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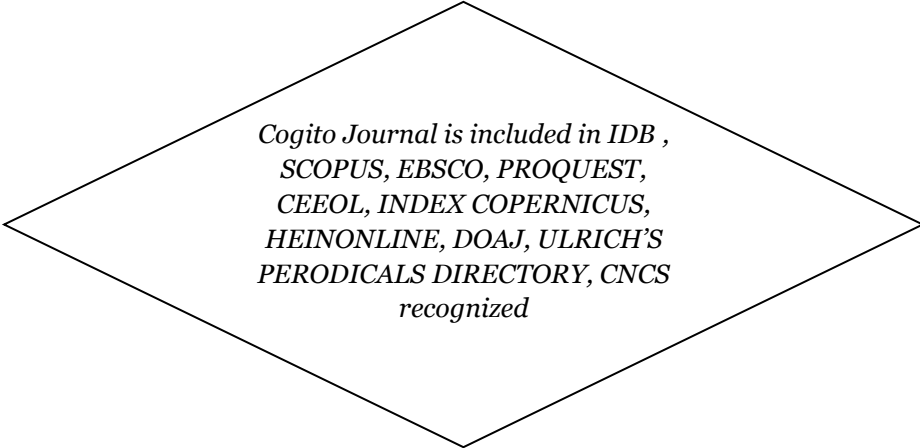
MULTIDISCIPLINARY RESEARCH JOURNAL

Vol. XIII, no. 1/March, 2021

Bucharest, 2021
ISSN 2068-6706

**Cogito Journal is published under the aegis of
“Dimitrie Cantemir” Christian University**

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Cogito

MULTIDISCIPLINARY RESEARCH JOURNAL

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CONTENTS

PHILOSOPHY AND RELIGIONS HISTORY

| | |
|---|-----------|
| NATURAL RIGHT AND HISTORICISM: FROM THUCYDIDES TO MARX | 7 |
| Elias Vavouras | |
| HUMAN'S SPIRITUAL CRISIS AND THE <i>EXISTENTIAL VACUUM</i>..... | 21 |
| Alexandru Gabriel Negoită | |
| COVID-19 PANDEMIC: AN ESCHATOLOGICO-THEODICAL PARADOX | 32 |
| Peter. O. O. Ottuh, Mary O. Jemegbe | |
| BETWEEN PAUL FEYERABEND'S EPISTEMOLOGICAL DADAISM AND AN EXISTENTIAL ANARCHISM: A CRITICAL DISCOURSE | 50 |
| Nelson Udoka Ukwamedua | |

POLITICAL SCIENCES

| | |
|---|-----------|
| THE 2020 TIGRAI PEOPLE LIBERATION FRONT (TPLF) REGIONAL ELECTION: EXAMINING ITS LEGITIMACY AND MOTIVATIONS | 63 |
| Yihenew Misrak, Yayew Genet | |
| MULTICULTURAL PERSPECTIVES: STUDY OF THE FEMALE CHARACTERS IN THE SELECT RAJ NOVELS | 84 |
| Bhaskar Chettri, Dhananjay Tripathi | |

WOMEN'S POLITICAL ACTIVISM IN THE ARAB WORLD.....98

Irina Georgiana Bogdan

SCIENCE FICTION DISCOURSE IN THE USSR AND HUNGARY: INSTITUTIONALIZATION AND INTERACTION IN THE CONTEXT OF COMMUNIST IDEOLOGY118

Aleksandr Sautkin,

Elena Philippova

FOREIGN LANGUAGES AND LITERATURES

HOLOPHRASTIC CONSTRUCTIONS AS A MEANS OF OCCASIONAL WORD FORMATION IN ENGLISH POPULAR FICTION..... 132

Marianna Goltsova

AFRO-AMERICAN RAP LYRICS VS FAIRY TALES: POSSIBLE WORLDS AND THEIR MEDIATORS..... 146

Nataliia Kravchenko,

Maria Prokopchuk,

Oleksandr Yudenko

NATURAL RIGHT AND HISTORICISM: FROM THUCYDIDES TO MARX

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Abstract: *Although the origins of Thucydides' thought are scientific, its outcome does not avoid intersecting with historicism. Thucydides, while starting from the solid basis of human nature, which justifies the periodic repetition of historical events, since human nature is immutable, culminates in absolute relativism as to the purpose of his endeavor, the justice exists only in the intermediate of equal opposing forces. Thucydides' ending of the story is relevant, subjective and clearly historicistic. On the other hand, Marx who does not recognize a fixed human essence, which determines human action and includes the ultimate human purpose, is even closer to Thucydides in historicism. While Thucydides assumes the eternity of human substance and embraces the relativism of the imposition of power in the historical field, Marx considers that the human substance is the product of this very class struggle, which is obviously governed by power relations in history.*

Keywords: *Thucydides, Marx, historicism, natural right, human nature, political philosophy.*

*πρὸς ἕκαστα δὲ δεῖ ἢ ἐχθρὸν ἢ φίλον μετὰ καιροῦ γίνεσθαι.
καὶ ἡμᾶς τοῦτο ὠφελεῖ ἐνθάδε¹*

A. Thucydides

1) Natural Right

With Thucydides, history takes on a central meaning in the human condition. Everything is history, the becoming as a dynamic field of evolution and change acquires a historical character in the sense that human activity gives it meaning, brings it to the sphere of existence from the non-existence. With Thucydides there happens the real descend of science from the heaven to the earth², everything that is human passes into the land of the being, while everything that is extra-human is lost in the realm of the non-being. History is conceived of as human creation, as

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¹ Thuc. 6. 85: "Everyone should be an enemy or a friend depending on the circumstances. And our own interest is served here".

² Cf. K1κ. Tusc. 5. 10.

human political creation, which takes man out of the natural, of the impersonal becoming and introduces him to the real, to the existent world. However, this creative-political activity of man does not develop by chance, but is subject to an inescapable natural necessity. This Thucydidean saying “by the human way” (κατὰ τὸ ἀνθρώπινον)³ is interpreted as a necessary interaction of human nature and the environmental characteristics created by the historical folds, by the times. Man is governed by innate natural characteristics, which determine his action from the outset, and he is called by these natural constants to shape the historical becoming and to give his stigma to the historical stream.

Only the appearance of the events is mutated into their periodic and lawless perpetual reappearance, since the nature of humans and their life is and remains the same (γινόμενα μὲν καὶ αἰεὶ ἐσόμενα, ἕως ἄν ἡ αὐτὴ φύσις ἀνθρώπων ᾗ, ἀλλὰ τοῖς εἶδεσι διηλλαγμένα)⁴. And history, of course, as a whole or the individual historical event becomes an everlasting example of understanding and interpretation of the human condition. Since the nature of the human is the same, there is repetition, but if in the historical becoming there is a constant movement and change, the humans are neither completely the same, nor the historical impressions exactly the same. The backdrop of the historical model of Thucydides resembles a Heraclitean sybil oracle, the human history is a river that constantly has the same form, but its essence is constantly changing, it is never the same, since its waters are different every moment⁵.

³ Thuc. 1.22.4: ὅσοι δὲ βουλήσονται τῶν τε γενομένων τὸ σαφὲς σκοπεῖν καὶ τῶν μελλόντων ποτὲ αὖθις κατὰ τὸ ἀνθρώπινον τοιούτων καὶ παραπλησίον ἔσεσθαι, ὠφέλιμα κρίνειν αὐτὰ ἀρκούντως ἔξει. **κτῆμά τε ἐς αἰεὶ** μᾶλλον ἢ ἀγώνισμα ἐς τὸ παραχρῆμα ἀκούειν ξυγκείται.. “But I will be satisfied if my work is judged useful by those who want to have an accurate knowledge of what has happened and what will happen in the future, which, from the point of view of human nature, will be similar or roughly similar. I wrote my History to remain an eternal property of the people and not as a project of a timely competition for a temporary audience”. Cf. W. Nestle, *Vom Mythos zum Logos. Die des griechischen Denkens Selbstentfaltung Homer bis auf die von und Sokrates Sophistik. (From Mythos to Logos: The Self-development of Greek Thought from Homer to the Sophists and Socrates.)* 1940, (Greek translation Georgiou An., Gnos, Athens, 2010), pp. 758, 761, 763-766, 768, W. Jaeger, *Paideia: die Formung des griechischen Menschen*, vol 1, 1933-1947, (Greek translation G. P. Verrius, Athens, 1971-1974), p. 427. Z. Perez, *Thucydides: An Introduction for the Common Reader*, Princeton University Press, 2005, (Greek translation K. Koliopoulos, *Poiotita*, Athens, 2006), pp. 250-251, 266.

⁴ Thuc. 3. 82.2. Cf. El. Vavouras, *The "Political Man" in Ancient Greece: The philosophical origins of political action* (From Homer to Aristotle), Zitros, 2013. Cf. G. Mara, “Thucydides and the Problem of Citizenship”, *A Handbook to the Reception of Thucydides* (Ed. Lee C. and Morley N.), Wiley Blackwell, 2015, pp. 313-331.

⁵ B. Herakl, 49a DK: ποταμοῖς τοῖς αὐτοῖς ἐμβαίνομεν τε καὶ οὐκ ἐμβαίνομεν, εἰμέν τε καὶ οὐκ εἰμέν "In the same rivers we enter and we do not enter, and we are and we are not.

Also, although humans are governed by the same eternal natural characteristics, they are also the same at all times and at the same time different in an always same, but at the same time constantly different river. Similarly, almost purely Heraklitean is the necessity that governs the Thucydides' historical-and therefore human-universe. Pairs of equivalent, opposing forces (such as justice-injustice, nature-law, power-weakness, justice-interest, rationality-passions, luck-necessity, ratio-action, multitasking - silence, etc.) prevail creating a gloomy scene of a perpetual war, where at the end of each conflict the justice is identified with the domination and is the birthplace of a new historical reality. Ultimately, natural right in Thucydides is coterminous with the imposition of any form of power. In the historical world there is justice between equal forces, if there is supremacy justice is identified with the right of the most powerful⁶.

Words such as freedom, justice, etc. have substance only if they are signified by the powerful, otherwise they remain meaningless terms, especially dangerous for those who ignore their true meaning. Every individual or civil being has within it as much justice as power - as Spinoza or Nietzsche would say - even the absolute natural being, God, is supremely just, because he is omnipotent⁷. The eternal natural law, the

⁶ Cf. B. Herakl, 103 DK. Cf. Lowell Ed., *Chance and Intelligence in Thucydides*, Harvard University Press, 1975, pp. 97-108.

⁶ Thuc. 5. 89: τὰ δυνατὰ δ' ἐξ ὧν ἑκάτεροι ἀληθῶς φρονοῦμεν διαπράσσεσθαι, ἐπισταμένους πρὸς εἰδότας ὅτι **δίκαια μὲν ἐν τῷ ἀνθρωπείῳ λόγῳ ἀπὸ τῆς ἰσῆς ἀνάγκης κρίνεται, δυνατὰ δὲ οἱ προύχοντες πράσσουσι καὶ οἱ ἀσθενεῖς ξυγχωροῦσιν**. "Each of us has the right to act in accordance with our real power according to what we both plan in our minds, since we also know and are well aware that, according to the calculations of the people, justice arises when the opposing parties have equal coercive means to impose it, but the powerful exhaust all possibilities of domination, the weak retreat". Cf. J.J. Sullivan, "Hobbes and His Contemporaries", *A Handbook to the Reception of Thucydides* (Ed. Lee C. and Morley N.), Wiley Blackwell 2015, pp. 241-260.

⁷ Thuc. 5. 105: Τῆς μὲν τοίνυν πρὸς τὸ **θεῖον εὐμενείας** οὐδ' ἡμεῖς οἰόμεθα λελείψεσθαι· οὐδὲν γὰρ ἔξω τῆς ἀνθρωπείας τῶν μὲν ἐς τὸ **θεῖον νομίσεως**, τῶν δ' ἐς σφᾶς αὐτοὺς βουλήσεως δικαιοῦμεν ἢ πράσσομεν. ἡγούμεθα γὰρ τό τε **θεῖον δόξῃ τὸ ἀνθρώπειόν τε σαφῶς διὰ παντὸς ὑπὸ φύσεως ἀναγκαίας, οὗ ἂν κρατῇ, ἄρχειν**. "But we think that we will not lack the favor of the gods; because we claim nothing or act contrary to people's perceptions of the divine or their will in their relations with one to another. In other words, we believe that God, in the opinion of people, and man is proven to prevail in every case, where his power is more prevalent, driven by a natural necessity". Cf. B. Spinoza, *Political treatise*, 1670, (Greek translation Stylianos A., Patakis, Athens 2003), Ch. 2: "That is why God, who exists, thinks and acts with absolute freedom, exists, understands and acts also with absolute necessity: that of the laws of his nature. For there is no doubt that God acts with the same freedom with which he exists; so as he exists from the necessity of his nature, so he acts from the necessity of his nature, that is, he acts with

natural right is defined by the power and everything derives from it. Humans as natural beings cannot escape from the tragic fate of the constant war, because their inherent-natural characteristics inevitably lead them there.

All human things depend on *honor*, *awe* and *interest*⁸. *Honor* is identified with the *value* that a collective or individual entity may have within the history, but value, as we have seen, is identified with power and therefore with supremacy⁹. *Awe* is the *fear* of the opposing power, which acts expansively and therefore potentially destructive towards us. *Benefit* is man's tendency towards his self-interest, which is determined by the factors of hedonism and greed. For Thucydides, good is synonymous with pleasure, but even the acquisition of the pleasant does not stop the human expansive impulse to acquire more things¹⁰. But in the end the basic

absolute freedom". W.K.C. Guthrie, *A History of Greek Philosophy, Volume III: The Fifth-Century Enlightenment – Part 1: The Sophists*, Cambridge University Press, 1971, (Greek translation Tsekourakis D., MIET, Athens, 1991), pp. 114-118. Cf. L. Tritle, "Thucydides and Power Politics", *Brill's companion to Thucydides* (Ed. Rengakos A. - Tsakmakis A.), Leiden-Boston, 2006, pp. 469-494.

⁸ Thuc. 1.76.1-3: **καὶ ἀναγκασθέντας ἂν ἢ ἄρχειν ἐγκρατῶς ἢ αὐτοὺς κινδυνεύειν. οὕτως οὐδ' ἡμεῖς θαυμαστὸν οὐδὲν πεποιήκαμεν οὐδ' ἀπὸ τοῦ ἀνθρωπείου τρόπου, εἰ ἀρχὴν τε διδομένην ἐδεξάμεθα καὶ ταύτην μὴ ἀνεῖμεν ὑπὸ τριῶν τῶν μεγίστων νικηθέντες, τιμῆς καὶ δέους καὶ ὠφελίας, οὐδ' αὖ πρῶτοι τοῦ τοιούτου ὑπάρξαντες, ἀλλ' αἰεὶ καθεστῶτος τὸν ἥσσω ὑπὸ τοῦ δυνατωτέρου κατείργεσθαι, ἅξιοί τε ἅμα νομίζοντες εἶναι καὶ ὑμῖν δοκοῦντες μέχρι οὗ τὰ ξυμφέροντα λογιζόμενοι τῷ δικαίῳ λόγῳ νῦν χρῆσθε, ὃν οὐδεὶς πω παρατυχὸν ἰσχύι τι κτήσασθαι προθεῖς τοῦ μὴ πλέον ἔχειν ἀπετράπετο. ἐπαινέισθαι τε ἅξιοι οἵτινες χρησάμενοι τῇ ἀνθρωπείᾳ φύσει ὥστε ἐτέρων ἄρχειν δικαιότεροι ἢ κατὰ τὴν ὑπάρχουσαν δύναμιν γένωνται.** "You would be forced to exercise your power with your fist or to be exposed to dangers So we too did nothing paradoxical or contrary to the nature of human things, when we accepted the hegemony that was offered to us and when, now, we refuse to give it up, driven by the stronger human passions: the *honor*, the *awe* and the *interest*. After all, we are not the first who apply such a policy. There is always the principle that the weak obey the will of the powerful and we are convinced that we deserve it. And you, after all, accept this principle until now, while in fact pursuing your own interests; you invoke principles of justice that have never prevented anyone from gaining greater advantages by his power. Praiseworthy, after all, are those who, according to the human nature, have gained power over others, but they are less unjust than their power could allow". W. Jaeger, *Paideia: die Formung des griechischen Menschen*, vol 1, 1933-1947, (Greek translation Verrius G. P., Athens, 1971-1974), p. 434. Cf. D. Gribble, "Individuals in Thucydides", *Brill's companion to Thucydides* (Ed. Rengakos A. - Tsakmakis A.), Leiden-Boston, 2006, pp. 439-468.

⁹ Thuc. 6. 83: **ἅξιοί τε ὄντες ἅμα ἄρχομεν.** "we are worthy because we exercise our hegemony". Cf. K. Raaflaub, "Thucydides on Democracy and Oligarchy", *Brill's companion to Thucydides* (Ed. A. Rengakos - A. Tsakmakis), Leiden-Boston, 2006, pp. 189-124.

¹⁰ Thuc. 4. 21: **τοῦ δὲ πλέονος ὠρέγοντο.** And 4. 92: **τοῦ πλέονος δὲ ὀρεγόμενος ἐκὼν τινὶ ἐπέρχεται.**

condition for the completion of the human nature is power, without power neither the *honor* (value) nor the *benefit* (interest) can be realized and the *awe* (fear) of the violent death-annihilation will penetrate alienally into it. Therefore, the alienation of man consists in the lack of power, while his bliss goes hand in hand with the increase of individual or collective power¹¹.

Without power, human is alienated, isolated, is desert and trampled by the momentum of the historical events. Without the natural right of the imposition of power, human nature remains in the realm of non-being, it is lost in non-existence, precisely because it cannot control and shape the history in a real way¹².

2) Historicism

We see, then, that Thucydides proposes a natural right, which derives from the inherent characteristics of human nature, from the human way of being or from the necessity of the human nature (*ἀπὸ τοῦ ἀνθρωπείου τρόπου* or *ὑπὸ φύσεως ἀναγκαίας*), and which flows perpetually into the power. Natural right and power are at the end completely identical. The attempt to map the human nature and its historical-political interpretation are a clear example of scientificity and objectivity. Thucydides is rightly considered the father of science or history or political history, precisely because he tried to base his research on scientific-objective findings based on the unchanging characteristics of the human nature. Just like Machiavelli, Thucydides dissociates politics from ethics and metaphysics and tries to define people as they are and not as they should be. It also identifies history and politics with action, there is nothing if this is not validated by the decisive action of the acting human subject¹³. Any other

Of particular importance is the fact that the verb *ὀρέγομαι* (covet-desire) is associated with an innate predisposition of human nature. *Greed* is seen as an innate and therefore according to natural right justified human tendency.

¹¹ Thuc. 3. 11: *Ὅσῳ δυνατότεροι αὐτοὶ αὐτῶν ἐγίνοντο καὶ ἡμεῖς ἐρημότεροι.* “As they become stronger, so increase our isolation”. Cf. C. Lee, “Thucydides and Democratic Horizons”, *A Handbook to the Reception of Thucydides* (Ed. Lee C. and Morley N.), Wiley Blackwell, 2015, pp. 332-352.

¹² Cf. Thuc. 4. 87. Cf. J. Zumbrennen, “Realism, Constructivism, and Democracy in the History” *A Handbook to the Reception of Thucydides* (Ed. Lee C. and Morley N.), Wiley Blackwell, 2015, pp. 296-312.

¹³ Πρβλ. Πλάτ. *Γοργ.* 491a-b: *ἀλλ' οἱ ἂν εἰς τὰ τῆς πόλεως πράγματα φρόνιμοι ᾧσιν, ὄντινα ἂν τρόπον εὖ οἰκοῖτο, καὶ μὴ μόνον φρόνιμοι, ἀλλὰ καὶ ἀνδρεῖοι, ἱκανοὶ ὄντες ἃ ἂν νοήσωσιν ἐπιτελεῖν, καὶ μὴ ἀποκάμνωσι διὰ μαλακίαν τῆς ψυχῆς.* “those who have shrewdness in the political process, how the state can be properly governed and not only the prudence characterizes them but also the determination, men capable of doing what they process in their mind and not to be timid due to their mental flabbiness in the conditions of difficulties”. Cf. G.M. Mara, *The civic conversations of Thucydides and*

theoretical proposition or interpretation that remains in the realm of the intellect or "on paper" may well be considered a utopia, but by no means history, politics or even philosophy.

Thucydides begins his endeavor in scientific terms, his thinking is governed by this Aristotelian saying *all humans by nature desire knowledge*¹⁴ and thus operates under the terms of a philosophical anthropology, a scientific knowledge of the human nature. He also attempts - and does so with characteristic aptitude - to find eternal historical laws, an eternal fixed natural right (such as human nature, the struggle of the opposites, the power etc.) from which every movement and change derives and is directed. And that shows a clearly scientific way.

However, although the roots of Thucydides' thought are scientific, its outcome does not avoid meeting historicism. Thucydides, while starting from the solid basis of human nature, which justifies the periodic repetition of the historical events, *since human nature remains the same*, concludes in an absolute relativism as to the purpose of his endeavor, *the justice exists only in the intermediate of equal opposing forces*. The Thucydides' ending of the story is relevant, subjective and clearly historicistic. Thucydides justifies power, there is such right as power, he believes in this natural right. But this historical outcome, the justification of the actual imposition of power on the historical stream, disconnects history from science, as defined by the ancient classics. Science knows well, in depth, the essence and purpose of its object (these Aristotelian phrases *what is something* and *what its purpose is* - *τί ἦν εἶναι* and *οὗ ἕνεκα*) and that is why it can make a rational proof of its principles. On the contrary, Thucydides' "science" while starting from the essence of the human nature, ultimately denies the purpose, there is no purpose-completion in Thucydides. The lack of a teleological view of history inevitably leads to the position that history, as perceived by Thucydides, is not a science, with the exact ancient Greek meaning of the term, but a tool, an instrument for interpreting reality¹⁵. Thucydides - in stark contrast e.g.

Plato: classical political philosophy and the limits of democracy, State University of New York, 2008, pp. 227-260. Cf. St. Forde, "International Realism and the Science of Politics: Thucydides, Machiavelli, and Neorealism", *International Studies Quarterly*, Vol. 39, No. 2 Jun., 1995, pp. 141-160.

¹⁴ Arist. *Metaph.* 980a: πάντες ἄνθρωποι τοῦ εἰδέναι ὀρέγονται φύσει.

¹⁵ Cf. L. Strauss, *Natural Right and History*, Chicago, 1953, p. 18. Strauss calls this function of the "sciences" Machiavellian because Machiavelli in *The Prince* seems to advise on politics and tyrants as well as people, refusing to point out the purpose of his writing and thus giving in the political science which suggest *instrumental* function. Just like Machiavelli the modern sciences defined by subjectivity have lost their essence and purpose and have become instruments of the *historicistic* sense. Cf. J. Ober, "Thucydides

with Plato and Aristotle - he does not suggest any way of improvement, of human integration, he is completely indifferent to it.

He conducts his research and analysis in the human substance, says that people are who they are, does not care if they are good or bad, he places them beyond good and evil, but does not determine a way of completion, a path of improvement for them. What Thucydides does is to provide a methodological tool for interpreting and controlling the human nature and the historical conditions. This is man, this is the historical path and so they can be controlled, through the knowledge of the human passions and through the imposition of the power on history. History is written by power, regardless of whether this power is a way of improvement or destruction for the human. The story of Thucydides as a tool-instrument can be used by anyone, in any way with the sole purpose of enforcing the right of the most powerful. Yes one can use Thucydides or Machiavelli to improve humans, knowing the human nature and learning from the mistakes of the historical past, but one can well use Thucydides to oppress humans and impose his shadowy violence. The history of Thucydides as a tool of interpretation and control of the reality is governed by unwavering neutrality, whether its user is a democracy or a tyranny Thucydides says that the justice exist only in the intermediate of equivalent coercive means (*δίκαια [...] ἀπὸ τῆς ἴσης ἀνάγκης κρίνεται*). Thucydides claims that justice and in the background the history is identified with the beneficial or destructive - completely indifferent to this - imposition of power. This is the world of Thucydides. Nietzsche would say that the imposition of the power on historical realizations leads to the liberation of the human from the shackles of his destiny, leads him to self-supremacy, makes him superhuman. But someone else, but perhaps the ambiguous Nietzsche himself, could answer that this moral, non-teleological neutrality of power makes man unreleased, a prisoner of the tragedy of his existence, a being full of imperfection and lack of improvement.

B. Marx

1) Natural Right

With Marx we inevitably reach again Thucydides, and this is because the history and the power return dynamically in the most convincing way. For Marx, *dialectical materialism* shapes and determines the historical form. Unlike traditional materialism, which puts the object in an active state and the receiver of the feeling in a passive position, Marx's

and the Invention of Political Science", *Brill's companion to Thucydides* (Ed. Rengakos A. - Tsakmakis A.), Leiden-Boston, 2006, pp. 131-160.

materialism places the object and the subject in an indisputable dialectical relationship. During the cognitive process there is a mutual dialectical interaction between the transmitter and the receiver of the sensory data and in the end the output is always different from the primary contact-communication. The Heraklitean river of becoming, where the subject enters but always at the next moment during their dialectical contact, the form of both the river and the subject changes, returns as a structural example. In the subject-object's dialectical communication nothing can remain constant, because the change and the movement of both are constant but also influenced by the relationship between them. The subject as knower and the object as known "are in a constant process of mutual adaptation", which is never completed, that is why it is called dialectical. Therefore, no theoretical verification can have objective force unless it acquires a tangible form through the historical act. Only action can objectify something and give it a historical form and not its theoretical interpretation. Man's real obligation is not to interpret the world but to change it, just as the creator shapes his matter, but he himself is influenced and limited by it. The truth of any theoretical proposition must be reduced to a creative act. There is no truth in theory without its transformation into action¹⁶, otherwise we are dealing with emphasis, with false deception¹⁷.

For Marx the dialectical relation of *subject-matter* is the driving force of the history, in contrast to Hegel who believed that the *spirit* moves and shapes historical threads. In essence, this matter-subject's relationship is the process of *production*, which in the realm of the reality is identified with the concept of economy. Just like in Thucydides, history is vindicated and is meaningful by the power. Whoever has the power is the one who can play a dominant role in the dialectical relationship of subject-object /matter, that is, to become the master of the productive and economic process. The whole of historical becoming is a constant struggle/war between the social classes in order to control the production and impose power on the weak. Power is identified with production and every political system represents the power of the ruling social class, in feudalism it is identified with the landowners, in capitalism with the industrialists/employers, in socialism by the employees/peasants. But while in Thucydides the imposition of power has no specific characteristics and is found everywhere in the private and public and in the international and in the micropolitical field or even in the field of natural power, in Marx this

¹⁶ P. Lafargue, *The Historical Method of Karl Marx*, 1903, p. 5. Cf. St. Elden, "Between Marx and Heidegger: Politics, Philosophy and Lefebvre's *The Production of Space*", *Antipode*, 2004, pp. 86-105.

¹⁷ B. Russell, *A History of Western Philosophy*, Simon & Schuster, 1945, pp. 571-572.

power has purely socio-economic characteristics. The war of the classes is the driving force of the history, the dialectic is fed back by the war of the classes and leads to historical progress. For Marx this active dialectical relation of subject-matter as a precondition of power and therefore of human bliss, this dialectical materialism, must concern the greater number of people and not a small social part to the bliss of the few strong and to the misery of the many weak. For Marx, socialism is the real precondition for the full development of the dialectical materialism and human progress. But despite Marx's clear preference for socialism as the field of maximum unfolding of the dialectical relation of subject-matter and thus of human progress and prosperity or even final liberation, his final verdict on natural right is essentially Thucydidean, history moves by the war, the war has a structural place in historical causality and the justice is identified with power and only with it.

2) Historicism

To fully understand the Marxist-historicist relationship, it is necessary to analyze some parameters of the concept of human *alienation*. Marx was inspired by this concept and its characteristics by Feuerbach's *religious alienation*. Feuerbach substantiates the religious alienation as an objectification of human essence by man himself and at the same time his submission to his derivative god¹⁸. Man produces an idea of objectification of his essence, which separates it from his being and calls it god, but at the same time submits to his derivative and is alienated from it. The creator in an irrational way becomes a creation and separates from its essence leading to becoming something other than what it really is¹⁹. According to Marx "the personification of the thing and the realization of the subject" take place in the same correlation in the social field. The product itself dominates its creator, the worker, resulting in the domination of "materialized labor" over "living labor". This is how the objectification and alienation of the essence of the creator takes place, because in the process of production a raw material is not modified that meets only the needs of its use by the creator, but through work the creator-worker treats the produced object as something else, as something foreign independent of

¹⁸ K. Löwith, *Meaning in History*, Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1949, (Greek translation M. Markidis, - G. Lykiardopoulos, *Gnosi*, Athens, 1985), p. 80. Cf. M. Cowling, "Alienation in the Older Marx", *Contemporary Political Theory*, 2006, 5, pp. 319–339.

¹⁹ L. Colletti, *Introduction to Karl Marx: Early Writings*, ed. Colletti, 1975, (Greek translation P. Papasasantopoulos, *Odysseas*, Athens, without chronology), p. 72. Cf. Aug. Bayonas, *Dialectics and politics in early Marx, Four studies*, University of Patras, 1977, p. 61.

him. The subjectivity of the creator-worker is objectified through the process of production and integrated into the produced object²⁰. In essence, Marx sees the concept of *alienation*²¹ as a process of serving someone else's interest, as submission to a will foreign to him, as an objectivity foreign to and contrary to the subjectivity of the creator. Here Marx is close to the position of the sophist Thrasymachus in the *Respublica* of Plato²², where justice is defined as an *alien* good, as *the interest of the most powerful and of the dominant*.

Essentially, in the place of the Thrasymachus, there is the objectification of the subjectivity of the citizens, who through the positive law serve another interest and in this way alienate their essence, become useful tools of an alien stronger will. For Marx, therefore, human nature is nothing but a function of man's relation to nature and to other human beings, "a function of human or intra-social relations"²³. Human nature is not defined as a fixed substance, but as a result of the dialectical subject-object's interaction, just as in Heraclitus we are exist and the same time we aren't exist as before in our dialectical relationship with our own ever-differentiating self and the ever-changing river of the reality. Just as in Feuerbach the objectification of the subjectivity of the creator turned to God, in Marx this alienation process flows into surplus value, into money²⁴. But because the validation of alienated labor is institutionalized and imposed by the positive law of the each time political community, it is

²⁰ L. Colletti, *Introduction to Karl Marx: Early Writings*, ed. Colletti, 1975, (Greek translation P. Papasarakantopoulos, *Odyseas*, Athens, without chronology), p. 76. Cf. M. Musto, "Revisiting Marx's Concept of Alienation", *Socialism and Democracy*, 24:3, 2010, pp. 71-101.

²¹ K. Löwith, *Meaning in History*, Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1949, (Greek translation M. Markidis, - G. Lykiardopoulos, *Gnosi*, Athens, 1985), pp. 64-65. Cf. P. Raekstad, "Human development and alienation in the thought of Karl Marx", *European Journal of Political Theory*, 2015, pp. 1-24.

²² Plat. *Resp.* 343c-343d: ἡ μὲν δικαιοσύνη καὶ τὸ δίκαιον ἀλλότριον ἀγαθὸν τῷ ὄντι, τοῦ κρείττονός τε καὶ ἄρχοντος συμφέρον, οἰκεία δὲ τοῦ πειθομένου τε καὶ ὑπηρετοῦντος βλάβη, ἡ δὲ ἀδικία τοῦναντίον, καὶ ἄρχει τῶν ὡς ἀληθῶς εἰηθικῶν τε καὶ δικαίων, οἱ δ' ἄρχόμενοι ποιοῦσιν τὸ ἐκείνου συμφέρον κρείττονος ὄντος, καὶ εὐδαίμονα ἐκείνον ποιοῦσιν ὑπηρετοῦντες αὐτῷ, ἑαυτοὺς δὲ οὐδ' ὅπως τι οὖν. "So that you are unaware that justice and righteousness are in fact an *alien* good, the interest of the most powerful and of the ruler, while for anyone who meekly obeys the commands and submits to them justice is harmful, injustice is the opposite, the ruler rules the truly naive and just, the dominated do the interest of the one who has the greatest power and by serving him they make him happy, but not themselves at all".

²³ L. Colletti, *Introduction to Karl Marx: Early Writings*, ed. Colletti, 1975, (Greek translation P. Papasarakantopoulos, *Odyseas*, Athens, without chronology), pp. 78-79. M. T. Huber, "Value, Nature, and Labor: A Defense of Marx, *Capitalism Nature Socialism*, 2017, pp. 1-14.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 81.

obvious the deep assimilation of the concept of the state with that of money and its obvious identification of the theory of the Thrasymachus with that of Marx. When we talk about human we must perceive him as a product of social relations, but these social relations are determined by the positive law of the state²⁵. By producing objects, people also produce their own social relations, while transforming matter, they also transform themselves²⁶. The state as the institutionalizer of the conditions of production is also the one that necessarily delimits the people to serve an alien good, *the interest of the most powerful and of the dominant*, while alienating themselves.

Of course, for Aristotle in *Nicomachean Ethics*²⁷, *alienation* is something completely different from what Thrasymachus or Marx put forward. For Aristotle, human nature (*what is something* - τί ἦν εἶναι) is something unchangeable and stable, what unites a perishable being, like man, with the eternity of the natural world. The purpose of man (*what its purpose is* - οὗ ἕνεκα), its *purpose* is also determined by human nature, which also determines the innate human sociability (φύσει ζῶον πολιτικόν)²⁸. The special human characteristic is the ratio, the rational possibility and therefore absolute bliss is found in the so-called theoretical life (ὁ κατὰ τὸν νοῦν βίος)²⁹, a life as close as possible to the intellectual process of the divine first being³⁰, which is the first cause of the movement of all nature. The *alienation* in Aristotle is synonymous with the lack of free time, which allows the absolute theoretical engagement. The politician, for example, although he is endowed with the supreme moral virtue of *prudence*, due to his forced preoccupation with the fluid things of politics, can never reach the level of free time that allows the transition to *theoretical life* and for this reason is *alienated* in the sense that it cannot perfect his nature, the purpose of which is the reasonable ability. The consumption of ourselves in everyday things deprives us of *free time* as a precondition of the *theoretically blissful life* and thus alienates us.

In conclusion, Marx, not recognizing a fixed *human essence*, which determines human action and includes the ultimate human purpose, is even closer to Thucydides in historicism. While Thucydides started from the eternity of human substance and ended up in the relativism of the

²⁵ Cf. Aug. Bayonas, *Dialectics and politics in early Marx, Four studies*, University of Patras, 1977, pp. 109-150, where the function of the "state" in Marx's political thought is analyzed.

²⁶ L. Colletti, *Introduction to Karl Marx: Early Writings*, ed. Colletti, 1975, (Greek translation P. Papasarakantopoulos, *Odysseas*, Athens, without chronology), pp. 84.

²⁷ Arist, *Nic. Eth.* 1177a-1180b.

²⁸ Idem, *Pol.* 1253a: ὁ ἄνθρωπος φύσει πολιτικὸν ζῶον.

²⁹ Idem, *Nic. Eth.* 1178a.7.

³⁰ Idem, *Metaph.* 1074b.

imposition of power on the historical field, Marx considers that human substance is the product of precisely this class struggle, which is obviously governed by power relations in the historical field³¹. The act of human birth is history, because *what is human* is how it shapes itself, how it creates itself historically³². Human does not exist, he is non-being, if he does not impose his power on historical realizations, if he does not become the master of the dialectical subject-object's relationship. But again the result will not be certain, because in the dialectical relationship of human with the matter of the creation there is a constant change and therefore the result of this relationship cannot be completely predetermined. In order for anything to be historically justified, it must acquire a real form through its dynamic imposition on history. Eventually history is recorded by relations of power and the dominant power is historically confirmed, passing from non-being to being: this is the philosophical teaching of Thucydides and Marx.

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³¹ K. Löwith, *Meaning in History*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1949, (Greek translation M. Markidis, - G. Lykiardopoulos, *Gnosi*, Athens, 1985), p. 73.

³² L. Colletti, *Introduction to Karl Marx: Early Writings*, ed. Colletti, 1975, (Greek translation P. Papasasantopoulos, *Odysseas*, Athens, without chronology), p. 84.

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HUMAN'S SPIRITUAL CRISIS AND THE EXISTENTIAL VACUUM

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Abstract: *The human being is constantly in search of meaning: the meaning of his life, the meaning of everyday events and, above all, the meaning of suffering. The process of secularization affects the process of finding the meaning of life, by eliminating the spiritual dimension of man, and the consequences, as Mircea Eliade, Carl Gustav Jung or Viktor Frankl pointed out, are disastrous, all leading to the alienation of man and the possibility of self-destruction. The transdisciplinary approach is used in this article in relation to the possibility of recovering this meaning.*

Taking into account the spiritual dimension of man, as well as democracy, understood in the Community spirit, could be a viable solution against the "existential void" caused by the loss of meaning of this life.

Keywords: *crisis, meaning, existential vacuum, transdisciplinarity, spirituality, religion.*

Introduction

We have all observed around us, or perhaps even faced what we can call the crisis of modern man, especially that man centered on the accumulation of goods and values, respectively centered on himself and the well-being to which he can reach. A hypothesis to explain this crisis is related to man's failure to find his place and meaning in a world that no longer makes sense. Modern man, unlike the man of archaic societies, has lost the ability to relate sacred in everything he does, and for the religious man of archaic societies the position in the sacred was exactly what gave meaning to his life and vital activities.¹ The daily activities of modern man no longer have a religious significance, his home no longer reflects a divine pattern, his world is more and more desecrated. According to the classical theory of secularization, in contemporary Western society there is a decline in Christianity as a result of modernization – as societies moderate,

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¹ Mircea Eliade, *The Sacred and the Profane*, Humanitas Publishing House, Bucharest, 2007, p. 195.

become more complex, more rational, more individualistic and less religious.²

The effects that the desecration of the world has on modern humans can be worrying both individually and socially. Viktor Frankl speaks of the existential vacuum of modern man who finds no meaning of life³. Carl Gustav Jung mentions the compartmentalization of modern man's consciousness and the danger of the split between civilized consciousness and primal instincts, which leads to a high degree of dissociation and mental confusion⁴. Mircea Eliade states that a totally anti-religious society would be in danger of self-destructing.

A possible solution to this modern human drama is suggested by a new approach to Reality: transdisciplinarity⁵, which proposes to consider the completeness of the human person in relation to the world, to reconsider the relationship Subject – Object of knowledge and to overcome disciplinary limits in search of dialogue with art and tradition in trying to understand man, its meaning and that of the world in which it lives.

Modern man in the face of the terror of history

For the man of archaic societies the meaning of his life and activities, the meaning of suffering, was given by the situation in the sacred, that is, by "contact" with the gods. As in the case of archaic societies, the man of traditional societies manages to endure the suffering that historical events (personal or collective) bring, i.e. to bear history, because all of this makes sense. Historical events being subject to God's will, all catastrophes or sufferings of man have significance, are not arbitrary⁶.

The man of archaic and traditional societies is antihistorical. He defends himself from history either by abolishing it through periodic regeneration of the world or by attributing a metahistorical significance to historical events⁷. In both situations, historical events were integrated into well-articulated systems in which both the cosmos and human existence had a meaning, a clear reason to be.

² Philip S. Gorski, "Historicizing the Secularization Debate", in *Handbook of the Sociology of Religion* edited by Michelle Dillon, Cambridge University Press, New York, 2003, p.111.

