your lifestyle?

Examinees that had responded that influences are negative gave the additional explanations, such as following:

Virtual system make studying more complex. It is the hardest not to have face to face interaction with the professors, and it influences feelings of isolation, and being cut off everything. It can not replace live communication, in person. We were forced to enter the online classrooms, ignorant of online systems, and applications. Covid 19 influenced social distancing, taking away contacts , and feeling of being close, and connected. Work from home shutters the social dimension of human existence, influences rise of fear in people being afraid of physical contact, and avoiding being close to each other. Our social relations started to be held online, only. Viruses forced us to think about solidarity(organic), and that we need each other. We become potential refugees, having the contacts with our professors only virtually, which is not natural. We spend too much time on the laptop, no real contact with our colleagues, and prof.

The other 40% of examinees said that taking virtual turn in teaching methods, due to the Covid 19, is positive:

We did not have any adjustments problem, and enjoy classes even more. The only problem, and real challenge is the internet connection lost, if it occurs.

Question 2. Did You partake in any workshops, or gave some other contributions to COVID 19 debates?

The most of the examinees, 90 % responded that they did not partake in any workshop specifically dedicated to the COVID 19, while as 10% responded that they do partake in special workshops, and social media activities.

90% of examinees even though that they did not have any workshops, do respect COVID sanitation and protective measures, imposed. Some of them partake in organizing the cloning of their apartment buildings, and others even went to bring in food, for isolated people. One of the examinees, as an active media person, partakes permanently, in social media networking , and had written seminar on the theme of Pandemic, inside the Sociology of Deviance and Control, module.
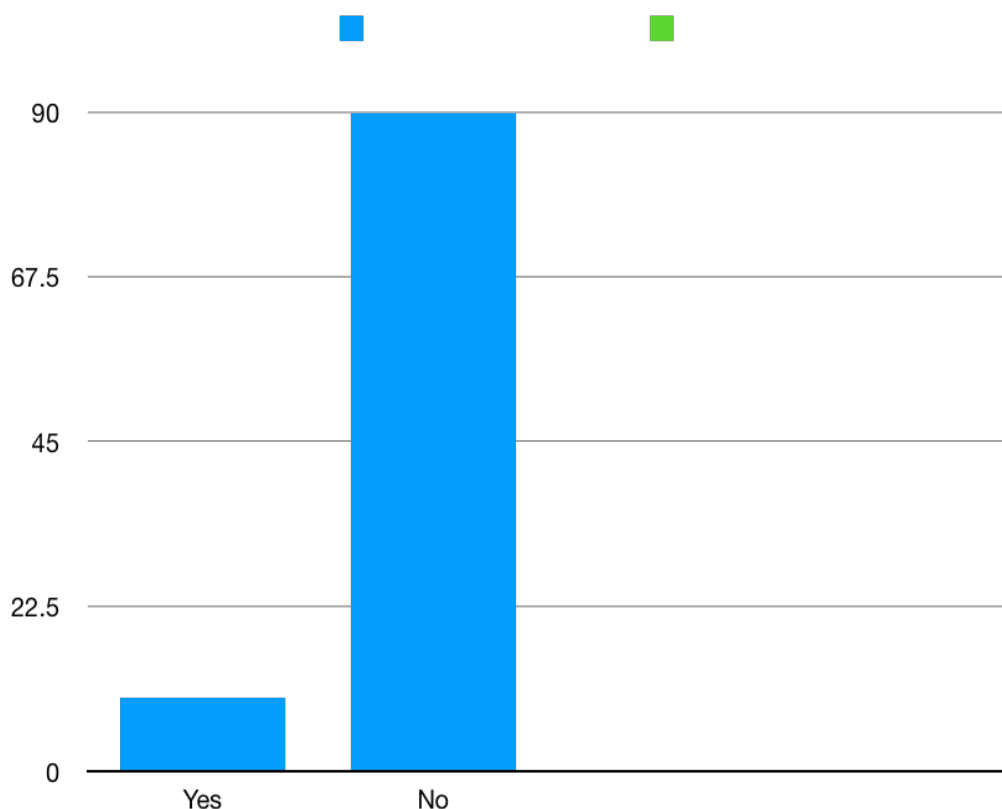

Figure 2. Participation in Workshops in COVID 19 lockout

Question 3. Have You become more interested in Sociology of Gender, and Gender and Environment? In what way?

100% percent of examinees responded yes. They additional explained the focus of interest, and researches inside the fight against the women discrimination, Jane Addams virtual museum tours, more research inside the inequalities and no egalitarianism in between men and women, staying without a jobs, stereotypes in between men and women, and non importance of this differences due to Covid outbreaks, watching documentaries and being part of interactive and creative module activities.
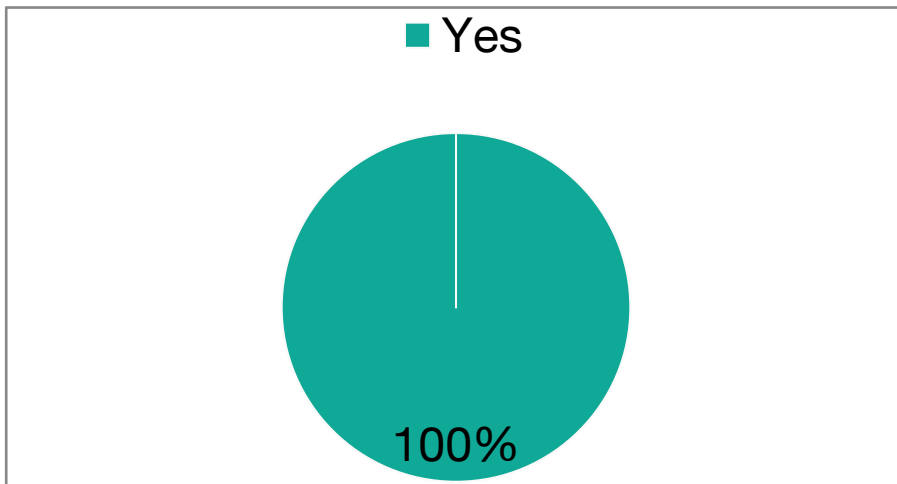
Figure 3. Higher Interest in Sociology of Gender

Question 4. What kind of new trends have You encountered in dealing with Covid outbreaks, in regards to help from Your teachers? How do Faculty, and professors help You, and support You?

Professor give as a lot of different possibilities to gain additional points, they want to help us to feel more as a accomplished students, that will go out of this pandemic as a conquerors. Even though professors are overwhelmed with full email inboxes, at the end we agree with them. Professors are more flexible, and give as a lot of support. We have a lots of essays to write and express our opinions freely. We can , always, count on them, and they offer maximal help.

Question 5. What form of obstacles did You encounter being an online student?

50% percent of examinees responded that they did not encounter any difficulties. Other half mostly found not enough literature, because of libraries lock down, professors overloaded with emails do not respond immediately or not on time, long on line classes hours, not good internet connection.
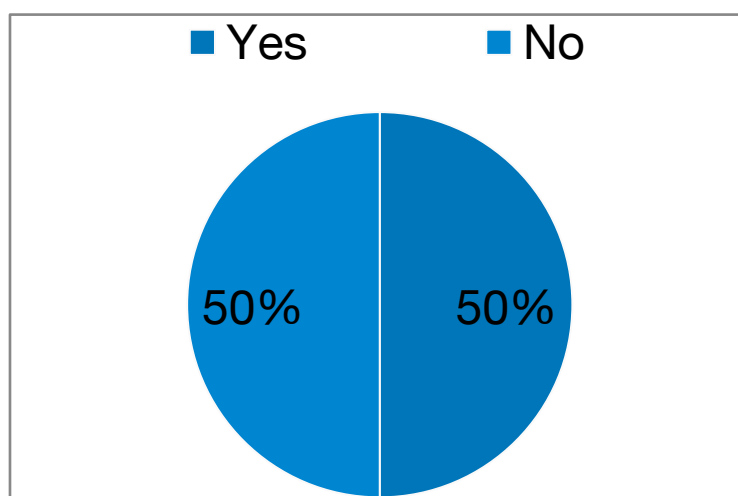

Figure 4.

Question 6. Do You get enough support from Faculty?

90 % percent of examinees responded yes, only 10 % responded that they are not responded.
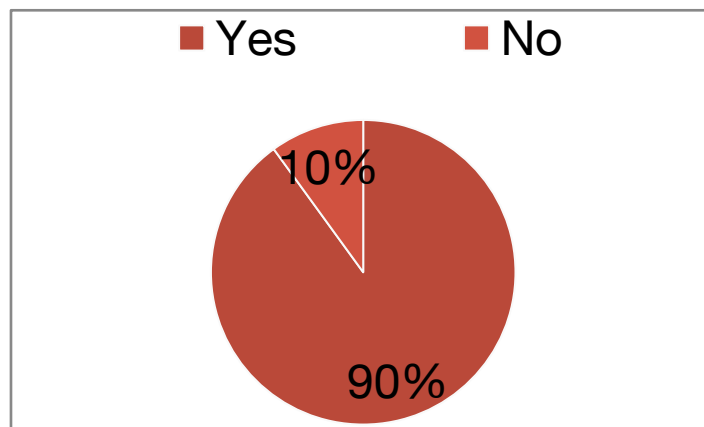

Figure 5

Question 7. What praxis did You like the most at Your Sociology of Gender classes?

60% of students responded that they liked the online module,, and the other 40%

like the debates, documentaries in relation to theme of unit watch, and commentaries, indigenous women, and finding Yourself inside Disney enchanted young femininities, and masculinities.
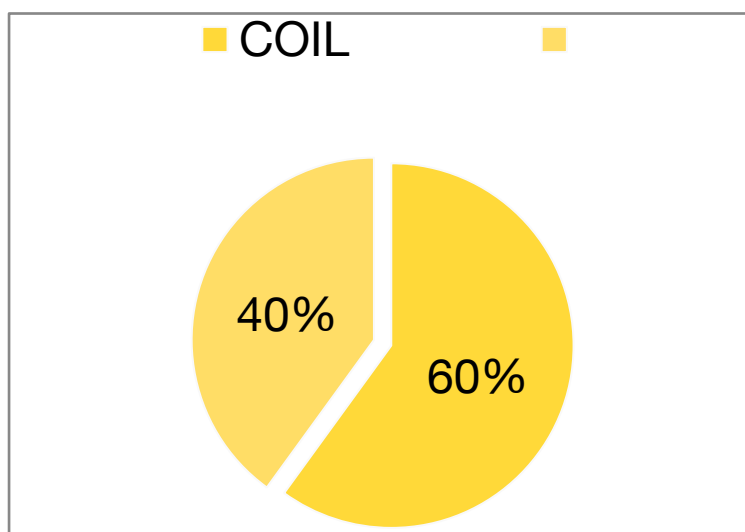

Figure 6. What praxis did You like the most at Your Sociology of Gender classes?

Question 8. Do You have enough self esteem as a student? Do You find Your place of being student promotive and worthy enough?

60 percent of students think that they are promotive and worthy as a student, in Covid 19, another 40 percent do not feel the same.
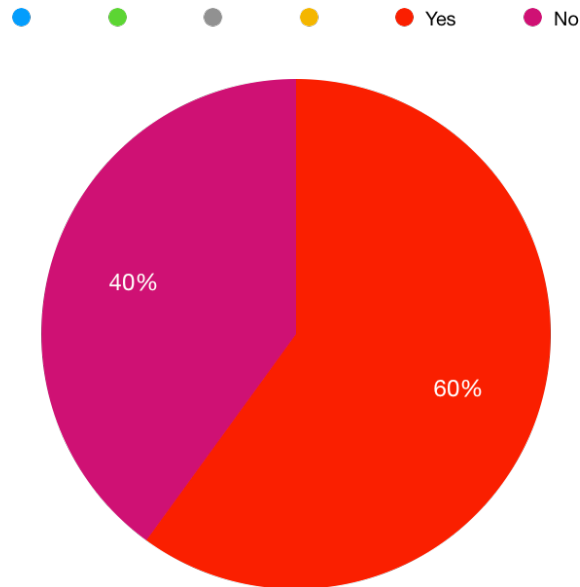

Figure 7.

Question 9. How did pandemic influence Your lifestyle?

Students describe their lifestyle mostly(70%) as living in constant lock downs, wearing masks, too much social distancing (not going to coffees, sports, tennis, mostly staying at home, at job, supermarket, or in front of different screens. Covid 19 influenced changes in everything, too much online activities is not something that they like, even though they know it is more safe for them. 30% responded that nothing drastically changed for them, some even stated that they do not look back to obstacles that are not changeable, they just go ahead, and move forward without looking back, or they do not think back at all.
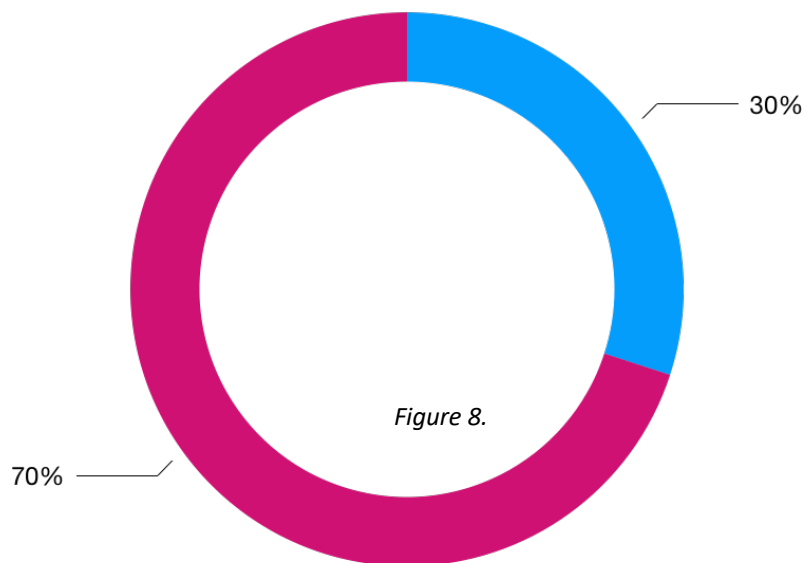

Figure 8.

CONCLUSION

Even though, there is a plead of multi perspective, multidisciplinary , and practical knowledge that is learned inside the academia, there is not enough implementation, and use of the potentials for fighting the discrimination, that is result of the social inequalities. The main hypothesis of this investigation is that the social inequalities are rising every day, and that the better joint strategy of different science networks, especially sociologists, NGO-s, Women's groups for help, students, can help in their diminishment. Empirical part of this investigation includes the analyses of the opinion of students on how to diminish the social inequality, especially in the pandemic.

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Sociologists for women in Society, RC 32 , Summer Newsletter, 2019/2020, Volume 10:16.

LITERATURE STUDIES

HEDGEWOOD

ROBIN FETHERSTON

Robin Fetherston, Assistant Professor, Virginia Commonwealth University School of the Arts in Qatar

ABSTRACT

This coming-of-age work of fiction features the power of rumor and explores how a close-knit community might deal with the unfamiliar and the unknown. The story is set in 1982, and at its center is a dense forest that lies on the western border of the small town, St. Gualbert. Although the official name of the forest is Hedgewood, all residents of the town refer to it as Silent Forest. Yet no one knows why. What has been handed down through generations are tall tales and speculations of what or who inhabits this place, running the spectrum from the realistic such as bears and wolves to the supernatural of ghosts and zombies. The anecdote most people refer to involves a dentist from out of town who insists on entering the forest despite multiple warnings from his new acquaintances. He is found later, lying at the forest's edge bloodied and broken, murmuring all the while about elves. However, while most are convinced something is amiss in the forest, not all are willing to attribute it to fantastical creatures. One is Waverly Taylor, a recent high-school graduate who plans to study music in college. He learns that some people experience dizziness and disorientation in a heavily soundproofed room and starts to wonder if the natural soundproofing that a forest as dense as Hedgewood provides is at the crux of the local legend. What he discovers surprises all expectations.

Keywords: short story, forest lore, legend, fantastical creatures, experiments in sound

PART I

Waverly Taylor's backpack laid open like the dark mouth of a cave. His best friend Blair McGrath read from the list of items they figured Wave would need, pronouncing each one as if reciting a benediction. Both stayed away from the word "hike" knowing full-well this effort would have a more investigative edge.

"Flashlight," Blair read.

"Check," said Wave.

"Extra batteries."

"Got two."

"Bug spray."

"Yep."

"Kodak."

"Got it. Film, too," Wave replied. "Do we have the rope, yet?"

"Couldn't find it. We're using yarn. I found a bunch in the coat closet, never used before, but forgotten." Blair pulled open a plastic bag lying on the kitchen table and showed several skeins, all in holiday colors.

"You've got to be kidding. This isn't gonna be strong enough," said Wave, feeling a skein.

"We can tie several strands together."

Wave shook his head. "Preposterous," he said, using one of Blair's favorite words. The idea was that he would be tethered to Blair who would stay put at the forest's border, and they could use the rope to signal each other, or if Blair had to, he could drag Wave out.

The forest in question, according to the state of Virginia, was named Hedgewood, but everyone in St. Gualbert, the town situated outside its edges where the two boys lived, had called it Silent Forest for as long as anyone could remember. No one knew why because no one had dared to walk into it for decades. Not even to take a scenic hike. Instead folks visited sites in the much larger Washington National Forest such as Hot Springs to the southwest. Nearly every family favored its own lore of Silent Forest stories running the gamut from predictable ghosts, head-chomping zombies, and secret agents—sometimes foreign, sometimes native—to the seemingly more realistic assumptions that wolves or bears inhabited its dark recesses. No matter the case, it was not advisable, even normal, to venture in.

Once in a while when neighbors or families gathered, some old codger or matron would drum up the name of Dewberry, or a child might ask about him. Wave had found out from several of these conversations that E.C. Dewberry was a retired dentist from Boston who settled in St. Gualbert some forty or fifty years ago, depending on who was doing the telling.

