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UNIVERSAL CYCLICITY AND THE MEETING OF THE CONTRARIES IN "BECAUSE I COULD NOT STOP FOR DEATH" BY EMILY DICKINSON

Abstract: By cultivating a high sense of intimacy and introspection, generated with incontestable poetic fervor, Dickinson's works are both revelatory and reflexive, possessing the capacity of integrating disorder in an elaborate poetic form. Exploring the innermost parts of the self in quest of answers which may bring to light the yet unrevealed mysteries of the soul, Dickinson offers a poem of personal experience, in which the ineffable use of the pronoun "I" comes as a universal identifier, a tool which draws a parallel between the poetic thought and the enigmatic, multifarious strata of human nature. These kinds of overwhelming existential uncertainties, which lead to obsessive introspection and the fervent desire of unveiling the secrets of the universe, are majestically explored in the poem "Because I could not stop for Death", the aim of this paper being that of investigating the way in which Dickinson balances the universal disorder with cyclicity.

By cultivating a high sense of intimacy and introspection, generated with incontestable poetic fervor, Dickinson's works are both revelatory and reflexive, possessing the capacity of integrating disorder in an elaborate poetic form. Exploring the innermost parts of the self in quest of answers which may bring to light the yet unrevealed mysteries of the soul, Dickinson offers a poem of personal experience, in which the ineffable use of the pronoun "I" comes as a universal identifier, a tool which draws a parallel between the poetic thought and the enigmatic, multifarious strata of human nature. These kinds of overwhelming existential uncertainties, which lead to obsessive introspection and the fervent desire of unveiling the secrets of the universe, are majestically explored in the poem "Because I could not stop for Death," the aim of this paper being that of investigating the way in which Dickinson balances the universal disorder with cyclicity.

Right from the first stanza, the dichotomy "Death"- "Immortality" announces the two poles around which the poetic soul fluctuates, two contraries which enhance the oppressive incertitude which will prevail throughout the poem. The motif of "death as a courtly lover" (Martin 2007: 101), highlighted through the use of personification and the suggestive adverb "kindly," establishes the unusual initial phase of the mortuary journey, which "draws on the sentimental idea of death […] escorting his love to a new and blissful home" (Martin 2007: 102). The act of "kindly stopping" is perceived as a "Civility" or "an act of politeness" (Leiter 2007: 57), proposing an upside-down perspective on death: instead of being dominated by inner turmoil, the poet does not perceive the tragic vicissitude occurring in the course of her fate, but rather benevolently accepts to take part in a journey of revelation, which becomes "her vehicle for exploring the question that obsessed her imagination: What does it feel like to die?" (Leiter 2007: 58).

The initial visual image, that of the three entities sharing the carriage (the poet, "Death" and "Immortality"), preparing themselves to emerge into the deepest strata of the unknown, is also symbolic, and may be interpreted as going back to "the classical myth of Persephone, daughter of Ceres, who is carried off to the underworld by Hades" (Leiter 2007: 57). Persephone's abduction myth, that of becoming immersed in the underworld and momentarily returning to the surficial, external layers of the Earth suggests, as Carl A. P. Ruck suggests, the "continuing cycles of rebirth upon which the Olympians themselves depended for nourishment in the form of sacrifice." (1986: 164). Persephone's journey also symbolically depicts the succession of the seasons, in an eternal cycle which sets in motion the existence itself. The image of the woman travelling in the carriage may find its traces in a biographical event which marked Dickinson's life as well: the tragic death of Olivia Coleman, the sister of the poet's friend Eliza Coleman, who found her end while riding in a carriage (Leiter 2007: 266).