³ Viktor E. Frankl, *Theory and Therapy of Neuroses (Introduction to Logotherapy and Existential Analysis)*, Three Publishing House, Bucharest, 2008, p.15.

⁴ Carl G. Jung, "Approaching the Unconscious", in *Man and his Symbols*, edit by Carl G. Jung and M.-L.Von Franz, Anchor Press, London, 1964, pp.83-84.

⁵ Basarab Nicolescu, *Spiritual Dimension of Democracy – Utopia or Necessity*, edited by Andrei Marga, Theodore Bercheim & Jan Sadlak, Cluj University Press, Cluj Napoca, 2008, p.12.

⁶ Mircea Eliade, *The Myth of Eternal Returns (Archetypes and Repeat)*, Encyclopedic Universe Publishing, Bucharest, 1999, p.129.

⁷ *Ibidem*, p.137.

For the modern man of contemporary societies time no longer presents a discontinuous or circular structure. Starting with the Jewish religion, cyclical time turns into a linear, historical time. From the perspective of historical philosophies, the meaning of historical events is given by their very realization⁸. So catastrophes, the negative events of history, no longer have as their explanation the invention of a divine "force" as in the traditional Jewish vision, for example.

The "evil" done by man, through his behavior, to another man, is extremely difficult to integrate into a coherent system of explanations that gives meaning to the world, to human existence and especially to suffering. In the past people have endured the "terror of history" because suffering made sense or because they knew it would come to an end. For the contemporary man, creator of history, who eliminates from his explanations divine intervention, the "terror of history" is increasingly difficult to explain and bear.⁹

In the face of the "terror of history", man can fall prey to despair caused by "his presence in a historical universe in which almost all human beings live prey to a continuous theory (even if not always conscious)"¹⁰, or can defend himself from this despair by faith (philosophical, religious or otherwise).

Rationality, denial of the symbolic contents of the unconscious and division of the personality of modern man

For contemporary man without religious affiliation, all vital activities are desecrated¹¹. It rejects transcendence, relativizes reality and sometimes doubts the meaning of existence. Compared to the religious man of archaic and traditional societies, the modern religious man assumes a new existential state, in which he refuses "any call to transcendence" and considers himself the subject and agent of History.¹²

We could say that while the religious man assumes a theocentric existence, the non-religious man bases his existence on an anthropocentric perspective. Thus, in the case of the anthropologists of The Sartrean existentialism, Marxism and Freudism, man is absolved and detached from any external conditioning, which implies a denial of God, but also of

⁸ *Ibidem*, p.144.

⁹ *Ibidem*, p.152.

¹⁰ *Ibidem*, p. 154.

¹¹ Mircea Eliade, *The Sacred and the Profane*, Humanitas Publishing House, Bucharest, 2007, p. 126.

¹² *Ibidem*, p.153.

a predetermined mission of man, who must not answer to anyone "of his own origin".¹³

Heir to *homo religiosus*, the areligious man forges himself by trying to get rid of any religious heritage, to empty himself of all transhuman significance. As Mircea Eliade says, modern man "is self-righteous and does not come to be made entirely unless he desecrates and desecrates the world. The sacred is, by excellence, a hindrance to his freedom. Man will not become himself until he is entirely demystified, and will not truly be free until he is killed the last god."¹⁴

However, if the ideal of the areligious man is the personal desecration, the desecration of the world in which he lives and the killing of the last god, his existence is an extremely tragic one, the proposed ideal being either unattainable or very difficult to achieve. This existence assumed by the areligious man implies a constant struggle with the inheritance received from his religious ancestor, a legacy that takes the form of behaviors or rituals, which even if they have lost any trace of religious significance persist in his life. But the hardest battle goes on within him, because his unconscious is populated by the beliefs and symbols he wants to be rid of, but over which he has no control.

From the perspective of Mircea Eliade, as from that of Carl Gustav Jung, the contents of the unconscious being the result of experiences related to existential aspects of the ancestor of modern man, i.e. *homo religiosus*, they refer to religious aspects or integrate primordial images symbolically. The totally religious man, "in pure condition", is very hard to find in reality, even in the most desecrated societies. We could say that although he banished the gods from the world, the areligious man keeps them inside: through behaviors, rituals (even emptied of religious significance), myths and symbols.¹⁵

Myth is one of the forms of storytelling that is found in archaic societies and that recounts an event that the primitive man believes to be true.¹⁶ By the fact that the myth recounts an event that took place in the *illo tempore*, it represents an exemplary history¹⁷. As an account of the creation of a "situation" or of a primordial cosmic event, the myth recounts

¹³ Mario Germinario, *The Man Without Vocation*, Studia Publishing House, Cluj-Napoca, 1997, p. 71.

¹⁴ Mircea Eliade, *The Sacred and the Profane*, Humanitas Publishing House, Bucharest, 2007, p. 126.

¹⁵ Carl G. Jung, "Approaching the Unconscious", in *Man and his Symbols* edited by de Carl G. Jung and M.-L. Von Franz, Anchor Press, London, 1964.

¹⁶ Joseph Campbell *The Myths and the Masks of God*, High Bridge Company, Minneapolis, 1998, p.43.

¹⁷ Mircea Eliade, *Treaty on the History of Religions*, Humanitas Publishing House, Bucharest, 2008.

how something came about—the World, Heaven, people, plants, animals, behaviors—and what is the meaning of these things, of these "sacred realities"¹⁸

One of the functions that the myth for primitive man performs is to give meaning to the order of the universe – is what Joseph Campbell calls the cosmological function of the myth.¹⁹ In modern society this function is no longer performed by mythology, but has been taken over by science. To understand the order of the universe, the origin of planets or stars, modern man no longer appeals to myth, but to science, and scientific explanations can generate the same state of amazement and reverence that primitive man found in myth.

We could say, then, that for modern man, myth is no longer a true history. The myth is banished from the consciousness of modern man as something fantastic or irrational. But the representations, symbols, myths of primitive man are found in the contents of the human unconscious, more precisely, in what Carl Gustav Jung calls the collective unconscious. We recognize these mythological motifs in the collective images that appear in people's dreams²⁰.

Just as the conscious is concerned with the future and its possibilities, so does the unconscious have the same concerns that it expresses in dreams. The unconscious seems to be able to analyze and draw conclusions from facts just like the conscious, except that the unconscious deliberates instinctively, being guided mainly by instinctive tendencies, represented by appropriate forms of thought, by archetypes. Archetypes have their own initiative and their specific energy, produce meaning, meaning, in their symbolic form and function as complexes. But while personal complexes produce only personal errors ("personal bias"), archetypes create myths, religions and philosophies that influence nations and eras of history.²¹

Modern man refuses to admit his dependence on powers that are beyond his control, such as the contents of the unconscious. To maintain this faith, modern man pays the price in the form of a remarkable lack of introspection. But his gods and demons have not disappeared, only they have other names and make him anxious, lead him to mental complications and various forms of addiction. "Civilized consciousness"

¹⁸ Mircea Eliade, *The Sacred and the Profane*, Humanitas Publishing House, Bucharest, 2007, p. 74.

¹⁹ Joseph Campbell, *The Myths and the Masks of God*, High Bridge Company, Minneapolis, 1998, p. 46.

²⁰ Carl G. Jung, "Approaching the unconscious", in *Man and his Symbols* edited by de Carl G. Jung and M.-L. Von Franz, Anchor Press, London, 1964, p. 67.

²¹ *Ibidem*, pp. 78-79.

has separated from its primal instincts. But although man wishes to believe himself to be the master of his own soul (master of himself), as long as he cannot control his own emotions and emotional states or the contents of the unconscious, he is certainly not his own master, but archetypes cannot be mastered because they are autonomous.²²

Thus, in Jung's opinion, the modern cultural mind is characterized by a high degree of dissociation and mental confusion, both at the individual and social level. Dissociation (individual and social) explains why so many people in Western society feel helpless. For example, Jung states that many people have lost faith in religion because they no longer understand religion. As long as life can go on without religion, this loss is not noticeable. But when suffering occurs, things are different: in these moments people begin to seek to understand the meaning of life, the meaning of suffering.²³

In many situations, modern man tries to show that there is no scientific evidence to support faith. But Jung believes that we should not deprive ourselves of a useful thing such as faith and the positive effect it can have on man (especially in crisis situations), especially since looking for evidence to support faith is that it is as hard as showing that there is no transcendent reality. Man can overcome the most difficult challenges when he is convinced that they have meaning²⁴. It is the role of religious symbols to give meaning to human life. Symbols were not consciously invented, they were produced.²⁵ Modern man does not understand how much his "rationalism" affects him, which has destroyed his ability to respond to symbols and numinous ideas, and which puts him at the mercy of the "underground world" of his psyche. He freed himself from superstitions, but in the process he lost his spiritual values to a dangerous degree. His moral and spiritual tradition has disintegrated, and now he pays for the price for this split in disorientating and dissociating the whole world.

The world of modern man seems to be cleansed to the surface of any superstitions, but its internal world still feeds on symbols, not yet released²⁶. Understanding these symbols, communicated by the unconscious through dreams and which turn out to be significant, are important in the process of individuality, a process by which the individual consciously integrates the contents of the unconscious in an attempt to

²² *Ibidem*, pp. 82-83

²³ *Ibidem*, p. 87.

²⁴ Viktor E. Frankl, *Man's Search for Meaning: an Introduction to Logotherapy*, Beacon Press, Boston, 1992.

²⁵ Carl G. Jung, "Approaching the unconscious", in *Man and his Symbols* edited by de Carl G. Jung and M.-L. Von Franz, Anchor Press, London, 1964, p. 89.

²⁶ *Ibidem*, p. 96.

become complete. Understanding the symbols of dreams, of archetypal symbols, is important to stop the process of splitting modern man.

The need to know the meaning of life and the existential vacuum

The common element, found in both Eliade and Jung, is the need for man to find meaning for his own existence, the world and, above all, suffering. The personal significance accorded to life in general and the events of life in particular has helped many people to overcome the adversities of life and reach well-being, both mentally and physically²⁷. The importance of meaning for man is very well surprised by Basarab Nicolescu when he says: "Senseless man dies. Hunger for meaning is fiercest than terrestrial food"²⁸. This was highlighted by the numerous cases of people who managed to go through traumatic situations, such as concentration in Nazi camps, only because they managed to find the meaning of suffering that they endured.

Crystal Park conceptualizes the meaning, on the one hand, as a global system of meanings, where it includes personal beliefs (e.g. those that can be included in a philosophy of life), objectives and subjective living that things, events and life in general make sense. On the other hand, the author refers to the process of achieving meaning which occurs in particular when life events contradict the contents of the global System of Significance²⁹. In order to reconstruct meaning in these conditions, man uses either the restructuring of the system of meanings in accordance with the events that happened, or to the reinterpretation of events so as to be in accordance with the beliefs he has. Whatever the situation, it is found the tendency of man to find meaning, a coherence in his life.

Unfortunately, modern man often faces a sense of the absurdity of life, with what Frankl calls "existential vacuum"³⁰. In his opinion, the sense of existential vacuum faced by modern man arose as a result of his loss of instincts and impulses, on the one hand, and traditional cultural norms, on the other.

²⁷ Karin Pohlmann; Barbara Gruss; Peter Joraschky, "Structural properties of personal meaning systems: A new approach to measuring meaning of life", in *The Journal of Positive Psychology*, vol. 1, nr. 3, 2006, pp. 109-117.

²⁸ Basarab Nicolescu, *In the Mirror of Destiny*, European Idea Publishing House, Bucharest, 2009, p. 189.

²⁹ Crystal Park, "Religion and Meaning", in *Handbook of the Psychology of Religion and Spirituality* edited by. Ray F. Paloutzian & Crystal L. Park, The Guilford Press, New York, 2005.

³⁰ Viktor E. Frankl, *Theory and Therapy of Neuroses (Introduction to Logotherapy and Analysis existential)*, Three Publishing House, Bucharest, 2008, p. 16.

To the extent that man loses his traditions, there are no rules that tell him what is right to do in certain situations – for example, that he has reached a certain age must start a family. In the absence of these guidelines, man reaches conformism ("only wants what others do"), totalitarianism ("only does what others want") or noogenous neurosis caused by feeling of existential vacuum.³¹

Viktor Frankl believes that exacerbating man's orientation towards material appearance or pleasure is, in fact, a mask of the existential vacuum faced by modern man or a compensation for this "existential vacuum"³². To mask, cover the meaninglessness of his life, man seeks to fill the void with the accumulation of material objects or with activities that create pleasure for him. A real industry of services and objects has been created to give pleasure to modern man, but which he does not really need³³: amusement parks, malls, computer games, etc. We thus come to an idealization of the image of *homo economicus*.

Homo economicus and the failed attempt to fill the existential vacuum

Carlos Rodriguez-Sickert defines *homo economicus* as the individual who acts in such a way as to maximize his personal well-being in the face of the constraints he faces.³⁴ According to John Stuart Mill, political economics is centered around the idea that man wants to possess wealth and is able to judge and compare the means by which ends can be achieved. Starting from this idea develops the perspective of methodological individualism that sees instrumental rationality and personal material interest as two traits of human nature.³⁵

The myth of the economic man, rational and interested only in the personal good, who seeks satisfaction in the accumulation of goods and values is disproved by the deeds of everyday life. This has come to the "hedonistic paradox" that *homo economicus* or anyone who seeks happiness for himself will not find it, but the one who helps others will find it³⁶. The accumulation of values and goods does not ultimately lead to more happiness and well-being, mental or physical, but sometimes it even has the adverse effect.

³¹ *Ibidem*, p. 18.

³² *Ibidem*, p. 113.

³³ Viktor E. Frankl, *Man's Search for Meaning: an Introduction to Logotherapy*, Beacon Press, Boston, 1992, p. 132.

³⁴ Carlos Rodriguez-Sickert, "Homo Economicus", in *Handbook of Economics and Ethics*, edited by PeilJan & Van Staveren Irene, Edward Elgar Publishing, 2009, p.112.

³⁵ *Idem*.

³⁶ James Konow, Joseph Earley, "The Hedonistic Paradox: Is homo economicus happier?", in *Journal of Public Economics*, vol. 92, 2008, pp. 1-33.

This reminds us of Viktor Frankl's assertions about the unnecessary attempt of the contemporary man to fill the existential void with goods and pleasures. Satisfaction can be achieved rather by the dedication of man, by his ability to transcend his own needs and interests. The existential void, however, felt consciously or unconsciously, cannot, it seems, be filled with material goods or pleasures.

Conclusions

Man is a seeker of meaning: a sense of life, a sense of events that happens to him every day, a meaning of words, a sense of suffering. Meaning is found insofar as man finds coherence in everything that happens around him, but also within him. This is quite difficult to achieve in the world of *homo economicus*, centered on efficiency and binary thinking, at a single level of reality, because it would take a look at the human being entirely and trying to integrate its contradictions. Such contradictions are met between man's desires and the reality he faces, between his dreams and the resources at his disposal at a given time, between the demands of society and his possibilities, to list only a few contradictions that should be taken into account in order for man to reconcile with himself and with the world around him in order to find coherence.

We find in our usual thinking a tendency towards simplification, a reductionism specific to Western scientific thinking. This reductionism, however, is incompatible with finding meaning, because the human situation is an extremely complex one, in the idea of interrelationship of man with the environment in which he lives, with other people, of events and conditions between them. The man is trapped in a network of relationships and events to which he cannot find a sense in a dissociated way, separated from each other.

Ignoring the spiritual dimension at the social level has effects as negative as at the individual level. Basarab Nicolescu stresses the importance of taking into account the spiritual dimension of democracy³⁷. Saving man from the danger of technology, sometimes put at the service of conflicts between cultures and religions, but also from the danger of absolutizing the image of *homo economicus*, can only come through a dialogue approached with a transdisciplinary attitude. Such a dialogue implies a transcultural and trans-religious attitude, allowing "unity in diversity and diversity in unity".³⁸

³⁷ Basarab Nicolescu, *Spiritual Dimension of Democracy – Utopia or necessity*, edited by Andrei Marga, Theodore Bercheim & Jan Sadlak, Cluj University Press, Cluj Napoca, 2008, p.22.

³⁸ *Ibidem*, p. 32.

A transcultural and transreligious attitude implies openness to the search for things that bind you to others, regardless of cultural, religious, ethnic, etc. To the extent that man is able to transcend his own needs (sometimes selfish desires), as Frankl claims, and to see himself in others, to find himself in their diversity, he should be unable to put his own interests before anyone else and act selfishly.

The transdisciplinary attitude makes it possible to reconcile *homo religiosus*, which finds its place and meaning in the world, with *homo economicus*, oriented towards the accumulation of goods. Only through a transdisciplinary attitude, which allows openness and dialogue between cultures, religions, science (or more precisely technoscience), *homo economicus* can transcend its own selfish motivations and find its place with other people, regardless of the socio-economic status they have, that is, like *homo religiosus*, can find its entire being and place in the world.

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COVID-19 PANDEMIC: AN ESCHATOLOGICO-THEODICAL PARADOX

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Abstract: *Following the global outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, many people have resorted to asking questions that are rooted in certain religious assumptions. They assume, that God caused and allowed the disease; and second, that the pandemic is a sign of the end-time. These assumptions tactically point to eschatological and theodical paradoxes. This theoretical paper examines the presumptions and assumptions about the COVID-19 outbreak panic from the paradoxical paradigms of eschatology and theodicy. The paper employed the descriptive and phenomenological methods including personal interviews to achieve its aim. The research revealed that the effects of the pandemic worldwide have prompted people regardless of their religions to presume and assume that the disease outbreak is an end-time event and that God sent the disease to punish humanity for their moral evil. The paper concluded that these postulations resulted from the presumed and assumed eschatological and theodical traditions of religions and recommended that religious leaders and adherents should change their perceptions about the pandemic and work hard to deal with the realities on ground by cooperating in various ways with governments and other agencies using modern technologies to resolve the crises.*

Keywords: *Covid-19, Pandemic, Eschatology, Theodicy, Paradox.*

Introduction

Global catastrophe in human history in the form of ravaging epidemics or pandemics did not start today as there were three pandemics recorded in the twentieth century starting with the Spanish flu of 1918 after the First World War lasting about fifteen months and killing over fifty million people worldwide. In 1957 the Asian flu occurred where the elderly

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were the highest casualties. Third, the Hong Kong influenza pandemic which lasted one year occurred in 1968 with the elderly being the highest casualties¹. There was yet the “Swine Flu” pandemic that occurred between 2009 and 2010 being the first in the 21st century². The latest ravaging the world today is the coronavirus code-named “COVID-19” first noticed in Wuhan, China in December 2019. By March 2020, over 200,000 cases across 150 nations of the globe had been reported with over 7,000 deaths³. The Coronavirus pandemic is disrupting the world, with a heavy toll on human lives, social, religious, political and economic activities.

Currently, humanity is helplessly under invasion by a coronavirus that is unlike any the world has ever experienced before. As a result of the coronavirus humans numbering thousands have died leaving many people around the globe in tragic panic. Businesses, religious institutions, economic institutions and so on have closed down. Only a few individuals across the world would not have thought of the cessation of the world. However, such a thought would be justified given the speculation, especially by the World Health Organization (WHO), that the mortality rate of the pandemic could surpass that of World War II. In this direction, therefore, different religions across the globe have different perceptions on the current pandemic and their perceptions have affected how people respond to the pandemic. On the other hand, while different faith groups are impacting the responses of the individuals, the pandemic itself tends to help in shaping many religions.

It is so interesting to observe how religion can insinuate itself into the narratives of the coronavirus, and facilitate an eschatological and theodical dimensions about what one knows concerning the coronavirus. From a theodical dimension, a theodacist or fundamentalist, for instance, would see human beings’ incapability to curb the virus as the handiwork of God working to either punish humankind or call them to repentance. From the eschatological dimension, intellectually oriented eschatologists are oriented towards a rational understanding of the human world, enabling humankind to understand the universe and the possibility of its final demise. It is this eschatological and theodical ideological dimensions that have motivated the current research.

In the course of the global outbreak of COVID-19 pandemic many people have resorted to asking questions based on certain religious

¹ Ping Yan Lam, “Avian Influenza and Pandemic Influenza Preparedness in Hong Kong.” *Annals of the Academy of Medicine Singapore*, vol. 37, no. 6, 2008, pp. 489–96.

² Rajendra Kumar Jangde, “A Review on Swine Flu.” *Research Journal of Pharmacology and Pharmacodynamics*, vol. 8, no. 1, 2016, p. 30.

³ Yoshiki Hirooka, “COVID-19.” *Journal of Medical Ultrasonics*, vol. 47, no. 2, 2020, p. 339.

assumptions. First, they assume that God caused and allowed the disease; and that the pandemic is a sign of the end time. The paper argues that these assumptions amount to eschatological and theodical paradoxes. The motivation of this research, therefore, is rooted in the premise that eschatological and theodical assumptions in the present situation tend to kill the human abilities and capabilities to cope and deal with life realities as far as this pandemic is concerned, hence the paper advocates handling the current COVID-19 pandemic in concrete terms with no reference to religious presumptions and assumptions.

Overview of Eschatology and Theodicy

The word, “eschatology” is from the Greek *eschatos* (last) or *eschata* (the last things)⁴. Technically, eschatology means the scientific study of the last things. The “last things” in this sense refer to the judgment day, resurrection day, the great tribulation, rapture, and ultimately the end of this physical world. The word “eschatology” was not in the English lexicon until the nineteenth century, but it has since become a major concept in most religions⁵. Many religions entertain ideas, teachings, or mythologies concerning the beginnings and ends of things: the gods, the world, the human race⁶.

Eschatology can be classified as individualistic or cosmic. The notion or fate of the human soul after physical death falls into the domain of individualistic eschatology. This conception is predicated on the idea of last judgment of the dead, reincarnation of the soul into other forms of existence or into some other super natural realm. On the other hand, cosmic or general eschatology refers to the overall transition and cessation of the present physical universe⁷. In this sense, this eschatological end of history can as well be deemed to be a revival of the human characteristic of perfection that once lost to lust. In the current global crises situation, COVID-19 pandemic is presumed and assumed to be one of those eschatological events met for the finality of the physical world.

The word, “theodicy” is derived from the Greek *theos* (God or god) and *dike* (justice or judgment)⁸ thus, it literally means justifying God or defending God’s justice hence, Thurow defined theodicy as the answer to

⁴ Peter F. Ryan, “On Eschatology.” *Nova et Vetera*, vol. 15, no. 3, 2017, pp. 901.

⁵ Ted Peters, “Eschatology: Eternal Now or Cosmic Future?” *Zygon*, vol. 36, no. 2, 2001, p. 349.

⁶ Offiong Offiong Asuquo, “Humanism as a Category of Religious Alternative.” *GNOSI: An Interdisciplinary Journal of Human Theory and Praxis* 2.1, 2019, pp. 32.

⁷ Anné Hendrik Verhoef, “Transimmanence and the Im/possible Relationship between Eschatology and Transcendence.” *Religions*, vol. 7, no. 11, 2016, p. 43.

⁸ George Remete, “On Theodicy.” *European Journal of Science and Theology*, vol. 8, no. SUPPL.2, 2012, pp. 113–19.

the question of why God allows evil⁹. Therefore, theodicy is a theological notion that attempts to vindicate God in response to the evidential problem of evil that is inconsistent with the existence of an omnipotent and omnibenevolent Supreme Being. In this sense, theodicy is the justification of divine goodness and providence in the face of the fact of evil in the world. Three requirements for theodicizing include common-sense views of the universe, widely-held historical and scientific opinion, and plausible moral principles¹⁰. Theodicy as an attempted solution to the problem of evil is distinct from a mere defense, because a defense tries to show that the existence of evil does not stand contrary to the existence of God, neither does it propose that rational beings are capable of knowing the reason why God allows evil. Therefore, in defense solutions are proposed to resolve the philosophical problem of evil, while theodicy attempts to respond to the evidential or the inductive problem of evil.

A theodicy attempts to demonstrate why it is intelligible to believe in God even though evil is evident in the world and, at the same time, offers ground to account for the reason why evil exists. A theodicy is often rooted in a prior natural theology that tries to prove God's existence, and seek at the same time, to prove that God's existence remains hypothetical after the problem of evil is posed by giving a justification for God's permitting evil. COVID-19 pandemic currently ravaging the world is presumed and assumed religiously to be the handiwork of God to punish humanity for the world's moral evil (sin). This is the focus of this paper.

COVID-19 Pandemic

COVID-19 is a code-name given by the World Health Organization (WHO) to the present illness caused by coronavirus where COVID-19 implies "CO" and "VI" for coronavirus, "D" for disease, and "19" for the year it was discovered¹¹. It is asserted that coronaviruses are enveloped non-segmented positive-sense RNA (Ribonucleic acid) viruses belonging to the family of Coronaviridae and Nidovirales and are broadly distributed in humans and other mammals¹².

⁹ Joshua C. Thurow, "Mystical Body Theodicy." *Religions*, vol. 9, no. 2, 2018, p. 65.

¹⁰ Ibid, p.68.

¹¹ Samuel Akpan Bassey, "Technology, Environmental Sustainability and the Ethics of Anthropoholism". *Przestrzeń Społeczna*, vol 1, no 19, 2020, p. 96.

¹² Phan, My V.T., et al. "Identification and Characterization of Coronaviridae Genomes from Vietnamese Bats and Rats Based on Conserved Protein Domains." *Virus Evolution*, vol. 4, no. 2, 2018, p.99.

Below is the physical structure of a coronavirus.

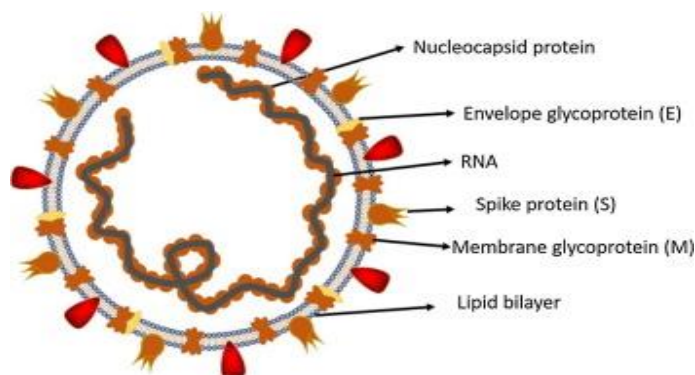


Fig. I: Coronavirus

Coronaviruses are common in animals of all kinds, and they sometimes can evolve into forms that can infect humans. For scientists, this new virus is capable of jumping to humans. However, the kind of mammal where the virus originated from is not clear; although one source¹³ have discovered that the genetic make-up of the new virus is about 96 per cent identical to one coronavirus normally found in bats. It is probable, that people first came in contact with the virus at a food or meat market in Wuhan, China from where it spread to other places. Till date, experts are still trying to trace the origin of the outbreak¹⁴. By July 21st, 2020, over 14 million persons worldwide have been identified as having laboratory-confirmed COVID-19 infection with over 600,000 deaths recorded.

Common symptoms of the disease include fever, cough, fatigue, shortness of breath, and loss of sense of smell. Most affected in terms of deaths are the elderly people and those already having underlying health challenges such as hypertension, heart-related diseases, and diabetes. Coronavirus spreads quickly in contained environments, like in a cinema hall situation. The virus is believed to spread when an infected person sneezes or coughs. Maintaining personal hygiene, hand washing, avoiding touching one's eyes, nose, or mouth with unwashed hands, and coughing or sneezing into a tissue, and putting the tissue directly into a waste container are some of the recommended ways for preventing the spread of the virus. Those who may already have the infection have been advised to

¹³ S. Khan, et al. "Novel Coronavirus: How Things Are in Wuhan." *Clinical Microbiology and Infection*, vol. 26, no. 4, 2020, pp. 399–400.

¹⁴ Ibid, p.400.

wear a surgical mask in public¹⁵. Physical distancing measures are therefore also recommended to prevent transmission.

Presently, there are no proven treatments for COVID-19 neither is there known COVID-19 vaccine, though many organizations are working hard to develop one. The first confirmed case of death was in Wuhan on 9 January 2020, while the first death outside of China occurred on 1st February 2020 in the Philippines¹⁶, The first death outside Asia was in France on 14 February¹⁷. As of 24th May 2020 countries that publicized their testing data have typically performed many tests equal to 2.6 per cent of their population, while no country has tested samples equal to more than 17.3 per cent of its population ¹⁸As of 21 July 2020, over 650,000 deaths have been attributed to COVID-19 worldwide.

Table 1: Global Coronavirus (COVID-19) Statistics
(As of July 18, 2020)

| Confirmed Cases | Active cases | Recovered | Deaths | Territories |
|-----------------|--------------|-----------|---------|-------------|
| 14,107,052 | 5,609,505 | 7,894,890 | 602,657 | 188 |

Source: (COVID-19 Dashboard, 2020)

As a result of the pandemic, many countries and regions imposed quarantines, entry bans, or other restrictions, either for citizens, travellers to affected areas, or for all travellers. The outbreak has affected the political systems of many nations, leading to the suspensions of legislative activities, isolations or deaths of many politicians, and postponement of elections due to fears of spreading or contacting the virus. The pandemic, alongside lockdowns and travel restrictions, has prevented movement of aid and greatly impacted food production. As a result, several famines are forecast, which the United Nations called a crisis “of biblical proportions”, or “hunger pandemic¹⁹. The pandemic has also resulted in misinformation and conspiracy theories about its scale and origin, prevention, diagnosis, and treatment of the disease.

¹⁵ Catherine Plotton, and Xavier Gecko. “Surgical Mask or N95?” *Exercer-La Revue Francophone De Medecine Generale*, no. 162, 2020, pp. 168–69.

¹⁶ Edna M. Edrada, et al. “First COVID-19 Infections in the Philippines: A Case Report.” *Tropical Medicine and Health*, vol. 48, no. 1, 2020, p. 76.

¹⁷ Hélène Faury, et al. “Medical Features of COVID-19 and Influenza Infection: A Comparative Study in Paris, France.” *Journal of Infection*, 2020, p. 54.

¹⁸ Chen Wang, et al. “A Novel Coronavirus Outbreak of Global Health Concern.” *The Lancet*, vol. 395, no. 10223, 2020, pp. 470.

¹⁹ Lukasz Sulkowski, and Ignatowski Grzegorz, “Impact of COVID-19 Pandemic on Organization of Religious Behaviour in Different Christian Denominations in Poland.” *Religions*, vol. 11, no. 5, 2020, p. 64.

Eschatological Assumptions about Covid-19 Pandemic

The global COVID-19 pandemic has brought a significant threat to the safety, health and well-being of societies across the world. In light of the crisis, most people, especially religious adherents are less concerned about the new coronavirus pandemic but are more worried about the panic it has induced all over the world. In the course of the current pandemic, the responses of different religions maybe more complex and heterogeneous than many other people should have portrayed and that there may be alternative explanations for the rise of a novel doctrine for some religions²⁰. In this way, the rise of the upper classes with more time to think about religious questions may have played a role in heightening the panic about the disease.

However, some religions do not promote such extreme altruism. Islamic teachings basically disavowed the existence of contagious diseases, despite some Arabic scholars thinking otherwise at this time²¹. Jewish belief system attributes death to the will of God and thus, promotes the idea that only God is capable of healing a person hence; there is a less incentive to treat the sick. In this sense, the spread of diseases such as the coronavirus is a foretaste of pandemics that will be part of the end-time.

As in the Indian or Hindus notions of *yuga* (epoch or age) and *Kalpa* (long period of time), cultures that view time as an endless succession of repetitive cycles develop only relative eschatologies, because the notion of an ultimate consummation of history is alien to them. However, individual eschatology means liberation from the endless, weary wheel of death and rebirth by escaping into an eternal, or rather timeless, trans-mundane reality that is referred to as *moksha* (salvation) in Hinduism and *nirvana* in Buddhism. Within the cosmic cycles, there are periods of rising and decline. According to Indian perceptions of time, the present age is the *kali yuga*, the last of the four great *yugas*, or world epochs²². In various traditions, these periods often end in a universal catastrophe, conflagration, or cataclysmic annihilation, and to be followed by a new beginning. The present COVID-19 pandemic is assumed to be one of those catastrophes that will lead to a cataclysmic annihilation.

Chinese Buddhism developed the notion of periods of successive, inexorable decline, of which at the end the future Buddha *Maitreya* (Messiah), who is currently biding his time in the *Tulita* (Joyous – the 4th

²⁰ Ibid, p. 66.

²¹ Eka Airlangga, and A. Akrim. "Learning from COVID-19, Will This Pandemic Reappear: A Reflection for Indonesian Children Future." *Systematic Reviews in Pharmacy*, vol. 11, no. 6, 2020, pp. 1008.

²² Oliver Bennett, "The Manufacture of Hope: Religion, Eschatology and the Culture of Optimism." *International Journal of Cultural Policy*, vol. 17, no. 2, 2011, pp. 115.

of the heavens) heaven that will appear and establish a type of millennial kingdom and inaugurate a new era of bliss and salvation for all²³. Messianic and millennial movements in China and Southeast Asia, some of which became social revolts and peasant rebellions have often been associated with expectations of the future emerging *Maitreya*. Taoism, like Buddhism, entertained notions concerning a postmortem judgment. According to Taoist belief, judgment will take place before a tribunal of judges of the dead who decide the subsequent fate of the soul and assign it to one of the numerous hells or heavens that figured in their popular mythologies²⁴. Confucianism, however, has no eschatology in the actual sense of the word; that is, it has no known dogmas pertaining to a notion of a judgment day, catastrophic end of this universe, or a messianic millennium.

It is therefore obvious, that other Chinese conceptions of individualistic eschatology were partially part and parcel of ancient lore that were later merged with Taoist and Buddhist elements²⁵. Although Japanese Shintoism has no cosmic eschatology, it, however, has vague ideas concerning the state of the dead. It is exactly this gap that is filled by Buddhism in the history of the religion of the Japanese. Individualistic and cosmic eschatology integrate when the ultimate hope of the individual person is related to that of the universe. In such experience, the individual person is believed to remain in a type of provisional state believed to be a state of bliss or suffering pending the final denouement of the historical cosmic process.

In the Hebrew Bible the terms *anarit* (end) and *anarit yamim* (end of days) originally means a less distant future and not to the cosmic and final end of days, that is, of history. Nevertheless, in due course, eschatological beliefs developed as a result of failures arising from the moral decadences of the Jewish kings, who theoretically were God's anointed from David's lineage. Most contemporary theologians have taken up the notion of eschatology as the core of the Christian message even though it is interpreted in a less literal-historical and more spiritual manner²⁶. For instance, some scholars have portrayed the individual Christian's life, as well as that of the church, as a series of decisions to be apprehended in an eschatological perspective²⁷. On the other hand, others in their conception

²³ Ibid, p. 115.

²⁴ Ibid, p. 116.

²⁵ Ibid, p. 118.

²⁶ Brian Macallan, "A Process Theology of Hope: The Counter Apocalyptic Vision of Catherine Keller." *Religions*, vol. 10, no. 10, 2019, pp.62.

²⁷ Andrew F. Walls, "Eschatology and the Western Missionary Movement." *Studies in World Christianity*, vol. 22, no. 3, 2016, pp. 182.

of realized eschatology have stressed the present significance of future eschatology.

Jesus pointed out to future plagues associated with the end-time in Luke 21:11. Presumptuously, the two witnesses of Revelation chapter eleven will have the ability “to strike the earth with every kind of plague as often as they want” (Rev. 11:6). In other words, seven angels will wield seven plagues in a series of final severe judgments as recorded in the book of Revelation chapter sixteen. Some believers make reference to Luke 21:11, which predicted that there will be earthquakes, famines and plagues in many lands, including terrifying things and great miraculous signs from above. Christians also point to verse 28, which says that when all these strange things begin to happen it is a signal that the end is near. To understand this passage better, one should look at the previous passages where Jesus explained to his disciples earlier in order not to allow anyone deceive them prior to the last events (Luke 21:8-9).

The notion of “the hour” in Islam, that is, the judgment day and the final catastrophe of which the time is only known to God, looms crystal clear in Prophet Muhammad’s message and is conspicuously contained in the Holy Quran (7:187, 18:50, 36:81, and 78:17ff). As in the Jewish and Christian traditions on which Muhammad drew, God will judge the living and the dead on a day of judgment that will be preceded by a general resurrection and the agents of the final hour will be Gog and Magog led by the antichrist (Surah 18:95ff. and 21:96). In most primal religions eschatology plays no major role because they are generally based on the idea of cyclical renewal rather than on a movement toward a final consummation or end. The contemporary sense of the present crisis and fear is aroused by expectations of imminent nuclear catastrophe and cosmic destruction and has reawakened an apocalyptic-eschatological mood in many circles.

Most people believe that they are seeing signs that they have never seen before, hence anticipate the end of the world. In his opinion, Wale Adekoya (Oral interview, 2020) said that Covid-19 pandemic is a further confirmation and manifestation of end-time. The cleric also stated that before the pandemic the world was at the end-time due to several prophecies predicted by the Bible and other sacred texts about the end-time. Others from a Christian standpoint have presumably posited that the pandemic is a further confirmation and the manifestation of the end-time events that Jesus promised in Matthew chapter 24 verse 7 and that the next will be the rapture of the church followed by a period of great tribulation that will usher in the anti-Christ and finally lead to destruction and judgment of the unbelievers, Satan and the anti-Christ.

Theodical Assumptions about Covid-19 Pandemic

Natural or physical evil occur in divergent forms. Coronavirus disease currently ravaging the world is one of those physical or non-moral evils. Within the conception of evil, is the notion that everything in nature has some purpose and so each evil helps to make the universe a harmonious whole. Remarkably, one cannot deny the fact of natural evil in the world that does not lead to any purposefulness²⁸. This theodical perception sees evil as a non-problem since at every stage of perfection it is necessary to attain whole perfection. Hence, every imperfection (evil) must necessarily exist to achieve the total whole. Within this conception, evil is necessary and also serve as an instrument of soul-making²⁹ (Wright, 2006). Here, the notion that God is ultimately responsible for the presence of evil in the world is an inescapable conclusion. For a religion that is monotheistic, it is difficult to attribute both sinful creatures and the evil which they both cause and suffer to anyone else but God.

In Islam, the Mutazila theologians approached the problem of theodicy within a framework of moral realism, according to which the moral value of acts is accessible to unaided reason so that humans can make moral judgments about divine acts³⁰. The Mutazila theologians insist that God's act of creation is good even though evil exists in the world and further postulate that human sufferings and pains attract greater rewards as compensation in the afterlife. On the other hand, ordinary moral judgments come from the feeling and social norms that are insufficient to approve or disapprove divine actions.

Other schools of thought tend to argue for both cosmodicy and anthropodicy. The justification of the "basic good" of the universe in the face of evil is termed cosmodicy, while the justification of the "basic good" of human nature in the face of evils produced by humans is called anthropodicy³¹. Classically, the synergy between theodicy, cosmodicy and anthropodicy amounts to theodical paradox that is, contemplating about God in the face of the existence of sufferings and pains in God's creaturely acts. In this way, the choice between theodicy and cosmodicy may be a

²⁸ Arthur Caplan, "Debating Human Dignity." *The Lancet*, vol. 375, no. 9708, 2010, pp. 19–20.

²⁹ Natasza Szutta, "The Virtues of Will-Power – from a Philosophical & Psychological Perspective." *Ethical Theory and Moral Practice*, vol. 23, no. 2, 2020, pp. 326.

³⁰ Atta Muhammad, "Mutazila-Heresy; Theological and Rationalist Mutazila; Al-Mamun, Abbasid Caliph; Al-Mutawakkil, Abbasid Caliph; the Traditionalists." *Middle East Journal of Scientific Research*, vol. 12, no. 7, 2012, pp. 1031.