"He was a widower, I believe," Mr. Foxworth said to Wave one damp night in November in the Foxworths' sitting room after folks from the neighborhood had enjoyed an indoor potluck.

Henry Hatten doubted it. "Why the woman would have to be severely unhinged to wed herself to such a stubborn fool."

"Oh, Henry," his wife, Georgia, exclaimed as the women broke out into guffaws and hooting.

"That is totally absurd," Louise Hornsleth said.

"Why, what I say?" Henry looked befuddled. He held his palms out and motioned to Stan McNally for support. "I'm complimenting the women, here."

"I'm with ya," Stan said.

"Baloney," Emma Jamison said. "All you have to do is look around town to see all sorts of granite-filled men who've managed to find a mate."

"Around town?" her best friend, Page, asked. "How about just around this here room?"

"Hey now!" one of the men gave a mock protest.

"You know we love ya'll, anyway," Mama said once the laughter and joshing subsided a bit.

"And that's the point, isn't it, Emma? Insanity has nothing to do with it. I say it's generosity on the part of the brides. Maybe some are a little naïve, but generous all the same."

Wave could see several of the women nod their heads and heard, "She got that right," from somewhere near the china closet.

"Well, I cannot attest to the state of mind of Dr. Dewberry's wife," said Mr. Foxworth. "She was a northerner, I assume."

"Now that could make a difference," Mama pointed out. Everybody laughed at that.

Wave's little sister, Charise, piped up and asked Mr. Foxworth what happened to Dr. Dewberry.

"Well, Ms. Willow oughta tell you. I think she was with the group that discovered him."

Ms. Willow sat on the sofa. She looked eternally tired. Indeed, her eyes were closed, but she must have been listening because she started speaking before opening them.

"No, it was my brother Fred, and Dad, of course, that went with the group who carried him to the hospital. Mother wouldn't let me go as I was just a wee one. He had come to St. Gualbert, Dr. Dewberry that is, had come to St. Gualbert because he wanted a peaceful existence in his retirement years, but didn't want to sit around doing nothing. He told us he wanted to take advantage of the superb fishing and hiking opportunities in Augusta and Bath counties. Well, when news of Silent Forest came his way, he was dead set on traversing it. Everyone tried to warn him—told him that as of old, travelers who risked entering often failed to return, but he seemed to know better.

"It was Edmond Rose who discovered him. It was a fine morning, and Mr. Rose decided to take a stroll along the border of Silent Forest—without stepping into it, mind you. Well he saw what seemed to be some loose clothing fluttering in the breeze when he realized it held the dentist, who was laid out flat as a gander. He was covered in blood and bruises. It was as if an animal had gotten to him, or he had fallen into a ravine and had crawled his way out. Fred told me that he had several ribs broken, a dislocated shoulder, and a nearly fractured skull. His hiking boots were missing. We all heard he was unconscious the whole way to the Staunton hospital, but Dad told me at one point he heard him whisper several times, 'Forest elves.'

"The town-folk never got the whole story because for days he lay in a hospital bed talking gibberish. His sister came down and took him back home to Boston. They heard he eventually came to his senses, but couldn't remember the incident clearly. Never really wanted to talk about what he did recall either."

PART II

Wave said, "We gotta find some decent rope somewhere. Maybe Pop's shed."

"Hey, I know. The A&P is having a closing out sale in Ferrol," Blair said.

"I already spent my dough on the thing of beauty." Wave smiled as he said it.

"Ah," Blair played along. "And beaut-ee-ful, it is. Where is it resting right now?"

Wave didn't have time to answer for a car could be heard pulling into the carport. Without a word they stuffed everything into the backpack, and it went out the back door with Blair in a loop around the Taylors' house towards his own across the street.

Wave pretended to search in the fridge for a snack. He could hear the screen door open. Pops was complaining, it sounded like, to Aunt Mary Grace. She had just returned from vacationing in Cape Hatteras, and the Taylors had picked her up at the train station.

"You are not gonna believe what the boy wants to do," Pops said as they walked into the front room. "Sing. He wants to sing for a livin'. I'll be payin' thousands upon thousands of dollars to that college for the next four years so my son can learn to sing and prance around with some band headed for jail or rehab."

"You mean he won't sing with a symphony? Isn't classical music the thing they study in college?" Mary Grace asked.

Mama interrupted. "No. It's jazz. Jazz Improv, he calls it."

"Same difference," Pops said.

Wave decided to stay in the kitchen. He had heard this rant before. Pops was a supervisor-type for insurance adjustors and had worked his way up from being an office boy who cleaned up after everyone and ran errands. It was no surprise, then, he had found it unbelievable his eldest had failed to seek something practical, like business management or engineering, something to give him a solid living wage, as Pops had put it. Wave had tried to tell his parents that he would be learning to sing in several styles. He was not narrowing his possibilities, merely expanding on them. There were all kinds of ways to make it in music. And they appeared to listen, but then Pops would make some comment like this, and Wave knew his logic hadn't made a dent in that stubborn head of his.

But Wave had a gut feeling things were going to be different after this summer. He had a clue—no a theory— that if confirmed, would solve the mystery behind the town's Silent Forest. And he arrived at this theory as the very result of his preparing to be a music major. Even Pops would have to admit as such. Everything would change.

The story of Dr. Dewberry came to bear on Wave during a strange occurrence in, of all places, a music studio at the college. It was a seminar for promising high school seniors. He and his classmate Jake were collaborating on a musical arrangement of their own of Cahn and Van Heusen's "Ain't That a Kick in the Head" for their aural training. The goal was to bring the tune back from the full orchestral arrangement typically used for it to a piano and voice duet without using sheet music. Wave met early with Nate, the audio engineer who was a graduate assistant, to lay some initial vocal tracks down on top of Jake's rhythmic piano.

"Wave, my man," said Nate, "I gotta help a prof out for a bit. You hold the box together 'til I get back, yeah?" Wave agreed, and just as Nate stepped out the door, he stuck his head back in to say, "When Jake gets here, we gotta work on your sympatico a bit. Smooth out those rough patches." Nate's stance by the door put the visual focus on his perfectly coiffed hair with its high-top fade. He looked like he belonged on a cover with the Commodores. Wave wondered how he kept it up on top of his head that way. Someday when they knew each other better, he'd get up enough nerve to ask.

Wave stood near a sofa and studied his surroundings. He had never been in a recording studio before. He had seen pictures of elaborate, fully decorated ones with sleek, glassed-in sections for vocalists and instrumentalists. This one deserved Nate's moniker—it was a perfect square of concrete block walls. Panels of sunburst orange carpet hung on the front and back walls while large round bolts of fabric or foam were stuck on the side walls. The floor was thickly carpeted, also in sunburst orange, and the ceiling displayed corrugated pine wood. Facing the sofa, some chairs, and several microphone stands was the long row of instrument panels and mixing boards common to the working studios in the photos.

Wave had noticed earlier when singing that there was no echo at all. He was known to have a beautiful pitch, but in here it had sounded flat, dead. He noticed more fully now that the entire room felt weighted down, including himself. No sound he made—walking on the carpet, scratching his head—could move beyond its self-contained space. He thought he needed to sit down. The morning had found him skipping breakfast, which was not unusual when he had to sing. He was satisfied with merely gulping water and orange juice. Obviously, it had been a mistake. He took several deep breaths, but those only served to make him feel slightly dizzy. The sunburst colors seemed to swirl a bit. He would feel better sitting down, surely.

By the time Nate returned with Jake in tow, Wave was in a sweat.

"Whoa, dude," said Nate. "You look totally out of it. What's going on?" He put the back of his hand against Wave's forehead."

"I feel dizzy. Just since you left."

Jake suggested he was coming down with the flu, but Nate laughed and said, "Na. I know the problem. Help me get him outside."

They each draped an arm of Wave's over their shoulders and half lifted, half walked him outside to a bench nearby, bordering a manicured lawn. A slight breeze whispered across Wave's face, and he heard the murmur of cars moving across a campus road. He already felt better. Nate directed Jake towards a coke machine before turning to Wave and saying, "You ain't got no fever, my man, you've caught the Sound of Silence."

"You mean the Simon and Garfunkel song?"

"Just my little joke," said Nate, "just my little joke. You see, we don't notice all the sound that's around us, but there's a ton of it constantly. And those sound waves bounce back to us at high and low frequencies to let us know where we are. Now, if you reduce the decibel level, you get rid of some of the sound, but you're also getting rid of those messages that help us keep our balance." Here he grinned and patted him on the back—"See we gotta have our *Waves*, or we're all messed up."

"How come it doesn't bother you?"

"Ah, hell, I'm used to it. I've been floatin' in and out of soundproof rooms and garages all my life. And I was a dumb prick for leavin' you in there with the door closed. If I had opened the door, there wouldn't have been no problem. But you are a delicate child, my brother, a delicate child!"

Wave had a horrible thought. He thought of Pops who had suffered from claustrophobia at times. This was one legacy he could do without. "So, some people are especially sensitive to it? I hope I can get used to it."

Nate shook his head and cut the air sideways with one hand. "Oh, no, you'll be fine, eventually. We'll just have to remember to take more breaks. That room in there is not completely soundproof either. That's a help. Everybody, and I do mean everybody has to watch out in a completely soundproof room. Some people even have hallucinations. But I did have a dude in this room here last year—I thought he was gonna pass out after about only 20 minutes. And there was a whole band around."

Nate took off pontificating about decibel levels and frequency rates, but Wave was stuck back at the notion of passing out and hallucinations. It wasn't until a day later, however, as he was standing in front of his closet sniffing the underarm of a shirt to see if it was wearable, that he made the connection between the incident in Nate's studio and the unconscious form of Dr. Dewberry and his going on about elves. Suddenly the name Silent Forest took on a whole new dimension.

It was Blair who gave him the word. "See here, Wave. It must be an anechoic chamber. A natural one."

"A what?"

"An anechoic chamber. It says here in *Encyclopedia Britannica* that it's a sound laboratory where they 'minimize sound reflections as well as external noise.' They accomplish it through certain materials like masonry walls, glass fiber, acoustical filters…"

Blair was seated at his family's dining table with his own copy of the "A" volume open in front of him. He was the only kid Wave knew who had his own set of encyclopedias and not just one, but two. A set of *World Book Encyclopedia* graced the counter above his desk in his room. A *Webster's Dictionary* was placed in the magazine rack in the bathroom where Blair would often lock himself in much to the chagrin of his siblings. And within easy reach under his bed lay stacks of *National Geographic*, fishing and trail guides, a large colorful volume of *Dinosaurs of North America*, and a book about the Lost Colony, the strangely spelled *Search for the Cittie of Raleigh*.

After he swore Blair to secrecy, Wave told him his plans for testing out Silent Forest.

"I'm in," Blair declared.

Wave's internal antennae went up immediately. "You're in how?"

"I mean I'm going with you."

"No way. Your parents would have my hide if anything happened to you, and Pops would throw me in jail."

"So you're just gonna go traipsing in there by yourself singing "Do Re Mi" to the wolves. It'll be scary dark in there, man. Just like a German forest."

"That's where you come in. You're my base."

Blair rolled his eyes.

"I mean at the site, dimwit," Wave said.

Blair's eyebrows raised as he cocked his head. Wave had a partner.

A few weeks after Mary Grace had returned from vacation, the boys stood at the very edge of Silent Forest, a mile and a half south from Wave's home and in the back of Mrs. Bolt's house, standing a football field away. They chose this point to enter because Mrs. Bolt's family was dead or gone from the house, and she worked long hours at the Augusta Health Center in Staunton. The houses were small, but much more spread apart here than in Wave and Blair's neighborhood, with about five or six acres of grass and shrubbery and oak and ash trees between them. They had come prepared to deal with the thick shrubbery bordering the forest and already had been hard at work with the hedge-clippers Wave had brought. They had been nervous about people seeing them toting a tool on their walk even though it was in a large garbage bag, but no one seemed to have paid much attention.

They thought they had the problem of the rope solved when Blair discovered one above the washing machine at home. It was a scratchy thing, but would have to do this time.

"Now, for the thing of beauty," Wave said. "No passing out for me." He proudly pulled out his new Walkman II cassette player with the small earphones and their orange pads. He had spent a year saving everything he had made by mowing and trimming neighbors' lawns and working in the school cafeteria in order to buy it. He slapped in the first tape he had bought for it—Gino Vannelli's *Nightwalker* album—pushed the on/off lever and put one of the cushioned phones to an ear. A moment later he could hear strands of "Living Inside Myself." Here was his key into the forest.

PART III

Wave looked at Blair, whose mouth was set in a line, and said, "Here goes, dude." He received Blair's nod before bending down and stepping through the hole, feeling the tug of his backpack as it beat against the leaves and wood. When he stood up again, the first thing he did was to reach up with both hands to check his headphones. Along with the rope around his waist, the mellow strands of Gino Vanelli's jazz tunes tethered him to the reality he had just departed.

It was cold comfort, however, for as soon as he passed the tall oaks growing immediately behind the hedge, a preternatural scene awaited him. He didn't need his flashlight here for there was an open sky, and what it exposed was a silent congregation of kudzu facing his way. He and Blair had seen hints of this above the hedge, but the tall oaks had blocked much of the view. Layers of green vines covered the ground and had marched up and over and around the trees, molding their natural shapes into a semblance of giant human forms. Some trees presented branches that had succumbed to the ravenous leaf, while others supported arms made purely of kudzu and reached out to companions to form a web between them, their leaves fluttering in the slight breeze. Still others stood as solitary figures seeming to cast a blank face towards Wave.

Yet, he sensed the presence of watchful eyes behind the green. The word "Trespasser" felt emblazoned upon his forehead like a mark of Cain.

Taking a deep breath from the pit of his stomach as if preparing to sing an arpeggio, he walked straight ahead, every step either atop or immersed in layers of vine and leaf. Moving past the first solitary figures, he stopped in front of a webbed wall of vines and could tell he wouldn't be able to get through, not even with his outdoor knife. Beyond the webbing it looked like a canopied part of the forest.

He retraced his steps partway, being careful not to get caught up in his rope, then heading left, he walked five minutes avoiding the jagged line of solitary figures. He could already tell he and Blair would have to do something different next time about the rope. It kept getting caught in the ground cover, and though it looped through his waistband, he could feel it scratch his skin through his shirt in places where it rose above his pants. It drove him crazy.

Another thing annoyed him that he should have realized ahead of time, and that was the music—not the instrumentation but the vocals. Wave loved Vanelli's stuff, but that was the problem. Vocals were never merely background for him. He habitually paid attention to lyrics and phrasing and tone, and in this case, it was distracting.

The webs of vines grew thinner in appearance so Wave tread around the individual trees and stopped right in front of the webbed network. He removed his knife from his belt, unsheathed it, and started slicing and cutting through the growth so he could step through.

He was now in what he considered to be the real forest. The kudzu had made only minor inroads, mostly as ground cover mixed with other ivy and low plants. Wave thought back to his merit badge in forestry from Boy Scouts. He could still recognize the common Appalachian hardwood trees, the Red Oak and the Poplar. The Eastern White Pines stood straight, close together, their smooth trunks rising fifty feet or so, adorned by soft green-gray foliage. Wave could tell he wouldn't be able to wrap his arms around most of them. These were old trees. Older still was a strange type of tree he had never seen before. With a gnarled blackened trunk, disfigured branches sticking out at odd angles, and red-orange leaves, it looked like a witchy, over-sized sister to the bonsai tree. Some were short and seemed to grow sideways instead of up. Many were tall and tangled with branches and leaves from other trees to form a multi-colored canopy overhead.

The air felt heavy. Wave's sinuses were closing in, and he could feel an immediate drop in temperature. The sun seeped only through the gaps here and there bringing a dim cast over the scene. He wondered how long it would be before he was forced to use his flashlight. He walked a few steps. It was slow work because of the forest's density. He felt a tug on the rope and thought it had caught on something so he gave it a good yank. He didn't gain any more leverage. He had simply run out of rope. Cursing to himself, Wave thought once again that he and Blair were going to have to replace the rope with something else. It wasn't working.

He found a young red oak and with some difficulty because his gloves were oversized transferred the rope from his pants to the tree trunk. Wave had long slender hands, a pianist's hands. He and Blair would have to try harder to find a pair that fit. Wave shook his head slowly as he worked. They should have been better prepared than this.

He felt freer to be away from the scratchiness of the rope but knew full-well he shouldn't move too far away from it—he'd never find it again if he lost his bearings. Surely, it would be fine if he just stepped a few yards further to get a better view around that large pine just ahead. He made his way over there and let out a whoop, interrupting the somber piano chords playing just then on his cassette. A walker's path lay before him. It was overgrown with weeds and grass, embedded rocks marked its already disturbed texture, and boulders lay here and there against the sides. Here was a path ignored over time. But its presence meant not just one but a number of people had traveled on it before. He had to force himself not to run and jump over the weeds and rocks.

First, however, the music had to go. That much he would do. After removing a glove, he pushed the stop button on his cassette player and pulled the headphones down to hang around his neck. He believed he'd be all right. He felt some sinus pressure, but nothing unusual for him, certainly not like anything he had felt

in Nate's studio. If he started to feel strange, he could just get the cassette going again. Besides, it was important to test his theory.

Unencumbered, he journeyed along the path, which grew clearer of grass and boulders the farther he went. He noticed he was breathing hard out of his mouth and glanced at his battery-run watch. It had stopped. Another thing gone haywire. He should be heading back to civilization soon.

He stopped momentarily to listen. The stillness of the forest caught him off guard. No wind. No sound of insects or animals. All these trees and not a bird in sight. Very odd. The only thing he could hear was his own breathing. It was hard work and sounded like an ocean's surf to his ears. He tried to swallow, but his throat was dry. And there was a gurgling in his ears, a high tinny sound, too, that he hadn't noticed before. He started moving again to keep himself company if anything, and was so concentrated on the path that he almost missed a stone structure to his right. It was a fireplace, a very old one. It was black inside and leaves grew up one side of it. A long stone bench had been built close to the ground in front of it. Neither looked very inviting, but Wave needed to sit down. The pressure in his head was building. Leaves and stone crunched under his feet. Just as he neared the bench, something dark shot out from the grass fronds right in front of him. Wave yelled out in surprise, his voice sounding thin, and at the same time tried to turn around. His foot caught on a rock and some roots, and as he fell, he realized it was a raccoon before pain shot through his head and everything transformed into a swirl of black.