Another way of interpreting the journey, as Richard Sewall explains, is as a metaphor shedding light on the representation of the artist, enhancing "the birth of the poet" or "the time of poetic awakening" as well as "her recognition of her all-encompassing theme […] the meaning of eternity in the light of which all things, from childhood to the grave, must now be seen" (1963: 572). The general rejection of grief and of acknowledging the dark element in the first part of the poem reflects a state of confusion intermingled with curiosity rather than fear, which highlights the aim of the poetic voice: that of unveiling the hidden paradigms of life. In this way, "the terror of death," which is "objectified through this figure of the genteel driver" (Tate 1955: 219) is ironically turned into an optimistic promise serving the cause of Immortality.

As the carriage follows its track towards the unknown, the scenes highlighted by the observer depict the way in which the passengers are moving past "the great temporal divisions of a human life:" childhood (symbolized by the image of "School" and the children involved in the circular, ritualized game), maturity (underlined through the ripe state of the "Gazing Grain," a metaphor of fertility) and the old age (suggested by the "Setting Sun," whose trace is soon to be lost) (Leiter 2007: 58). In this way, life is presented as a succession of well-established stages which all the individuals must experience, being perceived as a recurrent cycle that shapes the form of humanity. The cyclicity of the existence is also underlined through the predominant use of circular symbols, such as "the Ring," "the Sun" or the wheels which are part of "the Carriage" and motivates the movement towards the end of this cycle.

The journey projects, from this point on, the inexorable universal pattern which defines the human existence and anticipates the final stage: that of the physical dissolution. Therefore, the fourth stanza brings forward a sudden change in the course of the journey: the line "Or rather-He passes Us-" triggers the first feeling of acute uneasiness, generated by a sense of spatiotemporal disparity, of getting lost in

the unreliable mechanisms of the fate. The contrast between the "Fields of Gazing Grain" and the "Dews […] quivering the chill" intensifies the vulnerability of the observer who is finally able to perceive the ill-fated nature of the events, just as Weisbuch observes: "Dickinson, suddenly, midpoem, has her thought change, pulls in the reins on her faith, and introduces a realistic doubt" (1998: 214). The "Chill" may also underline the beginning of physical death, in which the feeble fire of the heart is gradually fading away, being slowly replaced by the eternal frigidity. Moreover, the sudden disappearance of the sun, suggested through symbols indicating coldness ("Dews", "Chill") emphasizes the general lack of orientation caused by entering a dimension governed by its own rules. The enumeration of thin fabrics and articles of clothing ("Gossamer," "Gown," "Tippet," "Tulle") marks the poet's exposed and totally defenseless state, the condition of an individual who is taken aback by the critical point of their existence.

The universal order which governed the first part of the poem collapses under the obscurity of the impactful visual images which are revealed in the fifth stanza: the carriage that "seemed so comfortable in the first half of the poem is not a chariot that transports a soul to an afterlife but a hearse transporting a body to the cemetery" (Martin 2007: 102). The turning point of the existential journey marks the transgression to the mortuary setting: the "House" which ought to accommodate the soul in its afterlife becomes a "Swelling of the Ground," a grave which redirects the poetic idiom to the pathological dimension, suggesting "an organic, tumorlike growth" (Leiter 2007: 58). The image of the house sinking in the tenebrous strata of the soil enforces the implacable power of the fall: once reaching this critical point, there is no way back, an idea emphasized by the repetition of the lexeme "Ground," which, as Leiter observes, "stresses its prominence in the speaker's consciousness" when perceiving this "single relentless image" (2007: 58). Furthermore, according to Wendy Martin, the abrupt change of setting and atmosphere "flags a movement away from the sentimental idea of death as an easy spiritual journey" (2007: 102), altering the initial perspective on the process of death.