³¹ Frederick Sontag, "Anthropodicy or Theodicy? A Discussion with Becker's The Structure of Evil." *Journal of the American Academy of Religion*, vol. 49, no. 2, 1981, pp. 267–74, doi:10.1093/jaarel/XLIX.2.267.

false dilemma considering the connection between them³². To find meaning in religion in a situation marked by suffering and tribulation, adherents often adopt self-blame and personal guilt as coping mechanisms for reconciling their belief in God's benevolence with the mystery of evil, and the question of theodicy, and why God permits evil things to happen to good people. Since it is believed that every illness and well-being are permitted and controlled by God's will, it is also necessary for adherents to explain away pandemics as a supernatural punishment for the moral evil of humankind which includes usury, sexual immorality, crimes, and corruption. To escape this punishment, the answer may not be the ultimate antidote or vaccines for pandemics, but the renewal of faith, repentance and God's forgiveness.

Considering the early hadith literature, there are three Islamic orthodox and prophetic responses to plagues and pandemics. Firstly, that plague is sent by God as martyrdom for Muslims and punishment for unbelievers, second that a Muslim should not enter or flee a plague-stricken area and third, that there is no contagion or inter-human transmission of plagues and pandemic diseases because all diseases come directly from God³³. The theme of divine retribution and begging for God's forgiveness against influenza also featured in the manuscript "Tunkuyau" written by Bakr during the period most Islamic scholars assume to be the 1918 Spanish Flu pandemic³⁴ (Agwan, 2020; Olaopa, 2020). Those who argue for a religio-centric understanding of pandemics from a particular paradigm posit that this pandemic is the "death angel" of God brought to the world to purge it from moral evil so that humankind can change and come nearer to God again.

Supporting the above postulation, Festus Keyamo, a Nigerian minister of state buttressed that humanity has sinned against God by their acts of weaknesses and selfishness hence God sent the current pandemic to punish humankind for the purpose of reordering their footsteps into holiness³⁵. Also reasoning along this divide, are the adherents of the Ogboni Cult (an indigenous Yoruba a religious group in Nigeria). They believe that since the pandemic has defied modern medical and scientific technologies the only solution to end the pandemic is the appeasement of

³² Ibid, 45.

³³ Ibid, 52.

³⁴ Trevor Hoppe, "'Spanish Flu': When Infectious Disease Names Blur Origins and Stigmatize Those Infected." *American Journal of Public Health*, vol. 108, no. 11, 2018, pp. 1462–64, doi:10.2105/AJPH.2018.304645.

³⁵ Melba G., Bondad-Reantaso, Mackinnon Brett, Bin Hao, Huang Jie, Kathy Tang-Nelson, and Win Surachetpong, "Viewpoint: SARS-CoV-2 (The Cause of COVID-19 in Humans) Is Not Known to Infect Aquatic Food Animals nor Contaminate Their Products." *Asian Fisheries Science* (2020). Print.

God's anger through the ritual of sacrifices to the gods³⁶ (Interview with Abdul Adetoyese). According to Adetoyese, the current global predicament is divine, therefore; it demands a supernatural solution. However, without prejudice to the religious consciousness of the human mind especially at a time of crises such as the current coronavirus pandemic, humans are bound to assume and conclude on certain religious mysteries rooted in eschatological and theodical presumptions and assumptions.

Eschatological and Theodical Assumptions about Covid-19: A Workable Synthesis

The best place to strike the workable synthesis between eschatological and theodical assumptions about COVID-19 pandemic is religious naturalism. This is a synthesis of naturalistic ideas that often depart from traditional ways of religious thought. The qualifier "religious" in religious naturalism refers to the natural universe as the centre of humans' most vital encounters and understandings³⁷. In other words, religious naturalism does not appeal to a supernatural being or to an ontologically distinct and superior realm to give meaning to this world. Thinking deeply about nature and the position of humans in nature is an urgent and salutary task for every individual and societal institution, no matter what their personal religious or secular outlooks may be in this time of rampant species endangerment in the face of the coronaviruses. Religious naturalism evokes a moral assumption which invites deep reflection on the back-to-nature model, and supports efforts jarred toward resolving the challenges of eschatological and theodical assumptions heightened by the COVID-19 pandemic panic. Drawing from the "back-to-nature" model, religious naturalism questions the unexamined assumption that it is humans' distinct differences from nature that helps them to use it for their benefits. The holistic worldview that many religious naturalists uphold challenges conventional established notions of humans as fundamentally separated from nature.

From an Islamic perspective, another workable synthesis can be drawn from the Proto-Semitic use of "*qarana*". It is mentioned that the Proto-Semitic use of "*qarana*" denotes 'horn' considered to associate with the ancient Greek word *khronos* (that sounds like corona), which means

³⁶ Alessio Dellanna, "Are Bats to Blame for COVID-19? Researchers Are Trying to Find out." *Euronews*. 20 Aug. 2020. Web.

³⁷ Abdulbasit Kassim, "COVID-19 and the Palliative Force of Religion." *The Republic*. 19 June 2020. <https://republic.com.ng/july-2020/covid-19-and-the-palliative-force-of-religion/>.

time or lifespan³⁸. Some Islamic commentators have also taken it as horn - an instrument sounding far and wide. For instance, Abdul Majid Dariyabadi interpreted the verse as a sounding horn. The Arabic lexicons also take the word as denoting to a time span of hundred years or century like the ancient Greeks, besides other meanings. The word “*qarana*” also conveys such meanings in Arabic as yoke, coupling, conjugating, pod, peer, peek, etc. Thus, the Quranic word “*qarana*” is taken as to mean generations, of which the plural is “*quruna*” having a strange phonetic similarity with the English ‘corona’.

It may be found striking that the present coronavirus exhibits most peculiarities expressed in the Arabic word “*qarana*” or its plural “*quruna*”. The most striking fact is that a viral pandemic generally appears in the early part of every century with some exceptions, which gives significance to another meaning of “*qarana*”, that is, a century or time span of hundred years. It may not be merely a coincidence that most known meanings of the Arabic word “*qarana*” have striking application to the description of the human coronavirus as observed today, apart from having the resemblance of the name.

Also, the respective verse may be interpreted as, “And, when the corona becomes viral” while taking the cue that the verse is talking about the pandemic of Coronavirus, which spreads with an exponential virulence. One thing that needs to be understood here is that the given verse is futuristic in tone and not informing about something occurring by the time of its revelation, so much so that it has been generally taken as an end-time sign by most scholars. If the word “*qarana*” or its plural “*quruna*” is applied in its meaning of a time span, is that, century or centuries, then the appearance of “*quruna*” may be taken as an event taking place century after century or during a particular century. The mention of the word ‘19’ in verse 30 of the chapter makes it obvious that this verse is pointing to an event that will take place when the word “*quruna*” will be bonded with an epithet of “19”. While verse 48 indicates that on the Day of *Saqar* all kinds of religious intercessions will be to no avail, mosques, churches, temples, synagogues, pagodas and other spiritual places will become closed and no holy agent will stand as a rescuer from that punishment.

It is a natural consequence of the fact that the religious sections of the world have failed to counter the domineering capitalist and political systems. From another Islamic perspective, it could be concluded that the pandemic of Covid-19 does not match with the ten end-time signs

³⁸ Rashid Agwan Abdul, “Probable Mention of a Covid-19 like Pandemic in the Quran”. *Muslim Mirror*. 19 June 2020. <http://muslimmirror.com/en?probable-mention-of-a-covid-19-like-pandemic-in-the-quran/>.

mentioned in Muslim eschatology hence, it may be ignored as a serious matter. However, there is hardly any discussion about whether the Quran directly or indirectly mentions this pandemic or similar pandemics. But reflection on some verses of the surah 74 of the Quran may lead to clues regarding the occurrence of a pandemic like Covid-19.

A workable synthesis between eschatological and theodical assumptions about COVID-19 pandemic from the Christian perspective is the understanding that every possible factor goes far beyond the human ability, and that God alone within His infinite knowledge and control has authority over every situation (Rm. 8:28-30 cf). In this way, only a false or true prophet may claim to know God's reasons for sending coronavirus disease that is, if the claim is true. For proper synthesis, it is imperative to appeal to some relevant basic holy texts and faith principles to gain factual insights into why God uses deadly pandemics in human history. Religiously and naturally, every human life implies facing suffering, death, and eternal destiny even if medical scientists develop a vaccine against the coronavirus disease still humankind may not escape the phenomenon of trouble in this natural world. Notably today, therefore, the vast majority of people in every nation of the world have continued to rely on God, thus, making the current pandemic a strengthener of their faith. Most religious adherents today are confident that God is capable of protecting them from infection and death during the coronavirus disease.

Many religions across the world today are trying to explain the reason why suffering exists and why evil things happen to good people. This is theodicy in action - justifying God in the face of the fact of evil in the world created by a good God. So, it is not surprising that religious adherents are trying to make sense of the health crisis by turning to their religions. However, there are some people who still hold the view, that the present coronavirus pandemic is not a sign of the extinguishment of the world (Interview with Michael Brown). Although for some religious adherents, the coronavirus pandemic should not be viewed as a prophesied end-time plague, but as natural seeing it the same manner many other epidemics and pandemics in world history have come and gone.

For others the COVID-19 pandemic is a tragic reminder of the broken state of the human world (including scientific and technological inventions fail governments, climate pollutions, social and moral decadence) and frailty of the human race (Interviews with Paul Ndeobi, 2020). While in a contrary view, others state that the coronavirus scourge is an end time sign of God's judgment noting that it is the first time that there was a pandemic that has affected all nations of the world in such a magnitude (Interview with Simeon Afolabi and Barnabas Otoibhi). Joseph Adedayo Ojaoba (Interview, 2020) posited that the present pandemic is not a sign of end-

time and that one's end-time depends on how it is viewed. Depending on the way every religion looks at the pandemic, one cannot confirm whether this is the end-time or not thus.

Conclusion

For people that maintain a critical posture to religion, the religio-centric response to pandemics might look irrational, and therefore unacceptable. For religious adherents, religion tends to offer a moral dimension of viewing the universe which is far removed from scientific explanation. All religious communities should not view the current coronavirus pandemic as a punishment for moral evil, but as a call to stay at home, a sign of the times that cannot be clearly read and a call to help the sick and lonely. Therefore, religious adherents and non-believers instead of engaging in eschatological and theodical speculations should reconsider their stands and cooperate with their respective governments and agencies to coordinate, fund, contain cases, and treat patients affected by the coronavirus diseases.

This paper, therefore, argues that the best religious perspectives at this time are to offer hope, not definitive answers, or perhaps the language of enchantment, encouragement, and hospitality. With the COVID-19 pandemic heightening humans' awareness of just how fragile life is, and how interconnected all humans really are, perhaps more people can begin to see and experience their current vulnerabilities, limitations, and challenges in a new religious perception.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this research, the following recommendations are made to curb the COVID-19 pandemic panic:

Forging and supporting intra-religious collaboration between groups of one identified overall faith being it Christian or Muslim or others should be encouraged at this time

Religious leaders and followers all over the world should work together to contain the COVID-19 pandemic rather than aggravating the panic already associated with the pandemic in the form of religious presumptions and assumptions.

At the levels of governments and institutions across the world, the power and complexity of religious institutions and beliefs should be appreciated in executing their programmes as regard the pandemic without scouring to any mutual religious suspicions or assumptions.

Scholars of religion and their likes should conduct further researches on the COVID-19 pandemic from the perspectives of religion.

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BETWEEN PAUL FEYERABEND'S EPISTEMOLOGICAL DADAISM AND AN EXISTENTIAL ANARCHISM: A CRITICAL DISCOURSE

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Abstract: *Over the years, science both as a discipline and as a method enjoys a primal place in the society as a paradigm of rationality, as a model of truth, and as one of the standards of authentic knowledge. However, with advent of Paul Feyerabend, a postmodernist, the story changed. Paul Feyerabend moved against this privileged position that science has enjoyed over the years. He argued that science could only give comfort to the narrow-minded since. That science was becoming over bearing and stretching its schemes beyond boundaries and stated that science cannot be the model or the ideal method for every mode of enquiry because its methodologies have their limitations and this inhibits the advancement of the frontier of knowledge. With this he propounded the theory of epistemological dadaism stating that anything goes upholding non-methodism as the ideal model and mode against the sole reliance on science. However, employing the critical analytic model of interrogation this paper was able to point out that Paul Feyerabend was propising his theory oblivious of the fact that his theory invariably enthroned the existential anarchic scenario that also throws up and off his submission as well.*

Keywords: *Science, Anarchism, Dadaism, Existential, Method.*

Introduction

Man by nature, according to Aristotle, is a rational being that is endowed with reasoning and with the intellect serving as the faculty of acquiring knowledge. This quest to know in the contemporary era took an interesting and novel turn with the disposition and narrative of the post modernists. Post modernism is a trend that cuts across almost all fields of study and not peculiar in any way to philosophy. However, post modernism, as a movement in philosophy, is viewed by Jimoh Anselm as an;

Eclectic and elusive criticism and analysis of western philosophy heavily influenced by Phenomenology, Structuralism and Existentialism as espoused by the

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philosophers like Friedrich Nietzsche, Martin Heidegger and to some degree, Ludwig Wittgenstein. It is thoroughly anti-foundationalism, waging an unrelenting attacking on modernism.¹

Post modernism is also known as ‘context-dependency’ and Stuart Sim describes it as “a wide-ranging cultural movement which adopts a skeptical attitude to many of the principles and assumptions that have underpinned western thought and which constitute the core of what we call modernism.”² In a simpler sense, post modernism is antithesis to the modernist view about the objective knowledge.³ The concept of post modernism means; post as denoting ‘after’ modernity and post as denoting going against any form of -universalism, foundationalism, absolutism, objectivity (truth), homogeneity, establishment, methodism, sciencism, any myth of presence (Derrida) or any myth of the given (Sellars) and their likes. Based on how it started and the disposition of the progenitors, the movement has followers and proponents not just in philosophy but in other disciplines as well. However, in philosophy one of the scholars to create an interesting and novel scheme is Paul Feyerabend. He created the system or model known as non-methodism of epistemological anarchism. Paul Feyerabend was born on January 13, 1924 in Vienna, Austria. At the age of six he attended school, later at sixteen with great interest in physics and astronomy, had the reputation of knowing physics and mathematics than his teachers. Later he took philosophy for the dramatic possibilities of reasoning and the power that argument seem to exert over people. He graduated from the University of Vienna but served in the academic world as a full time lecturer in philosophy in the University of Bristol, England (1955-1958), and visiting lectures at the University of California, Berkeley (1958-1964). His works includes: *Paradox of Analysis*, *Realistic Interpretation of Experience and Complementarily*, *Explanations, Reduction and Empiricism*, *How to be a Good Empiricist*, *Problems of Empiricism and Reply to Criticism*, *Autobiography of Paul Feyerabend* and so on.⁴

Science: Etymologically, the term ‘science’ is derived from the Latin word ‘*scientia*’, which has its root in the Latin verb, ‘*scire*’, meaning ‘to

¹ Jimoh, Kole Anselm, *Certitude and Doubt: A Study Guide In Epistemology*, Ibadan: Ebony Books, 2013, p. 173.

² S., Sim, (Ed), *The Routledge Companion to Post Modernism*, London: Routledge, 2001, p. 329.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Paul Feyerabend, *Killing Time: An Autobiography of Paul Feyerabend*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995, p. 12.

know'. Generally, the term science has come to mean any systematized, organized or classified body of knowledge which has been critically tested beyond reasonable doubt.⁵ Robert Morgan opines that "science is any activity resulting in knowledge and understanding about the world around us."⁶ For Robert Barnhart, science is the organized body of knowledge that is derived from such observation and that can be verified or tested by further investigation. From the above clarification, science has its methodology and systematicity from which knowledge is acquired.⁷

Dadaism-Anarchism: Anarchism is the political beliefs that laws and government are not necessary. However, Feyerabend does not find it suitable to employ 'anarchism' for what it connotes in its past usage and dadaism is said to have no commitment to political understanding, so he prefer dadaism.⁸ Dadaism is said to have no commitment to any single goal and even the goals it has vary with inclinations and contingency of the moment. It does not take life too seriously.⁹ Since Feyerabend's interest in science is an intellectual adventure that knows no limits and recognizes no rule, he argued that there is no scientific method and so science is not an exclusively reliable source of knowledge but epistemologically or methodologically, 'anything goes'. Thus, he opines that there is only one principle that can be defended under all circumstances and in all human development. It is the principle: 'anything goes.'¹⁰ The anarchism of Feyerabend is refers to as epistemological anarchism.¹¹

Science in the Modern Period: A Look at its Popular Image

Science is full of objective meaning, the whole body of ascertained and reasoned truths which human reason has established as truths and has systematized and arranged. This clearly points out the fact that science has its methodology and systematicity from which objective appraisal of the merit of scientific theories are made. In the scientific community, science is commonly associated and projected as that of rationality, objectivity, well-founded and beyond dispute.¹² Science has taken the stage as the

⁵ Ernest Nagel, *The Structure of Science: Problems in The Logic of Scientific Explanation*, New York: Harcourt Brace and World, 1981, p. 3.

⁶ R.P. Morgan, *Science and Technology for Development*, New York: Pergamen Press, 1979, p. xviii.

⁷ Jack Aigbodioh, *Philosophy of Science: Issues and Problems*, Ibadan: Hope Publications, 1997, p. 1.

⁸ Paul K. Feyerabend, *Against Method: Online of an Anarchistic Theory of Knowledge*, New York: New Left Books, 1975, p. 21.

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Anselm Jimoh, *Certitude and Doubt*, p. 185.

¹² A.F. Chalmers, *What Is This Thing Called Science*, Buckingham: Open University Press, 1999, p. XV.

paradigm of rationality, the model of truth, the standard of knowledge, and the possessor of the method of inquiry because of its relationship with the concepts like observation, verifiability (individuated), facts, naive realism, testability, impartiality, objectivity and its commitment to inductive reasoning. The scientific spirit is presently so powerful and scientists are so influential in modern society since science is taken (sic) to be the standard of authentic knowledge. That is, whatever is scientific and can be proven is authentic but the reverse is not knowledge but opinion. Ernest Cassirer reveals the popular image of science enjoys in modern society when he asserts that ‘there is no second power in our modern world which may be compared to that of scientific thought. It is held to be the summit and consummation of all human activities, the last chapter in the history of mankind and the most important subject of a philosophy of man’.¹³ It is in the same vein that Morris Cohen and Ernst Nagel opined that “the scientific method is the most assured technique man has yet devised for controlling the flux of things and establishing stable beliefs.”¹⁴

The Epistemic Quest of Science

The meaning and the nature of the epistemic quest of science has been a matter of controversy among philosophers of science and scientists alike. One view on the purpose of science is that science seeks to comprehend the world around us so that predictions can be made about the future occurrence of events. More typically, according to Nicholas Maxwell, “the aim of science is simply to discover more and more about the world or about the phenomena under investigation, whatever the world or the phenomena may turn out to be like.”¹⁵ Thus, concerning the epistemic enterprise of science in conformity to its methodological principles, it can be said that science is the specific modality of human activity investment which consists of producing objective knowledge based on the discovery of the laws in the various areas of reality enabling to give a rational account and an extremely good anticipation of events and phenomena.

The Post-Modernist Narrative

Post modernism is also known as ‘context-dependency’ and it is antithesis to modernism. The starting point of the developments in

¹³ E. Cassirer, in Jack A. Aigbodioh, *Philosophy of Science: Issues and Problems*, Ibadan: Hope Publication, 1997, p.168.

¹⁴ M.R. Cohen and E. Nagel, ‘The Nature, Limit and Value of Scientific Method’ in H. M., Titus and M.H., Hepps (Eds). *The Range of Philosophy: Introductory Readings*, New York: American Books Company, 1964, pp. 49-50.

¹⁵ Nicholas Maxwell, ‘The Rationality of Scientific Discovery, Part I: The Traditional Rationality Problem’ *Philosophy of Science*, Vol. 41, No. 2, June, 1974, 124.

contemporary epistemology is the notion that philosophy is a foundational discipline. Foundationalism can be traced to Rene Descartes who, using the phrase of Richard Rorty, 'invented the mind' as the foundation for our epistemic claims. Since science is seen as the standard of authentic knowledge, in the words of John Kekes justification involves establishing the correspondence of a proposition to a fact and this was done by observation.¹⁶ Thus, all justification of knowledge claim is done in the context of science; it is this contextualism that gave birth to post modernism. From the epistemological point of view, Feyerabend argues against the modernist view about the objective of knowledge;¹⁷ rather he reasons that knowledge is a special kind of relations, that is, a text or discourse that puts words and images together in ways that are pleasing and useful to particular culture. This means that each culture has its knowledge claims from linguistic and other meaning-making resources; thus, there is relativism of their worldviews.¹⁸

Feyerabend's Impression of Science and Science in Relation to other Disciplines

Paul Feyerabend makes a case against the implication of modern science represented by the likes of Bacon, Descartes and Popper. In his *Against Method*, Feyerabend mounted a prominent attack against the account of scientific methodology. He raised two critical questions: What is science? And what is so great about science?¹⁹ Concerning the first question, questions like: how does science proceed? what is its result? How does its standard, procedure and result differ from the standard, procedure and result of other enterprises? In the same way, questions like: what make science preferable to other forms of existence using different standard and getting different results as a consequence? What makes modern science preferable to the science of the Aristotelians or to the cosmology of the pre-Socratic philosophers? In his response to the first question, Feyerabend make allusion to many scientific historical data and asserts; "...scientists proceed in many different ways, that rules of method, if mentioned explicitly, are either not obeyed at all or function at most like rules of thumb and that important results come from the confluence of achievements produced by separate and often conflicting trends."²⁰ This means that science, although seen as a systematised body of knowledge

¹⁶ J. Kekes, "Recent Trends and Future Prospects in Contemporary" *Metaphilosophy*, Vol. 8, No. 2 and 3, April/June, 1977, p. 89.

¹⁷ Robert Audi (Ed), *The Cambridge Dictionary of Philosophy* 2nd Edition. Cambridge University Press, 2001, p. 725.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ Paul K. Feyerabend, *Science in a Free Society*, London: New Left Book, 1978, p. 73.

²⁰ Paul Feyerabend, *Against Method*, p. 242.

does not have a comprehensive principles, methods or facts that are stable and thus, there are no entities that correspond to the word 'science.' However, in his response to the second question, Feyerabend challenged the popular image of science and argued that the belief that science is the sure foundation of knowledge is unjustifiable and unrealistic. Feyerabend elaborated his view, pointing out the fact that the history of science reveals no single rational method but a series of opportunistic, chaotic and desperate attempts to cope with immediate problems.

Feyerabend takes a further step to analyses the non-superiority of science to other forms of knowledge by pointing out the fact that many methodologies take for granted without argument that science constitutes the paradigm of rationality. According to him, when science is compares to other disciplines, it is necessary to investigate the aim and method of both through the study of historical record-textbooks, original papers, and record of meeting and private conversations, letters and the likes.²¹ Chalmers supported Feyerabend when he asserted that "it is illegitimate, for example, to reject Marxism on the ground that it does not conform to some preconceived notions of the scientific method as Popper does or to defend it on similar ground as Althusser does."²² Thus, there is no rational ground for eliminating any cognitive system that people find helpful and attractive.

The Epistemic Anarchism of Paul Feyerabend

In his epistemological or methodological anarchism, Feyerabend advocated the need to loosen up science so that 'real science' will be an intellectual adventure that knows no limit and recognizes no rules, not even the laws of logic. Feyerabend, as we have seen prefer the term dadaism to anarchism. The Dadaist opposes the faith in science and in the scientific method, arguing that there is no scientific method and thus, science is not an especially reliable source of knowledge. Epistemologically or methodologically therefore, anything goes.²³ What Feyerabend implies in the aforementioned statement is that since scientific methods or procedures most times do not predict the future as conceived, then it means that if the growth of knowledge is to be achieved by following any rule or methodology at all, it will have to be a methodology that is both flexible and undogmatic. This means that there should be freedom vis-a-vis methodological rules.²⁴ Thus Feyerabend avers that; if you want

²¹ Ibid., p. 253.

²² A. F. Chalmers, *What is This Thing Called Science*, Buckingham: Open University Press, 1999, p. 14.

²³ Ibid., p. 295.

²⁴ Ibid., p. 187.

universal standards, I say, If you cannot live without principle that hold independently of situations, shape of the world, exigencies of research, then I give you such a principle. But it will be empty, useless and pretty ridiculous. It will be the principle: ‘*anything goes*’²⁵ Feyerabend's argument has the humanitarian attitude, which Curthoys and Suchting identified as the ‘ethical thread’ of Feyerabend's argument. The underlying principle of the humanitarian attitude is unconditional individual freedom for self-development, cultivation of individuality and expansion of the specifically human faculties of imagination. Thus, Feyerabend’s anarchism increases the freedom of the individuals by encouraging the removal of all methodological constraints: while in a broader context, it encourages freedom for the individual to choose between science and other forms of knowledge. Therefore, one can say that epistemological anarchism as a theory is aimed to restore to both the creative scientist and the general public, freedom in matters of knowledge.

Refutation of Foundationalism: Towards Re-defining Science in the Modern World

The conception of science was popularized by Descartes in his foundational quest for knowledge claims. In his *Meditations*, Descartes argued that for a genuine knowledge claim, there must be rational and objective methods for measuring its truth content, less we cannot escape the forces of darkness that envelop us with madness, with intellectual and moral chaos.²⁶ Descartes based our epistemic claims on the mind and since the mind is taken to be the mirror of reality, modernists based all knowledge claims on the foundation and context of science. However, Feyerabend’s argument about non-methodism, which clearly shows that science, has no universal or objective methodology to predicting the future; refute the claims of modernist about science as the foundation of our knowledge. Although the history of thought is characterized by the different schools of thought which came into existence in the bid to ascertain and establish certitude. In the modern time, all knowledge claims are based on the foundation and context of science. This is based on the fact that since science is believed to be the paradigm for rationality and standard for authentic knowledge, all knowledge that are not scientific or that cannot be proven empirically are discarded. In this situation, science has it all and so there is no room or freedom for creativity. However, Feyerabend in his anarchism turned the picture of all our knowledge being in the context and foundation of science around. Feyerabend in his

²⁵ Ibid.,

²⁶ R. Berstein, *Beyond Objectivism and Relativism: Science, Hermeneutics and Praxis*, Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1988, p. 18.

humanitarian attitude clearly points out the fact that modernistic view on science limit human creativity and freedom. Since science as a discipline is only a part of human activity and cannot explain the whole of reality, other disciplines or forms of knowledge must be seen as authentic knowledge in as much as it can justify the knowledge claim in its context. Thus, Feyerabend proposed a new science that will be free to accommodate all other disciplines or forms of knowledge and it must be equal with the other disciplines with a flexible methodology that will create room for innovations and creativity.

Culminating Reflections: From Epistemological Dadaism to Existential Anarchism

The epistemological dadaism of Paul Feyerabend appears to be one of the most debated issues in contemporary philosophy especially amongst postmodernist and their opponents. And this explains why scholars have really expressed reservations about some of the impressions and suppositions of the postmodernist ideas of Paul Feyerabend. In fact, Lugg criticized Feyerabend's argument in favour of relativism of truth, of irrationalism, subjectivism, nihilism and anything goes relativism as Feyerabend reduced the objective criteria of acquiring knowledge to personnel criteria.²⁷ In the same mode, Newton was not comfortable with Feyerabend's anarchism. He argued that Feyerabend only reinvented Mill's argument for freedom of opinion.²⁸ Feyerabend was also not only lampooned for inventing truth on particular terms instead of the general terms but he was vilified for his inability to give a criterion for assessing the truth in question. Despite these flaks on the ideas of Feyerabend, Kringe aligned and appreciated the premises and suppositions of Feyerabend's anarchism. Kringe asserts that the views of Feyerabend can be interpreted and appreciated as a novel contribution to the idea of rationality regardless of the fact that Feyerabend did not provide a veritable criterion for assessing the particular.²⁹ However, despite these submissions from Kringe, it could not stop Harvey Siegal's serial denigration of Feyerabend's pluralism of science, as he reasons that it provided a bad argument for a good cause since Feyerabend himself

²⁷ A. Lugg, 'Critical Notice' *Canadian Journal of Philosophy* Vol. 21, No. 1, March 1991, pp. 100-112.

²⁸ W.H. Nelton-Smith, *The Rationality of Science*, Boston: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1982, p. 132.

²⁹ J. Kinga, *Science, Revolution and Discontinuity*, Sussex: The Harvester Press, 1980, p. 120.

rejected objective reason but still used reason to defend his views and challenge that of his opponents.³⁰

For him, this appears like a contradiction. Nevertheless, Alfred Nordmann was disposed to support and defend Feyerabend's theory of anarchism by asserting that Feyerabend helped to provide resources for argument at the interface between cultures, traditions and methods in the sense of making each culture to appreciate the wisdom of the other, reasoning that even the strangest way of life and mode of existence may have something to offer after all said and done. From the religious perspective also it can be said that the stark position of the adherents of the scientific methods will ultimately lead to the extinction of religion and God-talk. The impression stems from the fact that modernists narrowed all reality to the scientific world since it is believed that the objective knowledge of science is the only authentic source of truth. The implication of the aforementioned is that even metaphysics the first principle of philosophy and the science of all sciences together with religion are cast out totally, what a world! One would then underscore why Etienne Gilson in his book *God and Philosophy*, asserted that since God or any other metaphysical beings are no object of inquiry, then they are no object of knowledge as well.³¹ And this conformed with the position of Bertrand Russell that what science cannot tell us, mankind cannot know.³² The aforementioned statement drives on the message of modernism and the limitation is set for creative mind since everything must be taken in the context of science. And it was this narrowness of reality by science in the modern era that gave rise to Feyerabend's theory of anarchism. And through this theory, he was able to advance the growth of human knowledge and the search of truth; since it opens up science and makes it equal with other discipline in their epistemic quest.

Also his decision to expunge and outlaw the stark methodism of science is that its mode of establishing knowledge claims would eliminate human factors, environmental conditions and dispositions in assessing epistemic claims. And this is simply and really not acceptable based on the fact that to a great extent, the human factors and the environmental condition affect every scientific research or experiment. This seems to reecho the impression that knowledge is relative and objective knowledge is not feasible. But irrespective of the censures that has greeted his position, when gleaned from another critical angle, it can be said that Feyerabend's anarchism underscores the fact that ultimately, reality

³⁰ S. Harvey, *Farewell to Reason* London: Verso Press, 1987, p. 36.

³¹ Etienne Gilson, *God and Philosophy*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 2002, p. 109.

³² Bertrand Russell, *Why I Am Not A Christian*, London: Unwin Books, 1967, p. 26.

comprise of both the physical and the transcendental or non-physical realms and *prima facie*, science can only interrogate the knowledge of the former to a large extent and for the latter, science is handicapped so, the implication is that science cannot be the standard of authentic knowledge or the only access to appreciate reality. Even in the natural or physical world, science can only induced realities from particulars not the whole of reality. This therefore means that other disciplines that are not part of science that make epistemic claim of reality should be given the chance to justify their claims as well. The analysis of Feyerabend about science also demonstrates the fact that there is no entity that is even and really worthy of the name 'science' *qua tale* since even what we refer to as 'science' when beamed critically, fails to pass the test since it has no objective methodology that is reliable, dependable and/or absolute. Although modernism, in the line of August Comte, believed science to be the final epoch of human civilization and quest of knowledge, Feyerabend's anarchism served as an antithesis to prove that modernism was on the far and wrong side of reality. So, it is stating the obvious that the dadaism of Feyerabend opens wide the epistemic claim of all discipline and attacked the foundationalism or conceptualism of modernism that relied heavily on science and only science.

Now, notwithstanding the polemics about the scathing position of Feyerabend on the excesses of science and the need to curtail it and redefine the model of science via his novel scheme of dadaism, it is apposite that in doing that, that is, in attempting to liberalize the method of science Feyerabend simply subscribed to a very tough pattern of relativism which is akin to making man the measure of all things as his relativism was quite imposing and stark. One would reason that he was quite oblivious of the implication of this position he was putting up or he was bent on taking a very far opposite from the model of science, he was keen on achieving this and was seemingly oblivious of the fact that there could be more to his disposition and suppositions. This latter submission on Feyerabend stems from the fact that from the move against modernity and position that places science not just at the centre, or as the model or as the method, he unconsciously and/or unknowingly gave rise to the existence of a novel scheme. This is the reality of the existence of an existential anarchy. The theory of existential anarchism is the theory that this paper intends to use to interrogate and juxtapose the submissions of Feyerabend as it will amount to naught to attempt to solve or resolve a problem and end up creating another problem that seems to create rancor in a different way and that would simply also deflate his theory and make a mess of his quest.

Pulling through the scheme of *existential anarchism*, it is pertinent to note here that Paul Feyerabend makes a claim that appears self-defeating. Now, if man is the measure of all things in his novel genre of relativism then there is no need for the existence of any form of false belief or knowledge and what we will rather have around will rather be series of truer beliefs or 'knowledges'. And that leaves humanity with the option and question of which belief or knowledge is truer at the end of the day. And this makes the existence of false beliefs inconsistent with the homomensura doctrine, and on the long run, if at all there are false beliefs, then, the truth of Paul Feyerabend could also be seen as false. And this will make the points of Paul Feyerabend not explicit thereby leaving room for ambiguities and it is these ambiguities that precipitated the emergence and existence of *existential anarchism*. Aside the characteristics of skepticism which we can see very evidently in the claim of Paul Feyerabend one can also find some humanistic characteristics explicit in human interests, values and dignity. And he seems to express so much and even an ultimate faith in humankind as he believes that man possess the power or potentiality of solving their own problems over and above the static and dogmatic model of science which is not progressive. It is an optimistic attitude to life whose ultimate goal is human flourishing. It affirms the dignity and worth of all people and their ability to determine right and wrong purely.

It searches for truth and morality through human means in support of human interests and focuses on the human capacity for self-determination. It endorses universal morality based on the commonality of the human condition and that it is up to individuals to find the truth. This relativist cum humanistic view has shaped the outlook of our world today, most especially in the western world where the issues of morality are left to the individual caprices and discretion however, with huge deficits and casualties. And the costs of this ultimate believe in the human person and human freedom has exposed the reality of an *existential anarchism* and that seem to be the prize to be paid for these freebies. And this has thrown humanity into a great confusion as to what is true and false and/or right and wrong. It is relatable to state that the never ending debate on gay right, lesbian mode of operation, weapons of mass destruction, sex roles, fidelity in relationships and marriages, the variegated ideas and religious ideals infact the list goes on are subtle pointers to the level of confusion which humanity has found itself and this seem to underscore the dawn, existence and reality of *existential anarchism* as the aftermath and seeming new normal. Although moral relativism, cultural relativism and the postmodern context dependence theories seem to explain the diversity we find in different cultural practices today.

On the other hand we find also so many similarities in moral and cultural practices, for instance the issue of respect is morally right in every culture. Hence, it brings up the question; if there are really no absolute moral standard or something else. No doubt, the submissions of Paul Feyerabend and his discourse should be appreciated on the premise that it has opened up novel panorama for the interrogation and appreciation of the fancies of human life and the mode of operation of man and method of epistemological and existential enquiry and analysis. And if for anything, it draws the attention of the human person and humankind to the reality and possibility of an *existential anarchism*. And this call also involves a call to critical reflections on our mode and model of operation and understanding so that humankind would not be destroyed or defeated by its own set rules and dictates. Back to back and despite the constraints that could be noticed when the relativism of Feyerabend is stretch beyond limits or interpreted outside its context which is very probably and rampant, there is really no doubt that Feyerabend played a critical role in redefining the concept and ontology of science and in doing that assisted in reconstructing the modernist concept of science and accentuating a humanitarian disposition that creates freedom for both the creative scientist. But it should be said that his extreme stand from in the form of non-methodism or dadaism could only lead to another concern, existential anarchism.

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THE 2020 TIGRAI PEOPLE LIBERATION FRONT (TPLF) REGIONAL ELECTION: EXAMINING ITS LEGITIMACY AND MOTIVATIONS

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Abstract: Election is a political order in which citizens have say in matters affecting them and actively participate to control the political system thereby limiting the power of the government. The purpose of this study is examining the legitimacy and motivations of the 2020 TPLF's regional election held in Tigray. The study employed qualitative approaches. Whereas the primary sources of data were collected through interviews, secondary sources of data were obtained from literatures, decisions of government authorities including National Electoral Board of Ethiopia (NEBE), and from online Media sources. The study indicated that the election held in Tigray was illegitimate since it was contrary to the decisions of the federal government mainly the house of federations and house of people's representatives. The unconstitutional aspect of the election was also witnessed since it violated the constitutional mandates of NEBE to execute any electoral activities like voters' registration, preparing, and distributing electoral documents. Moreover, the election was not honest as it was held without officially assigned local and foreign election observers. The study showed that destabilizing the State, regaining political power and domination, and the emotional dream to form a de facto State were the hidden agendas behind TPLF's unilateral regional election.

Keywords: Election, Regional Election, COVID-19, TPLF, Legitimacy, Motivations, NEBE.

Introduction

Following the beginning of the third wave of democratization in the early 1970s, political development in transitional and consolidating democracies has focused on three main goals: fostering free and fair

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competitive elections held among multiple parties and candidates; building civic society to assist grassroots organizations, citizen advocacy groups, and independent media, and strengthening the core institutions of the state by encouraging independent judiciaries, effective legislatures, and efficient bureaucracies¹. In the history of world politics, there was a time when power has been passed through hereditary kinship without elections. In addition, there were times when government changes occurred through undemocratic means such as civil war, coup, riots, and revolution which resulted bloodshed, destruction of property, and political unrest².

Election is a political order in which citizens of a state have their saying in matters affecting them and actively participate to control the political system thereby limiting the power of the government they made³. It is also a process through which people can vote for a candidate among the given alternatives⁴. In a democratic political system, people periodically and regularly elect their leaders and representatives through the mechanism of free, fair, and transparent elections⁵.

Election allows political organizations to exist and compete for the votes of citizens as a source of holding public office for a limited period of time⁶. It provides opportunities for choosing representatives of the people democratically and serves as a means for peaceful transfer of power or government change⁷. Election is one of the most significant ways that people can participate in decisions that affect their lives and hold their elected representatives responsible⁸. Electoral process allows political parties to perform five key functions: integrating and mobilizing citizens; articulating and aggregating interests; formulating public policies;

¹ T. Carothers, *Rejuvenating Democracy Promotion*. Journal of Democracy, 2020, 31(1), 114-123, doi:10.1353/jod.2020.0009.

² A. Renwick, *The Politics of Electoral Reform: Changing the Rules of Democracy*. Cambridge University Press, 2010, doi: 10.1017/CBO9780511676390.

³ A. Menocal, *What is political voice, why does it matter, and how can it bring change?* Development progress discussion paper, Overseas Development Institute, London, 2014, retrieved from

<https://www.odi.org/sites/odi.org.uk/files/odi-assets/publications-opinion-files/8950.pdf>.

⁴ T. Wondwosen, *Media and multi-party elections in Africa: the case of Ethiopia*. International Journal of Human Sciences, 2009, 6 (1), 85-112.

⁵ M. Solomon, *Electoral Politics, Multi-partism and the quest for political community in Ethiopia*. Ethiopian Journal of the Social Sciences and Humanities (EJOSSAH), 2018, 14 (2), 94-127, doi: <https://dx.doi.org/10.4314/ejossah.v14i2.4>.