He awoke to the sounds of Vanelli and was confused about when he had restarted the cassette and put his earphones back on. With some difficulty, for his backpack was lopsided now, he pushed himself up, noticing at the same time a black and white bandana splashed with red on the ground where his head had been. His head throbbed with pain, and he immediately put his hand on the side where it hurt the worst. It felt wet. His hand came back bloody. If Wave had been able to exercise sober judgment he would have discerned that his wound, while not light, was not life threatening. But he was stunned and frightened, and so leaving the bandana, he half-limped, half trotted back towards the rope. He grabbed hold of it and took a final look back. The upper part of the face of a man or a boy, he couldn't tell which, jerked back into the cover of branches about four feet from the ground, as if he had been spying on Wave, the interloper. A lone rough hand then emerged with its palm facing out in a warning not to approach. Terror bolted through Wave, compelling him to forego wasting time untying the rope. Instead he let it run through his naked hand—the glove had been lost—ignoring the scratchiness, and moving as quickly as he could to the condemning choir of kudzu. He could feel blood weave its way down towards his cheek. Fifty yards from his starting point the rope was dancing up and down, up and down, a sign of Blair's urgency. Wave let go and galloped in a limp. He worked his way through the hole and was greeted by Blair, a look of horror on his face, accompanied by a small group of women and children. His name was shouted and there were several screams. He answered promptly by hurling vomit at their feet.

"What on earth were you boys thinking?"

"My thoughts exactly, Mary Grace." Aunt Alice Gray tugged at her polyester summer dress as she sat on a chair near Wave's hospital bed. "You both could have gotten killed or permanently maimed." She leaned over for a moment to peer more closely at Wave's head, but it was bandaged. She seemed disappointed his wound wasn't out in the open for observation.

Blair who was halfway sitting on the side of Wave's bed piped up, "Well I wasn't gonna get killed. I was the look-out."

Wave said under his breath, "Wrong thing to say, guy."

Alice Gray gave an insulting whoop as Mary Grace replied, "Well, a lot of good *that* did. If it weren't for Clair and Eleanor and—was it Bixby who was with them?" She was standing with her thin arms crossed and looked to Alice Gray for help.

"Yes, Bixby," Alice Gray confirmed.

"Like I say, if it wasn't for Clair and Eleanor and Bixby deciding to take their usual Saturday walk on a Tuesday instead, heaven only knows what condition your friend would be in here."

"Especially with that frightening creature chasing him," Alice Gray added.

Wave closed his eyes and let them rattle on. Theirs was a common refrain he had heard over the last two days from everyone calling or visiting from St. Gualbert. This "little outing" of his as Granddad had put it, eyebrows raised and chin down, landed him in a Staunton hospital with seven stitches in his head, a mild concussion, and a bad knee sprain that would keep him on crutches for six weeks. The doctor said he would recover as the young tend to do, but concussions could be tricky, and because his family lived close to an hour away, they would keep him three nights. The first day, while Wave bled and underwent the needle, everyone, including Mama and Pops, expressed great sympathy, even commenting on the boys' bravery, if not quite as they might on Lewis and Clarke's. After the first night, however, attitudes soured rapidly. Soon Wave and Blair were subjected to lectures and accusations.

It was just as well he could only hobble around, Pops declared, because he was grounded for a month. Blair's parents punished him to a lesser degree, since Wave appeared to everyone to be the instigator, and eventually sent him off for sixteen days to some science camp where he was made to study flora and fauna—not his favorite subject, the boy being a history buff. But if he was going to stalk the woods, he might as well learn about them, was the thinking. Most assuredly, the two friends were disallowed from hanging out together for as long as Wave was grounded. When Blair was home, they sent each other notes through their younger sisters requiring bribes on each side of the street. Wave was suspicious at times that Mama and Pops were merely pretending not to notice. He was glad, but it was another example of adult hypocrisy.

A week and a half after Wave's hospital stay, flowers were still arriving at the house from well-wishers. While Wave had his knee on ice, Charise made sure to read each card to him from the most recent bouquets to arrive. It wasn't out of generosity but to ensure he knew who the flowers really were for.

Charise read the card belonging to some daylilies in her high soprano voice: "Keep your spirits up, David and Ellie. They grow up sooner than you think!" Next, she picked up a card from the middle of a bouquet of tulips and white alstroemeria that said, "Praying for you, David and Ellie. And Wave, too—that ya'll recover soon!" A third card read, "If ya'll need anything, just call. We hope Wave has learned his lesson." Charise read this last bit with special emphasis.

"So nothing's really for me, then—just me," Wave observed.

"Not-a-one, Wavey-Lou, not-a-one." His sister made a lopsided zero in the air with her hand and sashayed around the knobbed end of the bannister before wiggling up the stairs.

Wave yelled from the sofa, "Just remember who taught you to win at Rat!"

"That still ain't gonna bring you flowers, Wavey-Lou," was the answer from above.

Later that evening Wave's parents hosted a few of their friends—Louise and Nelson Hornsleth, Henry and Georgia Hatten, Stan McNally—and Wave's ubiquitous aunts for a cookout in the backyard. Pops supervised hamburgers on a grill that often threatened to walk off while the guests sat on the stone porch with its patio extension. They had made short order of the lemonade Mama had made from scratch, so she was stirring up some more using the homemade syrup she kept on hand in the fridge. In the meantime, beer was readily available. Wave, stretched out on the flowered chaise lounge, took care not to turn his knee while it was up on two foam pillows. He had convinced Mama that the goose down ones scratched the back of his leg. His crutches lay nearby.

Meanwhile, Mr. Hornsleth had been trying, as he put it, to talk some sense into him. "Now lookee here, Wave. If the danger has to do with too much silence, how come—"

"Are ya'll talking about the elves?" Mrs. Hornsleth butted in. A full plate in hand, she had just sauntered over to her chair. "What about the elves? That's what I want to hear about. Dr. Dewberry—you know who I mean, Wave—the one that was beat up, well, he was supposed to have gone loopy over some terrible elves. Is that what you saw, Wave?"

"Oh, Louise," chided Mrs. Hatten, "we stopped believing in elves when we were in first grade. Good grief."

"Only because that boy Terrence whatever-his-last-name-was told us they weren't real," said Mrs. Hornsleth. "And you thought he knew better because of his British accent. Speaking for myself, I always suspected it was a put on."

"Now don't go scratching the elves out of existence, just yet." Mr. McNally had stepped over from shootin' the breeze with Pops and carried a plate of newly cooked hamburgers to pass around. "You'll get the folks in Iceland madder than a wet hen."

"Iceland!" Mrs. Hatten's voice rose a notch higher. "Why are we concerned with people in Iceland, of all places?"

"They believe in them," Mr. McNally said. "I saw it on *60 Minutes*. They make sure none of their roads go through where the elves live."

"Never mind the elves," Mr. Hornsleth said. "We was getting at something important before ya'll set everything asunder. What Wave thinks is that Silent Forest operates sort of like a natural sound-proof room. And it causes people to lose their balance. Isn't that right, Wave?"

"Yes, sir, but I wouldn't say everyone. There's this guy who manages the studio—"

"Is that what happened to you?" Mr. Hornsleth asked.

"I thought you said it was a raccoon," Mary Grace asked.

Wave admitted it was.

Mr. Hornsleth took a swig of his beer before leaning over with his elbows on his knees and said with some gravity, "What I was trying to get at, Wave, is that your theory about the sound-proofing doesn't quite explain everything that's been passed around about Silent Forest. Let's take Dr. Dewberry. The doc had several broken bones and a dislocated shoulder and was talking like he was ready for the loony bin. So you're ready to say all that happened because he couldn't hear anything and lost his balance? I have my doubts, young man, I have my doubts."

Alice Gray interjected. "Wave explained to us a little about his idea. But I keep wondering about the bears. And the bogs, too. And the strange lightning that strikes when there isn't one sign of a storm around."

"And so many people have disappeared," Mrs. Hornsleth said. "At least that's what I've always heard. My granny insisted it was haunted."

"Surely, they can't have all lost their balance and just stayed put," explained Mr. Hornsleth.

Mary Grace said, "That makes sense, Nelson." Her voice softened then as a mother's might. "You know, Wave, dear, science can't explain everything."

"I know, Ma'am." Wave felt right then that anything he said would sound weak.

Mama came out and poured Mr. Hatten some fresh lemonade. He had been listening to all this, and finally spoke up. "You know what they oughta do. The National Park folks, I mean. They oughta go in there as a group and investigate. It's past time they did."

"No one ain't going in there no-how." Pops had walked up to the edge of the group and said this in the tone of an announcement. Everyone gave him their full attention. "Now I got here the last of the hamburgers so ya'll dig in," he said, handing the oversized serving plate to Mr. Hatten. "Nope, we all are to leave Silent Forest alone. I had a call in to the man up at the Park Ranger office, and he done call me back right before ya'll arrived. This here forest, he's pretty certain, is privately owned. He's checking to make certain it's the

one he's thinking of because he's just joined the service, but off the top of his head, he says he's pretty sure. That means we here in St. Gualbert are to leave it alone. Otherwise we're trespassing."

Everyone began talking at once. Pops assured them the ranger had told him that most Virginia forests were owned by individuals, even by those outside the timber industries. The park service tries to work with the owners in opening up their parks to the public, but some are not interested.

"Guess the owner of Silent Forest wants it left alone," Pops said.

"See," said Mrs. Hornsleth, "it's meant to be a mystery. I say let our town's namesake take care of the forest. Isn't he the protector of all the forests?"

Alice Gray answered, "No, Blair told us that's an error we Protestants tend to make. St. Gualbert protects the foresters—the ones who take care of the forests."

Mama had a hold of Mr. McNally's glass and was about to pour him some lemonade when she said, "What I'm wondering, is if Wave saw a child in there. We keep talking about elves, but what if a child is being held captive in that forest? Hasn't anyone thought of that?"

Her question popped up right as the excited talk was settling down, and it caught everyone by surprise. They turned to Wave, and Mr. Hatten asked, "Well Wave, what do you say? Give us your best guess. Was it man or creature or child?"

Wave shook his head as he said, "I don't really know, sir. Honest, I don't."

PART IV

"Ice cream soda at Rodney's." Wave was eager to get to that envelope with a message from Blair sticking out of Charise's waistband, but knew he was still a minor of limited means and didn't want to offer a gourmet meal before offering a snack. His bodily position didn't improve matters considering he was stuck lying on his bed surrounded by pillows with his bad leg propped up by even more, while Charise was…well…being Charise, ever moving.

"You said that last time. Promise something different."

"Uh, double ice cream soda."

"Oh, please."

At that moment, he regretted she was set to advance to fifth grade come fall. Only last Christmas, a double ice cream soda was a great treat.

"Okay, a friendship bracelet.

Charise sneered. With her hands she leaned on Wave's mattress and performed backward ballet kicks.

"Ouch! Be careful. Not from me, do-do. To give to what's her face, Blair's sis, Katie."

Charise slowed her kicks down, but just a tad. "Her name is Kate, Kate for Katherine, and I just gave her one.

"So give her another one! Good God, girl. You're hard to please.

Charise halted her kicks. "Aah, you swore. I'm tellin'. You'll be grounded till you're sixty.

"And what do you think will happen to you, Miss Hoytie Toytie, if Mama and Pops find out you've been sneaking messages between me and Blair? We'll have to hang out together till we're both sixty.

Charise screwed up her face in disgust. He had her there, he thought, until she pulled out the envelope and waved it in the air saying, "Better think quick. Railroad Pond is hungry!"

"Uh, tickets to the movies. We'll drive ya'll."

"And you'll pay?"

"Yep."

"And we choose the movies?"

"Yes, yes. You got your ransom. Now give it here."

She tossed it at him with exaggerated nonchalance and promenaded out of the room. He carefully tore one short end of the envelope with his fingers. He had a feeling about this message. It was going to make or break them. He pulled out a full-size sheet of notebook paper with a single line written on it in Blair's box-like print: "I found a quicker way. Near us."

"Yes-s-s-s," Wave said aloud, shaking a pillow in the air.

It was a sunny Tuesday morning when the boys stood by what appeared to be a shamrock-green hedge so thick and tall the only thing they could see behind it were the upper branches of some very tall oaks. Since Blair's note about his discovery, they had waited three weeks for this moment: one week for Wave to finish his month-long grounding and two weeks before he could lean the crutches against the wall in his bedroom as artifacts from his recent heroic experiment and declare to them, "I survived. You didn't."

Blair had done the hard work. He had borrowed his dad's tools whenever his parents were busy or asleep and had sneaked up on the hedge, keeping an eye out for anyone who might be curious, including Wave's parents, and had clipped and cut and sawed and axed through the hedging. It took him fifteen days, four hours, and thirty-six minutes, much of it darting away from potential onlookers. He kept a running record in his communiqués to Wave who accused him of bragging, but was thankful nonetheless.

As they pulled off the leaf and branch camouflage Blair had leaned against his man-made opening, Wave couldn't help but express, "You the man, bro." Blair gave Wave a closed-mouth smile and a nod.

Once the camouflage was off, Wave could see that Blair had cut a jagged opening through some dark wooden fencing, rotten and black in parts. It was big enough for them to climb through only one at a time, and they had trouble moving Blair's bulky and oversized backpack through. More and more hedges met them immediately on the other side. Blair had hacked through parts of these as well, while other parts could be pushed aside.

When bodies and backpacks were all in one place, Blair touched Wave's shoulder and motioned him to look behind them. "Here's the surprise I was talkin' about."

Wave gasped. "My God, it's like Nate's studio!"

Barriers made of wood paneling, some of concrete, and others of stone or rock stood up from the ground over six feet in height and stretched six to eight feet in length, but askew, not in a straight line, and with gaps between them, like a perforated membrane. Some wooden panels were nailed to a row of hedges here and there. Wave couldn't tell where it ended. The patterns seemed to go on indefinitely.

"Soundproofing," Blair said. "Gave me the creeps yesterday when I finally broke through and saw it. Keeping the world out."

"Or keepin' it in," answered Wave. "One dude did all this?"

"Or thing."

"Whatever it is. It can't be too hostile. Like I said, somebody put the earphones back on me and turned the cassette back on. He could've killed me if he wanted to."

"Yeah, or just left you alone. That's true," Blair said. "How do you feel?" Blair had been looking at him with some concern.

"I can feel the deadness in here."

"Same here," said Blair.

"But so far, okay. And I'm not taking many chances on that." Wave knelt down to dig through his backpack and pulled the Walkman and its headphones out. Blair got busy opening his overloaded backpack and pulled out what he referred to as the umbilical cord. It was an assortment of rope, wire, and fishing line the boys

had tied and taped together, long enough to cover at least a football field, maybe more, Blair thought. Wave wasn't sure. He had brought short, variegated ribbon to tie around trees and bushes—an update on Hansel and Gretel.

Blair tied one end of the cord to an oak. They synchronized their watches. It was 9 am. Wave had an hour and a half, maybe an hour and forty-five minutes; then it was Blair's turn. He had refused to keep watch the whole time, and Wave figured he had done more than earn his keep. Wave pulled his backpack over his shoulders, placed his earphones carefully on his ears and turned the cassette player on before sliding it into the front pocket of his brown jacket. He picked up the loop of cord, and he and Blair gave a thumbs up to each other as he walked towards the inner workings of the forest.

This time Wave had opted for a cassette he borrowed from his school's library called "Relaxing with the Classics." It was all soft piano music from Chopin, Debussy, and the like. He realized he could keep his focus easier if there wasn't a singer wooing him in his ears.

His main purpose had shifted, as well. He figured some in the past had felt the ill effects of the deadness, the lack of sound, as he had in Nate's studio, and he planned to still test that out. But he could not get the flash of the strange face out of his mind, and finding out who or what that belonged to was pre-eminent.

White pine oaks towered above him, forming a dense canopy. It was an obstacle course, and when the umbilical cord came near to an end, he didn't really have a sense of how far he had come. His watch showed 9:31. There had been no sign of life other than overgrown grass and shrubs sprouting from the ground and tree leaves fluttering up in the sky.

After tying the end of the cord to a tree, he retrieved the ribbons from his backpack, and as he pressed his way through, he paused every now and then to tie one to a bush or a sapling. A few minutes of this and he started realizing that things had become less dense. It was getting harder to find smaller bushes. Ahead there was a path before him much like the one he had used the first time in the forest. He walked gingerly for some reason he wasn't sure of and then picked up speed, more rarely stopping to leave a ribbon. It was the presence of sharp sunlight that brought him up short. He made a loud exclamation. He had come upon a clearing. It was circular. Trees had been cut down, and some of the stumps remained, though decayed. Something had been dug up in the middle. As Wave walked closer a hole appeared the size of a small backyard swimming pool. Some water lay at the bottom, but it was mostly dry with rocks and stones jutting out from the sides and near the bottom. He removed his earphones because there was no need now to be concerned about the effects of a soundless entity. The sky above looked almost fierce with gaiety. And for the first time while in this forest, he could hear birds.

He looked down again at the hole. It looked surprisingly deep. A movement and a bubble caught his eye. Was that a fish or a frog? He leaned over the rim to get a better view. His backpack shifted causing him to lean farther than he meant to. He was trying to straighten up when something tugged forcefully at his backpack, pulling him away from the edge before letting him go. Quickly, he turned around just enough to catch a glimpse of a small man.

"Whoa, there, boy," said the man. "You don't want to go that way. It might not kill you, but you'd get hurt like you did a while ago."