The last stanza brings forward a temporal distortion generated by the impossibility of accurately interpreting the flow of time: the whole period of the journey is confined to the boundaries of only a couple of hours, instilling in the poetic consciousness the feeling of helplessness generated by a temporal loop impossible to surmount. Thus, Eternity seems "nothing more than Centuries of physical decay in the earth" which feels "shorter than the Day when the narrator first noticed she was on her way to death." (Martin 2007: 102). The synecdoche "the Horses' Heads" marks an apocalyptic perspective of the final stage of the quest: Death is no longer actively present, but the poet rather succumbs to the inexorable guiding force of the horses which will direct her to the realms of "Eternity." The significance of this last image is not explicitly put forward, but it allows room for further interpretation: the poet never establishes whether "Eternity" implies that the soul will endure through the immaterial dimension of the existence, or it suggests the perdurable fall in the webs

of the fatal decay of the existence. Gray suggests that it may represent either "the final escape of the self from its confinement into some more expansive, exalted state – or it might simply be a prelude to oblivion" (2004: 240). However, as Martin grandiosely puts forward, one way of deciphering the mystery behind the poetic idiom lies in the idea according to which "true eternity lies in the single day in which we recognize death and thus capitalize on the present moment, which is itself infinite" (2007: 101).

Beyond the horizons of the poetic idiom, the form of the poem reveals new strata of significance due to Dickinson's suggestive development of numerous structural techniques. As a remarkable trait of her poetry, Dickinson opts for making use of the dashes instead of the traditional punctuation marks. Therefore, in "Because I could not stop for Death" the remarkable use of dashes dominates the poem on a structural level: the only standard punctuation marks which can be observed are two commas and one full stop used throughout the whole poem. In every instance, the use of the dashes conveys meaning, suggesting the flow of thought naturally developed by the poetic voice, similar to the well-known "stream of consciousness" technique, as for Dickinson "the unutterable is represented by the dash" (Bloom 2008: 193). In this way, Dickinson cultivates a poem deprived of artificiality, emphasizing the veracity and profoundness of the feelings transmitted. The dashes also mark the necessity of occasional silence which encourage the deep reflection on the poetic matter, offering the readers an "interpretive challenge" (Bloom 2008: 193). Moreover, as Bloom further develops his argument, the way in which the poet "chooses to end a poem with a typically ambiguous dash" suggests that, just as "Eternity," "the poem has no end at all" (2008: 194). Therefore, though apparently silent, the dash succeeds in conferring precious significance to the poem, possessing the capacity of conveying what seems to be ineffable.

Another stylistic technique which Dickinson explores in her work is the use of capitalized words in the middle of sentences. One way of interpreting this phenomenon leads to the exploit of several personifications throughout the poem: "Death," "Immortality" and "Eternity" transcend their usual abstract, conceptual ways of perception, being endowed with mundane features, anchored in reality: they become "characters" which take part in the poet's initiation process. The aim of the capitalized words can be further explained through Dickinson's intention of creating a kind of "semantic field" which comprises the essence of the poetic thought: the words "Civility," "Children," "Recess," "Ring." "Fields" "Setting Sun," "House," "Ground", "Horses" become evanescent key-elements which ought to be emphasized in order to encapsulate the genuine substance of the artistic universe. The musicality of the poem, notwithstanding the use of the blank verse, is ensured through the ingenious use of alliteration, in examples such as "Gazing Grain", "Setting Sun", "Gossamer […] Gown", "Tippet-[…] Tulle", "Horses' Heads", where the pairs of words intensify the feeling of oppression which will become suffocating in the end, just as the final visual images of the "Ground" impose. Symmetry is also

explored through the successive depiction of the sinuous stages involved in the cycle of life: the first three stanzas suggest the ages at which death is not perceived as a potential danger, whereas the last three stanzas introduce the end of the terrestrial life, which offers a radically different perspective on the phenomenon.

All in all, Dickinson succeeded in shaping an artistic dimension endowed with the highest expression of her unfiltered poetic thoughts which, majestically flowing into verses, present her intention of shedding light on the inscrutable secrets of the universe. Making use of introspection as a way of conveying her existential dilemmas, Dickinson creates a poem of both mythical and biographical significance, depicting life as a journey with certain stages which cannot be omitted, as in a universal cycle which governs the laws of existence. Cyclicity becomes, in this way, the main force justifying the course of humanity, which constantly faces the meeting of the contraries in its development, starting from the undeniable opposition between life and death, just as both the form and the poetic idiom of "Because I could not stop for Death" enforce.