⁶ B. Reilly, *International electoral assistance: a review of donor activities and lessons learned*. Netherlands Institute of International Relations, 2003, Paper series 17.

⁷ *Ibid*.

⁸ United Nations Development Programme/UNDP, *Electoral systems and processes: Practice note. 2004*.

recruiting political leaders, and organizing the parliament and government⁹.

The prevalence of strong party-based communications provides vital opportunity for public participation, to structure citizens' electoral choices, and to connect leaders and elected officials around common programs¹⁰. Elections lie at the very heart of democracy through which citizens become engaged in the political process to determine the identity of those who will govern and influence how that governing power can be exercised¹¹. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights under Art. 21 (3) further stated that the will of the people shall be the basis of government authority expressed through periodic and genuine elections.

Regardless of its role to build a democratic political system, election is often used for non-democratic purposes as many have been held in authoritarian settings to provide some façade of democracy while retaining control within a single party, military regime or traditional monarchy¹². Electoral authoritarian regimes are neither democratic nor democratizing but are authoritarian. Such regimes hold regular polls but do so without the kinds of political rights and freedoms necessary for elections to be a tool for advancing democracy¹³.

In Ethiopia, parliamentary election has begun since the period of Emperor Haile Selassie though not a multiparty system¹⁴. According to the 1931 Ethiopian constitution, the senators were fully appointed while members of the house of deputies were partly elected. Property ownership and 2000 ETB deposit had been a precondition to be a candidate to the house of deputy¹⁵. The five consecutive elections which were conducted from 1957 -1973 in Ethiopia never established people's rule. The elected members were empowered neither in making laws nor had a mandate in questioning the legitimacy of the regime as the Emperor vested the last say on all issues¹⁶. Following the collapse of the imperial regime through

⁹ P. Norris, *Political parties and democracy in theoretical and practical perspectives: developments in party communications*. National Democratic Institute for International Affairs/NDI, USA, 2005.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*

¹¹ A. Renwick, *The Politics of Electoral Reform: Changing the Rules of Democracy*. Cambridge University Press, 2010, doi: 10.1017/CBO9780511676390.

¹² P. Schmitter, & T. Karl, *What democracy is. . .and is not*. Journal of Democracy, 1991, 2 (3), 75-88, doi: 10.1353/jod.1991.0033.

¹³ A. Schedler, *Elections without democracy: the menu of manipulation*. Journal of Democracy, 2002, 13(2), 36-50, doi: 10.1353/jod.2002.0031.

¹⁴ G. Merera, *Ethiopia: from autocracy to revolutionary democracy, 1960s*. Addis Ababa, Chamber Printing House, 2011.

¹⁵ The Revised Constitution of Ethiopia, 1955.

¹⁶ B. Kassahun, *Electoral politics, decentralize governance and constitutionalism in Ethiopia*. Addis Ababa University Press, 2007.

popular revolution, the military socialist regime commonly known as the Derg (1974-1991) transformed the country from no party to one-party system where elections conducted among individuals who were recruited and scrutinized based on the directives, alternatives, and ideological orientations of the Workers Party of Ethiopia (WPE)¹⁷. Since then, elections were continued as a toll to endorse WPE, the pre-determined and the only recognized legal party at the time¹⁸.

Tigray People Liberation Front (TPLF) was created in 1975 in the midst of a radical left-wing students' movement that shook the foundations of the empire. Drawing its support from the northern region of Tigray and its subsistence peasants, TPLF was a Marxist-Leninist liberation movement¹⁹. Before capturing power, TPLF embarked upon creating or assisting in the creation of several ethnic-based political movements and ultimately Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF), an umbrella front²⁰. The opportunity that TPLF got to dominate EPRDF in military and security aspects, transformed it from a regional front into Ethiopian-wide aspirations. In 1991, TPLF led EPRDF and its allies overthrew the Derg and started its relationships with the various categories of the Ethiopian people²¹.

The introduction of multi-party political dispensations is one of the major political developments in Ethiopia since the coming of EPRDF²². The regime invited political organizations calling themselves 'fronts', 'parties', 'forces', 'movements', etc. to participate in the July 1991 National Conference held in Addis Ababa²³. With the participation of 30 political groups, the conference created 87 seat Council of Representatives that served as a parliament during the 1991-1995 transitional period. The EPRDF-led Transitional Government (TGE) was established with representatives from the EPRDF and other political groups such as the Oromo Liberation Front (OLF). In this period, the Transitional Period

¹⁷ T. Andargachew, *The Ethiopian Revolution 1974-1987: A transformation from an aristocratic to a totalitarian autocracy*. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1993, doi: <https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511563102>.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁹ K. Loukeris, *Contending political ideologies in Ethiopia after 1991: the role of intellectuals*. Polis, Revue Camerounaise De Science Politique, 2005, Vol. 12, Numero Special, 2004-2005.

²⁰ *Ibid.*

²¹ M. Solomon, *Electoral Politics, Multi-partism and the quest for political community in Ethiopia*. Ethiopian Journal of the Social Sciences and Humanities (EJOSSAH), 2018, 14 (2), 94-127, doi: <https://dx.doi.org/10.4314/ejossah.v14i2.4>.

²² L. Arriola, *The Ethiopian voter: an assessment of economic and ethnic influences with a survey data*. International Journal of Ethiopian Studies, 2007, 3(1), 73-90, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/27828878>.

²³ *Ibid.*

Charter was served as a framework for a nominal election held in 1992 to form regional assemblies²⁴. In 1993, the new EPRDF-led government issued a document on its ideology of governance stated as:

We can attain our objectives and goals only if Revolutionary Democracy becomes the governing outlook in our society, and only by winning the elections successively and holding power without let-up. If we lose in the elections even once, we will encounter a great danger²⁵.

In 1994, another election was held for the formation of constituent assembly which allowed the EPRDF to maintain absolute majority²⁶. After the adoption of the 1995 constitution, different political organizations participated in what was considered the first general election held in May 1995, despite the election did not significantly contribute to the genuine democracy in the country. The election was used by TPLF dominated EPRDF to legitimized its sole arbiter in the post-1991 political order where EPRDF and its affiliates claimed to have won in absolute majority²⁷. In 2000, the second general election was held where candidates of opposition political groups were able to participated in almost half of the country's electoral districts. However, due to opposition parties' financial constraints, harassments, and intimidations by state functionaries, opposition political groups were unable to compete with the EPRDF which resulted EPRDF and its affiliates took the overwhelming majority of seats in the House of People's Representatives (HPR)²⁸.

The third general elections were held in May 2005 which were considered the most significant electoral event happened in Ethiopia to date²⁹. It marked a significant evolution in the country's political development as the state transitioned from a *de facto* single-party system

²⁴ L. Terrence, *Ethiopian elections: Past and future*. International Journal of Ethiopia Studies, 2010, 5(1), 107-121, dio:10.2307/41757576.

²⁵ J. Abbink, *Democracy deferred; understanding elections and the role of donors in Ethiopia*. In J. Abbink, & M. de Bruijn (Eds.), *Land, Law and Politics in Africa. Mediating Conflict and Reshaping the State*, Brill Academic Publishers, 2011, 213-239.

²⁶ M. Solomon, *Electoral Politics, Multi-partism and the quest for political community in Ethiopia*. Ethiopian Journal of the Social Sciences and Humanities (EJOSSAH), 2018, 14 (2), 94-127, dio: <https://dx.doi.org/10.4314/ejossah.v14i2.4>.

²⁷ S. Pausewang, & K. Tronvoll, *The Ethiopian 2000 elections: Democracy advanced or restricted*, Human Rights Report No.3. Norwegian Centre for Human Rights, 2000, <https://www.corteidh.or.cr/tablas/14920.pdf>

²⁸ *Ibid*.

²⁹ J. Abbink, *Discomfiture of democracy? The 2005 election crisis in Ethiopia and its aftermath*. African Affairs, 2006, 105 (419), 173-199, dio: 10.1093/afraf/adi122.

to a multiparty system³⁰. This elections appeared to give a more credible opportunity to the people to participate in the greatest numbers hoping that they may be able to change the government through a ballot box. It was one of the rare instances in which political organizations outside state power mounted a considerable electoral challenge against the incumbent-the EPRDF, but failed to usher in an orderly transition based on peaceful multiparty competition³¹. Local elections in 2008 returned to form with harassment of the oppositions, boycotts, and the ruling party won virtually every seat in every region³². On May 23, 2010, the fourth general election to the HPR and State Councils were held where the ruling party and its allied parties won 544 of the 547 seats in HPR and 1900 seats in the State Councils. Similarly, the fifth national and regional elections were held in 2015 where the FDRE won with the greatest variation³³.

The sixth general national election in Ethiopia was originally scheduled to be held on August 29, 2020. However, due to the outbreak of Covid-19 global pandemic, the country has been forced to postpone the election. As the condition in the country was not enabling to undertake the elections, the National Electoral Board of Ethiopia (NEBE) has suspended the proposed schedule and forward its resolution to the parliament. Then, the parliament postponed the elections for an indefinite period of time. However, this decision of the federal government to suspend the election was objected by TPLF and its government despite the other nine state governments agreed up on the extension. After the decision of Tigray region state council on June 12, 2020 to hold regional election, the election was held on September 9, 2020³⁴.

Accordingly, five parties including TPLF, Baytona, Tigray Independence Party, Salsay Weyane Tigray, and Asimba Democratic Party were participated in this election. TPLF has won 98.2% of the vote for the

³⁰ L. Arriola, *The Ethiopian voter: an assessment of economic and ethnic influences with a survey data*. International Journal of Ethiopian Studies, 2007, 3(1), 73-90, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/27828878>.

³¹ T. Terrence, *Ethiopia: implications of the May 2005 elections for future democratizations programs*. International Foundation for Electoral System/IFES, 2005, Washington D.C.

³² L. Terrence, *Ethiopian elections: Past and future*. International Journal of Ethiopia Studies, 2010, 5(1), 107-121, [dio:10.2307/41757576](https://doi.org/10.2307/41757576).

³³ European Union Election Observation Mission. *Ethiopia final report House of People's Representative and State Council Election 2010*.

³⁴ Reuters, Report on the election held in Tigray, available at: <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-ethiopia-politics/ethiopias-tigray-holds-regional-election-in-defiance-of-federal-government-idUSKBN25Z35S>, 2020, September 10.

regional parliament and took all 152 seats of state council³⁵. Therefore, taking into consideration the decisions of the federal government to extend the sixth national election in one hand and the regional election held by TPLF on the other hand, the purposes of this study is to assess the constitutionality and motivations of the 2020 TPLF's regional election. Hence, the paper aims to achieve the following specific objectives.

- To examine the legitimacy/validity of the 2020 TPLF's regional election held in Tigray, and
- To analyse the motivations for the 2020 TPLF's regional election held in Tigray.

Methodology

The study employed qualitative approach which is vital to achieve research objectives that require explanation and to understand social phenomena in their contexts. Both primary and secondary sources of data were used in the study. Primary sources of data were collected through semi-structured interviews held through face-to-face personal interviews, phone interviews and email conversations. Accordingly, fifteen participants were participated in the interviews. Participants were selected from the incumbent party, opposition political parties, NEBE, senior political science experts, and human rights activists. Participants were selected based on non-probability purposive sampling technique which helps to identify individuals who were more experienced concerning the problem under study. Secondary sources of data were also collected through the analysis of literatures, decisions of the House of federation, House of People's Representatives and NEBE, and from online media sources. The collected data were analysed thematically.

Result and Discussion

Here, the main findings of the study in relation to the legitimacy and motivations of the 2020 TPLF regional election are presented and discussed in line with other empirical studies and literatures.

The Legitimacy of the 2020 TPLF Regional Election

On March 27, 2020, NEBE conducted a survey in coordination with Ministry of health concerning the possibility of holding an election under the spread of Covid-19. Accordingly, the Board, on March 31, 2020, announced to the House of Peoples Representative, the highest law maker body at the federal level, that the election could not be conducted on the

³⁵ Kidanemariam Muluwork, *Commissioner of the Office of Electoral Commission of the National Regional State of Tigray, Interview with Dimtse Weyane TV*, available at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cWuUFu_nxUs, 2020, September 10.

specified period. Thus, the House passed a resolution to suspend the national election claiming that it must be conducted safely in the 2013 Ethiopian fiscal year³⁶. ***Election suspension is democratically reasonable in a variety of circumstances like natural disasters and if there is a humanitarian case that threat human life and health***³⁷. However, on June 12/2020, Tigray Regional State Council, under the leadership of TPLF, decided and officially declared to undertake the election in Tigray election by September 9, 2020 irrespective of the decisions passed by the House and NEBE. Getachew³⁸ said that: “We are making preparations to hold the election to safeguard the rights of our people from chaos. Tigray State Council can decide to hold election and have the power to carry out it.”

Following the decision of Tigray State Council to undertake election, Birtukan³⁹ demonstrated that no request for a vote was submitted by TPLF and no organization other than the Board had a mandate to conduct any type of elections. According to FDRE constitution Art. 102 and the amended electoral law of Ethiopia Proclamation No. 532/2007 Art. 7, it is only the NEBE that has the mandate to execute the impartiality of any election in Federal and State constituencies. Nevertheless, TPLF officials declared that the Board has no power to decide the fate of election but it is a tool to facilitate elections. Getachew⁴⁰ explained the case: “there is no constitutional principle that prohibits holding election in Tigray. As we repeatedly said, NEBE is an instrument to implement the activities of elections but not authorized to guarantee substantive right to elect.”

The NEBE in its official statement reiterated that it will not conduct election in any part of the country until a re-assessment of COVID-19 pandemic. The Board also declared that Tigray has no legal ground to deploy manpower and provide logistic and other materials support for the election⁴¹. Birtukan⁴² told for Ethiopian Broadcasting Corporation that the

³⁶ Ethiopia News Agency, Report on the decision of government on the 2020 Election, retrieved from <https://www.ena.et/en/?p=17057>, 2020, September 9.

³⁷ T. James, & S. Alihodzi, *When is it democratic to postpone an election? Elections during natural disasters, COVID-19, and emergency situations*. Electoral Law Journal, 2020, 19(3), 344-362, Dio: 10.1089/elj.2020.0642.

³⁸ Getachew, Reda, Members of TPLF Central Executive Committee, Interview with Local Media, 2020, June 17,

³⁹ Midekssa Birtukan, *Head of the National Electoral Board of Ethiopia*, Interview with Local Media, 2020, May 5.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*

⁴¹ African News, Report, available at <https://www.africanews.com/2020/06/25/ethiopia-pm-rejects-talk-of-transitional-govt-amid-delayed-polls/>, 2020, June 24.

⁴² Midekssa Birtukan, *Head of the National Electoral Board of Ethiopia*, Interview with Local Media, 2020, May 5.

board has not received any official request from TPLF or the government of Tigray region. She explained that TPLF's claim to hold regional election in defiance of the federal government is illegal and unconstitutional. According to FDRE constitution Art. 102, there is only one national electoral board and no organization other than the NEBE had a mandate to conduct any types of election. Ethiopia's House of Federation, the upper house, in its closed door emergency meeting voted that Tigray State's regional election, scheduled to take place on September 09, is unconstitutional⁴³. Accordingly, the House approved the following three final resolutions after its members have deliberated on the results submitted by the Council of Constitutional Inquiry (CCI) to the Identity Affairs Standing Committee of the House of People's Representative regarding the CCI's resolution on the postponement of the sixth national election in Ethiopia.

First, Tigray National Regional Government election proclamation 352/2012 contravenes the FDRE's Constitution Art. 55(15) and Art. 55(2)/D.

Second, Tigray National Regional Government's Election Commission established based on its election proclamation 352/2012 violates Art. 102 of FDRE Constitution which provides the power given to the NEBE.

Third, Tigray National Regional Government's electoral related decisions undertakings by its Council, Executive and Election Commission's electoral proclamation 351/2012 contravene the Art. 9(1) of FDRE constitution and hence decisions are of no effect, non-binding and non-applicable⁴⁴. Therefore, we can understand that all activities done by TPLF officials to hold regional election were contrary to the authority of NEBE and the decision of Federal Houses.

The study showed that, the 2020 Tigray regional election was conducted without assigned local and foreign observers which in turn made both the electoral process and the result untrustworthy. The amended electoral law of Ethiopia Proclamation No. 532/2007 Art. 78(1) indicated that interested domestic election observers may observe the election process upon the issuance of license from the Board. Art. 78(1) of this proclamation also stated that without prejudice to international conventions to which the country is a party, the government may invite foreign observers as deemed necessary. Nonetheless, calming that the

⁴³ Addis Standard, Report on the decision of House of Federation, available at <https://addisstandard.com/news-house-of-federation-votes-tigray-regional-election-contravenes-federal-constitution-non-binding-non-applicable/>, 2020, September 5.

⁴⁴ Addis Standard, Report on the decision of House of Federation, available at <https://addisstandard.com/news-house-of-federation-votes-tigray-regional-election-contravenes-federal-constitution-non-binding-non-applicable/>, 2020, September 5.

electoral process made by TPLF was unconstitutional, neither the board was assigned any local election observers nor the government called any foreign election observer to observe the election held in Tigray.

Prime Minister Abiy⁴⁵, in his official statement, said the following regarding the election.

We have working and preparing intensively to hold the election since we recognize its importance. Nevertheless, NEBE, the only authorized body to oversee any electoral process in the country, announced that the election could not be held in the specified time due to COVID-19. So, we are obliged to postpone the election and will stay put until the threat from COVID-19 will be contained. Since we have a duty to respect the decision of constitutionally established board. The government will take all actions against those who are engaged in illegal political acts that are threatening to violate the constitution and constitutional order in Ethiopia. We will do anything necessary to protect and defend the safety of the country and its people.

Prime Minister Abiy asserted that the government was the entity mandated to protect and defend the safety and security of the country as per Article 50 of FDRE constitution and hence ready to exercise this mandate by all means necessary against those striving to control state power through chaos, and will not tolerate any group vying to do so at a time when the country was struggling to contain the spread and effect of COVID-19⁴⁶. Irrespective of the Prime Minister's statement and the decisions of federal government to postpone the election, polls were opened in Tigray region on September 9 which was a direct challenge to Abiy and his government⁴⁷. Therefore, the federal government did not recognize the election held in Tigray region and its result. The election was conducted by squatters unlawfully to build a shanty house on the land they did not own⁴⁸.

⁴⁵ Ahmed Abiy, *Ethiopian Prime Minister*, Official Statement on the Postponement of 2020 Election, 2020, May 6.

⁴⁶ Addis Standard, Report, available at <https://addisstandard.com/news-pm-abiy-issues-warning-of-decisive-actions-to-protect-country-constitution-says-govt-to-stay-put-until-elections/>, 2020, May 7.

⁴⁷ VOA, Report on the election held in Tigray, available at <https://www.voanews.com/africa/ethiopias-tigray-region-votes> defiance-government, 2020, September 9.

⁴⁸ Reuters, Report on the decision of Federal Government on the election held in Tigray Region, available at <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-ethiopia-politics-idUSKBN25Z35S>, 2020, September 9.

The amended electoral law of Ethiopia Proclamation No. 532/2007 Art. 98 stated that “whosoever has, without the consent of NEBE, printed, duplicated, forged any election document and material or found to have possessed or distributed such document and material shall be punishable with imprisonment or a fine.” However, TPLF officials prepared printings and possessed election documents in contradiction to the proclamation and the mandates of the Board. Moreover, Proclamation No. 532/2007 Art.28 stated that general elections shall be conducted at different times only when the Board finds it necessary and decided by the House of People’s Representatives. Nonetheless, neither the House nor the Board has decided to hold elections in Tigray. Given this, one can argue that the election held in Tigray region was not legitimate as it violated the mandates of the House of People’s Representative and NEBE.

Tigray has its own constitution. This constitution is working in Tigray. So, it is based on the interest of the region that Tigray is a member of the federation, never be forced. Tigray regional state has constitutional authority to conduct the election. The contradiction occurs only between the regional constitution and the order of somebody who comes from somewhere, some politicians⁴⁹.

This explanation showed that the government of Tigray region was not accountable for any governmental institutions and authorities other than its regional constitution. The statement violated the supremacy of FDRE constitution and the decision of the federal government. TPLF officials also viewed the decision of the federal government as the order of somebody or some politicians from somewhere and hence not binding in Tigray. Muluwerk has denied the authority of the federal government and unwilling to call officials of the federal government in their appropriate political status and position. Amanuel Asefa, Head of Tigray Regional State Justice Bureau, blamed the federal government for abandoning its constitutional duty to hold the national election under the pretext of Covid-19. He argued that Tigray region is not forced to obey the decision of the ruling government⁵⁰. One of the informants also illustrated that: “Tigray’s regional government has prepared electoral documents and assigned election commission unlawfully. Its unilateral decision to hold the election was contrary to the federal government and other regions

⁴⁹ Kidanemariam Muluwork, *Commissioner of the Office of Electoral Commission of the National Regional State of Tigray*, Interview with Dimtse Weyane TV, available at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cWuUFu_nxUs, 2020, September 10.

⁵⁰ Addis Standard, Report, available at <https://addisstandard.com/news-pm-abiy-issues-warning-ofdecisive-actions-to-protect-country-constitution-says-govt-to-stay-put-until-elections/>, 2020, May 7.

interest since none of them were participated in the process.”⁵¹ Therefore, these explanations of participants are clear indications for TPLF’s defiance to accept the authority and decision of the federal government and hence its election was not genuine.

In relation to the controversial regional election held in Tigray, the European Commission⁵², an institution that has a long year experience in observing electoral process in Ethiopia, stated that:

Ethiopia’s Tigray holding regional election in defiance of the federal government. There should be an inclusive and comprehensive dialog between all political parties at federal and regional levels to hold the national election in an organized way. The commission will encourage and support such dialogs.

However, TPLF officials were not ready to negotiate with the federal government up on the recommendation of European Commission. At this point, Muluwork⁵³ told that:

...who will go to witness for Tigray to conduct its own affairs? Tigray has never demanded others to do the same. It is not imposing its will over others. So, they can carry out the election or postpone for twenty or thirty years. It is up to them.

This statement pointed out that the election held by TPLF authoritarians was not aimed to bring democracy in the country but to maintain political power. This was clearly realized when they ignored all types of dialogues with the federal government. According to Schedler⁵⁴, electoral authoritarian regimes are neither democratic nor democratizing but are authoritarian. Such regimes hold regular polls but do so without the kinds of political rights and freedoms necessary for elections to be a tool for advancing democracy. By and large, the study showed that the 2020 election held in Tigray region was not legitimate. TPLF officials were failed properly justified the election except they seemingly mentioned Art. 54(1) of FDRE constitution which stated the members ***of the House of Peoples’ Representatives shall be elected for a term of five years (FDRE Constitution, 1995). However, the activities that***

⁵¹ Interviewee 12, personal communication on the electoral process conducted in Tigray Region, 2020, October 20.

⁵² European Commission, Statement on the 2020 Election held in Tigray Region, retrieved from <https://youtube.com/watch?v=hnpNMjSjls>, 2020, September 9.

⁵³ Kidanemariam Muluwork, *Commissioner of the Office of Electoral Commission of the National Regional State of Tigray*, Interview with Dimtse Weyane TV, available at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cWuUFu_nxUs, 2020, August 10.

⁵⁴ A. Schedler, *Elections without democracy: the menu of manipulation*. Journal of Democracy, 2002, 13(2), 36-50, doi: 10.1353/jod.2002.0031.

TPLF did to hold regional election was not politically credible since they have been undertaken unilaterally. The legitimacy of the election was also problematic as it was conducted against the decisions and mandates of federal authorities mainly the House of Federation, House of People's Representatives and NEBE.

Motivations of the 2020 TPLF Regional Election

At this juncture, the article discusses the main reasons that motivated TPLF officials to hold a separate regional election in defiance of the federal government.

Destabilize the State

The study indicated that one of the motives of TPLF officials held regional election was to create political instability and tension in the country. Participants explained that in the pretexts of safeguarding the federal constitution and people's right, TPLF leaders were intensively worked to destabilize the nation. Spokespersons of Tigray region were warned that there will be political unrest and conflict in the country if any governmental authority attempted to stop the election to be held in Tigray. Muluwork⁵⁵, Commissioner of Tigray Electoral Commission, said for local media that: "Tigray has its own constitution which is working in Tigray. Nobody will decide on Tigray. If somebody will say I will decide for Tigray, there will be non-ended crisis. Therefore, accepting what Tigray say for Tigray is the best. In similar speech, Debretsion⁵⁶ said that:

Referring to legal articles has no place if it is found to be unacceptable to our people. It is only people of Tigray who can decide on their fate and the constitution would allow them to exercise autonomy and self-rule. Any attempt to prevent the election from going ahead in Tigray is declaration of war against Tigray people.

These statements of high level executives of the region visibly verified that TPLF was ready to jamming country if any political actor attempted to break the electoral process in Tigray. Their speech pointed out that

⁵⁵ Kidanemariam Muluwork, *Commissioner of the Office of Electoral Commission of the National Regional State of Tigray*, Interview with Dimtse Weyane TV, available at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cWuUFu_nxUs, 2020, September 10.

⁵⁶ Gebremichael Debretsion, *President of Tigray Region and member of TPLF central executive committee*, Interview with VOA, available at <https://www.voanews.com/africa/ethiopia-tigray-region-votes> defiance-government, 2020, September 9.

attempting to prevent the election is considered as waging war on the people of Tigray which in turn resulted continuous crisis in the country.

William Davison, the former International Crisis Group think tank's senior analyst for Ethiopia, told that:

TPLF's decision to proceed with elections before the rest of the country could be politically explosive given a lack of legal clarity. It threatens to deepen Ethiopia's political crisis, as the legality of regions holding polls without federal permission is unclear and disputed. It is an acute threat to the stability of the country⁵⁷.

The other informant also said that "TPLF's stand had no constitutional basis. They had no mandate to held separate regional elections. They were trying to destabilize the country in an attempt to regain power."⁵⁸ The study showed that the ultimate aim of TPLF's claim to hold the election was not safeguarding people's right and the constitution despite they were arguing to do so. TPLF's unlimited demands of political power and despotic leadership indeed demonstrated when they dominated the political power for the last 30 years. Therefore, their rhetorical speech of safeguarding the rights of people and the constitution were pretexts to conduct pseudo election at regional level. Concerning this, Renwick⁵⁹ described that elections could be undertaken only for the sake of attracting the international attention as if they are democrats and misleading citizens through the conduct of pseudo/false election.

TPLF officials' were also repeatedly said that after September 2020, there is no government in Ethiopia and the mandate of Prime Minister Abiy will expired there by his government will lose its constitutional authority as FDRE constitution sets a maximum five-year term for the national government to rule the country. They also argued that since then the federal houses are not mandated to represent Tigray people. By saying these, they showed that they were not governed by the federal government which in turn caused hostility between federal government and TPLF officials. Consider the following statements of TPLF central executive members:

Tigray has no representatives in the house of federation and house of people's representatives after October 6, 2020. There is no such government bodies as prime minister and council of ministers.

⁵⁷ Reuters, Report on experts view towards the 2020 TPLF Electio, 2020, May 5.

⁵⁸ Interviewee 05, personal communication on the electoral process conducted in Tigray Region, 2020, September 29.

⁵⁹ A., Renwick, *The politics of electoral reform: changing the rules of democracy*. Cambridge University Press, 2010, doi: 10.1017/CBO9780511676390.

We will not participate in the activities of such illegal bodies. Their decisions and actions are also illegitimate and non-binding⁶⁰.

“The regime in power does not fulfil the criteria of government and has no authority to hold election. Being a government is a matter of necessity to conduct elections.”⁶¹ “The Ethiopian defence force is responsible to safeguard the constitution but not the dictators. To save the country from chaos, they must work in accordance with the constitution.”⁶² These speeches were clear indicators for TPLF’s readiness to avert any decisions of the federal government offensively. Generally, the study revealed that TPLF leaders were arguing deliberately to disrupt the state by creating anxiety between Tigray and the central government.

Maintain Political Power

According to Renwick (2010), elections are often used for non-democratic purposes as many have been held in a variety of authoritarian settings. In view of this, the study showed that TPLF officials’ demand to sustain political power was the other motive for their strong claim to carry out regional election unilaterally. They held election in the pretexts of safeguarding the federal constitution (as it declares election would be held within five years interval), to secure their political status. Participants explained that TPLF leaders were expected that the election held in Tigray region would allow them to win the election smoothly so that they can maintain themselves in power for the next five years. One of the participant said that:

The unilateral election held in Tigray signaled TPLF’s hidden demand to sustain political power until the next election. They knew that the unilateral election held in the absence of the federal government and officially assigned election observers allowed them to win the election easily and thereby to secure their last long political power. Accordingly, they were aggressively worked to implement it⁶³.

⁶⁰ W/silasie Asmelash, Interview with Tigray TV, available at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3KyxCj8R8AE>, 2020, September 28.

⁶¹ Amanuel, Asefa., Head of Tigray Region Justice Office, Interview with Tigray Mass Media Agency, available at

https://www.facebook.com/watch/live/?v=344128503348650&ref=watch_permalink, 2020, September 23.

⁶² G/egziabher Fetlework, Vice President for Tigray National Region State and member of TPLF central executive committee, Interview with DW International, available at <https://aruslagu.com/arus/pre/tlq2DZFKo2U/7783186.html>, 2020, September 19.

⁶³ Interviewee 10, personal communication on the electoral process conducted in Tigray Region, 2020, October 16.

Therefore, we can understand that keeping their political position was one of the reasons for TPLF officials concern to conduct election at regional level. In relation to this, Schedler⁶⁴ stated that the key challenge for an authoritarian ruling party in holding an election is how to gain the benefits of the process to distribute patronage, demonstrate power, and thereby consolidate its rule. Boix and Svolik⁶⁵ also asserted that in autocracies and non-democratic regimes, elections are associated with regime durability. Elections might therefore be a good tool for autocrats, if they can manage the unpredictability associated with them.

Attempt to Established *De Facto* State

The study further showed that the election held in Tigray was motivated by TPLF's wish to establish its *De facto* state. After the coming of Aby Ahmed as Prime Minister, TPLF leaders were no longer cooperated with the federal government but acted independently without considering decisions of the central government. Onwards, the disparity and brawl between TPLF and the federal government have been deepened from time to time. TPLF leaders have blaming that Aby's leadership had the aim to impose a one man absolute rule appealing that his administration did not have a genuine interest to hold election in accordance to the constitution. In return, they were fled away from the central government and began to concentrate at Mekele, the capital of Tigray Region. They leave out their seats in both House of federation and house of people's representatives by themselves. Regarding this, Asmelash⁶⁶ said for local media that;

After September 25, Tigray people have no representatives in the House of Federation and House of People's Representatives. All decisions made by these bodies are not binding. Since the government in power is illegal, we cannot participate in such activities that this force engaged in.

Participants stated the unilateral actions of TPLF in defiance of the federal government was worsened when its members prepared to hold regional election although they knew that their actions were against the federal government and the mandates of NEBE. Hence, this exceptional political phenomenon was not aimed at holding genuine election but an attempt to establish a *de facto* state. TPLF's intrinsic demand to

⁶⁴ A. Schedler, *The logic of electoral authoritarianism*, 2006.

⁶⁵ C. Boix, & M. Svolik, *The foundations of limited authoritarian government: institutions and power-sharing in dictatorships*. *Journal of Politics*, 2013, 75(2), 300-316, doi: 10.1017/S0022381613000029.

⁶⁶ W/silasie Asmelash, *Interview with Tigray TV*, available at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3KyxCj8R8AE>, 2020, September 28.

disintegrate the country and to form its own *de facto* state was overtly demonstrated on November 03, 2020 when it declared war on Ethiopian military force by taking brutal action on members of Semien Command which resulted to death of thousands while many have been seriously injured. Temesgen Truneh⁶⁷ explained the case as:

...TPLF's ruthless and violent action on the country's military force Semien Command is not recorded not only in the history of Ethiopia but also in other parts of the world. It is an action which is calculated to reverse the country's sovereignty and its people. They did this to implement their secret aspiration to form a *de facto* state.

The other participant also stated that "TPLF officials' inherent but imaginary ambition to secede Tigray was evidently displayed when they ruthlessly outbreak war against the Ethiopian military force which was recorded as most shocking event in the history of the Country." (Interviewee 05 November 23, 2020)

The change of EPRDF in to Prosperity has faced objection and challenge from members of TPLF. Since then, the ruling party and its government lost its political control in Tigray region. "Tigray is the only region where Prosperity Party has no political power and influence. TPLF ruled the region and made every political decision without consulting the federal government"⁶⁸. After TPLF officials lost their dominance in the central government, they were intensively engaged to weaken the federal government and thereby to disintegrate the state. Moreover, they alienated themselves from the central government and involved in organizing and sponsoring illegal political groups mainly the OLF-Shene. As a result, the federal government has frequently alleged them as attempting to weaken the national unity of the state. "In political history of Ethiopia, it is TPLF that isolated itself from the ruling party and organized as opposition party. Its officials denied the legitimacy of the ruling party and acted independently."⁶⁹ By and large, the decision of the government to postpone the 2020 electoral due to COVID-19 creates an opportunity for TPLF to show its disobedience to the federal government and to act

⁶⁷ Tiruneh Temesgen, *President of the Amhara National Regional State*, Statement about TPLF's military action on the country's military force Semien Command via Amhara TV, available at, available at

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ewDUCGMoAVE>, 2020, November 4.

⁶⁸ Interviewee 08, personal communication on the status of TPLF's relation with the federal government, 2020, October 13.

⁶⁹ Interviewee 15, personal communication on the status of TPLF's relation with the federal government, 2020, October 24.

independently. In pretext of safeguarding the constitution, its officials held election at regional level without consultation and permission of NEBE.

Conclusion

The aim of this study was examining the legitimacy and motivations of the 2020 TPLF's regional election held in Tigray in defiance of the federal government. The study showed that the election held in Tigray region was illegitimate in many respects. It was contrary to the decision of the federal government authorities mainly the House of Federation and House of People's Representatives. The election also violated the mandates of NEBE, the only constitutionally authorized body to execute and manage all electoral activities in the country. Among others, TPLF officials were engaged in the task of voters' registration, and preparing and distributing electoral documents unlawfully without asking permissions from the board. They also organized a new electoral commission at regional level despite the federal constitution does not allow the establishment of such structures at regional level. In addition, the election held in Tigray region was not trustworthy as it was held without officially assigned local and foreign election observers. The study revealed that one of the hidden agendas behind TPLF's separate regional election held in Tigray was to destabilize the state by creating dissent between the federal government and Tigray region. Maintaining political power and regaining dominance in the country's political order was the other reason for TPLF's unilateral decision to held regional election. The study further revealed that the unlawful election held in Tigray region in defiance of the federal government was inspired by TPLF's nightmare and delirium to form a *de facto* State.

Conflict of Interests

The authors declare that they have no conflict of interests.

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Addis Standard, September 5, 2020, Report, available at <https://addisstandard.com/news-house-of-federation-votes-tigray->

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MULTICULTURAL PERSPECTIVES: STUDY OF THE FEMALE CHARACTERS IN THE SELECT RAJ NOVELS

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Abstract: This article examines a particular body of fiction classified as Raj novels whose narratives draw extensively on the social, political and historical contexts of the British Raj in India. The present article analyses three select novels; *The Jewel in the Crown* (1966) by Paul Scott, *Heat and Dust* (1975) by Ruth Praver Jhabvala and *The Tailor's Needle* (2009) by Lakshmi Raj Sharma, in the light of multiculturalism propagated by the major female characters in the novels. The article postulates how the Raj novels, generally categorized as historical fiction and studied in the context of colonial and postcolonial studies, could also be studied in the context of multiculturalism. Furthermore, it examines the role of the major female characters in these Raj novels and assesses how they acted as a harbinger of multicultural values at the time of high imperialism when the era itself was perceived as a masculine enterprise endowed with conflict, rebellion, hostility and antagonism.

Keywords: multiculturalism, Raj novels, culture, binaries, imperialism

Introduction

Multiculturalism has strengthened the boundaries of literature since time immemorial and in the last several decades, it has contributed immensely in defining and redefining the scope of historical and cultural studies. It addresses a wide range of ideas associated with human differences and delves into "several disciplines to highlight the neglected aspects of our social history, particularly the histories of women and minorities."¹ Edward Said's *Orientalism* too stressed, "the actualities of what were later to be called multiculturalism, rather than xenophobia and

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¹ C. James Trotman, *Multiculturalism: Roots and Realities* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press), 2002, p. ix.

aggressive race-oriented nationalism.”² It replicates the mixing and unmixing of populations throughout history and presents the lived realities of plural societies. Multiculturalism “decolonizes representation not only in terms of cultural artefacts but also in terms of power relations between communities”³ and is also studied against the binaries of colonialism and postcolonialism. Agger asserts that multiculturalism “espouses postmodern theories that accentuate the notion that people’s differences are more important than their similarities.”⁴ It recognizes different attributes that contribute to the making of identity and “attempts to subvert cultural homogenization by acknowledging the coexistence and equal representation of different cultures and peoples within a nation-state.”⁵ At present, multiculturalism aims at “the maintenance of a cohesive national state capable of recognizing multiple identities”⁶ where there is harmony among different cultural groups in the society. It is the recognition of all belief systems, cultures, traditions and customs as equal and a sense of oneness is achieved through their mutual amalgamation. Multiculturalism addresses anything from minority discourse to postcolonial critique⁷ and in the modern complex society it designates the situation of accommodation where differences are not eliminated but to some extent recognized.⁸

Rethinking Raj novels

The British Raj in India, with all its tussles, conflicts and crises, finds appropriate mention through fictional representation in novels written about the Raj, either during the Raj era or after the independence of India. The volume of novels bearing testimony to the Raj era is so abundant that it is commonly referred to as the Raj novels. The Raj has appealed to writers across the globe owing to its historical backdrop, its account of the conquest of the vast Indian land by the British Empire, conflicts arising out

² Edward Said, *Orientalism* (London: Penguin), 2003, p. 336.

³ Robert Stam, “Multiculturalism and the Neoconservatives,” in *Dangerous Liaisons: Gender, Nation and Postcolonial Perspectives*, (eds.), McClintock, Mufti and Shohat (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press), 1997, p. 189.

⁴ Ben Agger, *Critical Social Theories: An Introduction* (Oxford, West View Press), 1998, p. 69.

⁵ Chang Yau Hoon, “Assimilation, Multiculturalism, Hybridity: The Dilemmas of Ethnic Chinese in Post-Suharto Indonesia.” *Asian Ethnicity* vol.7, no.2, 2006, p. 153.

⁶ Zaki Nahaboo, “Subverting Orientalism: Political Subjectivity in Edmund Burke’s India and Liberal Multiculturalism.” *Citizenship Studies*, vol.16, no. 5-6, 2012, p. 597.

⁷ Homi Bhabha, “Culture’s in Between,” in *Multicultural States: Rethinking Difference and Identity*, (eds.) D. Bennett (Routledge), 1998.

⁸ Tariq Modood, “Multicultural Citizenship and Muslim Politics.” *Interventions: International Journal of Postcolonial Studies*, vol. 12, 2010, no. 2.

of racial and cultural differences, or in the endeavour of presenting human life in extraordinary situations. The ideas revolving around imperialism became so latent in the era that they dominated the entire discourse concerning the British Raj. The archetypal representation of the Raj in fiction is about the vociferous tussle between the mighty male British ruler and the oppressed male native. There are social, cultural, political and racial struggles, but what is astounding is, all these encounters are male-centric. Many writers during this period justified the colonial rule, its unquestioned control over the colonies and made imperialism “a religious and ethical theory and an integral part of a cosmology”⁹ and writers like Kipling endeavoured to “justify the dominance of Anglo-Saxon in the name of imperial enterprise.”¹⁰ The British imperialists advocated “an unambiguously heroic image of themselves as conquerors and civilizers of the world”¹¹ and tried to justify their supremacy against the colonized Indian counterparts.