Wave took a few quick steps to the side to gain more distance between him and the man. Part of him wanted to run. But he was also curious, and while the voice was gruff, it wasn't loud. He looked at the man more steadily now and realized he was looking at a dwarf, about the height of Charise, who was under five feet.

"Who are you?" Wave asked, his voice squeaking unexpectedly.

"Who am I?! I'm not the one trespassing. Who are you?!" The dwarf put his hands on his hips and scowled at Wave. "And a 'thank-ee' might be in order here now, since I done you the favor of helping you out not once, but twice. Where are your manners, boy?"

"You're the one who put my headphones on and turned on my cassette."

The man still had his hands on his hips. He nodded. "The very one. I tried waving at you when you were leaving to say, 'No harm, no foul,' but you were fairly out of it to notice."

Wave recovered enough to say, "I'm sorry, sir. I'm sorry for botherin' you."

"Well, that's a start. Now tell me what you're doing traipsing around these here woods."

"I...I...well, I..."

The dwarf crossed his arms. They seemed surprisingly long for a dwarf, reminding Wave of a wrestler. "Well, out with it, boy. Tell the truth."

"Well, I was just curious about what people were saying about the forest. And I wanted to conduct an experiment." Wave's heart was beating rapidly, and he felt a sense of dread descend upon him. Why had he started telling the man about his project? He couldn't believe he was doing so, but the words came tumbling out. "I wanted to see if it was the lack of sound, the deadness, that caught people off balance and brought them some trouble rather than...the...the..."

"Rather than what?" the dwarf asked sharply. His long bulbous nose looked nearly white against his pinkish face with a few slightly tanned spots.

Wave felt sheepish, but answered anyway. "Rather than the elves."

The dwarf answered with an abrupt laugh. "Well, we've been called worse. So, that's why you have the headphones. The forest bothers you."

Wave nodded.

"You wouldn't be the first. I'm thirsty. Why don't you come sit a while?" He started walking away from the hole. Wade stayed where he was. He wasn't sure how much to trust this man. The man turned and said, "Come on, I won't hurt you. If I'd wanted to I could've easily done it when the raccoon tossed you."

Wave cautiously followed him towards the center of the woods surrounding the clearing. The man's silver-gray hair reached to his collar. His long sleeves were rolled up, and he moved casually in his hiking boots as if they were house slippers. Just past the edge, a single-story wooden house appeared, its natural pine coloring obscuring it from plain view. A long porch featuring a rocking chair and a small side table greeted him as he stepped onto the stone floor. The dwarf opened the heavy wooden door and motioned him inside. The front room was L-shaped with a counter on the short end, plus shelves lined with canned goods— pickles, carrots and what looked like beets, the things his grandparents had in their pantry. A black wood stove stood in the center of the larger section, its long pipe jutting up through the roof. The gray Chesterfield, also recalling Wave's grandparents, was accompanied by two chairs with avocado-colored cushions and a secretary overflowing with books. A square oak table with four chairs sat near the wall opposite to the sofa. On the whole the room was sparse but not unwelcoming. However, there was something odd about it that Wave couldn't quite fathom.

"Let's see what we want here," the dwarf said as he leaned over next to the counter and opened an icebox with faux paneling. "Coke, coke, and more coke. Ah, here we go." He pulled out a large jar of light brown liquid and raised it to the counter. "Iced tea. Brewed with sugar. Only a couple of days old. Should still be good."

Wave was filled with questions, but as the dwarf positioned a step ladder to get to a cabinet holding glasses, the thing that was off kilter became clear. Everything in the house was normal sized. He asked, "Is this your house, sir?"

The dwarf took down two glasses before telling Wave it wasn't a house. "More like a café, or used to be. Called Wolf's Porch seeing that the man who ran the place came one morning to open up and was greeted by the sight of a wolf lying spread out on the porch taking a snooze. Roy it was. Roy didn't think it was smart to run, and he was probably right about that, so hid behind a bush for two hours before the wolf took his leave. We had more animals comin' and goin' then."

Wave told him he'd noticed there weren't many. "So, you've lived here a long time, then, sir?" he asked.

"Let's go outside, shall we? Nice outside for sitting," said the dwarf. He motioned to one of the chairs at the table and directed Wave to take one outside while he took care of the tea.

Once back outside, the dwarf handed Wave his tea with a slice of lemon and hiked himself onto the rocking chair. His legs, like his arms, seemed surprisingly long on a short torso. He had a short neck and a large head, similar to what Wave had noticed about other dwarfs. "I have more furniture," the dwarf said, "but it's stowed away. Now, I know you must have a load of questions, but we must get somethin' straight here first. I'm part owner of this here forest, and I like my privacy. I'm not itchin' to entertain a bunch of people who want to traipse in here satisfying their curiosity after hearing your story, you know?"

Wave nodded. "I won't tell no one," he promised.

"Hmmm. Whereabouts you from?"

As soon as Wave told him, the dwarf said, "Damn, I shoulda known. Wormhole."

"Wormhole?"

His host stroked his cheek, which sprouted about a week's worth of white whiskers. "It's what we called your town. Some bad feelings from way back—our elderly folks remembering that your people didn't treat us little people too well."

"But I don't think we met anyone from the forest." Even as Wave protested, he could imagine if Aunt Gray had ever met the dwarfs, she'd say an offensive thing or two, even if unintentionally. And then there was Nelson Hornsleth who seemed ready at a moment's notice to pass on most any outlandish rumor. Even Mama or Aunt Mary Grace might embarrass the dwarfs by commenting on how cute they all were.

"This was before your time, son. Bad feelings don't fade away too quickly in these parts, I'm afraid. Why don't you tell me more about the experiment you're running? I guess we should introduce ourselves. I can at least be polite. Given name's Greer. Most everyone calls me Mr. G."

Wave told him who he was and explained about his theory.

"You'd be right about that, I reckon'. It really bothered some of our folks. That's why they stayed close to the clearing or over to the other side where it's less dense. A goodly number of them left. Never bothered me, though. Or most people, actually—just the sensitive ones. I guess I'm starting to trust that you won't go blabbing to everyone in your town, right?"

Wave nodded and said yes.

"You can tell your parents. Just make sure they understand the importance of keeping it under wraps. I don't believe in children keeping things from their parents."

Wave decided then to hold off on confessing to Mr. G that his parents didn't know where he was. He guessed that made him not completely trustworthy, but he didn't want to be kicked out of the forest just yet, especially since he was solving a mystery.

"So none of the stories would be true then," Wave said.

Mr. G asked what kind of stories he meant, and Wave told him some of the outlandish fantasies that colored the forest's reputation.

Mr. G tittered at some of them. He said, "Well, now, I've never seen an elf or a zombie, but bears and wolves did inhabit the place for a while. They pretty much passed through. Didn't care for us as neighbors, I suppose. We numbered 70 at one time. As to people disappearing, I'm just wonderin' if maybe our elderly folks weren't the only ones to experience trouble in Worm…I should say St. Gualbert's. Maybe those townspeople *wanted* to disappear, you see?"

"And then there's Dr. Dewberry," Wave said.

Mr. G asked who that might be, and Wave began to tell him Dewberry's story. He reached the point where the dentist with his wounds was about to be discovered when Mr. G started shaking his glass and

interrupted, saying, "Well, all sorts of things can happen to somebody in the forest. It's not always a hospitable place. How about some more tea, Wave?"

Wave felt cut off. He wanted to tell him the rest of the story, but cooperated and went back inside. Mr. G decided cucumber sandwiches with cream cheese would be nice and set about making them while Wave replenished their tea. Wave wondered aloud why his town never heard of the dwarf community.

"Well, like I said, we stayed away from your side. Otterton's on the other side, about 12 miles or so away. We had friends there. Even grown children. Made regular runs for water and food if we didn't grow it or catch it. Used to be more animals around here than now. That hole over yonder connected to an underground spring. It's been dried up now for a long while."

"But didn't they wonder about a whole group of dwarfs? I mean, how did you keep it a secret?"

"Good grief, child, we had all sorts of sizes. You don't know much about little people do you?" Wave had to admit he didn't. "Dwarfs don't automatically beget dwarfs like some machine. We had all sorts of tall children—or at least taller than we were. Even had a couple of 'em on the police force in Otterton who steered the curious away from the forest—subtle like, of course. My own children—I got a son and daughter—both are regular size. Taller than you, I'd guess, though at my height, everybody looks tall."

The pair resettled on the porch to enjoy their sandwiches and soon were discussing the benefits of Wave's Sony Walkman II. He unhooked the earphones and turned up the volume so they could hear the solo violin repeat the melody of the flutes before leading them and the orchestra into an intricate cadenza, increasing in speed. Mr. G stopped chewing and closed his eyes for a few moments, his hand with half a sandwich resting against his chest.

"Beautiful," he said. "You know, I have a transistor radio, but it doesn't always come in good. Wonderful to hear this without static." At the end of the movement, he said, "You say you sing. Why don't you sing something?"

Wave nodded, his mouth full of cucumbers and cream cheese. Mr. G must not have noticed because he went on: "If I had my mandolin with me, I could provide you with some accompaniment, but it's stowed away back in my cabin. I haven't played much the last year so I'm a bit rusty. You don't mind singing a solo for an old man, do you? You said it's gonna be your major next year."

Wave swallowed and managed to say, "Sure." He was used to singing solos at a moment's notice, even when the thought of it made him nervous, but he had to get the gunk out of his mouth and throat. After wiping his mouth with a napkin, he took several gulps of iced tea, swishing it around in his mouth before swallowing. He actually gargled the last bit, kept it in his mouth long enough to get up, walk over to a post and grab it while leaning over the edge of the porch and spitting out the tea mixture. Mr. G laughed as it hit the air.

During this preparation, Wave considered what he would sing. He knew several acapella jazz tunes, but thought they sounded better with a few more voices. The setting and Mr. G's mention of his mandolin seemed to call for a folk song, so Wave started singing "The Water is Wide." He stood facing the clearing. Sometimes it helped him sing his best if he wasn't too conscious of his audience, though he could feel Mr. G's eyes on him. His clear tenor voice rang out over the clearing and instead of the nearly empty hole, he saw a lake with a waterfall. Blair and his sister and Charise were there galloping around the rim and the moistness of the water's spray could be felt on his face when they jumped in. Other swimmers were there as were dwarfs, some in inner-tubes and inflated tires. Even though the song's lyrics spoke of love's fading, that's not what Wave saw until the end when his vision cleared and the image of the empty clearing returned.

"What a lovely tenor voice, you've got, son," exclaimed Mr. G. "I'm duly impressed. He then sent Wave back into the kitchen—"bring the whole jar, this time"—and told him as he was opening the front door, "That's usually a melancholy song, but you gave it a lighter touch. I think I like it better that way."

When Wave brought the tea jar onto the porch, he found Mr. G staring down at his empty glass while twisting it with both hands. "Wave," he said, "tell me about the dentist. What happened to him?"

Wave glanced at his watch. He was going to have to hoof it pretty soon, but he had a bit of time to share Ms. Willow's story, and was glad Mr. G had finally wanted to hear the end of it. As he poured tea, he told about Edmond Rose finding the wounded Dr. Dewberry, his ramblings about the elves, and his sister from Boston bringing him home.

"So he did recover," said Mr. G. "I'm relieved to hear it." He swallowed some tea. Then he held the glass up and looked at the liquid as if he were eyeing a fine wine or a hand-pulled draft. He brought the glass down to his lap and said, "You know, I'm pretty sure I saw your dentist."

Wave felt surprise seep through his spine like the chill of an early morning, but didn't know what to say.

"I was around seven or eight at the time—a young one," said Mr. G. "So this was a long time ago. For most of the year, a new kid, a bully named Jed—he and his two friends—they were about twelve, I think—had me get them cokes at the market and do some of their chores when their parents weren't aware, things of that nature. In return he promised not to beat me up, though at times he or one of his buds would give me a slap or two."

Mr. G went on to describe Jed and his antics around the community. He was not a typical bully who would collapse when bullied himself, but a real fighter, and Mr. G was terrified of him. Wave began to wonder what this had to do with Dr. Dewberry until finally Mr. G said he saw a stranger walk into the forest from St. Gualbert's side.

"I'd never seen him before. Had fancy hiking boots. Figured he was not one of ours. I ran and told Jed. Thought it would earn me some points with him. I don't know what I was thinking—guess I wasn't thinking at all. Was a fool thing to do. I heard those boys bragging about carrying off a pair of boots, but it wasn't till later that we got wind of a doctor being hurt in the woods. Everyone assumed it was a physician—didn't know it was a dentist. Didn't hear anything after that."

"What happened to Jed?" Wave asked.

"That family moved out later that same year. I don't know for sure if anyone ever connected him to the incident with the doctor. But he had beat up a lot of kids by then and had started pickin' on the little girls. I think the other families asked them to leave, but that's just my suspicion. We had enough natural enemies without supporting growing ones from within, if you know what I mean. At any rate, some folk were concerned enough about the St. Gualbert side that they started building some soundproofing. That's what you've seen, I gather. Year by year, it was added onto and repaired."

Mr. G stretched out his legs and said he'd never told anyone about what he'd done for years until he finally "fessed up" to his grandfather, and then later his wife. "And now, you," he said, looking at Wave. He smacked his lips. "The sins of youth can stay with you a long time. You've done me a favor, son, tellin' me what you did today."

Wave felt the same. Mr. G had solved the mystery of Dr. Dewberry for him. He yearned to stay longer because he didn't want Mr. G to think that he didn't want anything to do with him on account of his confession, but when he looked at his watch, he realized he had only fifteen minutes to get back to Blair.

Mr. G must have noticed and rescued him by saying, "Time for you to get back, isn't it?"

Wave thanked him for his hospitality and the tea and especially for his stories.

"Well now, you come on back sometime and visit. I'm getting old…heck, let's face it, I *am* old, and I'm not sure if I'll be living in the woods after the end of this year. You know my wife already has left and moved near where our daughter is. Wants to be near the grandkids. She comes and visits sometimes. Takes them here. I keep up a few of the old houses in the woods for them. And I go outside to visit them now and then. But everybody keeps after me to move out and stay with them. They're probably right. It'll be hard, though. I'll miss the trees."

As Wave started off the porch, Mr. G called out to him, "Hey, do you know any Arlo Guthrie?"

Wave turned to say, "Yeah, uh, "City of New Orleans."

Mr. G leaned against a post and said, "When you come back, we'll do that one. I'll get out my mandolin."

Wave moved as fast as he could, leaving the ribbons, and pausing only to drag the umbilical cord back to where he and Blair had broken through the hedge. He was ten minutes late, but was still surprised to discover that Blair was not around. Worried that his friend might have already taken off into the woods, he quickly walked along the soundproofing, calling Blair's name, his headphones dangling around his neck. When no response came, he pushed his way through the hedge rows near the perimeter, wondering if Blair was waiting outside the forest. When he got near the opening Blair had made through the rotten part of the fencing, he could hear commotion.

Then a voice sounding like Mr. Hatten's came through the opening. "We know you're in there, Wave. Come on out now."

Wave exhaled and closed his eyes. He could not believe that he and Blair were caught this way. He had wanted to tell folks in his own way and in his own time. Now there would be nothing but trouble.

He left his backpack on the ground, thinking he could retrieve it before he was hauled away home, and he stepped through the broken fencing. A varied group of women and children, including Louise Hornsleth and Miss Bixby, with a couple of men—Henry Hatten and Stan McNally—plus old Mr. Patrick stood facing him. Blair was standing just in front of his mother, and she had both hands on his shoulders. He shook his head gently at WaveBlair, a look of resignation on his face.

A cacophony of voices rang out, sounding like an out-of-tune chorus. *You keep doing this and you're gonna get yourself killed, you will. Wave, for Pete's sake, leave the elves be. You just got out of the hospital and this is how you act? Why I never! You're a bad influence on Blair, I tell ya. Your ma and pa will be fixing to send you to military school next. Your ma and pa are gonna have a fit. Why on earth do you keep going into that blasted forest when you know it's full of danger?*

Wave stood silent. What captured his attention more than anything else was his sister Charise, who was to his left and making her way to their back door. Pops wasn't home right now, he knew, but he wouldn't stay at work for long once Charise or Mama got a hold of the phone. Wave could face anything right now, except Pops.

Wave looked at Blair and mouthed the words, "Sorry, bro." Calmly, he put his headphones on, turned around and stepped back through the opening. Some people were yelling now, but once he turned on his Sony the strains of Mendelssohn muted the noise. Wave grabbed his backpack and walked in the direction of Mr. G and Wolf's Porch.

EXPLORING THE NOTIONS OF HISTORY, HISTORICITY, AND POWER IN SUZANNE COLLINS' POST-APOCALYPTIC NOVEL *THE HUNGER GAMES* (2008)

SIHAM GUIBADJ

Siham Guibadj, sihamgui10@hotmail.com**, PhD Student, University of Blida 2 Lounici Ali- Algeria**

ABSTRACT

This research provides a new critical reading of Suzanne Collin's novel *The Hunger Games (2008)* as a post-apocalyptic novel, and in relation to important notions like historicity and power. This study examines the novel from Spatial and Marxist perspective and shows how historicity and power are depicted in the novel as a post-apocalyptic one. The research provides a definition of the genre post-apocalypse and its characteristics and how they are reflected in the novel. Furthermore, two main notions in contemporary literature are tackled which are historicity and power through Fredric Jameson's and Michel Foucault's insights. In addition to other concepts that have influence and an important effect on the two aforementioned notions such as history, narratives, metanarrative, space, knowledge and power. This research aims at drawing connections of Marxist and Spatial concepts and how they are portrayed in the post-apocalyptic novel of *The Hunger Games*. The research mainly attempts to show the significance of the post-apocalyptic novel and how it evolved through time, and how these concepts are depicted in the novel.