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FLAGELLUM DEI
PHYSICAL AND MORAL DEFORMITY IN *RICHARD III*

Abstract: The present study focuses on the depiction of *King Richard III* as the *"flagellum dei," i.e. the scourge of God* in William Shakespeare's eponymous history play. Betrayed by *physical* and *moral deformities, the character of Richard* inhabits multiple conflicting roles. Throughout the play the duke of Gloucester constantly alters his behavior to better suit his ultimate goal of being crowned king. Richard falsely presents himself as a devoted brother and compliant subject, yet his sinister intent lurks behind the carefully-crafted façade. His true nature is that of the envenomed outsider and aspiring medieval despot, and the complex functions assigned to him are tackled in a threefold analysis.

The essay first discusses Richard as Vice – a stock character popular in medieval morality plays. The second part of the study focuses on physical deformity and animal symbolism, as monstrosity served to illustrate a moral flaw in medieval times. The discovery of Richard's remains in 2012 showed that he actually suffered from scoliosis, while no other apparent deformities existed. Thus, the final purpose of the article is to discuss how the non-fictional Richard III was maligned by Tudor propaganda in order to justify the crowning of the Earl of Richmond as Henry VII.

The play begins with Richard revealing his true nature and Machiavellian intent as he boastfully describes himself as "subtle, false, and treacherous" (Shakespeare [c.1592] 2008 I.1: 36). A celebratory acknowledgement of his chicaneries appears in the first scene of the third act: "Thus like the formal Vice, Iniquity, / I moralize two meanings in one word" (Shakespeare [c.1592] 2008 III.1: 82–83). Richard openly identifies with Vice – a character widely employed in the dramatic compositions of the Renaissance period. As Bernard Spivack (1958: 151) notes in *Shakespeare and the Allegory of Evil*, Vice is the "homiletic showman, intriguer extraordinary, and master of dramatic ceremonies" and the Tudor audience of the beginning of the sixteenth century "submitted to his spell."

As Richard seeks to escape his "deformed, unfinished" nature (Shakespeare [c.1592] 2008 I.1: 20), he successfully morphs into the Devil incarnate. Apart from exposing his own duplicitous manner, Richard is also depicted carrying a dagger. His weapon of choice not only solidifies his connection with the medieval stock character, but also reveals his murderous intentions. When the young prince wishes to see the weapon, Richard happily obliges: "My dagger, little cousin? With all my heart" (Shakespeare [c.1592] 2008 III.1: 111). The Janus-faced character references his heart in order to project false good will.

The use of manipulative language proves an essential tool to Richard in his quest for power. His methods swiftly secure the affection of Lady Anne during the