Amid these conflicts, the Raj era witnessed the emergence of a new class of women hailing from both the ruling and the ruled class, who could be considered as the progenitors of multiculturalism, in the heyday of colonialism facing the heat of Indian freedom struggle. This new class of females includes native Indian women, the subaltern British women who do not belong to the ruling class and the wives of influential British who feel to be at home during their stay in India. The influx of British women as missionaries and teachers in India added new dimensions to gender relations and brought a new awakening among the native women as well. However, the British Raj is examined so much in the light of political and administrative exercises that it is often perceived as a masculine enterprise, endowed with conflict, rebellion, hostility and antagonism. The female characters, either representing the ruling class or the subject class, are kept on the fringe by their male counterparts. While the females belonging to the subject class were not taken seriously by their male counterparts, the ones belonging to the ruling class were perceived as a threat in their colonial mission. A close analysis of their action and reaction against the other characters exemplify them as the torchbearer of multicultural values amidst imperialistic visions, cutting across the boundaries of race, class and culture. There are “instances of dynamic interaction between different races when they come in contact with each

⁹ Ashis Nandy, “The Psychology of Colonialism: Sex, Age, and Ideology in British India.” *Psychiatry*, vol. 45, no.3, 1982, p. 209.

¹⁰ Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths and Helen Tiffin, *Post Colonial Studies, Key Concepts* (London: Routledge), 2000, p. 198.

¹¹ Elleke Boehmer, *Colonial and Postcolonial Literature* (New York: Oxford University Press), 1995, p. 23.

other, though not always on equal terms”¹² and the analysis of the female characters in the Raj novels is one such way of escorting into the dynamic interaction that embarked significant impact in the cultural politics of India. Therefore, the present paper is an attempt to analyze the selected texts and highlight the sprouting of multicultural ideas propagated by this new class of female characters. These characters show how love and respect can be shared despite social, cultural, religious and racial differences. For this, a selection of three Raj novels has been made and it will be studied in the light of literary representation as presented by writers belonging to different nationalities. Paul Scott’s *The Jewel in the Crown*, the first part of his popular *Raj Quartet*, a canonical text in Raj literature, Ruth Prawar Jhabvala’s *Heat and Dust* that explores the distinctive relationships of the English women with the native men and Lakshmi Raj Sharma’s *The Tailor’s Needle* that examines the Raj era from an Indian perspective are analyzed in the light of multiculturalism, assessing the new class of female characters, who embody the ideals of multicultural visions.

Examining the female voices in the select Raj novels

Paul Scott, who had a firsthand experience of India and the Raj era, is the pioneer in introducing characters professing multicultural visions. His popular novel *The Jewel in the Crown* published in 1966, the first part of his magnum opus *The Raj Quartet* took over the literary circle of the time by storm as he “presented the events of the turbulent years between 1942 and 1947 with commendable honesty.”¹³ *The Jewel in the Crown* advocates multiculturalism during the zenith of Indian nationalism, where the readers become “participants in an exploration not only of the British in India but of humanness itself.”¹⁴ Scott assesses different human relationships in the novel and presents all his characters as equals without taking the Eurocentric approach amidst the hyperactive social, political and economic developments of the time. Unlike other Raj novels, in *The Jewel in the Crown*, the plot strives to amend the wrongs of the past to tackle the present and Scott “without underestimating the new suffering

¹² Tutun Mukherjee, “History, Memory and Identity in ‘Anglo-Indian’ Writing or, How the Raj is Done!” *South Asian Review*, vol. 25, no.2, 2004, p.70.

¹³ Sujit Bose, *Attitudes to Imperialism: Kipling, Forster and Paul Scott* (Delhi: Amar Prakashan), 1990, p. vii.

¹⁴ Janis E. Haswell, *Paul Scott’s Philosophy of Place(s): The Fiction of Relationality* (New York, Frankfurt & Oxford: Peter Lang), 2002, p. 4.

involved, shows how they need to be combated for fresh possibilities to emerge.”¹⁵

In the novel, we have dynamic female characters like Miss Edwina Crane, who brings into light the discourse of multiculturalism. She is living in India for the last thirty-five years and is very vocal about multicultural values. She had come to India as a travelling nurse companion and joined the mission school as a missionary teacher. Later she rose to the rank of Superintendent of the District's Protestant Mission Schools. Yet despite her rise to this position, she is very friendly with almost all sections of the society, be it the company of Indian women, the gathering of school children and also with the young British soldiers. She “loved India and all Indians but no particular Indian.”¹⁶ She is passionate about her work and is very supportive of Indian values and customs. She considers Indians as equal to the British and acknowledges that it is the differences that give meaning to individuality. At the same time, she “hated British policies, and so she disliked all Britons unless they turned out to be adherents to the same rules she abided by.”¹⁷ This attitude of Edwina is not appreciated by other British characters but she is adamant about her ideology and never compromises with the principles of her life.

Being in the missionaries, she positively interacts with all classes of Indians and she is sympathetic to the cause of India's independence. Edwina felt at home in India and believed that “India must be independent. When the war's over, we've got to give her up.”¹⁸ She says, “for years, since the eighteenth century, and in each century since, we have said at home, in England, in White-hall, that the day would come when our rule in India will end, not bloodily, but in peace, in – so we made it seem – a perfect gesture of equality and friendship and love.”¹⁹ She is happy in India to work with the mission and “for her the only hope for the country she loved lay in the coming together at last of its population and its rulers as equal partners.”²⁰ She is peace-loving and is always afraid of the uprising that takes place frequently in India. She dislikes European music and the only kind of music that she listens to is Indian classical music. She readily accepts Indian ethos and is happy spending her time with the Indians than with the British. She is very professional and has a deep sense of love and respect for the Indians. She does not distinguish between the British and the Indian characters; instead, she believes that as she is

¹⁵ Jacqueline Banerjee, “Women of Affairs: Contrasting Images of Empire in Paul Scott's *The Raj Quartet*.” *Journal of Commonwealth Literature*, vol. 44, no.3, 2009, p. 71.

¹⁶ Paul Scott, *The Jewel in the Crown* (London: Arrow Books), 2005, p. 119.

¹⁷ *Ibid*, p. 119.

¹⁸ *Ibid*, p. 26.

¹⁹ *Ibid*, p. 70.

²⁰ *Ibid*, p. 41.

staying in India, India is her home and it is her moral duty to work for the betterment of India and the suffering masses.

Edwina appears to be the torchbearer of multiculturalism and the Indo-British relationship tends to grow steadily through her relationship with the Indian characters in general and with Mr Chaudhuri in particular, who also happens to be a teacher in Dibrapur School. Her relationship with Mr Chaudhuri cuts across all boundaries and they find solace in each other's company. Their last meeting on the day of the riots speaks volumes about the kind of relationships they share and the incident changed the discourse concerning the colonizer versus the colonized. When the rioters kill Mr Chaudhuri in the middle of the road, Edwina exclaims, "Oh God. Oh. God, forgive me, Oh God forgive us all, and then covered her face and wept, which she had not done for years, and continued weeping for some time"²¹ holding the hand of dead Chaudhuri by the roadside in the rain. Her reaction to the death of Mr Chaudhuri is a glaring example of the union of the East and the West and she feels sorry that she could do nothing to save him. Later Edwina committed suicide by burning herself like that of a *sati*. She had come to India as a humble accompanying nurse and rose to the position of distinction through her engagements with the common Indian masses but she ended her life in a tragic note. Her empathy for Indians may be due to her engagements with the missionary that demanded compassion with the local masses but despite this, she establishes a new benchmark among the British characters and overall as a new prototype female that propagates multiculturalism.

The other female character Daphne Manners, who has recently come to India, also embodies the multicultural visions in the novel. She is exuberant and friendly but is surprised by the racial prejudice exposed by the English in India. Her love affair with Hari Kumar, an Indian but educated in England, shows that love can trespass all boundaries created by humans. She chooses Hari over the British character Ronald, whom she considers less British than Hari. They began with friendship and ended in love, though they pay the price for their extraordinary bonding. Their relationships could not bear fruits as they are separated on a tragic note owing to the rape of Daphne on the night of 9th August 1942, while she was making love with Hari. They, however, seem to unite even in this critical situation and Hari offers to remain silent on the issue as advised by Daphne. Initially, Daphne also remained silent but later, she came up with multiple observations on who was involved in the incident. She mentioned that there was a gang of peasants with one of them a Muslim and also remarked that they might be British characters laden with masks. Her love

²¹ Ibid, p. 66.

for Hari is a probable suggestion of the possibility of the union between the East and the West. Her affair with Hari lends her into a tough situation but she is ready to bear those predicaments for the love of Hari. The Englishmen like Ronald Merrick were persuading to punish Hari entrapping him in the rape incident but she denies them the opportunity by remaining silent on the issue. Her denial to co-operate on the trial of Hari earned her enmity with the British community and she is even considered a traitor for protecting the native rapists. Despite her failure in love with an Indian, she resolves to have the baby and set an example that the East can unite with the West. She says,

“the child I bear is important to me. Even though I can’t be positive it is his. But I think so, I believe so. If it isn’t, it is still a child. Its skin may be as dark as Hari’s or almost as pale as mine, or somewhere in between. But whatever colour – he, or she, is part of my flesh and blood; my own typically ham-fisted offering to the future.”²²

Despite warnings from the doctor, she chooses to have a normal delivery but she could not sustain the childbirth. Jason Howard Mezey argues that “Daphna Manners articulates a new sense of responsibility to India not as the recipient of British imperial control but as a mutually constitutive terrain. The child Manners carries represents not only her love for Hari Kumar but also her belief in which such relationships become possible and productive.”²³ Her bold convictions exemplify that she is very vocal about recognizing individuality, which in turn can contribute to the success of a multicultural society. Scott, through the presentation of such characters, makes an informal announcement of the beginning of a new dawn in the history of modern India. Due to the synthesis of the culture of the East and the West, his characters, particularly the female characters show evidence of cultural hybridity which has led to the emergence of a multicultural society.

Another popular Raj novel, *Heat and Dust* by Ruth Praver Jhabvala published in 1975, traces the interaction between European and Indian cultures and suggests that “the differences of race fade into insignificance when the deepest needs of human nature seek fulfillment.”²⁴ The novel puts

²² Ibid, p. 403.

²³ Jason Howard Mezey, “Mourning the Death of the Raj? Melancholia as Historical Engagement in Paul Scott’s Raj Quartet.” *Studies in the Novel*, vol. 38, no. 3, 2006, p. 343.

²⁴ Yasmine Gooneratne, “The Expatriate Experience: The Novels of Ruth Praver Jhabvala and Paul Scott,” in *The British and Irish Novel since 1960*, (ed.) James Acheson (London: Palgrave Macmillan), 1991, p. 50.

forward new dimensions to the East-West encounter through the presentation of both British and Indian characters in the historical settings of both pre and post-independent India. The novel delineates the East-West encounter, symbolizing “the coming together of divergent cultures across oppositional histories”²⁵ and, through the predicament of an individual’s story, epitomizes the interaction of European and Indian Culture.

In the novel, we have two dynamic female characters who exemplify the multicultural values and lend new dimensions to Raj novels. The novel celebrates women’s strength and resilience and portrays the “feminist positives of validity and sincerity of the female search for identity, the enriching benefits of female relationships, the power of female bonding and the possibility of women living alone with dignity.”²⁶ If we peep into the pre-independent India of the 1920s, we have Olivia, a typical European mistress of a British officer, who is very vocal about India and asserts the possibility of being friends with the Indians. She says “That I don’t know India. It’s true I don’t, but what’s that got to do with it? People can still be friends, can’t they, even if it is India.”²⁷ She belongs to the new class of female who strongly advocates the union of people irrespective of race and nationality. She does not meddle with the customs and traditions of India rather; she respects them and considers that it is not wise on the part of the British to interfere with the Indian culture that has survived since ancient times. Olivia chooses to reserve her opinion while discussing the practice of suttee in India. Though declared illegal, there are cases of voluntary suttee in India of the 1920s, to which she states, “it’s part of their religion, isn’t it? I thought one wasn’t supposed to meddle with that. And quite apart from religion, it is their culture and who are we to interfere with anyone’s culture, especially an ancient one like theirs.”²⁸ Later she becomes close with the Nawab and gets pregnant and leaves her husband but decides to abort the baby. She surprises everybody by forfeiting the infant conceived out of her love with the Nawab, but she chooses to stay in India, the country she loved. There are critics like Kathleen Williams Renk who argues that “Olivia confuses the prescribed imperial relationship and, to a certain extent, contributes to the loss of empire through her naive attempt to cross prohibited barriers and understand an exotic culture, much in a way that Adela Quested in *A Passage to India* seeks to be a

²⁵ Jasbir Jain, “From Encounters to Introspection: Negotiating Cultural Pasts.” *Indian Literature*, vol. 54, no. 6, 2010, p. 134.

²⁶ Fadillah Merican, “Of Friendship and Motherhood: Feminist Positives in R.P. Jhabvala’s *Heat and Dust*.” *Akademika*, vol. 40, 1992, p. 41.

²⁷ Ruth Prawer Jhabvala, *Heat and Dust* (Great Britain: Abacus), 2011, p. 104.

²⁸ *Ibid*, p.60.

modern woman and collapse social barriers.”²⁹ However, through a careful examination of her reaction with other characters in the novel, we find that she is aware of both the imperial and native values and by crossing the prohibited barriers, she is seeking union with India and Indians in a conscious frame of mind.

There is an unnamed narrator in the post-independent India, who is on a mission to investigate the story of Olivia, the first wife of her grandfather. She is alien to Indian customs and traditions at the beginning, but she ultimately adopts the culture of India. She transforms from a sincere English woman to a genuine Indian with deep love and respect for India in the course of the novel. She shares the Indian ethos and values among other Indian characters and also adores Indian dress with firm passion. She has a routine indulgence in Hindi grammar and vocabulary and vows to help the suffering masses, loitering recklessly in the streets. The unnamed narrator shares a cordial relation with her landlord and is happy to share beautiful moments with him. In the process, she gets pregnant, and she is determined to have a child whose father is an Indian. For her, race, nationality and ethnicity do not, in any way, debar her from having the baby; instead, she regards that the baby can be the epitome of the union of the British and Indian values and customs. Her avowal to have a baby, illegally begotten with a married man despite the formal marriage, traces the spirit of multicultural values latent in her and shows how the binaries can come together and have a holy union. She loved India but is not a blind follower of traditional customs. She advises her landlord Inder Lal and later lover to consult the psychiatrist for his wife Ritu. She regards it is always wise to give her psychiatric care than to rely on the traditional methods of healing. She is concerned about the suffering masses loitering in the streets of India and tries her best to help them. She further decides to stay back in India alone following the footsteps of her grandmother.

Heat and Dust through the two alternate stories of a young English girl who comes to India in search of her family history and of her grandfather's first wife Olivia provides “the options available to women searchers- searchers after wholeness, meaning, transcendence and exaltation: qualities that convention and society seem to deny.”³⁰ Jhabvala herself being a woman and a European, married to an Indian and who lived in India for around twenty years is often critiqued for portraying the

²⁹ Kathleen Williams Renk, “Imperial Fantasies: Mourning the Loss of Empire in the Novels of Penelope Lively and Ruth Praver Jhabvala.” *Ariel: A Review of International English Literature*, vol. 42, no. 3-4, p. 228.

³⁰ Laurie Sucher, *The Fiction of Ruth Praver Jhabvala: The Politics of Passion* (Springer), 1989, p. 98.

evils of India but she skillfully presents the different stratum of human relationships in *Heat and Dust* through the presentation of two robust female characters who are the archetype of multicultural values. Jhabvala has rightly centred her narrative in the woman's perspective in the novel dealing with the British Raj as "women are important, perhaps more important than men as signifiers of change"³¹ during the period engulfed with colonialism and high nationalism.

The debut novel of Lakshmi Raj Sharma, *The Tailors Needle* published in 2009 is a tale of the juxtaposition of cultures and different mindsets of the people living in the first half of the twentieth century in India. It is a multi-layered and multi-genre novel that considers social, political, and cultural aspects of pre-independent India. It is a complex of stories, of a society where characters range from the Viceroy of India to the common domestic help. On the surface level, it appears to be the story of Sir Saraswati Chandra Ranbakshi or the 'Rai Bahadur' a Cambridge educated influential public figure of the time who oscillates between tradition and modernity and his three children, the elder daughter Maneka, the only son Yogendra and the younger daughter Sita. However, a careful analysis of the novel reveals that the plot centres more on Maneka, who embodies multicultural values and propagates multiculturalism at the time of intense nationalist movement. As Bhikhu Parekh says; "multiculturalism is neither a political doctrine nor a philosophical issue but actually a perspective on as a way of viewing human life,"³² Maneka has her distinct philosophy of viewing human life. She is free in her thoughts, liberal in her approach, distinct in her traits but radical in outlook and seems to be far ahead of her time. She represents the modern native Indian woman who is ready to accept the positives of other's cultures and, at the same time, prepared to question the drawbacks of one's culture as well. She is against the idea that a female should follow the path made by men, rather she believes in defining a path for herself. She is very practical in life. She is ready to accept challenges, quick to understand things and even bold to accept her mistakes. She boldly says, "traditions are meant to be broken."³³ She consoles Nimmy with confidence when she learns that Larry Stephens was playing foul with Nimmy. She says, "He cannot desert you! He cannot play with the lives of women. He is ruining

³¹ D.C.R.A Goonetilleke, "Disillusionment With More Than India: Ruth Praver Jhabvala's *Heat and Dust*," in *Towards a Transcultural Future: Literature and Society in a 'Post'-Colonial World*, (eds) Geoffrey V. Davis, Peter H. Marsden, Benedicte Ledent and Marc Delrez (Rodopi), 2005, p. 249.

³² Bhiku Parekh, *Rethinking Multiculturalism: Cultural Diversity and Political Theory* (Macmillan), 2000, p. 59.

³³ Lakshmi Raj Sharma, *The Tailor's Needle* (New Delhi: Penguin Books), 2012, p. 174.

womankind, isn't he?"³⁴ She dreamt of becoming a queen only at thirteen marrying Ranbir but once she lost the chance, she vowed to "migrate to Europe rather than remain an ordinary person in her country. Even at a time when Indian restaurants were unknown in Europe, her mind visualized the possibility of introducing the Westerner to Indian food."³⁵ She readily accepts the positives of the British culture and is also optimistic that even the British will acknowledge Indian values and cultures in the days to come. She loves her country but is even ready to migrate to other countries for better avenues. In doing so she emerges as a modern female with a cosmopolitan outlook when the entire country was immersed in the nationalist movement. She embodies the ideas suggested by Will Kymlicka who argues that "the basic premise of multiculturalism is that membership in a cultural community is essential to our personal identity and provides individuals with the necessary framework to exercise their true liberty."³⁶

Maneka is fashion conscious and doesn't believe in dressing like other Indian girls. "Having seen several films on the quiet, she knew what actresses wore. Most of her leisure passed in designing her dresses and coming up with different hairstyles."³⁷ She loved taking photographs and spent hours curling and designing her hair. She kept a perfume called Evening in Paris to use during her meetings with the people of the upper class and used the stronger scent of *itra* during her encounter with the gentry of the less upper class. "Her dressing table always had Afghan Snow, Yardley's soaps and powders, and various kinds of cosmetics – creams, kajal, and eyebrow pencils."³⁸ At the same time, she was also very fond of horse riding and felt "when she mounted a horse, she became more like a man."³⁹ She felt happy to ride a horse and felt that it increased her power and made her more compatible in society. "With her horsemanship and her training in revolver and rifle shooting, she felt as though she had almost liberated herself from the authority of patriarchal power."⁴⁰ She is even bold enough to argue with her father and is not happy with him as she feels he is trying to suppress the woman members of the family. She says to her mother Savitri, "Men have ruled the world because women like you have allowed them to do so. I believe that no man should ever be given

³⁴ Ibid, p. 106.

³⁵ Ibid, p. 31.

³⁶ Will Kymlicka, *Multicultural Citizenship: A Liberal Theory of Minority Rights* (Clarendon Press), 1995, p. 82-83.

³⁷ Sharma. *The Tailor's Needle*, p. 77.

³⁸ Ibid, p. 78.

³⁹ Ibid, p. 78.

⁴⁰ Ibid, p. 78.

so much importance.”⁴¹ She is farsighted and strongly supports the marriage of her brother with a girl of a lower caste. Over and above, she emerges as a distinct propagator of multiculturalism, a new voice of modern India seeking equality in all respects. The novel revisits multiculturalism from an Indian perspective which is substantiated by Lakshmi Raj Sharma himself when he mentioned in an interview that *The Tailor’s Needle* “is a political novel that is multicultural within an ethnic setting.”⁴²

Conclusion

After a careful analysis of the new brand of female characters in the select Raj novels, it can be argued that they changed the discourse of reading Raj novels, which is popularly read, only in the context of colonial and postcolonial studies. Their participation in the Raj era in different capacities lend them a distinct voice and they sketch their own story as pronounced by Burton who says, “feminism must produce a discourse that interrogates its own histories, particularly if it aspires to be something more than politics as usual.”⁴³ Multicultural literature is based on realism concerning race, class and gender and these novels are the careful record of different communities living together as participants of history. Multiculturalism seems embedded in these select texts that carefully record the death of the Raj, examining the politics of difference and the politics of recognition. This new class of female characters is like reformers aiming at the unification of the binaries. They do not oppose any individual; instead, they note the evolution of all the characters and their participation in society.

The Raj novels bear integral testimony to the history of modern India and are centred on the political aspects of the British Raj. However, in this article, an attempt is made to envisage more into the social aspects than to the political aspects of the time. In these select novels, the female characters propose public recognition of cultural differences to eradicate conflicts arising out of cultural differences⁴⁴ and promote equal respect for individuals, irrespective of race, class, nationality, culture and religion. They promulgate the acknowledgement of differences and establish an outlook in the society, acceptable to all sections of the people. The Raj

⁴¹ Ibid, p. 233.

⁴² Vivek Dwivedi, “Interview with Lakshmi Raj Sharma.” *Transnational Literature*, vol. 3, no. 2, 2011, p. 4.

⁴³ Antoinette Burton 1994. *Burdens of History: British Feminists, Indian Women, and Imperial Culture, 1865-1915* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press), p. 24.

⁴⁴ Charles Taylor, *Multiculturalism and Politics of Recognition* (Princeton: Princeton University Press), 1992.

novel, generally categorized as historical fiction, finds new vistas through this new class of female characters and they show how a relationship based on love may supersede the relationship based on power.

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WOMEN'S POLITICAL ACTIVISM IN THE ARAB WORLD

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Abstract: *“The oppressed Arab women” is one of the most promoted images of women in the Arab world. There has always been a certain perception about women in the Muslim-Arab region, that they have no rights, they are slaves in their own houses and they are owned by their husbands. The reality is that women face issues and gender discrimination everywhere around world and Arab countries make no exception, only that the weight of religious and traditional society measures in less women rights and equal opportunities. The last decade has been a period of many changes for Arab women, their role in society has evolved significantly in certain countries, they are becoming politically active and are positively involved in reforming and shaping the new modern Arab societies.*

Keywords: *women, empowerment, political activism, Islam, Arab countries, reform*

Introduction

The status of women in the Arab world has been highly debated, always oscillating whether the source of their condition has religious or cultural grounds. The most repeated discourse in media, political arena or even among academics is that the status of women in Arab countries is directly linked to religion, women have no choices, are totally oppressed in the Islamic patriarchal frame where the man's power has no limits. Before Islam women in the Arab world had no rights, they were mere objects, they were the source of procreation, however within some wealthy tribes, there were women that managed to carry more important positions, over exceeding that wifely-motherly status. Islam came and offered a series of rights which at that time, women in the Western world did not have, but in the same time drew some boundaries for them to respect within the *ummah*¹. Discussing about women in the Arab world means implicitly discussing about women

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¹ The word means community in Arabic and it refers to THE MUSLIM COMMUNITY, a concept that was born with the birth of Islam, the *ummah* is a nation-based idea, regardless the ethnicity or geographical settlement, the unity and strength is linked by the religious belief, Allah (God) is the supreme authority, Mohammad is his messenger and the Quran represents the words of God descended on earth.

in Islam, and this is a very complex and multi-sided topic. As it is well known Islam is an all-comprising religion that offers guiding in all aspects of human life. The Quran is the primary source of the *Shariah*, meaning Islamic Law, followed by the *Sunnah* which represents the body of customs: traditionally, socially and legally. To understand the real status of women as it is presented in the Quran and Sunnah one needs to have a good knowledge of the religious scriptures. Legally only the Muslim scholars have the answers to all questions, because they are the only ones who officially have the authority to practice *ijtihad*². In theory, the *ijtihad* was completed about half of millennium ago, and belongs to the big four schools of thought: Maliki, Hanafi, Hanbali and Shafi'i; but the needs of modern contemporary life are making this it imperative to find new ways of interpreting the religious writings. Thus, because "Sharia functioned as an ethical code that affected the social, educational, cultural, economic, and political practices in the Muslim community"³, it has been always the source for setting women status in Muslim society, but the application of the Islamic Law differs from one country to another, as a result the Arab woman doesn't have the same condition in all societies across Middle East and North Africa. We shall see that women rights application across the Arab region is not only influenced by religion, but also by culture and other elements. In a globalized world, where social media plays a very important role, women status in Islam, in particular in the MENA⁴ region cannot remain the same.

Religious background

The Arab countries are religious societies, Islam is at the core of the personal (private) and public life, Islam is present in every sector of human life, and Muslims resort to Islamic teachings in guiding their everyday life. But the Islamic world is not a monolithic one, there is a lot of diversity, Muslims around the world have very different opinions regarding to what it means to be a Muslim woman, their views and beliefs are a result of a complex combination of factors: currents they belong to: traditionalism, fundamentalism, revivalism, liberalism and so on; combined with the cultural background; the social class they are part of; and the personal experiences they have gained throughout their lives. As societies evolved, the woman's role has changed too, Muslim traditional societies have been trying to alter women's emancipation, always quoting

² Meaning interpretation, the *ijtihad* is the science of interpretations and rulemaking derived from the Quran and Sunnah. The root of the word is J-H-D and the words that derive from this root are related to the meaning of 'struggle' or 'strive'.

³ L. John, Esposito and Natana J. Delong-Bas, *Shariah. What everyone needs to know*, Oxford University Press, New York, 2018, p.33.

⁴ Middle East and North Africa.

the holy book and writings to support the humble-submissive-wifely-motherly model of a woman.

Now what does the main two sources of Islamic faith, the Quran and Sunna, do really say about women and their position in society? The prophet Mohammad when he started to preach about Islam, he made it clear that this new monotheistic religion, which was supposedly revealed to him by God through the angel Gabriel, is actually a completion of Christianity and Judaism, recognizing Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses and Jesus and his predecessors. In the Quran there are many references to the former religious writings like the Old and New Testament:

”O mankind! Be dutiful to your Lord, Who created you from a single person (Adam), And from him (Adam) He created his wife [Hawwâ’ (Eve)], and from them both He created many men and women; and fear Allâh though Whom you demand (your mutual rights), and (do not cut the relations of) the wombs (kinship). Surely, Allâh is ever an All-Watcher over you.” (4:1)⁵

This surah is similar to what can be found at the beginning of the Bible, in the Genesis, or in the Talmud, the creation of the first man, Adam, and afterwards of Eve, who was made from Adam’s rib, and was to be his companion. This surah is a source for gender-based discussions, where traditionalists would point out that women are subordinated to men because they are the second creation. Christianity and Judaism are also patriarchal religions, historically speaking, the role of men in societies has always been on a leading position in comparison with women (in public arena - in institutions, and at home - provider and head of the family), nevertheless, with secularization and modernization the patriarchal attitudes have changed, their roles in society are becoming equal, as gender equality is becoming an important factor that stimulates economic growth, even modern Biblical approaches now consider man and woman as equal. At the beginning of the January 2021, Pope Frances changed the church laws, by officially offering women the opportunity to hold more diverse roles within the Mass⁶, women inclusion in church structures is a form of promoting gender equality, even if they still cannot become priests.

⁵ *Quran*, English Translation of the meanings and commentary, King Fahd Complex for the printing of the Holy Qur’an, Madinah, 1997, p.105.

⁶ Paolo Rodari, *Vaticano, il Papa apre alle donne per le letture e la distribuzione dell'Eucarestia*, in Repubblica,

https://www.repubblica.it/esteri/2021/01/11/news/vaticano_si_alle_donne_per_l_e_letture_e_la_distribuzione_dell_eucarestia-282088907/ [accessed 12 February 2021]

The following surah from the Quran comes to reinforce this idea of woman's submission to man:

"Men are the protectors and maintainers of women, because Allâh has made one of them to excel the other, and because they spend (to support them) from their means. Therefore the righteous women are devoutly obedient (to Allah and their husbands), and guard in their husband's absence what Allâh orders them to guard (e.g. their chastity, their husband's property). As to those women on whose part you see ill-conduct, admonish them (first), (next) refuse to share their beds, (and last) beat them (lightly, if it is useful); but if they obey you, seek not against them means (of annoyance). Surely, Allâh is Ever Most Hight, Most Great."(4:34)⁷

This verse is a clear example of the woman's role in Islam, her position in relation with her husband, it is a controversial surah and there have been many interpretations to what does the text really mean, underlining that many words mean different things, so there cannot be one single meaning of it, as a result the translation is not an accurate one. This surah is controversial as it gives the husband permission to beat his wife, if she disobeys him. Classical scholars would actually consider the literally meaning of the text, which is to physically hit the wife. A *hadith*⁸ from Sunan ibd Majah comes to complement this surah by saying that the man can only hit his wife gently, without leaving marks. However pro-reformism activists are asking for exclusion of such a surah which is denigrating for women, not only does it approve domestic violence, but it also gives a man more rights than a woman, proclaiming his authority over her. However, there are scholars who claim this surah is misunderstood, man has the role to provide the necessary for their wives, and "Allâh has made one of them to excel the other" does not mean that man is greater and has authority over his wife, but it would actually refer that God gave an extra role to man, which is to financially support his family, and "beat them" was wrongly and contextually mistranslated, allegedly meaning to gently touch her with something unharmed.

Scholars claim that Islam is a religion that protects women in many ways, including defamation:

"And those who accuse chaste women, and produce not four witnesses, flog them with eighty stripes, and reject their

⁷ Quran, *op.cit.*, p.112.

⁸ A hadith is a story telling about the words of the prophet Mohammad.

testimony forever. They indeed are the Fâsiqûn (liars, rebellious, disobedient to Allâh”⁹(24:4)

So, those who accuse a woman of adultery must bring four male testimonies, otherwise they will be the ones that will risk eighty lashes, but somehow in the case of the husband his testimony is worth four testimonies, so his words can send his wife to death by stoning:

“And for those who accuse their wives, but have no witnesses except themselves, let the testimony of one be four testimonies (i.e. testifies four times) by Allâh that he is one of those who speak the truth.”¹⁰ (24:6)

The husband can testify alone, he only needs to utter the testimony four times, so it would be like swearing his truth four times in front of God, and after a fifth person would invoke a curse upon him if he is lying (24:7), that would be enough for an Imam to order the wife to be stoned till death. An exception can be made if they offer her the change to swear four times that her husband is lying (24:8), in that case they will avoid stoning, but most probably she will receive 100 lashes. In case of a wife, if she accuses her husband of adultery, her testimony is not enough, her testimony is not worth four testimonies like in the case of her husband, her testimony is not even worth one, a testimony of a woman in Islam is worth half of man’s testimony:

“O you who believe! But if a debtor is of poor understanding, or weak, or is unable to dictate for himself, then let his guardian dictate in justice. And get two witnesses out of your own men (available), then a man and two women, such as you agree fir witnesses, so that if one of them (two women) errs, the other can remind her. And the witnesses should not refuse when they are called (for evidence). ...”¹¹ (2:282)

This surah provides the basis for the Islamic principle that two women are worth one man when providing testimony in financial issues, but scholars have exported this particular case and generalised it. Even if some people claim this principle is a myth, and justify it by invoking some hadiths that say both men and women are equally reliable as long as they have integrity and good memory, the truth is that today in many Islamic countries, in Shariah and family courts the testimony of a women equals

⁹ Ibidem, p.467.

¹⁰ Ibidem.

¹¹ Ibidem, p.65.

half of a man. Thus, in case a wife accuses her husband of adultery, she needs four male witnesses (or eight women) to testify and if she cannot prove it, she will receive punishment for slander.

In case of divorce, a man can easily break the marriage by uttering the repudiation statement three times (*talaq*), the woman cannot do anything about it, she will be financially supported by her husband for a period of isolation until they will be sure she is not pregnant (three menses), in the situation she is pregnant it is recommended that they get together, but, if they don't, he has the obligation to offer child support (surah 2, verse 228), in the situation she is not pregnant, she will take her belongings and leave without any strings. When women want to divorce, they have to appeal to a higher power, like a court or religious authority, by forwarding a petition to support their cause, for a *khul'* divorce. But the qadi or imam have to investigate the case and call the husband for questioning, and many times the divorce is not grounded based on lack of solid proofs.

When Islam is accused of being a religion that oppresses women, scholars defend it proclaiming that women and men are equal in Islam, that woman's position within the religion is misunderstood. And they support their claim by quoting the following verses:

“And whoever does righteous good deeds, male or female, and it is a (true) believer [in the Oneness of Allâh (Muslim)], such will enter Paradise and not the least injustice, even to the size of a speck on the back of a date-stone, will be done to them.”¹² (4:124)

“Whoever works righteousness – whether male or female - while he (or she) is a true believer (of Islâmic Monotheism) verily, to him We will give a good life (in this world with respect, contentment and lawful provision), and We shall pay them certainly a reward in proportion to the best of what they used to do (i.e. Paradise in the Hereafter).”¹³ (16:97)

“Whosoever does an evil deed, will not be required except the like thereof; and whoever does a righteous deed, whether male or female and is a true believer (in the Oneness of Allâh), such will enter Paradise, where they will be provided therein (with all the things in abundance) without limit.”¹⁴ (40:40)

“O mankind! We have created you from a male and a female, and made you into nations and tribes, that you may know one another. Verily, the most honourable of you with

¹² Ibidem, p.129.

¹³ Ibidem, p.365.

¹⁴ Ibidem, p.637.

Allâh is the (believer) who has Al-Taqwâ [i.e. he is one of the Muttaqûn (the pious. See V.2:2)]. Verily, Allâh is All-Knowing, Well-Acquainted (with all things).¹⁵ (49:13)

The above verses indeed refer to an equality between man and woman for God, an equality in rewards in terms of righteousness and duties vis-à-vis God, but the earthly criteria by which a man or a woman are judged differ, as a result their position in this earthly life is not equal.

Now there are traditions that have been well embedded, and treated as if they are lawful, even if they do not originate in religion per se. According to the Islamic Laws a girl/woman can refuse a marriage, but arranged marriages in Islam are very common, and still practiced. There are Hadiths that underline that the Prophet Mohammad helped with household chores, but tradition makes it shameful for a man to take care of the house, making it entirely the woman's responsibility. The veiling of a woman is considered a symbol for Muslim women, but in fact veiling precedes Islam and is not specific for Muslims, the Quran does not speak about veiling, but about women dressing respectfully.

In theory women should have the freedom of speech, the liberty of replying, defending or addressing others in public, the Prophet Mohammad never forbade women to speak in public, the Quran just says that she should speak "in honourable manner"¹⁶ (33:32) which means they are allowed to speak, despite the fact that in many Muslim countries women are shamed for freely speaking.

In terms of the rights to work, the Shariah does not forbid the woman to work, but she can only do that under certain circumstances, there are three main conditions: first of all, she needs her husband's approval; secondly, the job should not put at risk her personal integrity, chastity or religion; thirdly, the job should be fit for a woman. The legal right to work for a woman is somehow contradicted by the husband's right to prevent her, as seen at the beginning of the verse 4:34, it is the man's duty to support her, so if he refuses, or anyone who is her guardian (if she is not married that may be the father, or the brother), then her right to work is violated.

Women's activism in politics is condemned by conservative scholars, the political arena is made for men, not women, somehow there are religious sources available to support both cases: women can occupy leading positions versus women cannot occupy such positions. Those who oppose it, invoke from the Quran things like "men have a degree (of

¹⁵ Ibidem, p.703.

¹⁶ Ibidem, p.566.

responsibility) over them”¹⁷ (2:228), or surah 4, verse 34 (quoted on the 3rd page), or a hadith that says “no people will ever prosper who entrust their leadership to a woman”¹⁸. On the other side, those who support women to activate in politics present sources that are considered by them clear evidence of women being acknowledged in leading position in Islam. One of the most invoked characters is the famous Aisha, the third wife of the prophet Mohammad, after his death she is known to be counselling the prophet’s companions, she even led the army in the Battle of Camel (656 AD). Another invoked character is Khadija, the first wife of the prophet, she was a businesswoman and a widow who had hired Mohammed to travel with her merchandise, afterwards she was the one to propose marriage to him, through a third person. A third character invoked to support the idea of women’s leadership is queen of Sheba (or Saba’), in surah 34, who is acknowledged as a leader and described in a favourable and righteous way.

Modern struggles for women

The 20th century is marked by many writings and debates, on a worldwide scale, about women’s status in Islam that “gives no sign of ebbing any time soon”¹⁹. Identities consciousness started to be a real issue in the Arab world as a result, or better said, as a reaction to the Western colonialism.

Feminists movements that started in the 19th century in the West, echoed in the Islamic world in the 20th, such big movements that were growing up in the Western world started to determine and influence a similar voice of argumentation for women in the Muslim world. But the historical, religious and cultural backgrounds are totally different and the diversity across the entire region is overwhelming even if we narrow it down just to the Arab world, the woman’s situation differs in terms of regional-geographical setting, nationality, ethnical background, social classes, economic situation and even religion affiliation (as there are Sunni and Shia or other religions apart from Islam). The Arab countries have struggled with many aspects in the 20th century, with ideologies like nationalism, pan-Arabism, Islamism; with echoes of the Six Day War, with the Palestinian issue, with the Iranian problem, Civil Wars, birth of extremism and terrorism and many others, and most of the time “women

¹⁷ Ibidem, p.49.

¹⁸ Sunan an-Nasa’i 5388, Book 49, Hadith 10, Vol. 6, Book 49, Hadith 5390, *Chapter 8: Prohibition of Appointing Women for Judgment*, <https://sunnah.com/nasai:5388> [accessed 12 February 2021]

¹⁹ Tariq Ramadan, *Islam: The Essentials*, Penguin Books, United Kingdom, 2017, p.215.

problems” or “women agenda” were postponed. Tunisia and Egypt are the pioneers who acknowledged women’s role in society, for instance, Habib Bourguiba had a vision of a modern state building, in 1956 he passed the *Code du Statut personnel*²⁰, which was offering the Tunisian’s society progressive laws that set equality among men and women: equality of men and women in front of the law, stipulation of two sides consensus in marriage, women’s right to divorce, abolishing repudiation and polygamy²¹. Egypt started with feminist organizations: Egyptian Feminist Union in 1923 (by Huda Sharawi), Muslim Woman’s Society in 1936 (by Zainab Al Ghazali), Daughter of the Nil Union in 1948 (by Doria Shafik), which unfortunately, under Nasser’s rule, went under state control.