Keywords: History, Historicity, Power/Knowledge, Narrative, *The Hunger Games (2008)*, Post-apocalyptic Genre

INTRODUCTION

After drawing attention to an important literary genre nowadays, which is the post-apocalyptic one and the themes that it undertakes, it is now plausible to discuss these aspects through the most prominent post-apocalyptic novel *The Hunger Games (2008)* by Suzanne Collins. Thus, this research will shed the light on the novel itself and how it was inspirationally written. Consequently, a discussion of the ideas or stories that influenced Collins to write the novel is to be held. Did Collins intentionally use those ideas to allude to something? Or was it just a coincidence? knowledge is always dependent upon a certain power, any sort of power, thus the reasons that led to the writing of this novel in particular were initially a way to show readers the way knowledge and power interacts. Some important elements are being considered in relation to the novel such as, history, knowledge/power, post-apocalyptic features, in addition to many others.

I. A PREFACE TO *THE HUNGER GAMES*

The Hunger Games is a novel written by the American Television writer and author Suzanne Collins in 2008. The novel is the first book of the most popular trilogy young-adult novels that have the same title; the series gained a considerable popularity and was later adapted into movies. The three novels are set in the Panem world which is a post-apocalyptic version of North America. The novel is set in unknown futuristic time after certain phenomena destroyed much of North America and led to the creation of the Panem. The first novel introduces readers to Panem and narrates the way people are socially classified and what are their main actions. The Panem is constructed of central wealthy government, known as the Capitol, surrounded by twelve poorer districts. Originally, there were thirteen districts but the Capitol destroyed, as they claim, District 13 for they attempted to rebel against the Capitol. Each year the Capitol organizes a televised game where two kids between ages 12 to 18 from each district are chosen as tributes to be part of the Hunger Games. The twenty four tributes are put in a special-designed arena to fight till death and only one survivor will win the game. This gladiator-like game is even broadcasted on television to the whole population. First, to entertain the people who live in the Capitol, and second to remind the residents of the districts of the totalitarian government's ultimate power. This totalitarianism of the central government makes the novel a Dystopian one. In addition, with its technological advancement and futuristic setting the novel falls under the category of Science Fiction. The way and the reasons that led to the creation of the Panem make the novel as post-apocalyptic, in a speculative manner of what might our world become into (Shmoop Editorial Team).

The first part of the book gives a presentation of the Panem as well as to the main character Katniss Everdeen, who is described as a tough hunter and the breadwinner of her family, her younger sister Primrose and her absent-minded mother, as her father died in a mine explosion. Katniss hunts with a guy named Gale, who is handsome and has a thing for her, but she seems not interested. When time comes for the Reaping, where they randomly pick a girl and a boy from each district, unfortunately Katniss's sister Prim is chosen to participate in the Hunger Games, but Katniss volunteers and takes her place. The other tribute is the boy, who is the baker's son Peeta Mellark who has a crush on Katniss. After the selection process, the two tributes are taken to the Capitol where they are prepared for the Hunger Games. After that, the twenty-four tributes are put in a designed arena and they have to survive dehydration, hunger, cold or hot weather in addition to any potential fight with the other tributes. Usually, there should be only one winner but this 74th Hunger Games was an important event in changing the rules (Ibid).

I. 1. Ideas that inspired Suzanne Collins to write *The Hunger Games*

Suzanne Collins as the author of the work pointed out in different interviews what inspired her to write the story of Katniss Everdeen. In the journal article A *Killer Story: An Interview with Suzanne Collins, Author of 'The Hunger Games' Under Cover.* School Library Journal (SLJ). 2008, Rick Margolis, an executive editor for SLJ asked Collins about what inspired her to write the novel, and she said:

One night, I was lying in bed, and I was channel surfing between reality TV programs and actual war coverage. On one channel, there's a group of young people competing for I don't even know; and on the next, there's a group of young people fighting in an actual war. I was really tired, and the lines between these stories started to blur in a very unsettling way. That's the moment when Katniss's story came to me. (Margolis)

Collins attempted to show the cruelty of the war and the obsession of people with TV programs in one story. She also pointed out to her obsession with the Roman and Greek mythology since she was young, and this led her to create the Hunger Games based on those mythologies.

I. 1.1. *The Greek Myth of Theseus and the Minotaur*

Suzanne Collins was asked about the stories or people she was influenced by in writing the book, and she said that she was obsessed with Greek and Roman mythology and this had a great part in her story structure. Collins when asked by Rick Margolis about how she came up with the idea of the gladiator-like game that is broadcasted, she said:

It's very much based on the myth of Theseus and the Minotaur, which I read when I was eight years old. I was a huge fan of Greek and Roman mythology. As punishment for displeasing Crete, Athens periodically had to send seven youths and seven maidens to Crete, where they were thrown into the labyrinth and devoured by the Minotaur, which is a monster that's half man and half bull. Even when I was a little kid, the story took my breath away, because it was so cruel, and Crete was so ruthless. (Ibid)

The Greek myth of Theseus and Minotaur is basically a story in which Athens is obliged every few years to ship off young people to Crete because of a past wrong. In the island kingdom of Crete Island girls and boys are devoured by a man-eating creature known as Minotaur, a monster with the head of a bull and the body of a man. The prince of Athens, Theseus decides to put an end to this and goes to Crete to fight the Minotaur himself. Theseus manages to slay the Minotaur with the help of beautiful Cretan princess Ariadne, who he ends up leaving in an island on the way back to Athens. In addition to the help of the famous inventor and architect Daedalus who built the Labyrinth. Theseus eventually slays the beast and makes a run for his ship. However, before leaving Theseus's father Aegeus advised him to change the colour of his ship from black to white when he wins and return home. Yet, Theseus was too overwhelmed he forgot to change the colour of the ship. When king Aegeus saw the ship still black, he thought his son was murdered, consequently he throws himself into the sea and drowns. Theseus becomes the king of Athens (Shmoop Editorial Team).

I.1.2. The Roman Gladiator Games

Another story from which Collins used in the plot structure was the Roman Gladiator Games. First of all, the Roman Gladiator is defined by Mark Cartwright in *Roman Gladiator* 2018, as '' A Roman gladiator was an ancient professional fighter who specialised with particular weapons and armour. They fought before the public in organised games held in large purpose-built arenas throughout the Roman Empire from 105 BCE to 404 CE'' (Cartwright). Then, the Roman Gladiator was a warrior or fighter in planned games. Cartwright pointed out to the Roman Gladiator as usually a slave, a former slave or a condemned prisoner since the concept is eventually the death. These games in Ancient Rome were performed before a public and were considered as the most watched forms of popular entertainment in the Roman world. He continues to show the cause of organizing these games, he says,'' Roman gladiator games were an opportunity for Emperors and rich aristocrats to display their wealth to the populace, to commemorate military victories, mark visits from important officials, celebrate birthdays''(Ibid). The Roman gladiator games were a means by which the kings and wealthy people show their wealth in different celebrations. Cartwright mentions very important reason why these games were organized back then and states, ''simply to distract the populace from the political and economic problems of the day'' (Ibid).

I. 1. 3. Reality TV Shows

Collins also got her inspiration while seeing reality TV programs where people were competing, she did not know about what exactly. According to Collins English Dictionary Reality Tv is defined as: ''Reality TV is a type of television programming which <u>aims</u> to <u>show</u> how <u>ordinary</u> people <u>behave</u> in <u>everyday</u> <u>life</u>, or in <u>situations</u>, often created by the programme makers, which are <u>intended</u> to <u>represent</u> everyday life''(Reality Tv). Collins took the idea of the show where people are put in a certain situation while they are being filmed and watched by other people and applied it on the novel. She did that by making the Hunger Games a reality TV show where a group of kids fight to death while broadcasted in all Panem parts. The audience is observing the reactions and behaviours of the tributes in the arena, their behaviours are in general real, but some people tend to act to attract more viewers and audiences. However, the Capitol rulers makes the broadcasting of the barbaric game to keep residents of the Capitol entertained and the residents of the districts afraid and aware of who has the power and authority.

Not only the Hunger Games that is televised in the novel but also other events, one of which is the Reaping Day, when the Capitol chooses the tributes. Here, the broadcasting of this crucial moment can say a lot about the tribute, their reactions when they are chosen, their behaviours and the way they talk when they are on spot.

II. THE NOVEL AS POST-APOCALYPTIC

The prefix 'post' connotes the after or what comes after, and since apocalyptic is preceded by the 'post'; the term means what happens after the end of the world. Or as Moon suggests, '' post-apocalyptic narratives are set in a world or civilization after such a disaster has taken place'' (Moon 1). This subgenre allows us to examine the possibility of human survival after an apocalypse has occurred. What characterises this fiction is the change on every aspect of life that occurs, and the emergence of a wholly new world that is different economically, socially and especially politically. This fiction shows the readers how fragile the human community is, and by presenting themes like, the connection between brutality and ''boredom, neoliberal hegemony and subjectivity'', and the inhuman status and values that people go through (Ibid). The themes included in this subgenre are generally pessimistic ones, like poverty, violence, crime, dehumanization, injustice, greed, selfishness, class struggle and surveillance, and dictatorship governments. In addition to the highly advanced technology, and which is usually misused by the government to oppress the people.

The Hunger Games novel is considered as dystopian novel which belongs to science fiction category. It is considered as dystopian because of the totalitarian government of the Capitol that controls the economic, political and social aspect of life in Panem. When it comes to science fiction novels they are generally set in futuristic worlds with advanced technologies. The best example in the novel is the way Game makers can create alive creatures and send them to the arena, Katniss describes them in the last part of the book as, '' Mutations.... I've never seen these mutts, but they are no natural-born animals'' (The Hunger Games 387). This is just one of many examples of scientific and technological advancement in the novel. Nevertheless, *The Hunger Games* (2008) in particular is set in a post-apocalyptic world as Katniss Everdeen describes in the first chapter of the novel:

He tells of the history of Panem, the country that rose up out of the ashes of a place that was once called North America. He lists the disasters, the droughts, the storms, the fires, the encroaching seas that swallowed up so much of the land, the brutal war for what little sustenance remained. The result was Panem, a shining Capitol ringed by thirteen districts. (Ibid 20)

So according to Katniss Panem is what is left after several phenomena destroyed most of North America. Here it is pointed to be as the only community that survived those disasters and formed a new world known as Panem.

II.1. Characteristics of Post-Apocalyptic Genre in the Novel

Since The Hunger Games can be considered as a post-apocalyptic novel, there must be certain characteristics that gave it that post-apocalyptic aspect. First, the novel is set in a post-apocalyptic North America after certain disasters destructed the world and Panem is the survivor land. Generally, the post-apocalyptic genre is characterised by pessimistic themes, such as poverty, crime, dehumanization, greed, selfishness, class struggle, dictatorship government and surveillance. These themes can be spotted in the novel like poverty; Katniss's description of her district says that, ''District Twelve. Where you can starve to death in safety'' (THG 6). In addition to crime that is represented in the Hunger Games itself as described in the novel by the protagonist, '' Taking the kids from our districts, forcing them to kill one another while we watch'' (Ibid 21). Other characteristics of the novel can be discussed as follow:

II.1.1. Fear and Punishment

Another feature in the post-apocalyptic world as mentioned before is the fear; a fear that people hold from their past experiences. The residents of the Panem show consistent fear of both the past days and the government. For example, in the novel as reported there was a rebellion by the districts led by District Thirteen against the Capitol. This uprising against the Capitol was contained, the twelve districts were defeated and the thirteenth obliterated (Ibid). The Capitol planned to punish the remaining twelve districts by organizing the Hunger Games each year, where people sacrifice with their kids to keep the rulers entertained. The Hunger Games ritual mainly serves the purpose of the Capitol which is humiliating the districts population and to keep them live in fear, in order to make sure the Dark Days will not happen again. The Capitol intentionally spread fear among people to maintain discipline and order, as Michel Foucault pointed to this idea of keeping disciplinary behaviour in *Discipline and Punish* (1977). Through the Hunger Games the Capitol annually reminds the population of the districts that they are under the Capitol's mercy as Katniss puts it, '' this is the Capitol's way of reminding us how totally we are under their mercy. How little chance we would stand of surviving another rebellion'' (21). The rulers of Panem tries consistently to make the people believe that they are weak and hopeless and dependent on the Capitol to survive. Nevertheless, Katniss continues to speak her mind of what the Capitol means when they pretend that they want peace, ''Whatever words they use, the real message is clear.... If you lift a finger, we will destroy every last one of you. Just as we did in District Thirteen'' (Ibid).

Moreover, the Capitol uses punishment to keep people living in fear, thus becoming more disciplined. From the other hand, the protagonist was not afraid to express her feeling and opinion as Katniss confesses, ''When I was younger, I scared my mother to death, the things I would blurt out about District 12, about the people who rule our country, Panem, from the far-off city called the Capitol. Eventually I understood this would only lead us to more trouble'' (7). Katniss realised that criticizing the authority will only bring troubles to her family and they would be punished and then she continues, '' So I learned to hold my tongue... Do my work quietly in school. Make only polite small talk in the public market... Even at home... I avoid discussing tricky topics. Like the reaping, or food shortages, or the Hunger Games'' (Ibid). Katniss changed her behaviour when she realized that there is a higher power that would punish her. She changed her attitude and became more disciplined.

II.1.2. Narrative

When reading any story, the question of who is narrating is always raised. Concerning the post-apocalyptic narrative, it is mostly one of the survivors of the apocalypse, otherwise who would tell the story? Usually, post-apocalyptic novel setting frame is right after the disaster took place, but there are some writers who focus on the new established world. In Suzanne Collins' case the story in *The Hunger Games* (2008) begins with first person narrator, and then the narrator turns out to be the protagonist, Katniss Everdeen. Throughout the novel Katniss narrates almost every detail of her life, the Panem, the Twelve Districts and many other histories, also the feelings, thoughts, and behaviours of other people.

II.1.3. Survival

What distinguishes the post-apocalyptic genre from other genres is the aspect of survival. The people living in post-apocalyptic world have already survived the apocalypse, but generally they are put in another challenge to survive. In *The Hunger Games* the people living in Panem survived the apocalypse and the rebellion. However, the hardest survival that the tributes have to encounter is to survive the Hunger Games. The chosen kids are put in an arena and they have to survive dehydration, hunger, high or low temperature. Not to mention that the main rule of the game is to kill or be killed.

III. HISTORY AND POWER IN THE NOVEL

John Jacob Anderson in *A Manual of General History* (1870), observes that, '' History is a narration of the events which have happened among mankind, including an account of the rise and fall of nations, as well as of other great changes which have affected the political and social condition of the human race'' (Anderson 1). In the context of *The Hunger Games* (2008), the history of the Panem is narrated from the beginning and how the nation of Panem came to existence. Throughout the novel many past events are reported such as the disasters that caused in the destruction of North America and led to the creation of Panem. Not only this, but how these changes in the structure of the world led to the changes in the political, economic, and social aspects in the new world. The rise of Panem nation in the new established world and the political structure this world. As Katniss narrates, ''the result was Panem, a shining Capitol ringed by thirteen districts, which brought peace and prosperity toits citizens'' (THG 20). This description tells what led to the creation of Panem, and how there is a central government ''Capitol'' that ruled the remaining thirteen districts and brought peace and prosperity to its citizens. Another historical event that changed the ruling system to a dictatorship government was the Dark Days as Katniss says:

Then came the Dark Days, the uprising of the districts against the Capitol. Twelve were defeated, the thirteen obliterated. The Treaty of Treason gave us the new laws to guarantee peace and, as our yearly reminder that the Dark Days must never be repeated, it gave us the Hunger Games (THG 21).

Here the narration provides an explanation of how the Hunger Games came to existence and what were the reasons that led to it. When it comes to who tell all these stories of the past, Katniss refers to them as they. This party is unknown but it is clear that this 'they' have enough power to control the education system in the Panem. The information being listed by Katniss about the past days are always told by ''they''. She does not explain who are they, but it is clear that they are powerful and have the authority to shape people's mind and beliefs about the history of their world.

III.1. History vs. Historicity

John Jacob Anderson in A Manual of General History (1870), observes that, '' History is a narration of the events which have happened among mankind, including an account of the rise and fall of nations, as well as of other great changes which have affected the political and social condition of the human race'' (Anderson 1). History is the study of the human past and the telling of the past events, usually through what is left and recorded in the documents. On the other hand, Historicity is the study of historical authenticity, to make sure the historical events and persons are real or true and not just a myth. Yet, Gauthier Vanhouwe in Questioning and Historicity: a Philosophical Revolution (2007) writes, ''History is a succession of answers and questions which are revealed in the questioning one undertakes in regard to them. Historicity is the constant presence of the question-answer difference, thanks to which an identity of reality, which is what we call 'reality', is available to us'' (Vanhouwe 358). Therefore, historicity is an important process to make sure historical events and texts are actual and genuine.

III.2. Historicity in the Panem World

The novel of *The Hunger Games* (2008) takes place in a world that is apparently the only remaining world after the apocalypse took place. From the establishment of Panem to the days of Katniss many events took place that the characters reflect their beliefs to. When it comes to the history in the novel, what is mentioned is only the history after the apocalypse, but the historical events that happened before the destruction of North America are not known to the characters of the novel. The only history that the characters are familiar with is the history after the apocalypse, what was before is either forgotten or wiped with the lost archives.

In order to test the authenticity of a certain historical event, historians use documented reports and archives to make sure that the historical event has really happened. References help in the establishment of authentic history that is a representation of true events. Nevertheless, in the novel the historical events that happened after the apocalypse are being narrated orally and through media. What it is missing in the novel is the archives, books, writings that characters can have access to in order to have a glimpse of the past events, of history of the world that existed before theirs. It is stated in the novel that kids in District 12 go to school, however, the knowledge they acquire is limited. Katniss in her description of what they learn at school says:

In school, they tell us the Capitol was built in a place once called the Rockies. District 12 was in a region known as Appalachia. Even hundreds of years ago, they mined coal here. Which is why our miners dig so deep. Somehow it all comes back to coal at school. Besides basic reading and maths, most of our instruction is coal-related. Except for the weekly lecture on the history of Panem. It's mostly a lot of blather about what we owe the Capitol. (THG 48)

Here, the subjects the kids take are generally related to coal-mining, and the only subject that concerns history is dedicated to the history of the Capitol in exaggerating manner. Nonetheless, Katniss disbelieves the things that she is learning about the history as she says, ''I know there must be more than they're telling us, an actual account of what happened during the rebellion. But I don't spend much time thinking about it'' (Ibid). This questioning shows unreliability and the absence of actuality of past events.