courtship scene. Never at a loss for words, Richard nullifies the widow's verbal hostility by resorting to flattery. In order to hide his true intent, Gloucester uses excessive compliments which prove successful. Lady Anne aggressively refers to Richard as a "foul devil," while the latter calls her a "sweet saint" (Shakespeare [c.1592] 2008 I.2: 49-50). There is a marked opposition between terms of endearment and insults, and also symmetry throughout the dialogue. Repetitive structures are employed in order to show the way in which both characters become echoes of one another. Lady Anne verbally attacks Richard by stating that she is delighted "when devils tell the truth" (Shakespeare [c.1592] 2008 I.2: 73), and Gloucester offers a quick rejoinder: "More wonderful, when angels are so angry" (Shakespeare [c.1592] 2008 I.2: 74). Richard further compliments the bereaved Anne by referring to her as a "divine perfection of a woman," (Shakespeare [c.1592] 2008 I.2: 75) whereas she asserts that she despises the "defused infection of a man" (Shakespeare [c.1592] 2008 I.2: 78). One is "fairer than tongue can name" (Shakespeare [c.1592] 2008 I.2: 81), the other is considered "fouler than heart can think" (Shakespeare [c.1592] 2008 I.2: 83). In order to secure her affection, the cunning duke further resorts to the Machiavellian tactic of defending his murderous actions by imbuing them with higher purpose: "He that bereft thee, lady, of thy husband / Did it to help thee to a better husband" (Shakespeare [c.1592] 2008 I.2: 141-2). A "master of dramatic ceremonies" (Spivack 1958: 151), Richard then threatens to commit suicide in order to repent for his sins: "That hand, which for thy love, did kill thy love, / Shall for thy love kill a far truer love" (Shakespeare [c.1592] 2008 I.2: 192-3). In addition to the emphasis placed on false adoration through the use of repetition, the character also attempts to poison Lady Anne's judgement with a sense of guilt: "To both their deaths shalt thou be accessary" (Shakespeare [c.1592] 2008 I.2: 194). Richard's histrionic display of affection proves fruitful; Anne no longer thinks of him as a "dreadful minister of hell" (Shakespeare [c.1592] 2008 I.2: 47) or as a "devilish slave" (Shakespeare [c.1592] 2008 I.2: 92), but is overjoyed by his apparent repentance: "With all my heart, and much it joys me too / To see you are become so penitent" (Shakespeare [c.1592] 2008 I.2: 224-5).

In one of his asides, Richard is half-astonished by the victorious result which comes a mere three months after the murder of Prince Edward: "Was ever woman in this humor wooed? / Was ever woman in this humor won?" (Shakespeare [c.1592] 2008 I.2: 234-5). Following this highly-poetic exclamation, Richard's disposition alters. His deeds render him more confident; he no longer finds pleasure merely in seeing his "shadow in the sun" (Shakespeare [c.1592] 2008 I.1: 17), but commands: "Shine out, fair sun, till I have bought a glass/ That I may see my shadow as I pass" (Shakespeare [c.1592] 2008 I.2: 269-270).

A parallel courtship scene in which Gloucester's eloquence accounts for his swift success appears in the fourth act. Richard persuades Queen Elizabeth to grant him permission to marry her daughter, despite having previously murdered her husband and two younger sons. His argument is that such a union would eliminate

the threat of civil war. Despite initially lamenting the loss of her "unblown flowers" (Shakespeare [c.1592] 2008 IV.4: 10), Elizabeth no longer views Richard as a "villain-slave" (Shakespeare [c.1592] 2008 IV.4: 145). Her wish that her daughters become "praying nuns" (Shakespeare [c.1592] 2008 IV.4: 203) swiftly vanishes. Richard's promises of "dignity and height of fortune" appeal to the naïve queen, and solidify his claims: "I mean that with my soul I love thy daughter" (Shakespeare [c.1592] 2008 IV.4: 264).

The female characters are not the only ones to become victims of Richard's machinations. His brother Clarence also refuses to accept Gloucester's devious nature when confronted with the two murderers. Since Richard repeatedly claims that he has no intention of becoming king, suspicions on the part of his incarcerated brother are not raised: "If I should be [king]? I had rather be a peddler. / Far be it from my heart, the thought thereof" (Shakespeare [c.1592] 2008 I.3: 149-150).

Richard's patterns of behavior are consistent throughout the play. He persists in maintaining the image of the villain, and his arrogance leads to his downfall. Despite Margaret being consistently aggressive towards the duke, comparing him to a "bottled spider" (Shakespeare [c.1592] 2008 I.3: 246), a "poisonous bunch-backed toad" (Shakespeare [c.1592] 2008 I.3: 250) and to a dog (Shakespeare [c.1592] 2008 I.3: 295), Richard does not discard his delusions of grandeur. He considers himself an eagle, "born so high. / Our aerie buildeth in the cedar's top" (Shakespeare [c.1592] 2008 I.3: 267-8).