Muhammad Iqbal Lahori (1877-1938), known as “the spiritual father of Pakistan”, was one of the most famous activists of the th century to support reform in Islam, and regarding women rights he firmly believed that it represents one of the biggest issues in Islam, he was among the first to strongly supported gender equality and the need to separate women’s role in society.²² First of all a reform in Islam would need to happen with women participation, women should have a voice and contribute with ideas, secondly reform should include all aspects of human rights: right the equal treatment, right to education, right to equal chances in work field, right to political participation, right to choose life partner, right to divorce, right to equal remuneration as men, right to be protected from discrimination and abuses and so on.

Education is probably the most important factor that influences political participation and activism. Female education has been a problem in the Arab world, between the 50’s and 70’s girls would enrol mainly for elementary school, “female enrolments at a secondary level in virtually all of the Arab countries are not equivalent to male enrolments”²³, but the real significant gap between male and female was represented by higher/university education. Fewer years of schooling, in comparison with male’s, mean smaller rates on the labour market, and in the same time less representation in politics. Women used to play a minor role in the civil

²⁰ Code du statut personnel du 13 août 1956,
http://www.ilo.org/dyn/natlex/natlex4.detail?p_lang=en&p_isn=73374 [accessed 12 February 2021]

²¹ Tunisia is the only Arab country, until now, to have officially banned polygamous marriages.

²² Bruce B. Lawrence, „Islam in South Asia”, in John L. Esposito (editor), *The Oxford Encyclopaedia of Modern Islamic World*, Oxford University Press, New York, 1995, volume 2.

²³ Baha Abu-Laban and Sharon McIrvin Abu-Laban, „Education and Development in the Arab World”, *The Journal of Developing Areas*, vol. 10, no. 3, 1976, pp. 285–304. JSTOR, www.jstor.org/stable/4190377, (doc. p. 291), (accessed 12.02.2021).

society, but the last two decades brought positive changes, education is imperative for building a healthy modern society. “Between 1990 and 2000-2004, six Arab countries ranked above the world average of 76.5%. Bahrain raised its literacy rate from 74.6% to 84.2%, Jordan from 72.2% to 81%, Lebanon from 73.1% to 82%, Qatar from 76% to 82.3%, and the United Arab Emirates from 70% to 80.7%.”²⁴ But that is not the case everywhere, for instance in Egypt, in 2017 literacy rates reached only 65.5% of women.²⁵

As literacy rates grew, so did rates of women getting their higher education diploma, and as a result we could observe more women’s representation in the labour market, in the private sector, but also in government sector, political arena, in the legislative, executive and judiciary branches. But despite rates growth women remain mostly “underrepresented at all levels of governance in the Arab region”²⁶, and that is an issue that reflects in economic development.

After long struggles, women’s suffrage won in all the Arab countries, making it possible for all Arab women to vote. Lebanon was the first country to grant women the right to vote in 1952, Syria a year later in 1953, afterwards others followed: Egypt and Comoros 1956, Tunisia 1957, Somalia 1960, Mauritania 1961, Algeria 1962, Maroc 1963, Libya and Sudan 1964, Yemen 1967, Jordan 1974, Iraq 1980, Djibouti 1986, Oman Sultanate 1994, Palestine 1996 (although there were local elections where women voted in 1976 in the West Bank), Qatar 1998.²⁷ Most Gulf countries have delayed this moment, Bahrain offered them this right in 2002, United Arab Emirates and Kuwait in 2005, and last country, not only among the Arab countries, but the last country on Earth to grant women the right to vote was the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, in 2015 women managed victoriously to vote for the first time, and even to run their candidature. Most Gulf countries organise mainly municipality elections, parliamentary

²⁴ Hassan R. Hammoud, *Illiteracy in the Arab world*, 2005, Background paper prepared for the Education for All Global Monitoring Report 2006 Literacy for Life, p.4, <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000146282>, (accessed 12.01.2021).

²⁵ CIA Factbook, *Egypt*, Literacy,

<https://www.cia.gov/the-world-factbook/countries/egypt/>, (accessed 9.02. 2021).

²⁶ UNITED NATIONS ESCWA Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia, *Women’s Political Representation in the Arab Region*, Beirut 2017, available at: <https://www.unescwa.org/publications/women-political-representation-arab-region>, (accessed 9.02. 2021).

²⁷ I’ve listed all the 22 Arab countries which are part of The Arab League, even if Somalia, Djibouti and Comoros may not seem Arabs based on ethnicity, they are considered Arabic countries as long as they have Arabic as their official language (even if it not the only official language).

(Consultative Assemblies) are partially elected, Saudi Arabia is the only country to appoint 100% of the members in the assembly.

There is still a gap between men's and women's representation in politics at a worldwide scale, but in many Arab countries, years in a row women's representation in politics has been absent: "In the formal political system of the Arabian Peninsula women do not exist. They are not judges, police officers, army commanders, ministers, tribal leaders or heads of states. They do not sit on tribal councils..., municipal councils, or legislative or consultative assemblies".²⁸ Starting with the 90's things changed, according to a report issued by the World Bank²⁹, across the Middle East and North Africa, in 1994, women represented only 4% of the total representation in national parliaments (consultative councils included, even if from all the Gulf countries only two councils, Kuwait and Bahrain, have legislative authority). The biggest percentage of women representation in parliaments in MENA reached 17.085% in 2016, while 2020 has registered lower rates 16.612%.

In Gulf countries, even if women rights are not met at right standards, there is a political inclusion more visible in some of these countries. For instance, the United Arab Emirates have 50% seats dedicated to women: "As per a directive by H. H. Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed Al Nahyan, President of the UAE, Emirati women must occupy 50 per cent of the Federal National Council's (FNC) seats, 20 seats for men and 20 for women"³⁰; which makes it the Arab country with the highest female representation and ranks 4th on a global scale. It is fair to say that the Council's role does not have same power in the government apparatus as a normal Parliament would, but the equality proportions of female-male representations is sizable. In 2018, United Arab Emirates appointed 9 women as ministers, contributing significantly to gender balance in society and women's empowerment. Same year, Bahrain's parliament registered a premier when in December 2018 Fawzia Abdulla Yusuf Zainal became the first woman to lead it.

Jordan is a country started in 1995 implementation of reforms to increase women's presence in politics, but it was not until 2019 that they managed to occupy key positions, 7 women out of a cabinet of 28, leading

²⁸ Cited in J. E. Peterson, „The Political Status of Women in the Arab Gulf States”, *Middle East Institute*, vol. 43, no. 1, 1989, pp. 34–50, available at: www.jstor.org/stable/4327879, p.34, (accessed 9.02.2021).

²⁹ World Bank, *Proportions of Seats held by women in national parliaments (%) – Middle East and North Africa*, <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SG.GEN.PARL.ZS?locations=ZQ>, (accessed 12.02.2021).

³⁰ The Federal National Council, available at: <https://u.ae/en/about-the-uae/the-uae-government/the-federal-national-council->, (accessed 9.02.2021).

key ministries like tourism, economy, social development, media and public transportation.

The Arab Spring and women's political activism

The revolutionary flame that caught the Arab countries happened with the participation of citizens from all classes and women were a very important part of it. The Arab Spring was a result of years of dictatorship, corruption, poverty, lack of opportunities, violation of human right and, of course, violation of women rights and gender discrimination and having had suffered greatly it was natural for women to participate and make their strong voices to be heard. The 2011 uprisings caused a significant shift of women's political role in the region, women played a key role in many of the countries caught by the revolutionary flame. Tunisia, Libya, Egypt and Yemen overthrew their leaders, Bahrain's regime survived, while Syria became a disaster and the number one 'refugee exporter'. In all these countries women stood on the front lines, demanding reforms, rights, equal opportunities and freedom. Taking into account that, in many of those Arab countries, women's enrolment into university is higher than men³¹, and their potential is significant, it can be stated that these countries "will not succeed unless women are fully incorporated into political and economic life"³².

In Tunisia, place where the revolution started and gave the tone to others, women of all ages and origins, with veil or without, were everywhere on the streets, side by side with men, demanding national dignity, freedom, end of poverty, political repression and unemployment. They called it Jasmine Revolution, it took them 28 days of very intense civil manifestation on the streets but also on social media to pun and end to 23 years of Zine El Abidine Ben Ali regime.

Lina ben Mhenni was³³ a vivid activist during the Tunisian revolution, she was present on the streets but also on online, writing on her blog³⁴ in

³¹ World Bank MENA developing report, *Opening Doors. Gender equality and development in the Middle East and North Africa*, The World Bank, Washington, 2013, p.34-37,

<http://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/338381468279877854/pdf/Main-report.pdf>, (accessed 10.02.2021).

³² Carol Gioacomo, *Women Fight to Define the Arab Spring*, in The New York Times, 10 Nov. 2012, available at:

https://www.nytimes.com/2012/11/11/opinion/sunday/women-fight-to-define-the-arab-spring.html?_r=0 (accessed 10.02.2021).

³³ Lina Bin Mhenni unfortunately passed away in January 2020 due to complications caused by an autoimmune disease.

³⁴ Lina B. Mhenni, *A Tunisian Girl*, <http://atunisiangirl.blogspot.com/>, (accessed 10.02.2021).

Arabic, French and English, about the need of reform and radical change, promoting freedom and civil rights. Lina was nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize in 2011 for her strong voice, her constant activism and contribution to the revolution.

Emna ben Jemaa and Jawhara Ettis are two other powerful names behind the Tunisia's revolution who became the protagonists of the documentary *Women in the Arab World/A Revolution in Four Seasons*³⁵ by journalist and producer Jessie Deeter. They are presented as representatives of two political spheres in opposition, Emna ben Jemaa, a journalist and a lecturer with strong secular beliefs, and Jawhara Ettis, a professor with strong Islamists beliefs who joins the Ennahda party, both were supporting women's political activism and inclusion but from different perspectives. Emna started to report the revolution from day one, immediately after the immolations of Mohamed Bouazizi, then afterwards she was on a daily basis present on the streets and blogging in the evening everything that was happening, risking her security, risking of becoming a target of the police. Emna ben Jemaa always dreamed of a democratic developed country like Sweden and France, and new that after the president stepped down reform would not be easy. She feared that the increase popularity of Islamist party Ennahda would make the country go backwards, and even if they will not use oppressive and punishing methods, she feared if they were to gain power, they would slowly work in changing the Tunisian youth mentality towards a religious state, this is why she tried to support independent candidates running for the National Constituent Assembly, people who would have the role to give Tunisia the new modern constitution. Jawhara Ettis, on the other hand, was not on the street during the days of the revolution, being on her first year of teaching in University she wanted to be cautious, secondly her father didn't allow her, so she obeyed. But immediately after Ben Ali stepped down, she joined Ennahda party, youth division as responsible for the young girls and started her politically career actively, preparing herself for the elections from December 2011 when she ran for a position in the National Constituent Assembly, and actually won. She was one of the 217 people who were meant to create the new constitution, and one of the 89 Ennahda representatives who owned the majority seats in this constituent body. There were 59 women elected to serve the country in this process, reaching a percentage of almost 31%, more than many other countries, as "globally women have been the single largest underrepresented group in

³⁵ Real Stories, *Women in the Arab World/A Revolution in Four Seasons*, published on YouTube 19.04.2020 available at:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CUI1GVLHm_g, (accessed 10.02.2021).

constitutional negotiations”³⁶, and their participation was a step towards greater women’s inclusion.

Since the Revolution, Tunisia’s women made progress in extending their rights and participation in the political arena, with the 2014 Constitution equalities of rights were proclaimed between men and women without any discrimination (Article 21), the state guarantees women’s representation in elected bodies (Article 34), the right to work for every citizen, male and female, along with the right to decent working conditions and a fair wage (Article 74), the state commits to protect women’s accrued rights and work to strengthen and develop those rights (Article 46), but despite all that, the implementation of these rights is still fragile.

In 2017, in Tunisia a new premier among all Arab countries happened, the state annulled a restriction that violated the 2014 Constitution by passing an Amendment to the Personal Status Code which allowed Muslim women to marry non-Muslim men. Tunisian’s women activist long lobbied for this to happen and it represented another great step of women’s emancipation.

In Egypt, at least half of the protesters marching on the streets during the time of revolution were women. They demanded freedom and social justice along with everyone else. While waiting for Mubarak to step down the situation was ideal, the army was not taking action against the people, representatives of the Muslim Brotherhood seemed to want the same things, nobody knew what was about to happen. The documentary *Egyptian women and the Arab Spring*³⁷, presents the harsh reality women had to face after the Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak stepped down, when the army took control of the country. Women protestants became the target of serious physical and sexual abuses not only of the army representatives but also of the co-fellow’s revolutionaries from the streets. The documentary has three main characters, Hend Nafea, Khadiga Nennawi and Mariam Kirollos, three women who have campaigned assiduously during the uprisings, pleading for women’s rights, dignity, freedoms and social justice. Protests continued long after the fall of Mubarak, on 8th March women tried to celebrate on the streets of Cairo Women’s Day but unexpectedly, male protestants called from them *to get*

³⁶ Nanako Tamaru, Olivia Holt-Ivry and Marie O'Reilly, *Beyond Revolution: How women influenced Constitution making in Tunisia*, United Nations Development Programme Case Study, 2018, p.3, available at: https://www.inclusivesecurity.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/Beyond-Revolution_Constitution-Making-in-Tunisia.pdf, (accessed 11.02.2021).

³⁷ DW documentary, *Egyptian women and the Arab Spring (1/2)*, published on YouTube on 25.01.2021 available at:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fbCSYJDeoCI&has_verified=1, (accessed 11.02.2021).

out, they started to harass them, afterwards the army interfered and human rights were seriously violated. There were many women arrested, they were tortured, harassed and threatened with rape. The police performed virginity tests on some of the women who were arrested for demonstrating pro-democracy, this caused outrage not only in Egypt, but all around the world. Major General Abdel Fattah Al Sissi admitted the virginity checks were performed, motivating the action as a form of prevention, so that women would not claim they were raped during custody.

Protests continued throughout the year, in December, the army clings to power, and the following protests became very violent, the pro-democracy activists demonstrating against the military interference were strongly targeted. Hend Nafea was beaten by soldiers, dragged into a building in Tahrir Square, stripped of her clothes and humiliated, they released her after losing consciousness and sent her to a hospital. Khadiga Hennawi, who was there only to bring food for the protesters, was also taken into custody and beaten, and many other women were assaulted. After this so called 'cabinet clashes' more women gathered on the streets of Cairo, marching while screaming slogans like 'Women of Egypt are a red line' or 'Women of Egypt will not be stripped'. Despite many women being victims of severe violence's and harassment Hend and others were summoned in court to be trailed for charges like: assaulting police officers, damaging public properties, throwing bricks, inciting riots, possessing weapons and many other. Hend eventually was forced to flee the country in 2015 after being sentenced to 25 years of prison for things she didn't do, she is a victim of the revolution now living in exile, activating as a human rights advocate.

Women in Egypt during the uprisings were a punching bag, but they continued their activism on the streets and on media. Despite all efforts women's right in Egypt are hardly met, women's political representation is meaningless, gender equality continues to be a distant dream. In Egypt too many impediments stood in the way, like the rise of Islamists movement which caused the undermine of feminist activism, society traditional boundaries for women and others. Here is a list of women's paradoxical circumstances in Egypt:

| | Opportunities | Impediments |
|--|---|--|
| Strengths for Egyptian Feminism | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Long tradition of Arab feminism, since the days of Hoda Sharawi; • Constant public exposure to challenges to women's rights & freedoms, via media, Internet, and other forms of information technology; • New openness overcoming taboos of the past; • No more fear; • Ability to demand accountability for crimes against women; • Ability to demand policies and laws that do not violate women's rights and freedoms | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Backlash against feminist activism; • Not enough (liberal / secular) women involved in politics; • Sexual violence and intimidation targeting women. |
| Weaknesses of Egyptian Feminism | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publicity through media and information technology will help keep the issues alive, especially in the face of adversity; but this is not power; • Claims of Islamist leanings toward orthodox policies can put the government in a critical light. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Islamist campaigns to undermine feminist movements; • Sexual violence and intimidation targeting women; • The military's (SCAF) involvement in, and manipulation of, the government/ politics. |
| | | |

Source³⁸

Women's participation during the Arab Spring have been also significant in other countries like, Algeria, Libya or Syria, and even in countries where the uprisings were less violent or meaningful like Jordan, Morocco or Bahrain. It appears that with the Arab Revolution a Gender Revolution unfolded, the system needed a reform in terms of women's

³⁸ Hayat Alvi, *Women's Rights Movements in the 'Arab Spring': Major Victories or Failures for Human Rights?*, Journal of International Women's Studies, 16(3), 2015, (pages 294-318), available at: <http://vc.bridgew.edu/jiws/vol16/iss3/19>, (accessed 11.02.2021).

rights and inclusion. "For years, women in these countries have suffered from gender discrimination. For this reason, in the popular uprisings in these countries, women played a prominent role; and without the presence of women, victory would not have been possible. Now at the moment of victory, the women in these countries demand their rights. Only when women achieve their rights can we say that the "Arab Spring" has commenced. So far, it would appear that the situation of Tunisian women is better than that of women elsewhere".³⁹

Conclusions

Women's role in Arab societies is defined significantly by the religious background of their societies. The trickiness of Islam and its religious scriptures is that people can find arguments to support, and in the same time, to decline women's equality to men and their activism in the public sphere. As shown in the beginning of the article, both conservative and liberal mindset can interpret the scriptures in favour of their beliefs, they can provide arguments to support their dissimilar standpoints. Besides the religious background, there are other elements which hold down women's development, there are the cultural-traditional grounds that limit women's empowerment, the late access to education⁴⁰, poor access to significant jobs, geographical aspects (rural versus urban) and many others.

Women in the Arab world are still underrepresented in the public sphere, there are many issues related to their rights, but it is fair to point out that in the past 10 years things have changed, in some countries more substantially, in some less. Since the formation of the new modern Arab states, women have faced many struggles, the process of emancipation was slow, but during the last decade things have been moving better, except for the torn-war countries like Syria or Yemen. The Arab Spring was a moment of awakening, women participated actively on the frontlines and on all social media platforms, trying to push for change and reform. With the Uprisings women have been fighting on three fronts: first of all, they fought for freedom, justice and democracy, secondly, they fought for women's rights, for ending their discrimination in society, for minimising the gender gap, and thirdly, they fought to push law-reformation, to ensure laws that will guarantee their social and political rights.

³⁹ Shirin Ebadi, „Reflections on Women in the Arab Spring, Women's Voices from Around the World", In *Celebration of International Women's Day 2012*, Edited by Kendra Heideman and Mona Youssef Designed by Kendra Heideman, *Middle East Program Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars*, 2012, p. 2, available at: <https://www.wilsoncenter.org/sites/default/files/media/documents/article/International%20Women%27s%20Day%202012.pdf> (accessed 11.02.2021).

⁴⁰ At MENA level, female citizens education strong trends start in the 90s.

Tunisia is definitely the best success story in terms of women empowerment, women's right and political activism. Gulf countries are registering good progress, the percentage of women university enrolment is higher than men's enrolment, women are starting to occupy more governmental positions and are making statement also in the business world, in domains that used to have male monopole like oil-gas field or fintech. Forbes magazine has been organising tops with the most influential women in the Arab world and it has underlined that women "have advanced in industries that were typically male dominated, breaking the proverbial glass ceiling"⁴¹. Even Saudi Arabia, that has a totalitarian regime with total enforcement of Sharia Law and a very conservative civil society, has been showing proofs of change in terms of women's rights: women were given the right to vote in 2015, they were finally given the right to drive in 2018 and while in 2019 the guardianship law was modified allowing women over 21 to apply for passport and travel without approval from their legal guardian. Of course, there are many laws that need to be changed, not just in Saudi Arabia, but in most Arab countries, laws that will guarantee women's rights, freedoms and equal chances in society. Aside from the laws, the mentalities have to change as well, in order to feel the practical reflection of changes in the Arab society, the legal reform must come hand in hand with a mentality reformation. It is a long process that involves serious efforts, but things are definitely moving in the right direction.

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SCIENCE FICTION DISCOURSE IN THE USSR AND HUNGARY: INSTITUTIONALIZATION AND INTERACTION IN THE CONTEXT OF COMMUNIST IDEOLOGY

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Abstract: *The article describes the development of Soviet and Hungarian science fiction (SF) in connection with the scientific and technical achievements as well as ideological changes in the USSR and Hungary. SF is considered as a literary genre with utopian and dystopian elements and as a form of socio-philosophical reflection in the context of social imagination. The research is focused on identifying both general aspects of the development of SF literature and related institutions (magazines, amateur associations) in the USSR and Hungary, and the specifics of their existence in these countries.*

Keywords: *science fiction, utopia, social imagination, communism, ideology, Soviet bloc, institutionalization.*

Introduction

Academic discussions on the definition of the concept of “science fiction”, on the delimitation of it from other concepts denoting various types of fantastic works, have been extremely intensively conducted for several decades. The objectives of our study are not to consider the existing positions on this issue, although we necessarily take them into account. As the well-known Hungarian science fiction writer Sándor Szélesi notes:

Science fiction is an Anglo-Saxon-rooted literary genre shaped at least as strongly by the scientific and social changes of the 20th century as literary currents. Defining it would not be easy even if, like other literary genres, it could be broadly described in terms of form or content, but since these (also)

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have changed throughout the history of sci-fi, classification by genre is many times difficult.¹

According to one of the widespread approaches, science fiction, social fiction (utopias and dystopias) and fantasy are varieties of fantastic literature.² While Hungarian specialist on utopias Zsolt Czigányik defends the point of view that the concept of utopia goes beyond the literary genre and includes social phenomena and political ideology³. Here he follows L. T. Sargent's famous thesis that literary utopias are one of three aspects of the broader concept of utopianism, interpreted as "social dreaming". Two other aspects of utopianism: "communitarianism" (real communities, the implementation of utopianism in practice) and "utopian social theories" (socio-political ideologies)⁴. When we talk about utopias and science fiction, it makes sense to take this division into account, as well as the variety of forms of realization of "social imagination".

Literary utopia is only one of the ways of expressing utopianism, and initially, this way was closer to a socio-philosophical treatise with the addition of arbitrary literary elements. It is obvious that utopia as a literary form historically took place long before the appearance of science fiction, but later, when this latter was constituted, utopias could hardly have been created without taking into consideration the influence of scientific and technological progress and scientific ideology (or "scientific and technical outlook", in terms of Margit Sárdi⁵) and, due to which a partial absorption of literary utopia by science fiction took place. SF-texts in the proper sense of the word often also contain elements of utopian discourse, which is determined by the specifics of this type of literature, and in the 20th and early 21st centuries, there is a kind of appropriation of utopian problematic by science fiction literature.

The logic of the Soviet SF development

The importance of science fiction in the life of Soviet society can hardly be overestimated. It was a very popular genre, addressed to the

¹ S. Szélesi, 'A sci-fi magyar útja' (A Hungarian way of sci-fi). In *Várad*. 2018, 5: p. 87.

² Е.С. Долгина, 'Проблема дефиниций "утопия" и "научная фантастика" в историческом дискурсе' (Problem of definition of "utopia" and "science fiction" in the historical discourse). In *Мир науки, культуры, образования*. 2012. 6 (37): p. 33.

³ Z. Czigányik, 'From the Bright Future of the Nation to the Dark Future of Mankind: Jókai and Karinthy in Hungarian Utopian Tradition'. In *Hungarian Cultural Studies*. 2015. 8: p. 13.

⁴ L.T. Sargent, 'The Three Faces of Utopianism Revisited'. In *Utopian Studies*. 1994. 5(1): p. 4.

⁵ S.M. Sárdi, 'Műfaj-e a sci-fi?' (Is sci-fi a genre?) In *Szépirodalmi Figyelő*. 2013. 1: p. 30.

widest circle of readers. Its development was under the close scrutiny of both the authorities and the professional community (scientific and technical intelligentsia, writers) and the general public. For the authorities, SF acted as one of the instruments of state cultural policy and political propaganda, for the Soviet intelligentsia it served as one of the forms of reflection, making it possible to raise and consider socially significant issues. The modern Russian researcher Boris Lanin even states that “Russian utopia and science fiction have brought up a new nation, a nation of globalized modern people, resourceful, resistant to adversity and hardships, capable of surviving under a repressive yoke.”⁶

The life-changing and turbulent boundary of the 19th-20th centuries, imbued with a sense of future transformations, was marked in Russia by a deep interest in science fiction and utopia: a variety of literature was being published including translated studies on the history of utopia, classical and modern foreign utopias and science fiction (by T. Campanella, E. Bellamy, H. Wells, and others), as well as original works of Russian authors in this genre. Later, in post-revolutionary Russia, the grandiose social experiment to build a new society could not fail to promote interest in utopian issues as well. The stages of development of the Soviet SF are closely connected with the development of technology and with a change in political course.

In the manifold Soviet “cosmic” SF literature of the 1920s, often close to the adventure novel and space opera, earthlings (engineers and Komsomol members), long before the start of the real era of space exploration, help revolutionize the inhabitants of other planets. In science fiction works of the 1920s – early 1930s representations of real social transformations are evident, the topic of interplanetary flights and contacts with aliens is shown in an inextricable combination with current socio-political problems. The vital issue then was the victory of communism in a single country, and it seemed that the victory of communism on the whole Earth and beyond was also close. So far, earthlings move only within the Solar system, to the objects closest to the Earth (the Moon, Mars, and Venus), and the development of extraterrestrial spaces is, as it were, simply an expansion of the earthly, social space.

During the development of the USSR in the 1930s – until the mid-1950s, the space theme in science fiction temporarily lost its relevance, although it did not completely disappear. The idea of an imminent world revolution became a thing of the past, and the successes of socialist

⁶ Б.А., Ланин, ‘Русская утопия, антиутопия и фантастика в новом социально-культурном контексте’ (Russian utopia, dystopia and SF in a new socio-cultural context). In *Проблемы современного образования*. 2014, 1: p. 169.

construction created confidence that the transition to communism could be made within the Soviet society in spite of a hostile capitalist encirclement. In the conditions of industrialization in the USSR, the stake was placed on the “close range” or “real” SF. The action of such works takes place in the near future, scientific and technical achievements and inventions that are useful for the national economy of the USSR are described. The unfolding active socialist construction, re-actualizing the nineteenth-century confrontation between Man and Nature, presupposed not the exploration of space, but the curbing of the forces of earthly nature, the realization of the dream of a future superhuman, who would master the matter itself.

The American researcher Anindita Banerjee proves that it was due to Russian science fiction at the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries that forced modernization processes became possible in Soviet Russia.⁷

The departure from the “real fiction” concept is associated with the “thaw” of the late 1950s and early 1960s when the “siege socialism” became a thing of the past. The ideological warming of the “thaw” period was accompanied by a rise in social optimism and enthusiasm, a scientific and technical breakthrough (nuclear physics, rocketry and radio communications), and obvious achievements in the beginning of space exploration: the first artificial Earth satellite was launched in the USSR (1957) and the first man (Soviet pilot Yuri Gagarin) made a flight into space (1961). In Soviet SF of the 1950s-60s, an exit outside the limits of near space was carried out and the topic of extraterrestrial civilizations took one of the main places in science fiction literature.

Such “long-range sight” SF (or “history of the future”) goes beyond the needs and concerns of the current moment both in space and time and often reaches great depths in understanding the laws of social development. The action takes place in the distant future, when representatives of the united mankind are able to carry out interplanetary, and then interstellar and intergalactic travel. The novels of this period describe the stages of construction and structure of the future communist planetary society on Earth, the daily life and activities of earthlings in space exploration, cooperation with representatives of remote extraterrestrial civilizations.

After the “Khrushchev thaw” of 1953-1964, a period of the conservative course of Leonid Brezhnev and his successors began and lasted until the beginning of Perestroika. By the end of the 1960s and the beginning of the 1970s, the USSR lost its leadership in space (the flight of American astronauts around the Moon in 1968 and the landing of a man

⁷ A., Banerjee, *We Modern People: Science Fiction and the Making of Russian Modernity*. (Middletown, Connecticut: Wesleyan University Press). 2012, 230 p.

on the Moon in 1969). Having lost the “lunar race”, the Soviet Union lost the space initiative and was increasingly turning from an advanced power determining the contours of the future into one of the many countries with catching-up development, which was fraught with strategic defeat in the Cold War. So late Soviet cosmonautics was almost entirely subordinated to the solution of military tasks.

Although ideologically oriented, “anti-capitalist” SF works did not disappear, in the late Soviet SF, we also find a reflection of two other concepts: the theory of peaceful coexistence of two systems with different social order and the theory of convergence of capitalism and socialism. If the first concept assumed the superiority of socialism and the inevitability of the victory of the communist system over capitalism, then the theory of convergence recognized certain advantages of the capitalist system and assigned capitalism an essential role in the future rapprochement with socialism. In this way, in the late Soviet era, the scheme of interaction between the East and West acquired a new look, there was a transition from self-confidence and uncompromising to the search for a compromise. Social science fiction acted precisely as a thinking ground where various scenarios of the near future could be played.

Summing up the development of Soviet science fiction, Olga Tenyakova states that during the 1980s it was gradually turning into purely entertaining fiction, and in the 1990s, already in the post-Soviet period, Russian science fiction completely transformed into other forms – space action, fantastic tales or pseudo-scientific journalism⁸.

Hungarian SF under Soviet influence

As M. Veres notes, Hungarian literary utopias, born in the 19th century, without exception used science fiction themes, and the first utopias not related to science fiction appeared at the beginning of the 20th century, while “the vast majority of works of utopian literature of the era of dualism [Austria-Hungary in 1867–1918] are [...] eutopias. There were also critical dystopian voices, but radical changes took place only with the outbreak of the First World War.”⁹

⁸ О. Тенякова, ‘Тема внеземных цивилизаций в русской фантастике: эволюция и перспективы’ (The topic of extraterrestrial civilizations in Russian science fiction: evolution and prospects). In *Фантастика и технологии (памяти Станислава Лема)*. Самара: Издательство Самарского государственного аэрокосмического университета, 2009, p. 125.

⁹ M., Veres, ‘A képzelet derült játéka. A dualizmus válságjelenségei az utópisztikus és tudományos-fantasztikus irodalomban’ (Creative games of the imagination. Crisis phenomena of dualism in utopian and science fiction literature). In *Holmi*. 2013. 25(1): pp. 67, 69.

Comparison with Russian science fiction and utopian texts from the same period reveals a peculiar difference: after the October Revolution and the end of the First World War, a gradual “scientification” of utopia and science fiction took place in Russia. At the same time, a completely explainable eutopic pathos of the creation of a new world dominates in early Soviet fiction, in contrast to Hungary, where the communist revolution collapsed in 1919, and the consequences of the just-ended World War I turned out to be catastrophic for the nation.

During the interwar period, Hungarian authors wrote some works that can be called “pessimistic utopias” (according to Béla Mester): these are not just dystopias, because their fictional cruel world still offers an alternative to the existing dark human culture.¹⁰

Hungary falls into the orbit of Soviet dominance after World War II, along with other states of Socialist Bloc – Eastern European regimes typologically close to the Stalinist regime in the USSR and politically dependent on it.

The post-war development of literature in Hungary was strongly influenced by the Stalinist course in the field of cultural policy: in 1949–1951 there was a Sovietization of cultural life in the organizational and ideological sense, which is perfectly expressed in the statement of one of the regime’s ideologists, Minister of Education József Révai: “learn from Soviet culture and Soviet art to create for the Hungarian working people”. [quoted from Штандейски, 2007]¹¹

Alexander Stykalin, a specialist in the history of international relations of European socialist countries, gives the following description of the situation in Hungary in the post-war period.

The “picture of the world” declared by the official aesthetics was inevitably hierarchical. The top of the pyramid was occupied by the leader, who personified all the power of the totalitarian regime and the dominant ideology. At the same time, the position of Hungary as a country politically dependent on its northeastern neighbor introduced some specificity into the hierarchy, in comparison with the USSR, making up a two-tier top – above “the best Hungarian student of Comrade

¹⁰ B. Mester, „Nincs út jobb hazába, hiába, hiába!” A pesszimista utópia elfödött magyar hagyománya (The obscured Hungarian tradition of pessimistic utopia). In *Liget*, 2019, 32(4): p.4-5.

¹¹ Е. Штандейски ‘Советизация венгерской литературной жизни в 1949-1951 годах’ (Sovietization of Hungarian literary life in 1949-1951). In *XX век. Русская литература глазами венгров, венгерская литература глазами русских*. Москва: Институт славяноведения РАН, 2007, p. 195.

Stalin,” as the Hungarian press called Rákosi in those years, the “Father of nations” himself towered.¹²

Thus, the convergence of the literary processes of the USSR and Hungary begins, but, unfortunately, with negative consequences.

The founder and former editor-in-chief of the *Galaktika* magazine Péter Kuczka notes: “The two decades after the war were not very favorable for Hungarian science fiction. Literature was preoccupied with a realistic approach to current problems, was not interested in the novelties of science and technology, and the creation of fantastic works was not encouraged by the state control over literature <...> At this time, we got acquainted first of all with Soviet science fiction and the theoretical discoveries associated with it.”¹³

Literary editor of the *Galaktika* magazine Attila Németh also assesses the two decades after 1945 as a period of decline of Hungarian SF, when it was “classified as youth literature, considered an educational adventure novel. It was a special socialist phenomenon, it started with the Soviet Union to push young people towards a certain positive vision of the future.”¹⁴

Obviously, they describe the influence of the so-called “close-range SF”, which became widespread in the USSR during those years. In this situation, the existence of utopias as an independent literary phenomenon becomes impossible as well:

1) utopianism always carries an element of criticism to the existing social structure, therefore, literary utopia in its pure form is blocked by ideology and censorship (including the self-censorship of the authors);

2) utopianism as such within the framework of Soviet Marxism was considered an early and imperfect form of the socialist idea (just recall the criticism of utopias by Vladimir Lenin, who declared that “Marxists are hostile to *all* utopias,” and that the condition for the emergence of utopias is the weakness of the development of class forces - see Lenin’s famous article of 1912 entitled “Two Utopias”¹⁵), therefore it was natural to assume

¹² A.C. Стыкалин, “Утопическая картина мира” и эстетика социалистического реализма в Венгрии начала 1950-х гг. (The “Utopian Picture of the World” and the Aesthetics of Socialist Realism in Hungary in the early 1950s). In *Утопия и утопическое в славянском мире*. 2002. Москва: Издатель Степаненко, 2002, pp. 157-158.

¹³ P., Kuczka, ‘A science fiction Magyarországon’ (Science fiction in Hungary). In *Éveken át. A szerző válogatása életművéből*. (Örökségünk Alapítvány). 1992.

¹⁴ ‘Egy rétegműfaj reputációja. Beszélgetés a science fiction szubkultúráról’ (The reputation of a stratum genre. A conversation about the science fiction subculture). In *Szépirodalmi Figyelő*, 2013, 1: p. 57.

¹⁵ В.И. Ленин, (1912). ‘Две утопии’ (Two utopias). In *Ленин, В.И. Полное*

that utopianism and its manifestations would disappear in the new Soviet world or radically transform.

Since science fiction has become almost the only legitimate way of “looking into the future” based on a rational “scientific and technical worldview”, it has absorbed all those elements of utopias that could be regarded as acceptable and even fruitful for creating inspiring pictures of the future. As for dystopian scenarios, they could also be admitted – to criticize the bourgeois world.

In the 1960s, due to the softening of the political regime, the situation in science fiction both in the USSR and in Hungary changed. Katalin Mund, comparing the publishing statistics of the USSR and Hungary, emphasizes the simultaneity of the SF boom in these countries (as well as notes its synchronization with the Anglo-American literary cluster).¹⁶

A prominent researcher of Soviet science fiction Anatoly Britikov cites the following quantitative data: “In the 1920s, about 25 titles of science fiction books were published annually in our country. In the 30s, 40s, 50s - no more than 10 titles, on average. And that's compared to 80 or more titles since 1962! Even if we take into account that half of them are translations, the leap is impressive.”¹⁷

According to Katalin Mund, in the period of 1948-1955 in Hungary, from one to three SF books were published a year, after 1956 – about 10 books a year, and in the early 1970s - about 20. In the second half of the 1970s and in the 1980s, relatively few science fiction works were published in Hungary, but in incredible circulation (by the standards of a small country). So, for example, Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World* was published with a circulation of 240 thousand copies, and the novelization of *Star Wars* – 200 thousand copies.

At the same time, there was intensive growth of science fiction clubs throughout Hungary, with fandom members holding meetings, conferences, etc. It is obvious that under the conditions of such political regimes as in the Brezhnev USSR and in János Kádár Hungary, the amateur public associations were somehow under state and ideological control, and their activities differed from similar processes among American SF fans who built strong, cohesive communities on the base of contacts through magazines and other self-organizing structures.

собрание сочинений. 1967. Vol. 22, pp. 117-121.

¹⁶ Mund, K. ‘Szűkülő világegyetem?’ (A Narrowing Universe?). In *Liget*, 2002, 6, p. 61-84.

¹⁷ А.Ф. Бритиков, *Отечественная научно-фантастическая литература (1917-1991 годы). Книга вторая. Некоторые проблемы истории и теории жанра* (Domestic science fiction literature (1917-1991). Book two. Some problems of history and theory of the genre). Санкт-Петербург: Творческий центр “Борей-Арт”. 2005. p. 47-48.

However, both in the USSR and in Hungary, associations of science fiction amateurs arose nevertheless.

Anikó Sohár indicates the exact date of the beginning of the amateur SF movement in Hungary – 20 February 1968 when the first Hungarian science fiction club was founded in Berzsenyi Dániel Grammar School (Budapest). He also points out that “since then a few fanzines have been published by non-professionals, in one-off or irregular issues” and that all these publications are listed in *Supernova 6*, the catalog of Hungarian fanzines (1968-1988).¹⁸

It is necessary to mention and consider in more detail such an important form of institutionalization of science fiction as SF periodicals appealing to the mass reader.

Periodicals as SF institutions in USSR and Hungary

There was no specialized science fiction magazine in the USSR, although a number of periodicals constantly published SF works, and among them should be noted the well-known magazine *Техника – Молодежи* (*Technics for the Youth*), founded in 1933. It was one of the most important popular science magazines in the USSR and it is still being published. Similar in concept periodicals for youth existed in other countries of the Socialist Bloc: *Népszervé Technika* in Hungary, *Наука и техника за младежта* in Bulgaria, *Știință și Tehnică* in Romania, *Věda a technika mládeži* in Czechoslovakia, *Młody Technik* in Poland and etc. In addition to the main body of materials devoted to the popularization of science and technology, these magazines published science fiction. Taking into account the almost complete absence of specialized sci-fi periodicals in most of these countries (with exceptions of Hungarian *Galaktika* and Polish *Fantastyka*) we can agree with Mike Ashley, who approves that “these science and technology magazines effectively played the role of ersatz genre magazines in the Soviet bloc countries for quite some time”.¹⁹

In Hungary, the specialized periodical *Galaktika* played a decisive role in the modernization of the SF sphere. It appeared in 1972 under the editorship of Péter Kuczka, initially in an anthology format and later (since 1985) acquired a more “magazine” form. *Galaktika* started as a quarterly periodical but later became monthly, with a circulation of 50,000.

Apart from publishing works by Hungarian authors, *Galaktika* was heavily focused on publishing translated fiction. The works of Soviet science fiction writers (Ivan Efremov, Ilya Varshavsky, Dmitry Bilenkin),

¹⁸ A. Sohár, *The Cultural Transfer of Science Fiction and Fantasy in Hungary 1989-1995*. PhD. thesis. 1997, p. 23.