III.3. Space, Knowledge/Power used by the Capitol

An important element used by dictatorship government like the Capitol is the knowledge/power aspect to maintain control over societies. One of the facts that the Capitol keeps bringing up is the Dark Days and Treason Treaty to keep reminding the residents of the Twelve Districts of the Capitol's power and how they could defeat the rebellion led against them. From the beginning of the novel Katniss's knowledge turns out to be based on what she is told are the truth, and the way she acts upon that knowledge. Not necessarily Katniss only, but also the people living in District 12 behave according to that knowledge. For example, Katniss goes to the wood in order to hunt and get food for her family, it is illegal to cross the fences but she does it anyway. She knows how to hunt and this gave her privilege to get food. The wood in which Katniss learned how to hunt represents a spatial institution through which Katniss observed the animals and gained new knowledge and learned how to hunt. This observation in the hood gained Katniss the ability to act accordingly.

Moreover, another spatial institution can be the District 12 and also the other districts, the Capitol keeps surveillance in the districts through agents known as Peacekeepers, in order to observe the behaviour of the Seam society. If anything occurs the Capitol will have the ability to react. The government uses this surveillance particularly to prevent any future rebellion and keep peace and order within. The Capitol does not keep an eye on District 12 only; it watches other districts as well constantly as an allusion of power that the Capitol possesses.

Another spatial institution the Game makers use to gain knowledge and practice power is the arena where the tributes are put in it and are filmed all the time. This constant surveillance of the tributes of the Hunger Games, gave the Game makers an opportunity to observe the players' behaviours and skills in order to control their actions and put them through harder challenges.

One good example of space power and knowledge in the novel is represented in the last parts of the novel, specifically at the end of the Hunger Games. The rule of the game states that there should be one winner, in

the Seventy-Fourth version the rule was changed to have two winners in condition to be from the same district. After long days of bloody fights in the game, there were Katniss and Peta from District 12 who survived. However, the supposedly winners were waiting for the result to be announced but the rules were changed again:

Claudius Temple smith's voice booms into the arena. ''Greetings to the final contestants of the Seventy-fourth Hunger Games. The earlier revision has been revoked. Closer examination of the rule book has disclosed that only one winner may be allowed,'' he says, ''Good luck, and may the odds be ever in your favour.'' (400)

Katniss and Peeta become more concerned since none of them wants to kill the other. Peeta says to Katniss that they have to have a victor and this information inspires Katniss to do something to challenge the Game makers and the Capitol. Katniss and Peeta attempt to eat poisoned berries and have a double-suicide. This action makes the Game makers announce them both as the winners of the Seventy-fourth Hunger Games. Katniss used the space she was in and the knowledge she received from Peeta and used it against the authority, and this shows the relationship between power and knowledge in the novel. How Katniss used that knowledge to possess the power and practiced on others to gain her victory.

Furthermore, in narrating the history of Panem it is stated that, ''Panem, a shining Capitol ringed by thirteen districts, which brought peace and prosperity to its citizens'' (20). What the Capitol does, is to convey to the people the information that the Capitol is the one that helped the residents of Panem to prosper and live in peace. This piece of information is mainly directed to the residents of the Panem to make them believe of the Capitol's superiority and they should be under its mercy.

III.4. Metanarratives and History of Panem world

The history of the Panem, as mentioned before, is framed from the establishment of the Panem to the creation of the Hunger Games after the rebellion failed. However, this is what it is being told by the mayor of District 12, who is reading this information to residents to District 12in the reaping day, '' Just as the town clock strikes two, the mayor steps up to the podium and begins to read. It's the same story every year. He tells the history of Panem'' (20). This representation of history is being done by someone with high position and who gets his information apparently from the Capitol. Another representation of history is being done at school by 'they', Katniss says:

In school, they tell us the Capitol was built in a place once called the Rockies. District 12 was in a region known as Appalachia. Even hundreds of years ago, they mined coal here. Which is why our miners dig so deep. Somehow it all comes back to coal at school. Besides basic reading and maths, most of our instruction is coal-related. Except for the weekly lecture on the history of Panem. It's mostly a lot of blather about what we owe the Capitol. (THG 48)

The kids are apparently learning about the history on Panem, however the information they are receiving is being conducted by 'they' who seem to have the power and authority to shape and represent history the way it serves their interests. Katniss suspicion of this history and the dictatorship of the Capitol raises questions of the authenticity of this knowledge. Apparently, the Capitol is totalitarian government, hence it uses its power and authority to narrate history the way it serves its interests.

Katniss Everdeen suspects the history being told to the whole nation but the poor situation she lives in prevents her from caring about truth. This method is used by the Capitol intentionally to keep enslaving the people and make them live in fear and hopelessness.

CONCLUSION

This research provided an analytical study of Suzanne Collins' novel *The hunger Games* (2008), and showed how elements discussed afore are presented in the novel and the way they work. Mainly what concerns the author as well as the reader is the power/knowledge and space manifested in the novel and how the Capitol

uses these concepts to write history and maintain in position. In addition to observing the post-apocalyptic characteristics in the novel and how it was concluded that this novel is post-apocalyptic. In addition to what led to the writing of this novel and how historical allusions help in connecting the events in the novel to the present days. The history concerns are highlighted in the novel and the role of narratives in writing it and how power and knowledge are used.

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MEMORY STUDIES

RECONSTRUCTION AND REENACTMENT PROCESSES IN KHAITA – JOYFUL DANCES

EVA LEICK

Eva Leick, Mag. BA BA, University of Salzburg (Austria)

ABSTRACT

Khaita – Joyful Dances (short: Khaita) were developed by the Tibetan scholar and Buddhist master Namkhai Norbu in 2011. They consists of a collection of around 400 Tibetan songs and 240 dances. The Khaita choreographies created are either based on the Tibetan song texts or inspired by the dances depicted in the original music video by Tibetan artists. In this paper, I explore the (re)creation and reenactment of Khaita choreographies. The question thereby is: Is Khaita Tibetan dance? Or rather, to which degree is Khaita Tibetan dance? I follow a kinesthetic approach and use terminology from reenactment and reconstruction studies to investigate in how far Khaita can be considered Tibetan dance. While reconstruction tries to reproduce past performances in detail, reenactment refers to them critically while staying present in the contemporary body, circumstances and conditions. I further investigate if and in how far dance can be documented and fixed as an act of remembering. Thereby, the Khaita community uses methods of video documentation as well as corporeal witnesses. I hence focus on the process of recreation / reenactment in Khaita with its different ways of remembering. I thereby attempt to define which elements of the dances displayed in the original Tibetan YouTube videos are reconstructed in the Khaita dances and how their process of reenactment continues within the context of Khaita performances. I first observe how Khaita choreographies are created and which stages are undertaken in doing so. I highlight both the creation of dances as reconstructions from the original YouTube videos as well as new choreographies based on the meaning of the Tibetan lyrics. After this, I focus on the transmission process of Khaita dances and possibilities to learn them.

Keywords: Dance, Reenactment, Reconstruction, Khaita – Joyful Dances

INTRODUCTION

Khaita – Joyful Dances (short: Khaita) is a translocal dance practice based on Tibetan movements and music. It was developed by the Tibetan and Buddhist scholar Namkhai Norbu in 2011 and is danced in the centers of the International Dzogchen Community around the world. Khaita practices and performances are done by heterogeneous groups of dancers with various ethnic and cultural backgrounds in different countries of the world. In this paper, I will explore the (re)creation and reenactment of Khaita choreographies. The question thereby is: Is Khaita Tibetan dance? Or rather, to which degree is Khaita Tibetan dance? I am further investigating how the choreographies are memorized and which methods of remembering are used to create connections to past and future traditions. I pursue a kinesthetic approach here and use terminology from reenactment and reconstruction studies to investigate in how far Khaita can be considered Tibetan dance.

I thereby follow Nicole Haitzinger in her differentiation between reenactment and reconstruction: She considers reconstruction the repetition of past performances that attempts to be as close to the original and to its displayed details as possible in order to preserve cultural heritage. (Haitzinger, 2010: 182) In contrast to that, she defines reenactment as the engagement with past performances that are fragmentarily combined and cross-read with anthropological, contemporary and pop cultural references. (Haitzinger, 2010: 182-183). In other words: While reconstruction tries to reproduce past performances in detail, reenactment refers to them critically while staying present in the contemporary body, circumstances and conditions. As Maaike Bleeker states, reenactment is about the engagement with "work created in the past from the perspective of the present" (Bleeker, 2017: 218) rather than historical accuracy.

In the following, I will investigate the process of recreation / reenactment in Khaita. I thereby attempt to define which elements of the dances displayed in the original Tibetan YouTube videos are reconstructed in the Khaita dances and how their process of reenactment continues within the context of Khaita performances. For this aim, it is first necessary to observe how Khaita choreographies are created and which stages are undertaken in doing so. I will thereby focus on both the creation of dances as reconstructions from the original YouTube videos as well as new choreographies based on the meaning of the Tibetan lyrics. After this, I will focus on the transmission process of Khaita dances and possibilities to learn them.

CREATING KHAITA CHOREOGRAPHIES

There are around 240 Khaita dances included in the Khaita archive. Two types of Khaita choreographies can be observed: First, choreographies adapted from the original Tibetan music videos by students of Namkhai Norbu. Second, choreographies created by Namkhai Norbu's students under the consideration of the song lyrics' meanings. As a logical consequence of these two choreography-creation processes and the large number of dances, Khaita dances display a wide diversity, ranging from different steps, mudras, formations, movement qualities, influences of style and levels of difficulty.

What both types of choreography-makings have in common are the following two stages, namely the feedback stage by Namkhai Norbu and the performance stage after the dances' official approvals. Because both types of Khaita choreography share these stages, I will first elaborate on them before focusing in more detail on the reconstruction of dances from original Tibetan music videos and the creation of choreography based on the meaning of the songs. An illustration of the various stages that lead to reenactments is provided below. Thereby, I highlight the two different starting points for Khaita dances, either the original music video or the song lyrics.
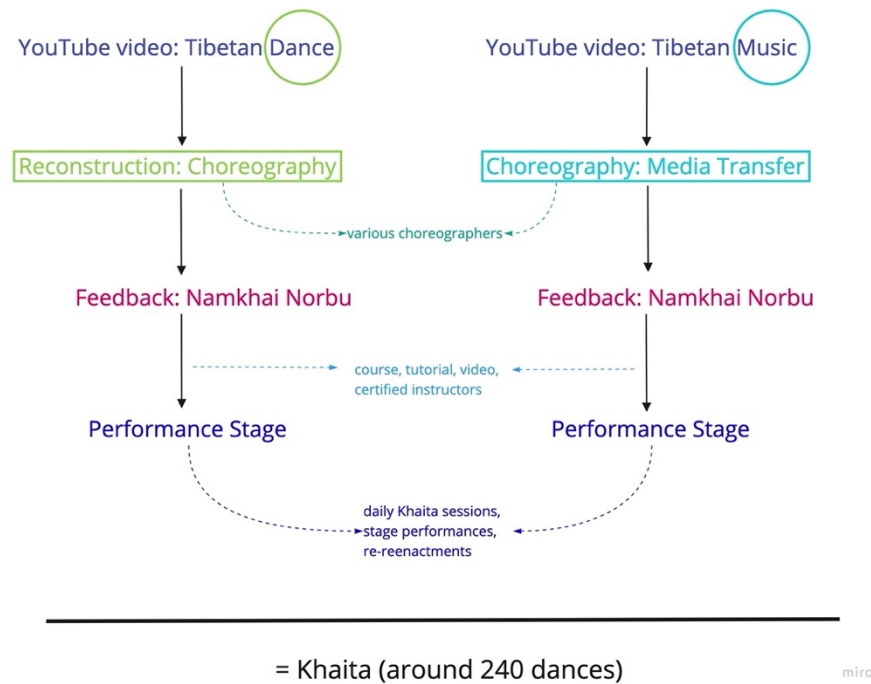
Illustration 1: Stages in the Making of Khaita Choreographies (Illustration by the author)

FEEDBACK STAGE

Before Namkhai Norbu's death in 2018, he was the authority figure of the feedback stage. Having created choreography either from the original video from YouTube or by referring to the meaning of the song, creators (students of Namkhai Norbu) would present their dance in front of Namkhai Norbu. He would then give feedback, ask for changes of movements, provide ideas for formation changes and similar, or approve the dance just as presented. Only after Namkhai Norbu's final approval, the dance was opened to the public for everybody to learn. As such, it became an official dance to be included in the Khaita archive. No adequate substitute for the feedback stage with corrections by Namkhai Norbu has been found since his passing. For this reason, the (re)creation of dances has been largely put on hold even though several songs in the Khaita archive remain without dances.

The feedback stage describes an essential part in the creation process of Khaita choreographies: It represents a regulation and approval setting by Namkhai Norbu as the authority for Khaita. It thereby provides important insights for the question to which degree Khaita is Tibetan dance. As becomes apparent, Namkhai Norbu's feedback becomes more relevant in the creation process of new Khaita choreographies than the accuracy of the choreography presented in the original YouTube video. This implies that the detailed recreation of original choreography is not the main point of Khaita choreographies. Similarly, Namkhai Norbu's corrections overrule the creative visions of choreographies created without a previous dance: For example, if Namkhai Norbu suggests changing a mudra, a symbolic hand gesture, proposed by a choreographer, it needs to be changed for the dance to be approved as part of the official Khaita collection.

PERFORMANCE STAGE

After the feedback stage and hence their official approval, the Khaita dances are made public. This means that they may now be part of daily Khaita sessions, taught in courses and used for performances. I call this the 'performance stage', since the dancing of a choreography always represents a performance, with or without an audience.

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Each official Khaita choreography is recorded at one point with a group of dancers. This serves both to preserve and remember the choreography as well as to present it to a wider audience online via the Khaita channels, for example, YouTube and the Khaita App. In addition to that, the demonstration video functions as a (stage) performance opportunity for dancers who participate in filming, meaning that the dance is trained well before. For these videos, it is important not to change the choreography so that an accurate representation of the dance approved by Namkhai Norbu is preserved. The community thereby relies on corporeal knowledge of the people who created the dance and received Namkhai Norbu's feedback.

Khaita demonstration videos try to 'fix' dance, making it somehow permanent. As Susanne Foellmer discusses, this connects to the ongoing debate on the nature of performing arts as ephemeral and the attempt of making it permanent, tangible, through means of non-ephemeral media such as films and photographs (Foellmer, 2019: 18). In the case of Khaita, I propose that the dance videos need to be considered as one of many performances of the same dance. As such, they represent a moment of the dance's ongoing history and development. They thereby serve as reference points for learning and recalling the choreography. This also enables dancers to study the dance regardless of geographic distances. However, the video should not be regarded as the 'final product' of the dance. On the contrary, the dance is produced anew again and again in each performance, for example, in the daily Khaita practice sessions. According to the ephemeral nature of dance, this means that one Khaita dance might be performed several times a week with different outcomes according to conditions of the dancing bodies and the surrounding. This means that each performance of a Khaita dance is a kind of reenactment of the 'fixed Khaita choreography' as presented in the Khaita videos and that these reenactments occur constantly.

Because many Khaita dances are performed frequently, often by different people in various places, inevitable shifts and changes happen to the dance. As Foellmer describes, "corporeal differences" and "distinct modalities of bodies, gender or dance technique" lead to unavoidable transformations (Foellmer, 2019: 19-20). It is important to highlight that this transformation happens unintentionally as a natural process of performing the same dance again and again. For example, when I look at older Khaita videos in the archive, I observe that some dances have significantly changed over the years - not in choreography per se but mostly in movement quality and style.

Intentional transformations of Khaita dances, hence reenactments, happen in performance contexts in front of an audience. In contrast to daily practice session where dances are usually done in simple circle formations, complex formation changes are trained for stage performances. In addition to that, movement quality is worked on and synchronicity amongst dancers is emphasized. Furthermore, costumes are worn that accentuate the dancers' movements. As such, reenactments of the original Khaita dance videos occur often. Numerous examples of Khaita reenactments can be found on Khaita's YouTube channel such as the Khaita and Tibetan dance performance at the British Museum in 2019 or the Khaita show 2017 in Gran Canaria.

RE-REENACTMENTS

Frequently, this process continues with re-reenactments of performances in other settings. Examples of this are the videos to the dances "Azhang Lak", "Phayul Mayul" and "Lagyai Bumo" that a Khaita dancer and I made during my stay in Tenerife in 2021. The videos are published on social media with the hashtag #ilovekhaita, encouraging Khaita enthusiasts around the world to create similar videos and thus making Khaita more public and popular. For our videos, we chose different locations, for example, in front of the beach, and arranged the choreography according to the affordances of the space. While we stayed true to the choreography, we purposefully changed the atmosphere of the Khaita dances, making them look easily accessible and playful. We also decided to only be two dancers so that individuals might feel encouraged to create their own video without needing a group. As such, we critically evaluated the original source and decided on changing some aspects.

The main point I want to emphasize is that once a Khaita choreography has been approved by Namkhai Norbu, it is opened to an ongoing process of reenactments. This involves reenactments in daily practice

sessions on the bodies of different people, the arrangements of original choreography for stage performances as well as reenactments by individual dancers according to their own creative visions. However, the reference point clearly stays the choreography as approved by Namkhai Norbu and preserved by the demonstration videos in the Khaita archive. Otherwise, the dance cannot be identified as 'Khaita'.