His resentment is a product of his deformity and of continuous verbal abuse on the part of the other characters. His image is not only that of a villain; Richard also meets the three requirements for an Aristotelian tragic hero. Gloucester "is of higher than ordinary moral worth" (Abrams 1999: 322), having been born into royalty; he is faced with an "[unfavorable] change in fortune" (Abrams 1999: 322) that brings about his ultimate demise; and his demise if the result of "hamartia [...] his tragic flaw" (Abrams 1999: 322) – his weakness taking the form of an obsessive quest for power. Richard does not become aware of the aforementioned hamartia. Therefore, he does not experience a moment of anagnorisis, which hinders him from garnering sympathy. Moreover, the Aristotelian belief that deformities serve as indicators of a rotten soul support the hypothesis that Richard is the "flagellum Dei" – a scourge sent by God onto the nation as a form of punishment.

The image created by Shakespeare is a form of Tudor propaganda. The discovery of Richard's skeletal remains in 2012 has confirmed his scoliosis, but no signs of spinal kyphosis were found. However, Shakespeare was not the first to depict the king in such a manner. The chronicles of Edward Hall and Holinshed had previously presented Richard as a monstrous being. Harold Brooks notes that "in so far as the play is a tragedy, it is tragedy of the medieval casus type. Primarily it is a drama of history, moralised according to the Tudor political idea of the providentially ordered process that brought Richmond and his successors to the throne" (qtd. in Jørgensen 2021: 200). Deformed individuals of medieval times were

often accused of having a foul soul, and the crowning of the Earl of Richmond as Henry VII became the main reason for the misrepresentation of King Richard III. Royal censorship and the threat of severe punishment meant that Shakespeare was obliged to conform. Thus, the king is portrayed as clothed in "naked villainy," destined to "seem a saint when most I play the devil" (Shakespeare [c.1592] 2008 I.3: 335-337). Thus, Richmond's claim to the throne is no longer dubious as he becomes a deus ex machina sent to rid the country of the evil Richard, the former's constant references to God being yet another argument for this claim.

By analyzing the two courtship scenes, as well as briefly discussing the animal symbolism which appears in Margaret's harsh verbal attacks, the present essay has sought to present Richard as Vice – "the dramaturgic darling of the popular stage" (Spivack 1958: 150) – and as the scourge of God. The vilification of Richard III through Tudor propaganda has also been mentioned as a response to Ricardian accusations directed at Shakespeare's portrayal of the king. The duke of Gloucester inhabits many forms throughout the play, each of the complex functions being reinforced through his eloquence and Machiavellian traits.

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WORDSWORTH'S ANXIETY
AN INQUIRY INTO THE PARADOXICAL WORDSWORTHIAN SUBLIME

Abstract: Drawing on previous analyses made on Wordsworth's solipsism as the roots of the poet's anxiety, this paper attempts to provide a new explanation as to why uncertainty and anxiety may be perceived within the Wordsworthian speaker. While still fundamentally bound to external nature as a philosophical building block - the selfless sublime, the speaker also feels the immense power of the self - the egotistical sublime. The core argument of the essay is that the poet is perpetually stuck in a philosophical limbo, since the previous conceptions of the sublime are mutually exclusive: any attempt to express the selfless sublime will inevitably be realized through the altering force of the ego, while any attempt to rely solely on the self is halted by the fundamental and ultimately Christian belief in an exterior ruling force. Ultimately, the essay strives to show that, by wavering between the two senses of the sublime, the poet never achieves clarity and certitude, thus rendering Romanticism incapable of crystalizing itself into the desired philosophical revolution.

William Wordsworth is one of the figureheads of English literature who is known by specialists and non-professionals alike. The late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, when considered, yield a couple of famous canonized poets, among whom one could do worse than considering Wordsworth the crown jewel. Such a favorable literary position begets a peculiar quality in the study of its occupant – from the Victorian age with its late Romantic tendencies, to the New Criticism movement and all the way to post-structuralist analyses, Wordsworth's poetry has never run dry. Each and every literary theory trend has something to add to his art, and, conversely, his art speaks volumes to more or less every aesthetic movement. In such an unfathomably expansive field, it is perhaps the first duty of an inquiry to position itself amongst the many others, so that its purposes might hopefully be better understood. To do just that, M. H. Abrams has been selected as a critical touchstone, around which one might organize the criticism of Wordsworth.