¹⁹ M. Ashley, *Science-Fiction Rebels: The Story of the Science-Fiction Magazines from 1981 to 1990*. (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press), 2016, p. 301.

as well as analytical articles by famous Soviet critics (E. Brandis, V. Gakov, etc.), appeared in *Galaktika*. There were some thematic issues devoted to Soviet, Polish, Scandinavian SF, or even to one certain writer: for example, issue 39 (1980 № 3) was entirely devoted to Soviet science fiction. Along with «progressive» Western authors actively published in the USSR (Arthur C. Clarke, Robert Sheckley, Isaac Azimov), in *Galaktika* one could also meet translations of writers not so welcomed in the USSR, for example, Philip Dick - see issue 52 (1983, № 4). Thus, the magazine acted as an area for the interaction of Eastern and Western SF traditions, and also served as a platform for a theoretical understanding of the features of science fiction literature.

The *Móra* Publishing House (Budapest), which is responsible for the publication of *Galaktika*, also published an associated paperback SF series *Kozmosz Fantasztikus Könyvek* (*Cosmos Fantastic Books*), 132 issues of which were released in 1969 – 1987. The number of issues published in each year was different (minimum 3, maximum 9, most often 7 or 8), as well as the circulation of a particular issue which varied from somewhere about 11,000 to 185,000 copies. Most of the issues (40) belong to Hungarian authors and representatives of the Anglo-American SF (35), 14 issues were devoted to Soviet SF. There were also issues of Polish (6), French (4), Italian (3), Argentine (2), Japanese (2) authors, and from other countries.

The traditions of this series (with some modifications) were continued in the *Galaktika Fantasztikus Könyvek* series, in which 44 issues were published in 1988-1994.

The role of *Galaktika* in the formation of modern Hungarian SF is generally recognized, M. Ashley even writes that “the history of modern science fiction in Hungary is, to a large degree, the history of one magazine, *Galaktika*, and of its publishing house, *Móra*”.²⁰

Sándor Szélesi connects the success of *Galaktika* with the fact that this periodical had managed to occupy a specific niche. “The pragmatically-minded Kuczka, who had a great network of contacts, found for himself the gap he could fill in Hungarian literary life. He was lucky, and not only because he was supported by socialist cultural policy”, but also because, unlike the USA, such substantial science fiction institutions as commercial book and magazine publishing had not yet developed in Hungary, and academic literary studies “considered the practice of sci-fi to be inferior”²¹.

It should be borne in mind that *Galaktika* was precisely a specialized magazine, whose profile was science fiction (belles-lettres and

²⁰ Ibid., p. 315.

²¹ S. Szélesi, ‘A sci-fi magyar útja’, p. 88-89.

illustration), while *Technics for the Youth* (TY) performed broader functions of a popular science magazine promoting the scientific way of thinking and the achievements of science and technology, and SF was only one of its activities. In the TY magazine, the following rubrics were directly related to science fiction: “The SF Fans’ Club” (the section of SF prosaic works), “SF poetry” (section of poetry with relevant topics), “Time – Space – Human” (the SF painting contest).

Technics for the Youth was published monthly in a circulation of 1 million 700 thousand copies and was contributed by many authors from Socialist Bloc countries (Poland, Hungary, the Czech Republic, the German Democratic Republic, and Bulgaria). In addition to its scientific and popularization activities, this magazine claimed the role of the leading Soviet periodical related to SF. This attitude can be clearly seen in the editorial introduction to the interview of 1983 with the guests of the magazine – Péter Kuczka (*Galaktika*, Hungary) and Adam Hollanek (*Fantastyka*, Poland): “It is not surprising that the leaders of the SF periodicals from abroad visit our magazine first of all: it is the only one [in the country] that has a specialized section of SF, and this is reflected in the publications.”²²

While exchanging experience with “the leaders of the SF periodicals from abroad”, *Technics for the Youth* tried to open up some new areas of SF creativity for them, such as the “Time – Space – Human” SF painting contest, that was one of the brightest ways of manifestation of transformed utopianism, namely: utopianism focused on the activation of the powers of the imagination (*l’imaginaire* in its “diurnal” aspect, in the terms of Gilbert Durand²³).

Judging by their feedback, the guests from Hungary and Poland were impressed by the SF painting and clearly took new ideas into service. So, five years later Kuczka giving another interview to TM, described in detail the interaction of his magazine with the fandom. Among ways to strengthen these ties, he mentioned using SF art products (postcards, posters, and wall calendars), and also announced the release of a tabletop RPG (role-playing game).²⁴

²² М. Пухов, ‘Журнал фантастики необходим! Беседа с П. Куцкой и А. Холланеком.’ (A science fiction magazine is essential!) In *Техника – молодежи*. 1983. 7: 16.

²³ See: A. Sautkin, ‘Landscape Imagination of the 1970s and 80s: Sci-Fi Painting as a Manifestation of the Technocratic Utopia’. In: *Logos*, 2020, № 104, pp. 121-129.

²⁴ М. Пухов, ‘Галактика» и её друзья. Беседа с П. Куцкой (“Galaktika” and its friends). In *Техника – молодежи*. 1988. 3: 6-7.

Conclusion

It can be stated that in the first half of the 20th century there was a significant difference between the utopian and SF social imagination in the USSR and Hungary, but after World War II, the evolution of the Soviet and Hungarian SF was largely synchronized (due to the unification of cultural policies in the countries of the Soviet bloc). Noteworthy is the special status of SF literature in the communist ideology, which, unlike it was in the West, never considered SF as purely commercial, entertaining literature - in the value coordinates of the world of socialism, SF was called upon to fulfill important educational and ideological state tasks, at the same time acting as a testing ground for the development of certain socio-philosophical ideas, thereby performing the function of a kind of public discourse for the intelligentsia. During the Soviet period in the USSR and Hungary, institutions related to SF (magazines and amateur associations) emerged and institutionalized, actively carrying out international interaction within the framework of the Socialist bloc, and also partly (dosed) acquainting their audiences with the SF achievements of the West.

Acknowledgments

This research was carried out with the financial support of the Russian Foundation for Basic Research within the framework of the scientific project No. 20-511-23002 “The migration of ideas and the formation of national philosophical traditions: dialogues across the borders”²⁵ The project is being implemented by a Russian-Hungarian research group, one of its aims is to analyze the experience of mastering and transforming models of thinking in Soviet/Russian and Hungarian philosophy and literature, in particular, in science fiction.

We acknowledge the Russian Foundation for Basic Research (RFBR) and the Foundation for Russian Language and Culture in Hungary (FRLC) for providing the opportunity to work within an international team and to conduct joint researches.

Our special thanks shall go to our Hungarian colleagues on the project and especially to Mester Béla (Institute of Philosophy, Research Centre for the Humanities, Budapest) for the organizational assistance, providing his materials, and for verifying quotes translated from Hungarian into English.

²⁵ The research was funded by RFBR and FRLC, project number 20-511-23002. Настоящее исследование выполнено при финансовой поддержке РФФИ и РЯИК в рамках научного проекта № 20-511-23002.

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HOLOPHRASTIC CONSTRUCTIONS AS A MEANS OF OCCASIONAL WORD FORMATION IN ENGLISH POPULAR FICTION

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Abstract: *The article examines the theoretical aspects of holophrasis as a means of occasional word formation in the English language. The purpose of the study is to reveal the peculiarities of holophrastic constructions as they function in modern English fiction. The methodology of this study involves the application of complex methodology via general scientific methods, such as induction, deduction, introspection and analysis.*

Holophrasis can be defined as an occasional lexical and semantic means of word formation, which transforms a syntactic unit into its lexical equivalent. Although a holophrastic construction comprises several words, it is argued to be processed as one single word. According to their lexical and grammatical characteristics, holophrastic constructions can be either nominative or attributive types.

The holophrastic construction, with its complex syntactic structure and built-in predication, is capable of conveying a large amount of expressive information in a concise manner. The context of holophrastic construction use is usually limited by the sentence in which it is used. The emphatic nature, vivid expressiveness, self-contextualisation and ability to conserve linguistic efforts are distinguishing features of holophrastic constructions. They are often used with the aim of adding originality, unique character and vivid expressiveness in modern fiction.

Keywords: *means of word-building; holophrasis, a holophrastic construction; occasional word formation; occasional lexical units; phrasal compounds; means of language economy; modern English fiction.*

Introduction

The main feature of language as a living organism is its continuous development on all levels. In this case we are examining the level of word formation. In English literary texts we can find word collocations, phrases, and even whole sentences which function as a single lexical unit. Such units can be referred to in various ways: holophrastic constructions, phrasal compounds, syntactic compounding, hyphenated phrasal

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expressions, creative compounds, and verbalised nominal constructions¹, for example.

This research is increasingly relevant in the context of a rising interest in analysing holophrastic constructions (HCs). There have also been various explorations of the creativity and free nature of holophrasis as an unusual but still quite popular type of word formation in modern English literature. Although HCs exist in other languages such as Ukrainian, Russian, and German, those that are typical to the English language can be grouped into two types of conversion: substantivation and adjectivation.

Literature Review

Occasional words and word combinations have been a consistent focus of linguistic research due to their unusual form, concentration of semantic load, and numerous functions, such as pragmatic, stylistic, humorous, and aesthetic.

Carola Trips analyses the expressive nature of phrasal compounds in English and German (*“How to account for the expressive nature of phrasal compounds in a conceptual-semantic framework”*)² and proposes an analysis in a conceptual-semantic framework. Trips claims that phrasal compounds are very interesting from a theoretical point of view, since they challenge traditional frameworks based on syntactocentricity and a strict division between lexicon and grammar. She assumes that the nature of phrasal compounds can only be understood if their conceptual-semantic properties are taken into account. In the collection of papers on phrasal compounds *“Further investigations into the nature of phrasal compounding”*³ edited by Trips and Kornfilt, the authors provide numerous insights into phrasal compounding. For instance, Trips⁴ analysed frequencies and forms of phrasal compounds with nominal heads in the British National Corpus. She found that heads were most frequently preceded by nominal forms (e.g. **sex in shiny packets** literature) and verbal forms (e.g. **the Have you heard the Good News** routine).

¹ M. Goltsova, *Holophrasis as a means of occasional word formation in the English language*. International Humanitarian University Herald. Philology 2 (42), Odesa, 2019, p. 40.

² C. Trips, *How to account for the expressive nature of phrasal compounds in a conceptual-semantic framework*, SKASE Journal of Theoretical Linguistics 11(1), pp. 2014, 33-61.

³ C. Trips; J. Kornfilt, *Further investigations into the nature of phrasal compounding*, Berlin: Language Science Press, 2017, pp. 1-11.

⁴ C. Trips, *Empirical and theoretical aspects of phrasal compounds: Against the ‘syntax explains it all’ attitude*. In Angela Ralli, Geert Booij, Sergio Scalise & Athanasios (eds.), *Online proceedings of the eighth Mediterranean Morphology Meeting*, Patras: University of Patras, 2012, pp. 322-46.

Crawford Camiciottoli, in her recent article “*My almost-leggings-so-I’m-kind-of-cheating jeans*”⁵, explores hyphenated phrasal expressions in fashion discourse. She studies contemporary fashion discourse through a systematic analysis of hyphenated phrasal expressions (in this case more or less synonymous with 'holophrasis') as linguistic features that are analytically challenging, but with strong expressive potential. In her other article “*All those Elvis-meets-golf-player looks*”⁶, she presents a corpus-assisted analysis of creative compounds in fashion blogging.

Jörg Meibauer in his work “*How marginal are phrasal compounds?*”⁷, analysed phrasal compounds, claiming that such compounds as '*I-told-you-so attitude*' are a typical cases of a marginal type of word-formation, as the integration of a phrase into a word should not be allowed (violation of the No Phrase Constraint); lexical integrity is weakened (violation of the Principle of Lexical Integrity); and phrasal compounds display an expressive flavour typical of marginal morphology.

In Ukrainian linguistics, Koloyiz⁸ highlights peculiarities of individual authors word-formation processes in creating nonce words (words created for a unique occasion). Degtyareva⁹ pays special attention to the notion of holophrasis while studying the stylistic means of language economy, that is expressing information in a concise manner in Ukrainian postmodern fiction. She states that holophrasis is widely used in Romance and Germanic languages due to the fact that some features of agglutinative morphology, linguistic economy, avoidance of complex syntactic structures and amplification of adjectives are the characteristic features of these languages.

Russian linguists Izotov and Kovyneva^{10,11} investigate ways of including HCs into usus (common usage of linguistic units) and dwell on the lexicographic representation of HCs in author's dictionaries of

⁵ Camiciottoli B. Crawford, *My almost-leggings-so-I’m-kind-of-cheating jeans’: Exploring hyphenated phrasal expressions in fashion discourse*, Berlin: De Gruyter, *Text & Talk* 39 (1), 2019, pp. 1-24.

⁶ Camiciottoli B. Crawford *All those Elvis-meets-golf-player looks: A corpus-assisted analysis of creative compounds in fashion blogging*. *Discourse, Context and Media* 12, 2016, pp. 77–86.

⁷ J. Meibauer, *How marginal are phrasal compounds? Generalized insertion, expressivity, and I/Q-interaction*. *Morphology*, vol. 17, 2007, pp. 233-259.

⁸ Zh. Koloiz, *Unusual word formation: a monograph*. Kryvyi Rih: NPP Asterix, 2015, 156 p.

⁹ I. Degtyareva, *Stylistic devices of linguistic economy of postmodern fiction*. Dnipro, 2012, pp. 133–141.

¹⁰ V. Izotov; I. Kovyneva, From holophrastic construction to the word-text. *Scientific journal Modern problems of science and education* (2). 2015, pp. 362–368.

¹¹ V. Izotov; I. Kovyneva, *Holophrastic Constructions as Interpreted by Lexicography*. A Project of the Dictionary of Holophrases. Saarbrücken, 2011, 67 p.

coinages. When compiling their dictionaries, the authors pay attention to the specific character of the dictionary entry and name the type of the sentence that was used to produce the holophrase. Kovyneva also studies holophrastic constructions from a stylistic point of view and designates them as a potential means of language and speech economy¹².

The purpose of our study is to identify the peculiarities of functioning in holophrastic constructions in modern English fiction.

Database and methodology

The data processed in this paper includes the novels *The Sun is Also a Star*¹³ and *Everything, Everything*¹⁴ by Nicola Yoon, – a Jamaican-American author. Examples have also been taken from the novels *Everyone Worth Knowing*¹⁵, *Last Night at Chateau Marmont*¹⁶, *Revenge Wears Prada*¹⁷, and *When Life Gives You Lululemons*¹⁸ by Lauren Weisberger, an American novelist and author of *The Devil Wears Prada*¹⁹. Some examples were obtained from the *Shopaholic* series^{20,21} of novels by Sophie Kinsella and *The Pursuit of Happiness* by Chris Gardner²².

To fulfil the objective of the research, a number of broad research methods (induction, deduction, introspection, and analysis) have been used in order to conduct a syntactic and semantic analysis of examples of HCs taken from the above mentioned literary works.

Presentation of basic material of the research

To start with, it is crucial to provide several relevant definitions and terms linked to the issue. The word 'holophrasis' was coined by German-American educator and political philosopher Francis Lieber in 1853 to

¹² I. Kovyneva, *Holophrasis as the way of saving the speech efforts*. Baltic Humanitarian Journal. V. 6. № 4(21), 2017, pp. 110–112.

¹³ N. Yoon, *The Sun Is Also a Star*. Random House LLC Kindle Edition, 2016, 353 p.

¹⁴ N. Yoon, *Everything, Everything*. New York: Penguin Random House Company, 2015, 310 p.

¹⁵ L. Weisberger, *Everyone Worth Knowing*, Harper Collins, 2013, 400 p.

¹⁶ L. Weisberger, *Last Night at Chateau Marmont*, Harper Collins, 2010, 424 p.

¹⁷ L. Weisberger, *Revenge Wears Prada: The Devil Returns*, HarperCollins, 2013, 432 p.

¹⁸ L. Weisberger, *When Life Gives You Lululemons*, HarperCollins Australia, 2013, 410 p.

¹⁹ L. Weisberger, *The Devil Wears Prada*, Harper, 2007, 257 p.

²⁰ S. Kinsella, *Confessions of a Shopaholic*. Dell; Reprint edition, 2003, 368 p.

²¹ S. Kinsella, *Shopaholic Ties the Knot*. Dell; 1st edition, 2004, 416 p.

²² Ch. Gardner, *The Pursuit of Happiness*. HarperCollins Publishers (Australia) Pty. Ltd., 2006, 326 p.

refer to a “combination of many ideas into a single word”²³. This is reminiscent of Evans’ and Sasse’s²⁴, “spectacularly self-sufficient verbal words”, which can express complex events requiring many words in a more analytical language like English. Woodbury calls such constructions “prolifically holophrastic”²⁵, that is, where a single word expresses what in more analytic languages would appear as a whole phrase.

A holophrastic construction is a new complex word coined on the spur of the moment, for example: *just-out-of-college*; *one-size-fits-all dress*; *rags-to-riches saga*; *what-you-may-call-it*; *what do you call him*. A HC must be understood from its context. Usually HCs are coined and used only for a particular occasion, but sometimes it could be that these words are repeated and even become neologisms with time, for example: *stay-at-home*, *bride-to-be*, *up-and-coming*, *hand-to-mouth existence*.

There is no agreed definition in terminology identification of holophrasis in linguistics. As it has been mentioned in my previous article²⁶, a number of similar terms exist for this notion, such as ‘phrasal compounds’ (Botha; Trips; Kornfilt;), ‘fusion’ (V. Vynohradov), ‘agglutination’ (F. de Saussure), ‘artificial nominations’ (A. Zhuravlov), ‘verbalised nominal constructions’ (M. Yefimova), ‘syntactic compounding’ (A. Levitsky) ‘holophrasis’ (I. Arnold, V. Izotov, I. Kovyneva); ‘hyphenisation’ (I. Kovyneva). In this research the terms ‘holophrasis’ and ‘holophrastic construction’ are used to avoid confusion with the word-formation process in polysynthetic languages.

Russian linguist Iryna Arnold²⁷ identified holophrasis as the functioning of a word combination or a sentence as a whole phrase that refers graphically and syntactically to the one word. Due to their unpredictability, such expressions are very vivid and expressive: *I-am-not-that-kind-of-girl look*; *Shoot’ em-down type*; *To produce facts in a Would-you-believe-it kind of way*.

In this research, a distinction is made between HCs and similar lexical units that are hyphenated but nevertheless are not holophrastic, as they do

²³ The Oxford Handbook of Polysynthesis, Edited by M. Fortescue, M. Mithun, and N. Evans, 2017, p. 31.

²⁴ N. Evans; H.-J. Sasse, *Introduction: problems of polysynthesis*, N. Evans and H.-J. Sasse (eds.) Problems of Polysynthesis, Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 2002, p.7.

²⁵ Anthony C. Woodbury, *Central Alaskan Yupik (Eskimo-Aleut): A sketch of morphologically orthodox polysynthesis*. The Oxford Handbook of Polysynthesis. Oxford, UK: Oxford Un. Press, 2017, p. 536.

²⁶ M. Goltsova, *Holophrasis as a means of occasional word formation in the English language*. International Humanitarian University Herald. Philology 2 (42), Odesa, 2019, p. 41.

²⁷ I. Arnold, *Stylistics of the modern English Language*. Moscow, Flinta: Nauka Publ., 2016, p. 135.

not belong to occasional word formations, for example: *love-in-a-mist*, *forget-me-not*; *mother-of-pearl*; *man-at-arms*; *salt-and-pepper*; *merry-go-round*; and *love-in-idleness*.

The distinguishing feature of a HC in comparison with other compound words is the presence of such elements as prepositions, articles, particles, and conjunctions, for example: *New York's must-get-reservations-or-die-a-horrible-death-in-C-list-purgatory restaurant*; *not-quite-British, probably-just-too-many-years-on-Park-Avenue accent* (Weisberger); *Her congrats-on-joining-the-family-we're-so-happy-to-have-you or some similar we'd-be-thrilled-and-honored-to-have-you-join-the-family speech* (Weisberger).

The usage of holophrasis as a means of occasional word formation and the rise of a great number of HCs are caused by the speaker's desire to transform all sentences or word combinations in one lexical unit and use them in the context as a nominal or attributive units.

The classification of holophrastic constructions

Holophrastic constructions consist of numerous parts of speech that are usually hyphenated. According to their internal structure, HCs can be divided into:

1) HCs that include nominal parts of speech, such as nouns, pronouns or adjectives: '**Italian-opera-singer good**'; '**What's in this food? Is it dog?** joke' (Yoon); 'It's a miracle (**water-into-wine** variety)' (Yoon); 'It's **his-and-hers** luggage!' (Kinsella).

2) HCs with a verb:

a) A finite verb in the indicative such as '**I-Promise-Not-to-Acknowledge-You-If-You-Extend-Me-the-Same-Courtesy** attitude' (Weisberger); '**I-told-you-so** grin'; '**a do-it-yourself** job'; '**Just-in-Case-You-Haven't-Heard** voice'; Her extra-special, **spare-no-expense** client Miss Becky Bloomwood (Kinsella).

b) HCs with verbals, so called Gerundial, Participial and Infinitive HCs, for instance: '**falling-in-love-scientifically** thing' (Yoon); '**meant-to-be** for you' (Yoon); **Facebook-stalking** skills (Weisberger); '**falling-in-love feeling**' (Gardner); 'I've taken the morning off work for the **cake-tasting** meeting with Robyn; **thank-you-note-sending** responsibilities (Kinsella); his **trying-to-tread-carefully** tone' (Weisberger).

3) Conjunctional HCs formed with conjunctions 'and, or, and, but': '**all-or-nothing** guy', '**all-or-nothing** matter', 'Mr. **So-and-So**'; '**wealthy-but-still-rednecks** from Georgia and North and South Carolina' (Weisberger).

4) Prepositional HCs are subdivided in accordance to the preposition: such as: *with, without, off, of, in, to, down, for* etc.: ‘a **who's-sleeping-with-whom** tell-all’ (Weisberger); ‘the big **you're-better-off-without-him** dinner’ (Weisberger); ‘**one-of-a-kind** wedding gown’ (Weisberger); ‘a **once-in-a-lifetime** experience’ (Kinsella); ‘**back-to-back** relationships’ (Weisberger); ‘an **adult-to-adult, straight-down-the-line** conversation’ (Kinsella); ‘**doomed-for-failure** couple’ (Weisberger).

From a structural point of view, HCs could be organized as:

- 1) word combinations that can be coordinate: ‘*his-and-hers luggage*’ (Kinsella),
- 2) sentences that can be classified by their purpose as:
 - a) affirmative: *Pilates-meets-kickboxing class*; ‘*I-told-you-so grin*’ (Weisberger);
 - b) interrogative: ‘*What's in this food? Is it dog? joke*’; ‘*the how could you do this to me? variety*’ (Yoon);
 - c) imperative: ‘*a do-it-yourself job*’ (Weisberger);
 - d) negations: ‘*couldn't-fool-anybody-about-anything face*’ (Yoon);

According to their structure and number of predicative units, HCs can be divided into the following types:

- a) simple, which contains only one predication (one subject-predicate unit): ‘*I-hate-my-siblings scream*’ (Weisberger); ‘*I'm-on-a-train-filled-with-strangers face*’ (Yoon);
- b) complex, which consists of a principal clause and one or more subordinate clauses: ‘*the New Yorker's I-Promise-Not-to-Acknowledge-You-If-You-Extend-Me-the-Same-Courtesy attitude*’ (Weisberger); ‘*look-how-healthy-and-sympathetic-I-am interview*’ (Weisberger);
- c) compound, which consists of two or more independent clauses joined together by means of coordination: ‘*I'm drinking-myself -to-death-and-nobody-can-stop-me*’ (Weisberger);
- d) compound-complex, which combines elements of compound and complex sentences: ‘*I'm-the-doctor-and-I'm-afraid-I-have-some-bad-news-for-you face*’ (Yoon).

Creating holophrastic constructions

The main way of forming HCs is through two types of conversion: **substantivation** and **adjectivation**. Substantivation is characterised as the formation of new nouns from different parts of speech without derivation.

A very interesting example of a substantivised HC can be seen in Yoon's *The Sun is Also a Star*: “... Now he does make fun of me. “What's your ship called? ***Girl Who Grew Up on an Island, Which Is a***

Thing Surrounded on All Sides by Water, Can't Swim? Because that would be a good name.” In this example we can see a very long proper noun formed from the sentence. This occasionalism (with certain ironic subtext) names the girl who used to live in Jamaica, but still could not swim. It consists of 19 non-hyphenated elements with each word capitalised.

In the majority of cases, the meanings of such HCs are established by the meanings of their components. For instance, let us analyse the HC **‘wealthy-but-still-rednecks’**, taken from the novel *“The Devil Wears Prada”*: *“I sighed, still refusing to accept that my Friday night was to be spent in a formal gown at the Met, greeting **wealthy-but-still-rednecks** from Georgia and North and South Carolina”* (Weisberger). In order to understand and interpret this HC we should know that ‘redneck’ denotes a poor white person without education, especially one living in the countryside in the southern US. In this HC, we can see that the new lexical unit is based on the opposition between the word ‘rednecks’ and the wealthy person.

Attributive holophrastic constructions could be defined as phrase epithets. They consist of a phrase, or even a sentence, in which words are crammed into one language unit. A phrase or sentence may act as a single idea to modify a noun, and thus become an epithet if the main formal requirement of the epithet is maintained, i.e. its attributive use (*The first time Olly’s dad gets afternoon drunk—**violent drunk, yelling-at-the-top-of-his-lungs drunk, doesn’t-remember-what-happened-the-next-day drunk**—doesn’t happen until a few months later* (Yoon); *‘...**we’d-be-thrilled-and-honored-to-have-you-join-the-family** speech would take only a couple of minutes’* (Weisberger); *‘**look-how-healthy-and-sympathetic-I-am** interview’* (Weisberger). In such a case attributive HCs lose their independence and graphically and syntactically become like a word.

Structural elements of attributive holophrastic constructions or phrase epithets generally include such words as: ‘tone’, ‘voice’, ‘face’, ‘smile’, ‘expression’, ‘attitude’, ‘manner’, ‘glare’, ‘grin’ and others that describe behaviour, facial expression, or the attitude of a person, for instance: *‘**I-know-something-you-don’t-know** tone’* (Weisberger); *‘**my most-respectful-with-just-a-hint-of-pleading-but-nonwhining** voice’* (Yoon); *‘the maddening **Just-in-Case-You-Haven’t-Heard** voice’* (Weisberger); *‘**I’m-on-a-train-filled-with-strangers** face’* (Yoon); *‘...her **the-agony-of-too-many-choices** face’* (Yoon); *‘an undeniable **I’m-yours-for-the-taking** smile’* (Weisberger); *‘**a king-of-the-pride** expression’* (Gardner); *‘**deer-caught-in-headlights** expression’* (Weisberger); *‘... **the New Yorker’s I-Promise-Not-to-***

Acknowledge-You-If-You-Extend-Me-the-Same-Courtesy attitude toward her neighbors' (Weisberger); 'a ***friendly-yet-professional*** manner' (Kinsella); '***how-dare-you-make-me-wait*** glares' (Weisberger); '***I've-been-a-very-bad-boy*** grin' (Weisberger).

Orthographic representation of HCs

HCs can be depicted using three different orthographic representations. As indicated in examples below, they can be linked together by multiple hyphenation, marked with quotation marks, written in italics, capitalised, or a combination of different methods.

1) Hyphenated: ***convincing-them-why-they-need-their-folic-acid type*** (Weisberger); ***unpacking-of-the-medical-bag*** ritual (Yoon).

Hyphenation is the most common method of creating new occasional words and phrases.

2) Written in inverted commas: We called it (the game) "***this-page-that-page***" (Gardner); 'I'm talking about your "***Do you eat kidneys?***" questionnaire.' (G. Simsion). HCs presented in inverted commas are not typical in English literature and their usage is quite sporadic.

3) Written in italics: ***Even I can hear the Mom is about to get pissed off*** warning (Yoon); ***She gives Natasha a look (the how could you do this to me? variety)*** (Yoon).

4) Written in italics with each word capitalised: ***Girl Who Grew Up on an Island, Which Is a Thing Surrounded on All Sides by Water, Can't Swim?*** (Yoon).

4) Each letter capitalised: I was three wearing a ***MY DAD IS THE COOLEST***T-shirt (Yoon).

However, it should be noted that the orthographic representation does not influence the meaning of these HCs. These are mostly hyphenated in the corpus under consideration.

The orthographic form specifies the temporary character of these occasional lexical units. However, it is not unusual for HCs to be incorporated into lexicon and become the members of the *usus*, in other words, the sanctioned standard language norm. It should be mentioned that the lexicographic work²⁸ of Russian linguists Izotov and Kovyneva investigates the ways of incorporating HCs into the vocabulary and the specifics of a vocabulary entry for these new words and constructions.

²⁸ V. Izotov; I. Kovyneva, *Holophrastic Constructions as Interpreted by Lexicography*. A Project of the Dictionary of Holophrases. Saarbrücken, 2011, 67 p.

Functions of holophrastic constructions in popular fiction

German linguist Werner Welte²⁹ has emphasized that HCs as occasionalisms (or ad-hoc formations, nonce-formations) are the result of a conscious creative use of word-formative rules or, on the contrary, a conscious violation of already existing rules. The speaker, for instance, often uses a context-dependent spontaneous construction to pursue humorous intentions or some other specific stylistic aims. According to Arnold, the use of HCs in literary texts creates additional emotionality, evaluation, and expressivity, and furthermore leads to semantic complication of the word meaning³⁰.

One of the main functions of HCs in the texts examined is nominative. HCs carry extraordinarily rich semantic information by expressing features and properties which simply do not have a corresponding synonym with a simple lexical form. For example, in the novel by Weisberger *When Life Gives You Lululemons*, we can see a thought-provoking HC '**the happy-marriage-home-wrecker**', which designates the person who is responsible and blamed for the destroying the happy life of a family.

Besides creating new words and expressions, HCs perform the function of foregrounding. According to Doughwaite³¹, foregrounding is the general linguistic technique by which a marked linguistic expression is produced to make that expression convey a different meaning than synonymic, equivalent unmarked construction would have conveyed. Foregrounding involves different linguistic techniques for attracting the reader's or listener's attention to certain pragmatically important text fragments.

HCs functioning as expressive epithets are employed to humorously describe characters. For example, in the novel *Confessions of a Shopaholic*, narrator Rebecca Bloomwood is thinking about advantages and disadvantages of becoming a professional banker: '*Do I really want to be a banker? I wouldn't mind the **clothes-from-Karen-Millen** part of it. In fact, I think I'd do that really well. But I'm not so sure about the rest. The **getting-up-early-and-working-hideously-hard** part.*' (Kinsella). As we can see the HC '*clothes-from-Karen-Millen part*' with the embodied implicature 'wealthy glamorous life' is opposed to another HC '*getting-up-early-and-working-hideously-hard part*' which implies 'hard work'.

²⁹ W. Welte, *Englische Morphologie und Wortbildung Ein Arbeitsbuch mit umfassender bibliographie* Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 1996, p. 57.

³⁰ I. Arnold, *Stylistics of the modern English Language*. Moscow, Flinta: Nauka Publ., 2016, p. 135.

³¹ J. Doughwaite, *Towards a Linguistic Theory of Foregrounding*. Alessandria: Edizioni dell'Orse, 2000, p. 93.

HCs nearly always produce an original expression: for instance, ‘*not-quite-British, **probably-just-too-many-years-on-Park-Avenue** accent*’; ‘Ashley, Eric, and Eric’s potentially underage **blue-glitter-condom-loving** girlfriend would have to fend for themselves’; ‘*her **premier-advantage-plus-gold-platinum-diamond-executive-VIP** mileage status*’ (Weisberger).

Another function of HCs is amplification of the certain feature or idea, that is adding further information to embellish a sentence or statement. This helps to increase readability and semantic load of the statement or sentence. It is usually used when a simple sentence is abrupt and cannot convey the desired implications. Creative HCs bring the reader's attention to an idea that they may miss otherwise, for instance in the novel *The Pursuit of Happyness* the narrator describes his mother as “*More than pretty, she is beautiful, **a stop-you-in-your-tracks-turn-around-and-look-twice** beautiful*” (Ch. Gardner). Moreover, a HC, with its complex syntactic structure and built-in predication, is capable of conveying a large amount of expressive information in a concise way.

The HC is a straight-to-the-point tool because it avoids the use of paraphrases, longer sentences and subordinate clauses. It is worth highlighting the enormous expressiveness of HCs, which, by definition being deviation from the norm, are always very vivid, unique, and distinct.

The authors of popular fiction works add originality to the text by using various holophrastic constructions, which create expressiveness and uniqueness. Subjective and occasional reinterpretation of the lexical units in context actualises aesthetic imagery and associations.

Conclusions

One of the most important factors in language development is the appearance of new lexical units. These new words play a significant role in the evolution of the language. Holophrasis, defined as the expression of complex ideas in a single word or phrase, is one of the most productive ways of occasional word formation in the modern English language.

The originality of a HC as a new lexical unit that consists of several words lies in the fact that it allows us to briefly create a new concept that is built from other pre-existing concepts. The inner structure of the HC allows us to perceive it as one meaningful, syncretic word, while at the same time giving a partitioned idea of the object. HCs are instantly scanned by our consciousness, generating a vivid image in which several features of the object are accentuated simultaneously. HCs are usually hyphenated, pointing to the temporary structure of the compound word.

The reasons for the appearance of HCs can be linguistic, such as the necessity of nomination, adding expressiveness to language, semantic

compression, or generalisation of the utterance. The current study of semantic, morphological and syntactic properties of the English HCs has led to the conclusion that these constructions are realised through substantivation and adjectivation.

According to their lexical and grammatical characteristics, HCs in the texts under analysis are presented as nominative and attributive. Nominative HCs render the meaning of a substantive. In contrast with attributive HCs, nominative HCs are less numerous. Attributive HCs perform the function of assigning attributes.

According to their orthographic representation, HCs can be divided into four types: hyphenated; written in inverted commas; written in italics; and capitalised. Hence, the experiments with the orthographic form of the word create an author's individual perception of the world, as well as conveying the feelings and emotions of the characters.

Having analysed the HCs in the texts, we can come to the conclusion that it is the fact that they are formed spontaneously in the language that gives them particular expressiveness. Thus, HCs possess certain qualities that are very important in literary fiction, such as novelty, creativity, contextuality, ambiguity, occasionality, author's individual style, artistic and aesthetic function, the possibility to characterise something from different perspectives, and the ability to conserve linguistic effort. All of these qualities attract the reader's attention, creating various stylistic effects depending on the author's intentions.

Holophrasis appears to be one of the most productive way of occasional word formation in the modern English literature; however, all its potential has not yet been discovered. Occasional HCs give authors the possibility to be structurally concise, but nevertheless semantically rich, manifesting linguistic creativity and originality.

As an unusual process of word-formation, HCs can be a challenge for translators. The meaning of a HC is comprehensible and transparent, but the principles of rendering such language units into target texts have not received sufficient attention. The prospects of further research on HCs in modern English fiction are promising, especially if the morphological aspects of such research are combined with stylistic and translation aspects.

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AFRO-AMERICAN RAP LYRICS VS FAIRY TALES: POSSIBLE WORLDS AND THEIR MEDIATORS

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Abstract: *The article aims to identify possible worlds and their mediators in their metaphorical, symbolic and archetypal properties in fairy tales and Afro-American rap lyrics. The rap lyrics semantic structure involves a great worlds variety. Some of them intersect with the fairy tale magic worlds. The world of death imagery indicated in the rap lyrics by demetaphorized compound imagery with a naturalistic-physiological component, is associated with the archetypally bound fairy tale “the other world”, denoted by fabulous toponyms and fairy topoi. The mediators of these worlds encompass some magical tools and super-abilities, designated by conceptual metaphors, metonymies and hyperbolized similes in the rap lyrics and by narrative means in fairy tales. The oneiric world is mediated by nominations of hallucinogens in the rap lyrics and sacred food and drinks in fairy tales. While the latter mediators add strength or serve as a means of correction of an evil character, based, respectively, on the narrative motifs of redemption and victory of good over evil, the rap oneiric mediators refer to fear and degradation, indicated by visual oneiric images. The mediators of world of inspiration, not appropriate to fairy-tales, use wings (ability to fly and counteract the gravity), designated by conceptual metaphors. The world of wonderful status transformation, inherent to the rap lyrics, is denoted by the symbols of material well-being, based on the archetypal narrative motifs of the hero transfiguration and reward.*

Keywords: possible worlds, mediators of transition, fairy tales, Afro-American rap lyrics, conceptual metaphor, archetypal symbolism, narrative motifs.

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Introduction

On the one hand, comparison of semiotic spaces of fairy tales and rap lyrics is an easy task, on the other hand, it is quite feasible as these spaces are characterized, oddly enough, by a number of common features. For example, in terms of their common symbolic topoi (Kravchenko, Davydova, Goltzova)¹, archetypal symbolism (N. Kravchenko, H. Brechak²), universal narrative models of the fairytale and rap hero "journey" (Kravchenko, Zhykharieva³), associated with transformation and transition to a new spiritual, sacred or simply profane-material status. In addition, fairy tales and rap lyrics involve various alternative "worlds", structuring their semiotics spaces that researchers point out both directly or indirectly (Kravchenko, Snitsar⁴; Kravchenko, Snitsar, Blidchenko-Naiko⁵).

The intersection of possible worlds in fairy tales and rap lyrics implies, in its turn, the existence of mediators, providing the transition between the worlds. The types of mediators may differ or coincide, revealing their archetypal and symbolic basis.

With that being said, **the purpose** of the article consists in identification and comprehensive comparative analysis of the mediators between fairy tales and rap lyrics worlds. **The multifaceted research objectives** are (a) to identify the types of mediators and their functions in actualizing an implicit meaning of the rap text and the symbolic subtext of the fairytale narrative; (b) to characterize the identified mediators in terms of their metaphorical, symbolic and archetypal properties; (c) to compare the mediators of transition in fairy tales and rap alternative worlds.

The analysis of the latest studies and publications

Taking into account a set of goals and objectives, the research involves three vectored theoretical and methodological basis: 1) works mainly structural-anthropological, concerned with mediation and mediators;

¹ N.K. Kravchenko; T.V. Davydova, & M.G. Goltsova, *A Comparative Study of Fairy Tale and Rap Narratives: Spaces Specificity. Journal of History Culture and Art Research*, 9(3), 2020, 155-167.

² N. Kravchenko, & H. Brechak, Archetypal symbolism of African-American rap (based on Tylor the Creator "Foreword"). *Science and Education. A New Dimension. Philology*, 7(60), 2019, 204, 56-59.

³ N. Kravchenko, O. Zhykharieva, Rap artists' identity in archetypal roles of Hero and Seeker: A linguistic perspective. *Journal of Language and Linguistic Studies*. Vol 16, No 4 (in print), 2020.

⁴ N. Kravchenko; V. Snitsar, Cultural archetypes in the construction of "possible worlds" of modern African-American rap (based on Kendrick Lamar's texts). *Euromentor Journal X* (4): 80-92, 2019.

⁵ N. Kravchenko; V., Snitsar, Blidchenko-Naiko, V., Paradoxes of rap artists' role identity: Sage, Magician or Trickster? *Cogito. Multidisciplinary research journal XII* (1): 179-195, 2020.

2) the fairy tale studies, which attempt to classify mediators and other characters with identical properties; 3) a few works focused on comparative characteristics of the fairytale and rap narratives from different research perspectives.