It is further noteworthy that the reference point for these reenactments is always the Khaita dance and not the choreography displayed in the original Tibetan music video. As such, it appears that Khaita reenactments circle around their own creations. At the same time, recognition of the original YouTube videos as the basis for many Khaita dances is given, for example, by displaying them on the Khaita App. Furthermore, during the daily Khaita practice sessions, it has become a habit to show the original music videos by Tibetan artist on a TV while dancing the Khaita choreographies to it. An explicit relation between the original music videos and the Khaita dance is thus created. As Bleeker states, this highlights "both the reaching out to the past from the present and the historical distance separating the two" (Bleeker, 2017: 218) and draws attention to its own mediality.

RECONSTRUCTION OF TIBETAN DANCE IN KHAITA

Khaita recognizes the original Tibetan dances and the Tibetan dance style associated with it. In fact, a lot of effort was put into accurate reconstruction of the Tibetan dances. Reconstruction hereby solely refers to the dance itself, meaning the choreography. Aspects such as costumes and stage design or location were neglected.

In order to gain more insight into Tibetan dance, two Khaita instructors, for example, went to study Tibetan dance and music at TIPA, Tibetan Institute for Performing Arts in Dharamsala. As such, the two were immensely important for the development of Khaita, using their knowledge and experience of Tibetan dance to teach Khaita.

After having accomplished a corpus of dance steps typical to Tibetan dance such as the basic or the lateral step, including its typical arms, the recreation of choreographies from videos became easier for Khaita choreographers. Many Khaita dances based on the original music videos are very similar to each other as they typically contain combinations of different basic steps. As such, the transfer from one dance to the other was facilitated and became quicker. Nowadays, Khaita choreographers are quite fast in deciphering movements from the original Tibetan music videos and translating them to their bodies. One skill that thereby needs to be learned is the understanding of mirrored movements, since the Tibetan dancers in the videos are usually shown from the front. Without experience, this is quite challenging.

"RIWO CHAK"

One example of Khaita dances with choreography based on the original music video is "Riwo Chak" ("A Mountain Formed"). The original video performed by artists from the Golog region shows a group of male and female dancers on a meadow surrounded by snowy mountains. In the song, the singers speak about the Amnye Machen mountain, which is considered a holy mountain in East Tibet. I assume it is the mountain that can be seen in the background. This Tibetan dance is one of many songs and dances (a total of 45 minutes) compiled to a video with the name 'Tibetan circle dance' uploaded on YouTube by 'Tibetan world music' in 2015 (Tibetan World Music, 2015).

The women and men dancing in the video are dressed in elegant ethnic Tibetan dresses, decorated with belts and necklaces. They form a circle and dance in clockwise direction. Their movements are synchronized and the shape of the circle is maintained harmoniously throughout the video. The atmosphere is idyllic and clearly shows the connection to nature. This aligns with the meaning of the song that, amongst other things, talks about the mountain and the river. (International Atiyoga Foundation, 2022b) The choreography used in Khaita is identical to the one in the video.

"Riwo Chak" has an introductory part that is different in movement, consisting of basic steps more or less on place facing towards the center of the circle, and a continuous sequence of movements consisting of seven different parts that is repeated until the end of the song. The individual parts of this sequence start with a combination of travelling steps in the direction of the circle with rotating arms from the side of the hips towards the head and down (1). After this, the left arm is raised for the duration of a double beat. Dancers then face the center of the circle, rhythmically step to the right and left along the width plane and simultaneously move the right and left arm (same side as leg) towards the head while the other arm moves close to the body (2). Following this is a sequence of movements forwards and backwards on the depth-axis towards the center of the circle and back again (3). The legs thereby perform simple steps, shifting the weight from one leg to the other (men raise their legs higher doing so). At the same time, the arms rotate three times at the height of the elbow. This is the most difficult part of the dance as it requires some practiced coordination: while the legs perform four steps, the arms only rotate three times.

When having approached the center of the circle as well as returned back on place, dancers perform two and four basic steps respectively while raising and lowering both arms towards their head and back towards their feet (4). They then continue in the direction of the circle with simple steps, accentuating the raising of the knees, while swinging and bending their arms back and front (5). This is followed by the raising of the arms from down towards the head, two times respectively, with changing body positions slightly facing inside and outside the circle (6). The sequence is then completed with simple steps walking towards the direction of the circle and the arms swinging right and left above the head (7). The body thereby turns rhythmically towards the other direction of the circle before continuing moving clockwise. This sequence, consisting of a total of seven different parts, is then repeated until the end.

The Khaita version of "Riwo Chak" represents an accurate recreation of the choreography displayed in the video. Similar to the original video, the Khaita video is filmed outside, evoking connections to nature. However, there is no mountain in the background. The costumes of the Khaita dancers are very different to the Tibetan ones. The three female Khaita dancers wear black dresses with colorful circle patterns and the man jeans and a simple green Tibetan shirt.

As highlighted before, the Khaita video is just one moment of the dance's many performances. In fact, "Riwo Chak" is amongst the most popular Khaita dances and is performed very regularly during daily Khaita sessions. It is relatively easy to learn yet requires musical and rhythmical understanding and presence when changing body orientations and rotating the arms.

Picture 1: Screenshot from "Riwo Chak", original version

Picture 2: Screenshot from "Riwo Chak", Khaita version

MEDIA TRANSFER: TRANSLATING TEXT INTO MOVEMENT

Besides Khaita choreographies based on dances of the original Tibetan music videos, a large number of Khaita dances have been created by Namkhai Norbu's students by referring to the song lyrics. Thereby a

media transfer from the written / sung text to movement / dance happens. Because many different people have created Khaita dances, Khaita choreographies are diverse and influenced by individual styles and previous dance backgrounds. While they often exploit the basic Khaita step and other typical Khaita combinations, choreographers have creative freedom as long as the song's meaning is respected. For this reason, some dances are very different to others. Some further require complex formation changes and detailed mudras.

Dances refer to the meaning of the songs by representing it in some form with the body. This is often done through mudras that refer to the song text. Thereby, no consistent Khaita mudra language exists. However, some mudras for frequently reoccurring words in Khaita songs are similar: For example, the mudra for 'flower' (Tibetan: 'metok') is usually formed by putting the lower parts of the palms together and opening the hands and fingers to resemble a flower. 'Rain' is commonly symbolized by wiggling the fingers and moving the hands with palms faced inside from the height of the head downwards. 'Mountain' (Tibetan: 'ri') is typically shown by putting the tips of the fingers, except for the thumb, together and raising the arms above the head. Gratitude, Buddhist teachings, devotion to a spiritual master or general preciousness is usually expressed by putting the palms together and holding them in front of the heart.

Combining text and movement adds another layer to the dance that goes beyond mere physicality as it activates the mind and gives intention to the movement. It further fosters presence as the dancer needs to carefully listen to the song, which is a challenge when not knowing Tibetan.

"MEYPO DRANLU"

One example for Khaita songs that translate the meaning of the song into movements through mudras is "Meypo Dranlu" ("Song for Remembering the Ancestors"). While the musical part without the singing voice of the dance is reconstructed from the original choreography displayed in the YouTube video by Rigzin Dolma and Tanzin, the singing part with its respective mudras has been created by a Khaita instructor. The Khaita choreography thereby fills the missing dance parts of the video where the choreography remains incomplete.

The dance can be structured in five parts that correspond with the five stanzas of the song. In between and at the beginning of the singing parts, the movements are identical to the choreography of the Tibetan music video. The first stanza speaks about "the great power of the white snow lioness" (International Atiyoga Foundation, 2022a). The snow lion is the emblem of Tibet, refers to the glaciers and snowy mountains of the region and generally represents power, fearlessness and joy. In the Khaita dance, the lion is represented by dancers putting their hands at the height of their hips with palms facing down and the fingers stretching away from the body. The legs perform simple weight shifts, rhythmically transferring the weight to one side and respectively raising the other leg away from the floor (1). After this, a combination of two mudras that represent the line of "This short song of remembering is my intention" (ibid.) is performed. Thereby, palms cross in front of the heart, slightly move away from the body and approach it again. This symbolizes the intention at the place of the heart. Then both hands come close to the mouth and open away from the body towards the head with arms moving away from each other. This represents the song.

In the second stanza, the singers speak about a Tibetan creation myth, addressing "the Six Brothers who are the origin of the Tibetan generations" and the divine lineage of "good characters" (ibid.). In the dance, this is symbolized by dancers raising their arms above their head and bringing them down towards the height of their chest and opening them away from the body. This both symbolizes the connection to the divine above and an ancestral linage (2). Then the mudra combinations for expressing the remembering of one's intention through the song is repeated.

The third stanza talks about the "glory of the Potala [that] exceeds the dimension of heaven" and "the golden light of its yellow roofs [that] spreads in four continents" (ibid.). The golden lights of the palace's roof are symbolized in the Khaita dance with a sudden opening of the fists and fingers spread apart. The arms are thereby raised above the head and then move away from each other to the sides of the body and towards

the feet. This represents the spreading of light in all dimensions (3). Then the combinations of the mudras for the song and the remembering of intention is again repeated.

In the fourth stanza, dancers represent the "ten branches of knowledge that are like a treasure developed and spread in Tibet" (ibid.). Dancers thereby first show 'ten' by raising the right and then the left arm with palms facing outwards at the height of their head. Then they put the palms together and hold them in front of their heart before opening and bringing them to the right side of their body with a rotating movement. This symbolizes the preciousness of the ten branches of knowledge and the spreading of these teachings (4). After this, the familiar mudra combination is repeated.

Finally, the fifth stanza speaks about the land of Tibet where "cool waters descend melodiously from the melting snow" which makes the singers "remember [their] fatherland, the Land of Snow" (ibid.). To represent this, dancers first shape a mountain with their fingertips touching above their head which then transforms into snow or water falling down symbolized by the arms moving towards the feet with palms facing inside and wiggling fingers. The arms then cross in front of the body and move away from each other to show the land formed by snow (5). The dance then finishes with a triple repetition of movements for the line "this short song of remembering is my intention" (ibid.) and the combination from the musical part taken from the original choreography.

"Meypo Dranlu" is an example of Khaita's numerous dances that translate the songs' meanings into movements. As becomes apparent here, choreographers need to not only have a good understanding of the meaning of the text (for which Tibetan language skills are an advantage) but also be creative to find mudras that represent sometimes abstract concepts. Mudras need to be performed rhythmically with the music and should not be too complicated for non-professionals to learn. The song further illustrates the diversity of Khaita dances, highlights the importance of the song texts and reveals the effort of both Namkhai Norbu and his students behind creating the dancers.

TRANSMITTING KHAITA DANCES

There are three different possibilities to learn a Khaita dance: first, through self-study with the help of the demonstration video displayed in the Khaita archive or through practicing it together in Khaita sessions; second, by attending a Khaita course led by an authorized instructor; or third, watching and purchasing a Khaita video tutorial with an authorized instructor that provides step-for-step guidance through the choreography. In addition to that, there are transcriptions of Namkhai Norbu's commentaries to many dances that can either be accessed through the Khaita App (khaita.com) or the collected comments on Message from Tibet (N. Norbu, 2017). Sometimes references to dance movements can be found there. Furthermore, recordings of some of Namkhai Norbu's feedback to dance presentations are circulated informally amongst the Khaita community.

The transmission process of Khaita dances is insightful with reference to the process of reenactment. It both establishes a corpus of material for future engagements with Khaita choreographies and also states authorship of the dances. As Foellmer highlights, there are two main approaches for reenacting past performances, namely through documents such as photographs, scores or film footage and through 'corporeal witnesses', former dancers of past performances (Foellmer, 2019: 15-16). Future reenactments of Khaita dances hence may use the materials mentioned above, including the bodily medium of the dancers.

What is striking in this observation of transmission and the providing of material for possible future reenactments of Khaita dances is that the reconstructions of choreography - in case of choreographies based on Tibetan originals - are solely based on the film footage of the YouTube videos. In contrast to what Khaita reenactments demand themselves, namely the consultation of a corporeal witness in form of an authorized instructor, Tibetan dancers or choreographers from the music videos were not sought by the Khaita community or Namkhai Norbu. While it might admittedly be quite difficult to identify and get in contact with the Tibetan artists due to distance and a possible language barrier, it does not seem impossible. This clearly highlights once again that the priority of Khaita dances is not the detailed, accurate reproduction of

the original Tibetan dances. If that were the case, more research on individual dances and their creators would have been undertaken by the Khaita community.

CONCLUSION

Having investigated how Khaita choreographies are created, I conclude that reconstruction and reenactment processes occur throughout their development: For the creation of some Khaita dances, Tibetan dance choreographies as seen in the original YouTube videos are reconstructed. For others, media transfers from text into movement happen with choreographers referring to the songs' meanings.

After the initial creation / reconstruction stage, dances undergo a feedback stage by Namkhai Norbu. Thereby it has become clear that his suggestions for movement alterations are more important than the accuracy of reconstruction or choreographer's creative visions. Only after his approval, dances become official Khaita dances. Then demonstration videos with the final choreography are shot and included in the Khaita archive.

What follows is the performance stage in which Khaita dances are performed regularly in learning, performance or practice settings. As such, the 'fixed' choreography of the demonstration videos is constantly repeated and 'remembered'. Repetitions thereby range from reconstructions in practice sessions to reenactments for performance projects. While the former may lead to unintentional, inevitable transformations to the dance, the latter critically assesses the demonstration video and decisions to change certain aspects are taken by the performers. To repeat Khaita dances in the future, the Khaita community relies on both visual documentation such as the demonstration videos and tutorials as well as on corporeal witnesses in form of recognized instructors.

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LIST OF IMAGES

REFUGEES AND FORCED IMMIGRATION STUDIES

YAYLADAĞI, HATAY'S CONTAINER CITY

HOJUNG KIM, MARIAM SIAHATGAR

Hojung Kim, Assistant Professor, University of Tennessee, **Mariam Siaghatgar**, Research Assistant, University of Tennessee

ABSTRACT

On April 29, 2011, 263 Syrians crossed into Turkey, fleeing civil war at home. Within 24 hours, the Turkish government set up an emergency tent camp for them in the southern Hatay Province. In less than three years, Turkey was operating 22 camps serving 210,000 refugees, mostly in provinces along its roughly 500-mile-long border with Syria. (McClelland, Mac) But after five years of development and major support from the Turkish government, the camp transitioned to a "container city". In the case of Yayladağı, Hatay, although this method effectively houses over 2000 refugees and has developed various amenities for the people, the camp does not account for the cultural heritage and social norms of refugees. Thus, the current research objectives are to address the social, environmental, and architectural issues of the "container city" and to suggest a closer-knit community to enhance the temporary living conditions by addressing these four main topics:

1. Utilizing agricultural products, skills, and trades within the state of temporal camp.

The recent survey from "Syrian Refugees in Turkey Need Jobs" indicated that less than 50 percent of the refugees residing in Turkey use their skills and knowledge from the trades that they previously used in Syria. (Shanthi & Louay). Approximately twenty percent of Syrians worked in agriculture before migrating to Turkey (Safwan), where the trade can be used in the farmland of the Yayladagi region.

2. Using architectural design to enhance the traditional living environments of Syrian refugees.

Reconfiguring the existing containers, creating semi-public courtyards and a marketplace. Within Syrian culture, the community is an extremely valuable part of their culture, and there are various places where these communities develop. The souk, or marketplace, serves as a space that leads to social interactions. The courtyard is the distinctive social environment within Syrian architecture that enables the development of a community within a family.

3. Utilizing the local, readily available materials and construction techniques to improve the current container modular housing units.

In the current camp imagery, the attempts at privatization of the balcony spaces become evident. Many are utilizing simple tarps that encapsulate the entirety of the balcony. Others appear to be stitching together traditional fabrics to surround their spaces. This not only privatizes the space but also introduces elements of Syrian culture to a region where they may be foreign.

4. Through cultural environmental design to accommodate a major population of children and women to create a sense of security and stable education opportunities.

The camp prominently comprises Sunni Muslims, where the women typically practice wearing the hijab or veil, and community development constitute a large portion of their culture. Within the Syrian architectural typology, the central courtyard serves as a haven for two demographics of people—women and children. (Mahmoud)

UTILIZING AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTS, SKILLS, AND TRADES WITHIN THE STATE OF THE TEMPORAL CAMP

As of 2019, over three million protected Syrian refugees were living in Turkey, with much of the influx beginning with the start of the Syrian Civil War in 2011. This influx can be attributed to Turkey's open-door policy for Syrian refugees. Yayladagi was one of the first places, closely located to the border, to provide emergency housing, and by 2014, Yayladagi 1 and 2 were part of five refugee camps housing nearly 15,000 total refugees with 60,000 living in the areas surrounding these camps. This was nearly ten percent of the refugee population in Turkey (Erturk, 2016). Of this refugee population within Yayladagi, 42% were of working age (those between the ages of 19 and 45), while 45% of those outside the camp were of working age. This data presents that over 30,000 refugees, at the very least, should have been physically capable of being part of the workforce. With such a sizable workforce within Yayladagi alone, utilizing agriculture can be seen as an economic stimulant, even if the benefits are on a micro-scale.

Integration issues had been present since this influx, though they were never properly addressed. For some refugees, the lack of recognition of this issue subjects some to some unwarranted incidents (Brookings). Some accounts in Istanbul claim natives were threatened with "knives and batons" and chanted "This is Turkey, not Syria!" (Middle east eye). Economic integration may be a first step in solidifying the presence of Syrian refugees, though the intention of utilizing refugees should not be in hopes of cheap labor; rather, helping these people to assimilate into a new culture and society.

The crossover of agriculture in both the Turkish and Syrian economy and culture renders ground for agriculture to serve as a steppingstone to better integrate Syrians into the Turkish workforce. Per *Migration and Agriculture*, migrant workers within the agricultural sector are a newer phenomenon (Erturk, 2016). Twenty percent of the newer integration of migrant workers in this industry may be attributed to the labor shortage among native workers, leading to lower GDP values – refugees serve as a great demographic to incorporate (Brookings). Current situations for many Syrian workers in this industry require improvements to engage in a normal lifestyle (Kirisci and Uysal, 2019). By implementing crop cultivation with a camp such as a Yayladagi, refugees provide economic benefits, even if it benefits more towards the local economy of Yayladagi.