In his suggestively entitled essay "Two Roads to Wordsworth," Abrams attempts to historically and culturally map out the reactions to Wordsworth's Romantic revolution throughout the ages. Naturally, as the author describes them, these reactions start simple, to then increase in considerations and ambiguities, becoming more and more problematic. In fact, these two terms – simple and problematic – are used to determine two main "roads to Wordsworth." One is the Simple Wordsworth: "the great poet of the natural man and the world of all of us" (Abrams 1973: 14). A revolutionary, the simple Wordsworth transfers, as Hazlitt pointed out first, the principles of the French Revolution into art by celebrating simplicity and equality before the all-pervasive, all-encompassing power of nature. The other is the Problematic Wordsworth. Growing out of the simple one, this problematic interpretation is famously advocated for by A. C. Bradley who argues

that "the road into Wordsworth's mind must be through his strangeness and his paradoxes, and not round them" (Bradley qtd. in Abrams 1973: 13).

These paradoxes are developed around the intrinsic conflict between conscience and the exterior world, between mind and nature and finally between the self and the selfless. The idea is that, throughout Wordsworth's poetry there is always an underlying effort to reconcile the poetic self with the contemplated nature, and consequently to organically fuse them into a higher state of being – a 'problematic' endeavor in as much as there is always a fundamental division between the two. Positions concerning this Problematic Wordsworth vary. In reductively broad lines, there are those (Abrams 1973; Bloom 2007) who would see this fusion as actually taking place, just as a marriage would, between these antithetical parties – mind and nature, while there are others who portray either of the two as taking hold and overtaking the other (de Man add year, Perkins add year). Evidently there is so much more to the critical interpretation of the Problematic Wordsworth, but, essentially, the foundation of these approaches consists of considering two opposite forces and then describing the outcome of their clashing.

Commonsensical though it may appear to be, the aforementioned typical approach to the Problematic Wordsworth can be challenged. Considered from a purely logical standpoint, the erroneous assumption is that what is generally agreed upon as being 'paradoxical,' namely the relationship between mind and nature, can be synthesized into a higher entity in the first place. A typical approach to any given poem of Wordsworth would proceed from this assumption, to then go on and virtually 'solve' the paradox by showing how the two contraries interact. Yet a paradox cannot be solved. Either we accept this, or we accept that the Problematic Wordsworth is not so problematic after all. Opting for the former rather than the latter, this essay proposes as its main argument to show that the opposing forces in Wordsworth's poetry cannot interact with each other at all, being mutually exclusive in the real sense of the phrase and resisting the Romantic Hegelian dialectic of thesis-antithesis-synthesis. To do this, this essay will analyze both mind, to which the notion of egotistical sublime is attached, and nature, with its own selfless sublime, only to then consider the Wordsworthian response to the paradox and surface the possible consequences of such a response. Furthermore, to avoid generalities and abstract analyses, one of Wordsworth's poems, "Tintern Abbey," will be selected for a close reading; to various sections of this poem we will turn for the purpose of illustrating the genuine Wordsworthian paradox, the one which never allows a simultaneous consideration of both mind and nature, at play.

To begin with, let us first investigate the notion of a 'selfless sublime,' which has been attached to Wordsworth's view of nature and the outer universe in general. Wordsworth's Romanticism, as a whole, entails the presence of a Unitary force which transcends the perceivable universe yet nevertheless governs it with absolute autonomy. The origins of such a concept are diverse. Initially one should mention the Unitarian view of Christianity, which provides religious concepts that play a