The term “mediation” was first introduced by Claude Levi-Strauss in “The structural study of myth”⁶ as a means of solving the binary opposition, which can reflect with either contradictions in the world or dichotomies in the human mind –such as night and day, left and right, nature and culture, good-evil, rationality-irrationality, life and death.

Taking into account the fact that the fairy tales’ alternative worlds symbolically correlate with the realm of the dead (V. Propp⁷): the transformation of a rap lyrics hero (a rapper) is also associated with metaphorical death (rebirth in a new social and material status; spiritual renewal as a result of spiritual travel), the research hypothesizes that the mediators are primarily related to the binary opposition “life versus death”.

Another alternative world, also inherent in rap lyrics, is the world of the distorted time-space relationships associated with the hallucinogenic world. The mediators between the real and illusionary worlds are, correspondingly, associated with the opposition “reality – illusion”.

Dealing with the fairy tale possible worlds, Levi Strauss's mediators are somehow associated with Propp's charming aides, identified in “Morphology of a fairy tale”⁸, because such assistants also symbolize the transition to “the other world”. According to V. Propp¹⁰, the helper can be manifested by animals (a wolf, bird, horse), objects from which helpers appear (a tree, a box), objects that are endowed with magical power (a sword, a pair of boots, water), the magical qualities themselves (the ability to transform into an animal, to travel through time and space, to understand the animals’ language). Some of these objects and qualities-mediators are revealed in the rap lyrics as well, reinterpreted as the conceptual metaphors.

Very few comparative studies of fairytales and rap narratives focus on their symbolism, chronotope and archetypal plot lines (see above) while the issue of mediators between the worlds remain unexplored. Thus, it determines the novelty of this article.

⁶ C. Lévi-Strauss, The Structural Study of Myth. *Journal of American Folklore* 68(270):428–44, 1955.

⁷ V. Propp, *Morphology of the folktale*. Austin: University of Texas Press, 2011.

⁸ C. Lévi-Strauss, The Structural Study of Myth. *Journal of American Folklore* 68(270):428–44, 1955.

1. Database and methodology

The research data encompass the rap songs of famous American rappers and some Ukrainian, Russian and English fairy tales, whose textual space consists of more than one “alternative world” along with corresponding mediators of transition between the worlds. The data collection criteria involve explicit, metaphorical, symbolic nominations of the various worlds and their mediators, as well as narrative motifs associated with transition from life to death, transformation into animals, the acquisition of supernatural abilities, purification and renewal.

Method of analysis includes textual-interpretative analysis with some elements of narrative analysis (Dundes⁹; Jones¹⁰; Propp¹¹; Zhykharieva¹²) that helps to identify some narrative motifs associated with the transition between the worlds; stylistic analysis (Simpson¹³) to reveal stylistic devices to designate the alternative world and its mediators in the rap lyrics; the **conceptual metaphor** analysis (Lakoff, Johnson¹⁴; Steen¹⁵) by means of which the elements of conceptual blending are included (Fauconnier, Turner¹⁶; Handl, Schmid¹⁷).

Procedures of data analysis consists of 5 stages:

1. Sampling of research material based on the data collection criteria.
2. Identification of an archetypically bound, connected "the other world", prototypically associated with the kingdom of the dead and marked with the names of fairy topoi and fairy toponyms, as well as demetaphorized images and metaphorical hyperboles of the rap lyrics world with an emphasis on common and specific characteristics of the worlds and their linguistic devices.

⁹ J.A. Dundes, 2007, *The Meaning of Folklore* / Bronner, Simon J. (Ed.). University Press of Colorado. Th. Bunce. London: Macmillan and Co., 1878. - 205 p.

¹⁰ R.A. Jones, *Mixed Metaphors and Narrative Shifts: Archetypes*. *Theory and Psychology* 13 (5): 651-672, 2003.

¹¹ V., Propp, *Morphology of the folktale*. Austin: University of Texas Press, 2011.

¹² O., Zhykharieva, *Ecopoetics of English biblical discourse: concepts, images, narrations*. Kyiv: KNU (in Ukrainian), 2018.

¹³ P. Simpson, *Stylistics: A resource book for students*. London: Routledge, 2004.

¹⁴ G. Lakoff, & M. Johnson, *Metaphors We Live By*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980.

¹⁵ G. Steen; A.G. Dorst; J.B. Herrmann; A. Kaal, and T., Krennmayr, *Metaphor in usage*. *Cognitive Linguistics* 21(4), pp. 765-796, 2010.

¹⁶ Fauconnier, G., & Turner, M., *The Way We Think: Conceptual Blending and the Mind's Hidden Complexities*. New York: Basic Books, 2002.

¹⁷ S. Handl, & H.-J. Schmid, Introduction. *Windows to the Mind: Metaphor, Metonymy, and Conceptual Blending*. Mouton de Gruyter, 2011, pp. 1-20.

3. Scrutinizing the types of mediators of inherent transition to the fairy tale and rap fabulous worlds in terms of their common and different features along with linguistic and narrative means of manifestation.

4. Identification of the oneiric world and its corresponding mediators of transition in the rap lyrics in comparison with the similar types of mediators in fairy tales, based on the analysis of oneiric visual imagery and fairy tale narrative motifs.

5. Specification of the mediators associated with the artistic inspiration world and their status transformation.

2. Alternative worlds

Since the mediators of the worlds transition presuppose the existence of mentioned above so called alternative worlds, a preliminary stage of the study consists in these worlds' identification in the mentioned above fairy tales and rap lyrics.

The analyzed rap lyrics shed light on five alternative worlds. Some of them are also identified in a few works related to the study of alternative spaces of the rap texts:

(1) the world of the rapper present, which, in opposition to the world of the past, is often associated with his miraculous transformation from a Ghetto boy into a prosperous super-star (about the metaphorical journey of the lyrical rapper in comparison with the fairy tale hero – see in Kravchenko, Zhykharieva¹⁸);

(2) the archetypally bound “the other world”, prototypically associated with the kingdom of the dead;

(3) the oneiric world, which the lyrical rapper immerses himself in search of an imaginary liberation from the earthly vanity, envious people, his struggle for fame and fans;

(4) the world of creative inspiration and uplift, which raises the artist's rap to “heaven” in a metaphorical sense;

(5) the world of spiritual values, most often religious, opposed to the profane world (see in Kravchenko¹⁹).

Some of these worlds with their corresponding mediators of transition intersect with the fabulous fairy tale space, the others are unique due to the semiotic space of rap texts.

¹⁸ N. Kravchenko; O. Zhykharieva, Rap artists' identity in archetypal roles of Hero and Seeker: A linguistic perspective. *Journal of Language and Linguistic Studies*. Vol 16, No 4 (in print), 2020.

¹⁹ N.K. Kravchenko, Biblical intertextuality devices in African American rap texts (based on the Kendrick Lamar's album “Damn”). *International journal of philology*. 10 (2): 12-17, 2019.

2.1. Fabulous underworld and its mediators: fairy tale versus rap lyrics

In the fairy tales different narrative alternative worlds may correlate with a number of fabulous topoi, such as "Faraway Kingdom", "Underworld", "another country", "in the underwater kingdom", "the three worlds, Above—Below—and Here" (The Butterfly that Stamped), "Kingdom, underneath the earth" as in (1) and even "the Well of the World's End" in (2):

(1) "But first you must follow me boldly into my Father's Kingdom, underneath the earth" (The Magic Ring);

(2) "So she did what the old woman told her, and at last arrived at the Well of the World's End" ("the Well of the World's End").

Much less often the other world is designated in the fairy tales by fabulous toponyms: "Blue Mountains" (The Blue Mountains), The Gold, Silver and Copper Kingdoms, etc.

However, such worlds are always associated with their archaic prototype. The kingdom of the dead is directly pointed out and thoroughly described by Propp (Propp²⁰, p. 360-374) in his **"Historical Roots of the Fairy Tale"**. Thus, he suggests that "the course of the development of the tale and especially from the outset (sending to the land of the dead) reflects the idea of death, which seems to be the most "tenacious and capable of artistic processing" (Propp²³, p. 147).

In the rap lyrics, the fabulous underworld, according to some research, emerges either in the form of an anthropomorphic mediator between the worlds, or as metaphorically reinterpreted images of "the deathlike world", the space of imagery death.

In particular, an anthropomorphic mediator, associated with fairy tales and a mythological witch character or **Atropos** (Goddess of Fate and Death), appears in "Blood" rap lyrics by Kendrick Lamar as "a blind woman pacing up and down the sidewalk". Symbolizing either the rapper's Fate or the Death, the blind woman snipped his life with a point-blank shot with words «You've lost your life!" (Kendrick Lamar, Blood).

The images of "the deathlike world" are foregrounded primarily by metaphoric imagery, reinterpreted in its literal naturalistic meaning, in particular, through:

(a) compound imagery in (3), which is built on a realistically exaggerated image of a perforated skull, which may metaphorically designate the rapper's emotional or psychological traumas but in combination with a subsequent metaphoric image of heart covered with ice

²⁰ V., Propp, *Historical Roots of the wonder tale* (in Russian). Leningrad. Available at: https://www.gumer.info/bibliotek_Buks/Linguist/Propp_2/index.php 1946.

it is interpreted in a naturalistic-sensory plane, that is incompatible with life. As a result, the demetaphorized meaning, suggested by the visual image of "holes in a skull" involves de-metaphorization of the fixed metaphor "ice heart" with replacing its basic denotative meaning "indifferent" by a new denotatum "lifeless" / dead.

(b) revitalizing the inner form of the metaphor "Dead alive" as in (3),

(c) the metaphorical hyperbole "I was never alive", which can mean a lack of interest in life or life joys, is decoded in its literal sense as "immortality" due to an explicitly established causal connection with the main part of the phrase, namely, "I cannot die»

(3) "Holes in my skull, over time / My heart's over ice" (Righteous, Juice WRLD)²¹;

(4) Dead alive, it's in my repertoire, forever even high" (Pain, Asap Rocky)²²;

(5) "I can't die, 'cause I never was alive" (Can't Die, Juice WRLD).²³

One of the research, peripherally related to the topic under our investigation, claims that the search for the supernatural world correlates in the rap lyrics with the archetypal role of Magician "constructing an illusory world and filling it with supernatural powers" (Kravchenko et al., 2020, p. 179)²⁴. The Magician, in its turn, deals with a set of magic tools, providing a transition between the ordinary and magical worlds.

Both in the fairy tale and rap domains, a *magic wand* stands out among other objects, which are endowed with magical power. Among the universal macrocultural narratives, primarily associated with a fairy godmother magic wand, it is the world-known Cinderella. The lesser known example is "The Princess of Colchester" that is deemed to be a linguoculturally specific fairy tale, where a magic wand opens a passage through a thick thorny hedge to the other world. This example is similar to the one presented in (6) or transform the hero into an animal or bird as in (7).

(6). «*There is a thick thorny hedge before you, which will appear impassable, but take this wand in your hand, strike three times, and say, 'Pray, hedge, let me come through,' and it will open immediately*» (The Princess of Colchest).

(7) «*she draws out from under her cloak a stick, and just touches the girl with it. Then a wonderful thing occurred, for the girl became all of a sudden changed into an owl*» (The Baker's Daughter).

²¹ Juice WRLD, Righteous. Available at: <https://genius.com/Juice-wrld-righteous-lyrics>

²² Asap Rocky. Pain. Available at: <https://genius.com/A-ap-rocky-pain-lyrics>

²³ Juice WRLD, Can't Die. Available at: <https://genius.com/Juice-wrld-cant-die-lyrics>

²⁴ N. Kravchenko; V. Snitsar; V. Blidchenko-Naiko, Paradoxes of rap artists' role identity: Sage, Magician or Trickster? *Cogito*. Multidisciplinary research journal XII (1): 179-195, 2020.

Similarly, a “New magic wand” rapper-lyrical hero, by means of a magic wand, can change the reality around him and acquires supernatural power over life and death:

(8) *“She’s gonna be dead, I just got a magic wand”* (New magic wand, Tylor the Creator)²⁵.

In contrast to the rap lyrics, some fairytale heroes may receive the most diverse symbolic attributes of power, wealth or status from the alternative world. They obtain them either as a reward for successful overcoming challenges during their journey or just as a gift (a rejuvenating apple, a firebird, a magic ring, a crystal ball, a hide-away hat, a panpipe and the wallet that never runs out of money as in the Ukrainian tale “How the tsar's horns grew”)²⁶. The symbolic image of «a magic ball» as a guide to “another world” is found in numerous Russian fairy tales, i.e. “Three kingdoms - copper, silver and gold”; “The Tale of a Brave Man, Rejuvenating Apples and Living Water”, “Go there - I don’t know where, bring that - I don’t know what”, “Animal milk”²⁷, etc. In some English fairy tales the hero may receive a gold horn with nectar («The fairy horn»), the sword («Jack the Giant-killer», a witch's rope («The witch of Fraddam and the Enchanter of Pengerswick»)²⁸, three feathers as in (9),

(9). *Then he told her to take three feathers from under his side, and whatever she wished through them would come to pass* (Three Feathers)²⁹.

According to V. Propp (2011)³⁰, an intermediary function between the worlds can be performed, in addition to objects endowed with magical qualities, by magical qualities themselves.

In fairy tales, magical qualities quite often give a hero an ability to change into animals according to his totemic and karmic archaic roots. For example, a protagonist changes into a serpent in “The magic ring”³¹ or a white hare in “The Haunted hare”. In addition to an archetypally bound narrative motif of transformation, in fairy tales, supernatural power includes the ability to understand the animals’, birds’, trees’ and objects’

²⁵ Tyler, the Creator. New magic wand. Available at: <https://genius.com/Tyler-the-creator-new-magic-wand-lyrics>

²⁶ <https://kazky.org.ua/zbirky/ukrajinsjki-narodni-kazky/och>

²⁷ A. Afanasyev, *Russian Fairy Tales*. The Planet, 2013.

²⁸ *The Project Gutenberg eBook, English Fairy Tales*, by Flora Annie Steel, Illustrated by Arthur Rackham <http://www.gutenberg.org/files/17034/17034-h/17034-h.htm>

²⁹ Grimm, Brothers, *Household Tales* / M. Hunt (Translator). Create Space Independent Publishing Platform, 2014.

³⁰ V. Propp, *Morphology of the folktale*. Austin: University of Texas Press, 2011.

³¹ <https://russian-crafts.com/russian-folk-tales/magic-ring-russian-tale.html>

languages as is in (10), which also reflects both an archaic karmic motif of the human reincarnation and totemic beliefs as well.

(10). *He understood what the beasts said, what the birds said, what the fishes said, and what the insects said. He understood what the rocks said deep under the earth when they bowed in towards each other and groaned; and he understood what the trees said when they rustled in the middle of the morning* (The Butterfly that Stamped)³².

Similar to fairy tales, the motif of supernatural qualities is rather frequent in the rap lyrics. The difference is the rapper ascribes these qualities to himself, hyperbolizing his superiority and exclusiveness over others.

In general, it is achieved by creating images of supernatural rapper's capabilities based on the metaphors-hyperboles of his popularity, associated with the donor domains of Galaxy and celestial bodies. In particular, it is the metaphor describing the rapper's ability to dance on the stars in (11), to break the laws of gravity as in (13) and (14), to transform into a monster as in (15).

(11). *And I'm dancin 'on' em stars*

The galaxy ain't got room for y'all (Blow My High (Members Only), Kendrick Lamar)³³

(12) *With a Skywalker ridin' 'round solar* (I Ain't Got Time! Tyler The Creator)³⁴

(13) *Trying to stay above water*, (HiiiPoWeR, Kendrick Lamar)³⁵

(14) *I have wings on my back so we don't (take the plane)* OKAGA, CA, Tyler The Creator)³⁶.

In (11), the metaphorical expression "dancin 'on' em stars" consolidates two metaphors: "To Be Globally Famous Is To Dance on The Stars" and "To Surpass (other rappers stars) Is To Dance on them". The implied meaning "fabulous fame" is further emphasized by the hyperbolized metonymy «The galaxy ain't got room for y'all», denoting both the "galactic level rapper's fame" and the uselessness of other rap stars. In the same vein, in (12), the rapper alludes a high level popularity by means of allusion on a Skywalker, the central character of the Star Wars

³² <https://etc.usf.edu/lit2go/79/just-so-stories/1295/the-butterfly-that-stamped>

³³ K. Lamar, *Blow My High (Members Only)*. Available at:

<https://www.azlyrics.com/lyrics/kendricklamar/blowmyhighmembersonly.html>

³⁴ Tyler, *the Creator*, OKAGA, CA. Available at: <https://genius.com/Tyler-the-creator-okaga-ca-lyrics>

³⁵ K. Lamar, *HiiiPoWeR*, Available at: <https://genius.com/Kendrick-lamar-hiiipower-lyrics>

³⁶ Tyler, *the Creator*, OKAGA, CA. Available at: <https://genius.com/Tyler-the-creator-okaga-ca-lyrics>

Universe, combined with the hyperbole designating the rapper's fame going beyond the planetary scale ("*ridin' 'round solar*").

In (15) the rapper's supernatural power is presented by allusion to a monster maniac who appears after five-time pronouncing his name in front of the mirror in (15).

(15) *Just say his name and I promise that you'll see Candyman (Element, Kendrick Lamar)*³⁷.

Often, the rapper's supernatural power is symbolically implied by his interaction with fire as in (I got that fire, I got that fire, Juvenile)³⁸ or its metonymic manifestations – the sun, light, etc. as in (16-17). Moreover, fire is often used as an integral element of visual space of a clip that leads to multimodality creation and parametrizing implicit meanings that are associated with possible interpretations of the symbol of fire in the rap audience (in I got that fire, Juvenile; Kendrick Lamar; Humble, Kendrick Lamar)³⁹, etc.

(16) *Nah spray cologne, we spray hot metal, cho man! (Royalty, XXXTENTACION)*⁴⁰.

(17) *I'm hot, I'm heat to the core like Earth (WHAT'S GOOD, Tyler The Creator)*⁴¹

In (16), using the conceptual metaphor, the rapper associates the force and energy emanating from him with red-hot metal dissemination.

In (17), the rapper compares himself to the Earth's core temperature by means of the simile, exceeding the Sun surface temperature. The implicature, triggered by the hyperbolized simile, is supported by the pun, based on the interplay of the different meanings of the adjective "hot" – as (a) denoting the artist capability to warming up the rap audience (to the Earth's core temperature), and (b) being associated with the "hot hits", and the rap writer hit maker's skills.

In this regard, there is a certain analogy with fairy tales. There is a hero, who is free to handle fire and endowed with supernatural power. In particular, a blacksmith possesses magical power precisely because he interacts with fire: in particular, he can "forge" a voice or a snake teeth

³⁷ K. Lamar, *Element*. Available at:

<https://www.azlyrics.com/lyrics/kendricklamar/element.html>

³⁸ Juvenile, *I got that fire*. Available at: <https://www.metrolyrics.com/i-got-that-fire-lyrics-juvenile.html>

³⁹ Lamar, K. Humble. Available at: <https://genius.com/Kendrick-lamar-humble-lyrics>

⁴⁰ XXXTENTACION. Royalty. Available at: <https://genius.com/Xxxtentacion-royalty-lyrics>

⁴¹ Tyler, *the Creator*, OKAGA, CA. Available at: <https://genius.com/Tyler-the-creator-okaga-ca-lyrics>

("Ivasyk-Telesyk")⁴². After interaction with fire, it is also an animal that gains supernatural power as a horse in "Tree to Heaven" fairy tale. Having been fed with frying pans, the horse obtains five legs, wings and golden mane and becomes capable to carry the hero, facing danger of fire, through air.

In Ukrainian fairy tales, in contrast to the rap lyrics, one of the narrative motifs is getting a purifying and renewing effect of fire that revives the hero, endowing him with the new best qualities. In the fairy tale "Oh!"⁴³, a lazy young man is burned with a stake (which is archetypally associated with the rite of purification), after which pieces of embers are sprinkled in the form of living water, bringing a revived hero back to life and transforming him into a better person. In another tale "Silk State", the witch burning is connected with a motive of rebirth as shown in (18).

(18) *As the fire broke out, he threw the witch into the flames (...). And I'm not who I used to be. After the fire I am a pure soul.*

In the rap lyrics, the image of fire loses its archetypal ambivalence as an element of rebirth and purification. Fire functions are presented by either as a symbol of rapper's supernatural power (see above), or symbolizes destruction, embodying the rap protest ideology as shown in (19-20).

(19) *We set the roof on fire*

We set the roof on fire

We set the roof on fire (twelfefold key phrase repetition) (Set The Roof, Lil John, Rae Sremmurd)⁴⁴.

(20) *Let's start a fire, watch the entire*

World as it opens up in flames (Christina Milian, Lil Wayn, Start a Fire)⁴⁵.

Table 1. Mediators of transition into fabulous underworld

| Rap lyrics | Fairy tales |
|---|---|
| Fabulous underworlds | |
| The space of imagery death. | The archetypally-bound "the other world", prototypically associated with the kingdom of the dead. |
| Linguistic means of the underworld designation | |
| Metaphorically reinterpreted images of | Fabulous toponyms and nominations |

⁴² <https://kazky.org.ua/zbirky/ukrajinsjki-narodni-kazky/och>

⁴³ <https://kazky.org.ua/zbirky/ukrajinsjki-narodni-kazky/och>

⁴⁴ Lil, John, Sremmurd, Rae. *Set The Roof*. Available at: <https://genius.com/Rae-sremmurd-set-the-roof-lyrics>

⁴⁵ Christina Milian; Lil Wayn, *Start a Fire*. Available at: <https://genius.com/Lil-wayne-start-a-fire-lyrics>

| | |
|---|---|
| “the deathlike world”: deliberately demetaphorized compound imagery, metaphorical hyperbole. | of fairy topoi. |
| Mediators of fabulous underworld | |
| Common | |
| Magic tools (a magic wand), providing transition between the ordinary and magical worlds. | |
| Different | |
| An anthropomorphic mediator, archetypally associated with fairy tales and mythological characters; single attributes of supernatural power: an anthropomorphic mediator, archetypally associated with the fairy tale and mythological characters. | Numerous symbolic attributes of supernatural power. |
| Common | |
| Magical qualities / capabilities | |
| Magical power due to the hero's / rapper's interaction with fire | |
| Linguistic and narrative means of manifesting the fire-bound capabilities of the fairy hero / the rapper | |
| Different | |
| Conceptual metaphors and metonymies associated with the donor domains of fire and the input / target domain of the rapper's force, power and energy; the hyperbolized simile and other stylistic devices; destruction motifs. | Narrative motifs of a purifying and renewing effect of fire on the hero's transformation. |
| Different | |
| Supernatural capabilities, emphasizing the rapper's superiority and exclusiveness over other people. | Supernatural capabilities, facilitating fairy tales hero's interaction with other worlds. |
| Linguistic and narrative means of the supernatural capabilities foregrounding | |
| Metaphors, hyperboles of the rapper's popularity, associated with donor domains of Galaxy and celestial bodies; allusions of precedential phenomena, related to the characters from the parallel worlds. | Archetypally bound narrative motif of transformation into animals. An archetypally bound narrative motif of understanding the language of animals and inanimate objects. |

2.2. Mediators of transition into oneiric worlds

The hallucinogenic or oneiric world is the most frequently appeared alternative world in modern rap lyrics. Correspondingly, the most common in the rap texts is a group of transition mediators, associated with drugs, alcohol and other mind-expanders that have a hallucination effect on the

rapper, for instance, making him sleep or expanding his mind barriers within his visit "the other world", gaining imaginary temporary freedom as in (21-23).

(21) *I see the feelin' the freedom is granted as soon as the damage of vodka arrived (Kendrick Lamar, Swimming Pools (Drank))*⁴⁶

(22) *Doin' cocaine with my black friends, uh*

*We'll be high as hell before the night ends, yeah (Juice WRLD Black & White)*⁴⁷

(23) *«hypnosis overdose on potions» (Juice WRLD, Nintendo)*⁴⁸

Transition to another fairy tale world is associated with sacred food and drink as attributes of initiation, provided by hallucinogenic mediators. In this regard, the researchers argue that "foodways are important in our connections with the supernatural because the food cycle itself – from seed to table and onward – is one of the very most fundamental sets of natural and social patterns, and is interlaced with others like it" (Lloyd, 1995, p. 61).⁴⁹

Thus, the state of intoxication in the English fairy tale "The Fairy Banquet"⁵⁰ blurs boundaries between the worlds, as a man acquires the ability to see creatures from another world. Having drunk water from a well, a hero gains the ability to understand the language of animals ("The mountain that reached the sky"). In "The Green Children" fairy tale, young children with green skin, fed with "human" food, obtain a usual skin color.

There is a substantial difference between mediators of transition in the alternative worlds of fairy tales and rap lyrics as we can reveal the mediators' unequal impact on the nature of human transformation when the latter depends on the quality of the target worlds. Thus, in the vast majority of cases found in the fairy tales, sacred food adds strength, ability, or serves as a means of punishing or given a hero a lesson. In particular, the herb in «The two serving damsels» strengthens the hero on his way to overcoming obstacles. After the king and his daughter eat magic apples, horns grew on their heads, which served to their repentance and change⁵¹.

⁴⁶ K. Lamar, *Swimming Pools (Drank)*. Available at:

<https://soundcloud.com/topdawgent/kendrick-lamar-swimming-pools>.

⁴⁷ Juice WRLD. *Black & White*. Available at: genius.com/Juice-world-black-and-white-lyrics

⁴⁸ Juice WRLD. *Nintendo*. Available at: <https://genius.com/Juice-wrld-nintendo-lyrics>

⁴⁹ T.C. Lloyd, *Folklore, Foodways, and the Supernatural. Out of the Ordinary: Folklore and the Supernatural* / ed. by B. Walker. Logan: Utah State University Press, 1995, pp. 59-71.

⁵⁰ The Project Gutenberg eBook, English Fairy Tales, by Flora Annie Steel, Illustrated by Arthur Rackham <http://www.gutenberg.org/files/17034/17034-h/17034-h.htm>

⁵¹ <https://kazky.org.ua/zbirky/javorova/jak-u-carja-rohy-vyrosly>

On the contrary, the mind-expanding drinks and food introduce a rapper into the world of death, imminent karma, fear and degradation, which can be expressed either explicitly as in (24)

(24) *Started pack smokin', good dope rollin'*

Maybe Mary Jane'll help me put the pills down

Dead inside, catch a look at my ghost

Numb the pain, take these Percs to the mouth and the nose (Juice WRLD, HeMotions)⁵² or through visual-oniric imagery as is exemplified by (25).

(25) *Spit (means "to rap" – authors) like my last breath: casket rap, six deep,*

Eyes closed, the black is back, out come the 'Lac with flats,

After that, bottles I can't pronounce,

Like, "How you ask for that?"

Why you ask for crack (...) ? (ASAP Rocky, 1 Train)⁵³.

In above (25) visual-oniric imagery, expressing the rapper's mental state, integrate a number of stylistic devices, including:

(a) the occasional simile, comparing the process of rapping (splitting) influenced by alcohol and crack, with the last moment before the rapper's imaginary death (denoted by idiom "last breath");

(2) the pun, exploiting two meanings of polysemantic words "casket": collection of musical masterpieces and rectangular coffin, the second meaning being enhanced by the subsequent detached construction "six deep", alluded to the usual burial depth;

(3) an image of Cadillac with curtains on the windows («Lac with flats»), usually symbolizing a funeral procession,

(4) some vocabulary designating inevitability of plunging into darkness («the black is back») and associated with the image of a deceased person ("eyes closed").

The search for illusory freedom from problems in the real world ("Life's too hard, I take the easy way and overdose" (Nintendo, WRLD)⁵⁴, «But I don't need love no more / I'll be fine, sipping wine (Everyday, ASAP Rocky)⁵⁵, as a rule, turns into an obsessive feeling of impending danger and death as is exemplified by (26-27)

(26) *"I was born to drown, I was born hell-bound";*

⁵² Juice WRLD, *HeMotions*. Available at: <https://www.metrolyrics.com/juice-wrld-hemotions-juice-wrld-ml-video-wfk.html>

⁵³ ASAP Rocky, *1 Train*. Available at: <https://genius.com/A-ap-rocky-1train-lyrics>

⁵⁴ Juice WRLD, *Nintendo*. Available at: <https://genius.com/Juice-wrld-nintendo-lyrics>

⁵⁵ ASAP Rocky, *Everyday*. Available at: <https://genius.com/A-ap-rocky-everyday-lyrics>

“I got cash, but I can't take that with me after death” (Nintendo, WRLD)⁵⁵,

(27) “Bloody ink on my pad spelled suicide” (Phoenix, ASAP Rocky)⁵⁶, as well as inner emptiness, metaphorically designated as a hole in a chest as in (28), lack of life as in (29) and physical disintegration (30).

(28) *There's a hole in my chest*

There ain't nothing left (Nintendo, WRLD)⁵⁵;

(29) *Blame it on the weather and the narcos / Take my breath, take my heart, take my soul, nothing left* (Nintendo, WRLD⁵⁷).

(30) *Chaos I create,*

I come apart (I Come Apart, ASAP Rocky)⁵⁸.

Table 2. Mediators of transition into the oneiric worlds

| Rap lyrics | Fairy tales |
|--|---|
| Alternative worlds | |
| The hallucinogenic world. | The fabulous “another world”. |
| Mediators of transition | |
| Types of mediators | |
| Hallucinogenic mediators, associated with drugs, alcohol and mind-expanders, introduce a rapper to the imaginary “other” world. | Sacred food and drinks. |
| Means of the mediators’ expression | |
| Explicit nomination of hallucinogenic mediators. | Narrative motifs of supernatural abilities. |
| Mediators’ functions | |
| To introduce the world of death, imminent karma, fear and degradation. | Add strength, ability, or serve as a means to punish or train a hero. |
| Linguistic and narrative means of the mediators’ functions foregrounding | |
| Different | |
| Explicit nomination of mental condition. Stylistic devices that construct visual-oneiric imagery to designate the rapper’s foreboding of death. | Narrative motifs of struggle between good and evil, victory over evil narrative motifs of a villain character, correction and redemption. |

⁵⁶ ASAP Rocky, *Phoenix*. Available at: <https://genius.com/A-ap-rocky-phoenix-lyrics>

⁵⁷ Juice WRLD, *Nintendo*. Available at: <https://genius.com/Juice-wrld-nintendo-lyrics>

⁵⁸ ASAP Rocky, *I Come Apart*. Available at: <https://genius.com/A-ap-rocky-i-come-apart-lyrics>

2.3. Mediators of transition to the worlds of artistic inspiration and status transformation

In addition to the oneiric world and the “world” associated with the kingdom of the dead, the rap lyrics can include two other alternative worlds – the world of artistic inspiration and the world of status transformation.

The world of inspiration, opposed to the world of earthly concerns, does not intersect with the fairy-tale worlds. The mediators of transition (in order to creative dimension) are often conceptualized as the attributes of a free flight, which overcomes gravitation as in (31).

(31) *Fly with the birds in the wind, (...)*

I just wanna soar through the space, let the wind hit my face

Till there's nothing left in the gas tank, I don't wanna crash.

You can buy a car, you can buy many things,

You can buy happiness but you can't buy wings,

But you can't buy a pair of wings, aerodynamic,

To stay cloud level (Pilot, Tylor the Creator)⁵⁹.

To explicate the metaphors, denoting the state of creative inspiration, the paper applies for the blending theory analysis – considering that there are no conventional metaphors associating the rap creation with soaring in space such as having wings or flying with birds at the level of the clouds. Input source domains in (31) is “to feel inspired while rapping”. The “generic” space, uniting the interrelated target inputs “to have wings”, “to soar in space”, “to fly with birds” and the source input “to feel inspired” is the “feeling of freedom from everything earthly”. As a result, two intersecting inputs are projected into a new kind of blended space: “to rap” is understood by the rap artist as to soar / fly through the space by means of a pair of wings and to feel the cloud level. At the same time, the involvement of wings images, birds and a free flight (as mediators between the world of the earthly gravitation and “the other world” of absolute freedom from earthly concerns) is additionally prompted by association with the conventional metaphor “on the wings of success”, conveying the feeling of a person who attains his desired aims.

In another song, exemplified by (32) the input domain of the metaphor “to rap / to flow is to levitate” appears as “to hover in the air in defiance of gravitation” The source domain is not verbally explicated while is associated with the process of creation, due to presuppositional knowledge about the rapper’s special attitude to creativity, based on the

⁵⁹ Tyler, the Creator, *Pilot*. Available at: <https://genius.com/Tyler-the-creator-pilot-lyrics>

context (hypertext) of the Kendrick Lamar's lyrics ("I'm talkin' fear, fear of losin' creativity" (Kendrick Lamar, *Fear*)⁶⁰.

(32) *Levitate, levitate, levitate, levitate (...)*

For free won't get you high, no, no, no

Two keys won't get you high, no, no, no

Bentleys won't get you high, no, no, no

Bars won't get you high, no, no, no

Levitate, levitate, levitate, levitate (Kendrick Lamar, *Levitate*)⁶¹.

Another alternative world (that is inherent to the rap narratives) is the world of the miraculous status transformation that is always opposed to the world of the rap hero past and mediated by the symbols of material well-being. For instance, "All white Gucci suit" (Juice WRLD, *Righteous*)⁶², "luxury car", "diamond in the ceiling", "marble on the floors" (Kendrick Lamar, *DNA*)⁶³, "a penthouse and a beach home" (Asap Rocky, *M's*)⁶⁴.

As it is pointed out in the research on the archetypally based motifs of the rappers' identity, the hero has to overcome the abyss "between the ghetto world and the world of luxury". He overcomes challenges, gets a fight with his external and internal enemies, and with himself. Thus, he wins an award –transfiguration into a new status in the new world of luxury and success. The example is given at the end of the rapper's life journey (Kravchenko, Zhykharieva, 2020)⁶⁵.

*Now we live it up, driving with the rooftop missin' (Empty, Juice WRLD)*⁶⁶.

(34) *come a long way from a hundred dollars a month*

*To a hundred mil' in a day (Compton, Kendrick Lamar)*⁶⁷

(35) *Straight (...)*

*From a peasant to a prince (King Kunta, Kendrick Lamar)*⁶⁸.

⁶⁰ K. Lamar, *Fear*. Available at: <https://genius.com/Kendrick-lamar-fear-lyrics>

⁶¹ K. Lamar, *Levitate*. Available at: <https://genius.com/Kendrick-lamar-untitled-07-2014-2016-lyrics>

⁶² Juice WRLD, *Righteous*. Available at: <https://genius.com/Juice-wrld-righteous-lyrics>

⁶³ K. Lamar, *DNA*. Available at: <https://genius.com/Kendrick-lamar-dna-lyrics>

⁶⁴ ASAP Rocky, *M's*. Available at: <https://genius.com/A-ap-rocky-m-lyrics>

⁶⁵ Kravchenko, N., Zhykharieva, O., (2020). Rap artists' identity in archetypal roles of Hero and Seeker: A linguistic perspective. *Journal of Language and Linguistic Studies*. Vol 16, No 4 (in print)

⁶⁶ Juice WRLD, *Empty*. Available at: <https://genius.com/Juice-wrld-empty-lyrics>

⁶⁷ K. Lamar, *Compton*. Available at: <https://genius.com/Kendrick-lamar-compton-lyrics>

⁶⁸ K. Lamar, *King Kunta*. Available at: <https://genius.com/Kendrick-king-kunta-lyrics>

Status transformation often occurs with fairy-tale heroes. However, unlike rap lyrics, it does not create a separate reality in the space of the fairy-tale text, but it is a consequence (reward) of the hero's overcoming trials associated with the fairy tales parallel world or its inhabitants (“Molly Whuppie and the double-faced Giant”⁶⁹, “Ivan the Fool”⁷⁰).

Table 3. Mediators associated with artistic inspiration and status transformation worlds

| Rap lyrics | Fairy tales |
|---|---|
| Alternative worlds | |
| The world of artistic inspiration | _____ |
| Mediators of transition | |
| Wings; ability to fly and to counteract the pull of gravity. | _____ |
| Linguistic means of the world designation | |
| Synonymic conceptual metaphors: “to create rap is to have wings”, “to create rap is to soar through the space”, “to create rap is to stay cloud level”, “to create rap is to levitate”. | _____ |
| Alternative worlds | |
| The world of the miraculous status transformation | Status transformation, which does not form a separate alternative world, but is an external manifestation of the hero inner renewal after his interacting with the magical world and its representatives. |
| Mediators of transition | |
| Explicitly designated symbols of material well-being, based on the narrative motifs of the hero transfiguration and reward. | |

5. Conclusion

The article clarifies the problem of mediators between the worlds of Ukrainian, Russian, English fairy tales and Afro-American rap lyrics. It is considered within the framework of their metaphorical, symbolic and archetypal characteristics.

The article has reached 4 main findings. *First*. The rap lyrics semantic space may include different worlds, such as the world of the rapper's present that is associated with his miraculous transformation in

⁶⁹http://www.gutenberg.org/files/17034/17034-h/17034-h.htm#MOLLY_WHUPPIE_AND_THE_DOUBLE-FACED_GIANT

⁷⁰ http://lol-russ.umn.edu/PopLit/the_tale_of_ivan_the_fool.htm

comparison with his Ghetto past; the world of imagery death; the oneiric world, mediated by hallucinogens; the world of artistic inspiration and the world of spiritual values.

Second. It is revealed that the world of imagery death, designated in rap lyrics by demetaphorized compound imagery and metaphorical hyperboles, is associated with the archetypally-bound “the other world” in fairy tales, prototypically corresponding to the kingdom of the dead and denoted by fabulous toponyms and fairy topoi. Similar to fairy tales and rap mediators of transition between the ordinary and magical worlds, they use magical tools and abilities, including the ones that are the result of the hero’s interaction with fire. However, it is performed differently in the rap and fairy tales according to the criterion, respectively, single / multiple magical abilities and their functions. Linguistically, the rapper’s supernatural power is marked by conceptual metaphors and metonymies which are associated with the donor domains of fire and the target domain of acquired power and energy as well as a number of hyperbolized similes and other stylistic devices. In contrast to fairy tales, where the fire-bound capabilities of the fairy hero rely on narrative motifs of purifying and renewing effect of fire, the fire images are based on the motif of destruction in rap lyrics. The other supernatural abilities are foregrounded by metaphors-hyperboles of the rapper’s popularity, with the donor domains of Galaxy and celestial bodies while the fairy tale domain involves the archetypally bound narrative motifs of transformation into animals and understanding the language of animals or inanimate objects to gain the same aim.

Third. The rap lyrics oneiric worlds are mediated by drugs, alcohol and mind-expanders, while in fairy tales, sacred food and drinks are used associated with the narrative motifs of supernatural abilities. Unlike some fabulous oneiric mediators that add strength or serve as a means of punishment or correction of an evil character, based on the narrative motifs of the victory of good over evil and redemption, the rap oneiric mediators are introduced to the world of death, fear and degradation by means of some visual oneiric images.

Fourth. The world of inspiration, opposed to the world of earthly concerns, is not appropriate in fairy-tales. Its mediators include wings; ability to fly and counteract the pull of gravity, designated by the conceptual metaphors: “to create rap is to have wings”, “to create rap is to soar through the space”, “to create rap is to stay cloud level”, “to create rap is to levitate”. The world of wonderful status transformation is denoted by the symbols of material well-being, based on the archetypal narrative motifs of the rapper’s transfiguration and reward in rap lyrics. In fairy tales, the same narrative motifs are not constitutive for the separate world

of status transformation and relate to the hero interaction with the magical world and its representatives.

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