Providing such jobs would prevent the refugees from appearing as deadweights to the Turkish people. With camp reconfiguration, spaces devoted, or partially devoted, to agriculture can be incorporated into the fabric of the camp. Courtyards, though small, can serve as small agricultural spaces. Such trade as farming, would not require obtaining a new skill for a portion of the population; farming would also be a trade that those in camp can teach to each other and increase the number of people in the camp with this skill. Since it would not require the refugees to venture outside of the camp, it serves as an excellent opportunity for the members of the community who have yet to assimilate into Turkish society, whether due to social or cultural barriers.Being part of the fertile crescent, agriculture and farming have been a contributor to Syria's livelihood for centuries (Food and Agriculture Organization, 2017). Before the civil war, just under twenty percent of the Syrian workforce was part of this industry, and similarly to Turkey, the sector served as a great economic stimulant (RSAI, Mohammad et al, 2019). Since the start of the war, agriculture within Syria has become especially critical in maintaining the economy. A study conducted by the Food and Agriculture Organization in 2016 surveyed approximately 3,500 Syrian families spread across 61 of the 65 districts across Syria and found that upwards of 75% of those surveyed were still producing their food for personal consumption, which constitutes approximately twenty percent of the general population (FAO, 2017). This displays that outside of the percentage of the workforce that is part of the farming industry, individual family members have knowledge of farming that can apply to small-scale farming. Though this study targeted those living in rural communities during the war, it still highlights that before the war, household farming was not uncommon. Women within these rural households have also served important roles, and their importance has also been amplified since 2011 (Lamberti et al, 2018).

With Yayladagi, Hatay being a bordering region with Aleppo and Idlib, there are similarities in agricultural production, but also crops that are more concentrated in each region. Hatay, Turkey has nearly 50% of its lands irrigated, which implies the land can support some agricultural endeavors, hence using space

available in the camp to take advantage of the arable land (Erturk, 2016). Some of the most common exports of the region include olives, cotton, and citrus fruits, along with a sleuth of other fruits and vegetables. These products together consist of nearly a third of both domestic and international exports within the region. When examining aerial views of Yayladagi, the city is surrounded by an expansive grid of farmlands. These fields produce nearly 4,000 acres of strawberries, with the majority being exported outside of the region (Tarihi, 2021). In the bordering district of Idlib, Syria, 358 thousand hectares of land are cultivated among its 609 thousand total hectares (Chapman, 2014). In 2012, the region produced 702,285 tons of agricultural products. Though crops such as olives and wheat do flourish in this region, Idlib's greatest export is potatoes. To its north, Aleppo has the largest total production with just over two million tons of crop produced in its 1157 thousand hectares of cultivated land. This is just over 60 percent of the region. Wheat and olives constitute many exports in this region. Both regions have suffered a tremendous loss since 2011, both from annual crops such as wheat and barley, but for Idlib in particular, perennial crops as well, such as olives, grapes, apricots, etcetera (FAO, 2017). This allows refugees who may be very recently displaced to find a similarity with the trades as they had previously partaken; this is with the assumption that olives become a primary crop within the camp.

Textile production captures another large portion of the Syrian population; nearly twenty percent of workers partake in the industry, which encapsulates the entire process from shearing off the wool to weaving the final product (SIBA, 2017). For some, this includes sewing, as well. Four regions, in particular, have an extremely strong reliance on the production and processing of textiles, one of which includes Aleppo. Though this trade may not be acquired by all women in the camp, the presence of such a skill still presents the opportunity to create a community of craftsmen familiar with the industry.

USING ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN TO ENHANCE THE TRADITIONAL LIVING ENVIRONMENTS OF SYRIAN REFUGEES

Within Yayladagi, the potential in having a farmer within its working-class population is one in five; even a larger group of refugees within the camp are likely to have familiarity with agriculture since family farms were particularly common with the rural populations of regions such as Aleppo and Idlib. Allowing space that allows for crop cultivation, or even small-scale family-style farming becomes a method to help foster the lives of refugees. Although the premise is not quite the same, courtyards similarly can serve the purpose of minor levels of the farm with yet another important factor of fostering community to expand on the idea of courtyard culture.

Allowing the opportunity to develop community within the camp becomes especially important when considering the mental health of those residing within the camp. *Culture, Context, and the Mental Health and Psychosocial well-being of Syrians* explain that various factors can contribute to mental stress in these refugees (Mekka - Berrada et al, 2015). For many, the violence which they witness bears a great burden. In an interview with National Public Radio (NPR), Ferdana, who wanted to spread her message, explains:We are begging you to just stop this regime of Bashar Assad. He is killing us; the people are forced to hide or go to another country. He doesn't understand anything but killing. We don't want to be refugees; we want to go home. So please, just stop him (Kenyon, 2011).

This statement was given as the civil war had just begun; with the continuation of war on a decade later, unlikely that this is not still the mentality of those still living within the country. A courtyard space that is enclosed and defined by the parameter of living areas, allows refugee families to create a sense of security, providing visual and physical security to kids. Mental stress stems partially from isolation, as well. Although the cause of isolation may vary by person, for some of these Syrian refugees, discrimination towards them became the reason for isolating themselves (Mekka-Berranda et al, 2015). Again, incorporating courtyard culture into the camp can serve as a haven for those who may face persecution and create semi-private and semi-public spaces. This introduces the importance of allowing communities to develop within these courtyard typologies. Knowing that isolation causes mental stress, community development becomes

valuable, especially for a demographic of people such as Arabs, who place such high importance on their communities.

Although people want to gather, if there is enough desire they will do so on their own, by providing and encouraging the development of the community, refugees within the Yayladagi refugee camp may be more prone to assimilate into life away from their home country. The souk, or the marketplace, and courtyards within Syrian culture both further this sense of community. The souks within Syria served as cultural centers before, and even during, the civil war (Rushby, 2012). Historically, souks were often located on trade routes, allowing people from various cultures and backgrounds to engage with the people and integrate their cultural foods and goods. Aleppo's historic souk, the Al-Madina souk, was once part of the Silk Road, a lively and sociable atmosphere. A strong tie to tradition and diversity developed within the walls of this market. Everything from textiles to fruits and vegetables to nuts and herbs exists with these souks, all of which are freshly sourced, and once people begin going continuously, they begin fostering relationships with the people and vendors they interact with. Souk encourages communal interaction on a much larger scale as compared to the courtyard, which houses much more intimate interactions. Although still prominent today, the emphasis of courtyard homes within not just Syrian architecture, but Arab architecture stemmed from Arab nomads, who were looking to create an enclosed central space to maintain their cattle (Alabidin, 2010). This topology eventually translated into the permanent homes of Arabs, partially with the influences of regional religions. The courtyard helped to create a sense of "inwardness and enclosure" (Salamandra, 2004). Especially Muslim women, this allows for freedom of dress that they may not have outside of the home because of their beliefs (Stouhi, 2021). Due to the value of family in Syrian culture, the courtyard served as a gathering place for "semi-independent subunits functioning independently but still maintaining strong family ties," as in most Arab cultures, family gatherings not only consist of the "nuclear family, but extended family typically partake in such gatherings, as well (Alabidin, 2010). Families may gather for events as typical as Thursday night, before Jummah, or Friday, when most people are off work; or, more important events, such as Eid-al-Fitr, which marks the end of Ramadan. The courtyard itself sits on the ground level of the home and is composed of various elements, including greenery, a central fountain, and carved elevations (Stouhi, 2021). The landscape becomes a valued part of the courtyard, and within Yayladagi, designing crop production or garden beds in an organized manner can amplify the effects of a traditional courtyard. To maximize privacy within the home, smaller windows will be placed on the outside of the home while larger windows face the courtyard, and covered areas will often serve as the focal point for furniture placement and overall gathering. By maximizing shading in these hot climates, the courtyard helps create a micro-climate, which is amplified with the usage of greenery. Creating this typology within the camp develops cultural ties but will benefit in transforming such a linearly cut camp, into a much greener and inviting environment.

UTILIZING THE LOCAL, READILY AVAILABLE MATERIALS AND CONSTRUCTION TECHNIQUES TO IMPROVE THE CURRENT CONTAINER MODULAR HOUSING UNITS

When analyzing the current living situation within Yayladagi, an attempt at incorporating elements of Syrian culture becomes evident with the fabrics utilized in privatizing some of the balconies. This introduces elements of traditional Syrian colors and patterning. Production of such textiles has prevailed for generations, going back to the time of the Silk Road (SIBA, 2017). The souks often house a variety of brightly colored fabrics, which eventually become incorporated into the homes of many Syrians, both in their homelands and the refugee camp and maintain their sense of identity, even during a dire time.

Within Hatay, cotton production in the region makes up just over ten percent of Turkey's total cotton product, which is the third largest volume of production in the nation (Semerci and Celik, 2018). Of the nearly 40,000 hectares of agricultural land in Hatay, fourteen percent produces cotton among other regional crops. Syria's relationship with cotton reflects that of Hatay, where during a period, Syria produced seven percent of all global cotton production, with Aleppo being in the top four regarding the density of the industry within a region (SIBA, 2019). Before the start of the war, approximately twenty percent of the agriculture workforce served in cotton production and provided the second largest source of income

(Hammada, 2014). In the processing after production, various styles of weaving are produced by Syrian craftsmen (Iracheta, 2019). Aleppo's most common style of weaving is shaft-loom weaving, indicating the loom which the textiles are produced with. With Aleppo generating a large number of refugees within the camp, utilizing their skills along with the available cotton, producing the traditionally rich textiles becomes a possibility. Being that most refugees abandon their homes with little to no belongings, engaging in cotton production allows them to not immerse themselves into a part of their culture but can gain a final product of their own culture. Rather than untouched drywall, bright blues and red, with some traces of gold and silver can fill the walls of the container homes. These brightly colored textiles perpetuate a friendlier environment and can help boost morale.

With examining the architecture of the current camp, the lack of coloration becomes especially apparent, even among those who have displayed their culture through their balcony covers. The interior of the Yayladagi containers uses drywall to line the walls of the container, yet they remain mostly barren, as most refugees do not own any memorabilia. As previously addressed, the migration process for many of these refugees leads to mental stress. Utilizing these colorful textiles can subconsciously benefit the mental health of Syrian refugees as a result of cultural color associations. Color-emotion association allows humans to associate various colors with different emotions (Takei and Imaizumi, 2022). Color-in-context theory suggests that based on its usage, colors may convey varying messages. Within Arab culture, although some colors have different connotations, most primary colors serve the same relationship as most common understandings. Green often alludes to nature, but it also serves as the traditional color of Islam, as it was the Prophet Muhammad's favorite color (Hasan et al, 2011). Red does tend to have some negative connotations, though for Arabs it can also serve as a positive reference as the majority of Arab nations display red in their flags, Syria included. Colors such as yellow, for the most part, have positive references among most cultures. Some colors do have cultural meanings that highly differ from other cultures, such as white, where in many cultures it references purity while in Arab culture it slightly references death as it is representational of a coffin. Understanding these cultural associations and their psychological impacts on color can allow craftsmen within the camp to create a final product that creates a lively interior that portrays cultural references at the same time. Such attention to interior detail can serve as a first-step solution to boosting morale. As an exterior element, visible displays of the culture that Syrians have had to abandon help create a sense of unity among those in the camp; those within Yayladagi visually understand they have a community of their own.

Though architectural methods vary across Turkey, stone usage is particularly common in the more southeastern regions, though stone structures can be seen across the nation. Turkish stones, particularly limestone, are strong and plentiful across the country (Branning, n.d.). Spolia, a "reuse material" stone, also exists in Turkish architecture. Its name stems from the stone being taken from structures that were constructed in previous periods, such as the Byzantine era. Reusing such material makes it significantly less expensive. One method of construction consists of the stone slabs being laid horizontally on one another; this assemblage can be done in various patterns, and due to the stone being precisely cut, little to no mortar is necessary to adhere to the stones. Such a construction is ideal for within the camp, as it would require little to no equipment and can be executed by the refugees living in Yayladagi. With the containers being an existing part of the camp, a stone would not be utilized to create a new housing unit; rather stone construction could be used to construct designated farming spaces, whilst creating a space for people to gather around at the same time. Agriculture within the camp does not need to be a large-scale operation, as there is only a finite amount of space within the camp; defining a set space for possible crop production ensures that the opportunity is utilized.

THROUGH CULTURAL ENVIRONMENTAL DESIGN TO ACCOMMODATE A MAJOR POPULATION OF CHILDREN AND WOMEN TO CREATE A SENSE OF SECURITY AND STABLE EDUCATION OPPORTUNITIES

Since 640 AD, Islam has been practiced in Syria, hence why Islamic tradition has become so deeply embedded into the Syrian tradition (Mazigh, 2016). Despite the Muslim majority, religious coexistence is a

common practice within the nation. Within these existing demographics, familial and social ties are highly valued, and tend to establish their lives around these relationships (Evason, 2016). Family honor holds high regard for many, as well as personal integrity, which leads to a generous manner toward many. With this though, people become guarded and avoid falling victim to social shame; hence, the normality of seeing many families abide by traditional values. The male figurehead will hold authority over most activities, while mothers perform household duties and care for children, and despite advances in women's rights, there is often still a power imbalance. For many, the presence of a courtyard can serve as an escape, while allowing them to gather in the event they are unable to leave their homes. This allows for the cultivation of a community among a marginalized group, which can benefit any mental stress within women, especially as displaced people in an unfamiliar environment.

Although children are not the largest demographic of people located within the camp population, their future is still partially dependent on their development during their time at the camp. Providing spaces that assist in fostering child development becomes valuable. Traditionally, spaces designed for children are filled with vibrant and joyous colors that encourage play. Visual design can tremendously influence the attitude of those occupying a space; careful consideration can even motivate an individual (Chang et al, 2018). Proper color usage will help improve the attention span of those of learning age, in which case warm colors are the best to use. Although considering cultural norms become important in color selections, there are very few colors that would have connotation derogatory to the point where it would not be appropriate to utilize them in space. When providing interior spaces that may house children, color associations may be the first step in providing a space that can help advance these refugee children's mental development, when they have been so far removed from the society, they are familiar with. Using these colors within textiles is one approach. Not only would these psychological considerations impact the development of refugee children, but they would also benefit older family members.

Green spaces within the Yayladagi can be developed in various ways; the most apparent would stem from a courtyard setting. Similarly, to proper color selection, even small doses of outdoor time allow children to broaden their attention span. Spending time outdoors has even been shown to decrease the chances of mental disorders ("The necessity of urban green…", n.d). Even vegetated lands serve as green space, though it may not traditionally be recognized as such; with a system of garden beds throughout the camp, the camp would hypothetically be surrounded by green spaces. For children, such spaces would help foster "stronger neighborhood social cohesion," hence utilizing the public spaces within the camp as an opportunity to foster such communities within the children of the camp. Being able to associate with other children can allow for a decrease in "behavioral and social problems" and "increased mental health, even in adverse situations."

Allowing children outdoor play, safety stems as a possible issue and can raise concern for parents. Even if the safety of children is not rooted in other people, children are still curious about the world around them and tend to want to explore (Brussoni et al, 2012). Because of their natural curiosity, children are also more apt to not recognize risks and may be more drawn to them, and the adult in the situation would recognize those risks and manage as for greater benefits. The benefit of following a courtyard creates a space for children to freely play without parental fear of a high-risk environment because of the enclosed walls creating semi private spaces. Although it is not uncommon for children to play in the streets of their neighborhoods, most children do not have the mental stress of being refugees. Providing a safe yet open space for children to engage in can be done in the walls of a courtyard. Although it may seem completely isolated, if the camp containers are properly reconfigured, it can allow multiple families and their children to access the space, while simultaneously preventing unwanted attention from being drawn in. Children can engage with those outsides of their family without parents being concerned for their children being placed in uncomplicated situations.

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RECENT FORCED MIGRATION OF THE UKRAINIAN POPULATION IN THE EUROPEAN AREA - DEMOGRAPHIC APPROACH

MONIKA KOMUŠANAC

Monika Komušanac, PhD

ABSTRACT

Recent Forced Migration have caused intensified forced relocations of the population in Ukraine and Europe in the context of exile and refugee movements. Forced (war) migration of the population of Ukraine took on very large proportions in the first months of the war and included between 12 and 14 million people by the beginning of May (estimated by the UN and IOM). It was established that both internal and external forced migrations of Ukraine have a pronounced spatial (regional) selectivity, with the fact that the displacement population within Ukraine is more pronounced in terms of intensity. Waves of refugees from Ukraine, estimated around 7,6 million are mainly directed towards neighboring countries, and, in addition to geographic differentiation, they also show selectivity towards countries with a large representation of the Ukrainian emigrant contingent. Thus, the destinations of Ukrainian refugees coincide with European countries where there is a noticeable trend of increasing the number of Ukrainian immigrants, increased requests for asylum, issued residence and work permits for the population from Ukraine, namely with Poland, Italy, the Czech Republic, Germany and Spain, where about 80% of the emigrated population from Ukraine in the last decade lives (European Commission, 2022; UN 2019). According to the latest available data from the UNHCR (2022), approximately 15 million inhabitants of Ukraine participated in recent forced migrations, of which the largest number refers to those who went across the borders of Ukraine to neighboring countries, around 7,6 million and a smaller number refers to internally displaced persons (refugees), about 7 million (UN, 2022). The aim of this presentation is to define the directions, intensity and characteristics of internal and external forced migration of Ukraine with special reference to the demographic analysis of threatened areas in the pre-war period in order to be able to determine the level of demographic destruction, indirect demographic consequences and potential of demographic renewal at national and regional level of Ukraine.

Keywords: Russian aggression, forced migration, war, Ukraine, population.