major role in forming the Romantic, rather deistic, view of divinity. Then there is the Classical influence which, Abrams points out in his "The Mirror and the Lamp", consists of Longinus' tracts on 'the One' authority of the Universe and on the sublime as a poetical quality that allows the human to bask in the One's light (1958: 73). Closer to the Romantic revolution stands Kant's aesthetic theory, which more or less endows the sublime with the same prime quality of transcending the perceivable, thus granting access to the realm of the 'noumena.' Finally, but surely not exclusively, there is the Jena group of Romantic philosophers who reworked Kant's tenets, adapting them to more idealist metaphysical systems. Endeavoring to present all these traditions to their full and deserving extent is surely impossible here, but they have been mentioned to highlight one characteristic which is crucial to this argument's purposes: the Romantic transcendental Unity demands complete, infinite authority. More specifically, the selfless sublime, be it something which precedes humanity or that towards which it strives, or even both, is complete in and of itself. Consequently, when the Wordsworthian speaker contemplates such a sublime, as will be presently shown, they do not strive towards a Hegelian synthesis with it. Rather, it is the desire to lose oneself in the infinite power of the One, to virtually become the One by renouncing the self, which is the philosophical and aesthetical quintessence. Abrams would have the "marriage of mind and nature" be similar to that of God and Jerusalem, or the Lamb (1973: 37-42). Yet, surely, one would not imagine God enriched, or improved by the synthesis with Jerusalem. Instead, it is Jerusalem that becomes purified by becoming one with God. Already the point we're attempting to make becomes clear: man and nature cannot be considered, in Wordsworth's poetry, simultaneously – nature, by virtue of its infinite force and influence, demands the disappearance of all opposition. What the condition of the Romantic individual in such a context is will be investigated later; for now, before drawing any preliminary conclusions, highlighting the aforementioned principles in Wordsworth's "Tintern Abbey" is necessary.

It might seem peculiar that a poem such as "Tintern Abbey," one dominated by the imposing presence and authority of the 'I' could ever deal with a selfless sublime. "Tintern Abbey" is, above anything else, a poem of remembrance, a meditation on the effects of the past when it is evoked by familiar landscape, and further yet on the differences between youth and maturity – and it is precisely within the speaker's past that one may find a sense of a selfless sublime. To the present purposes, a description of the young speaker will serve to perfectly describe this Romantic ideal. The first few mentions of the initial reaction to the landscape occur in between lines 28 and 36. The mature speaker remembers "sensations sweet, / Felt in the blood, and felt along the heart" (28-29), and further yet they recall "unremembered pleasure: such, perhaps, / As have no slight or trivial influence / On that best portion of a good man's life, / His little, nameless, *unremembered, acts*/ Of kindness and of love" (32-36, my italics). Two aspects need to be underlined here. Firstly, the mature poet remembers not the experience, but the feeling. Here, as much

as in any of Wordsworth's poems, the foundational device which allows one passage into the sublime is feeling. And, crucially, feeling and emotion are not conscious acts. They are determined, evoked within the subject's mind by higher forces. Feeling something, for Wordsworth, already entails an intoxication, a loss of control and yielding to the provoking agent. Secondly, selfless emotion drives the human towards their 'best' state, one in which, yet again under the influence of something larger – love – they act kindly towards others. Herein, essentially, lies Wordsworth's entire philosophical project. Mediated and overseen by nature, humanity can be corrected and idealized; in a state of selflessness drawing on unconsciousness, the world may become a better place. Such is the state of the young speaker, when "affections gently lead us on/ Until … / Almost suspended, we are laid asleep" (43-46).

Analyzing Wordsworth's "The Old Cumberland Beggar," Bloom remarks that "[t]he Old Man is in his own state, and he is radically innocent" (2007: 6), and, through "innocent," one ought to really understand selfless. "It is so extreme a picture," Bloom continues, "that we can be tempted to ask, "Is this life? Where is its use?" The temptation *dehumanizes* us" (2007: 6, my italics). This thought pattern can be applied perfectly to "Tintern Abbey." In lines 74-78 ("For nature then/…/To me was all in all. I cannot paint/ What then I was."), the reason why the mature, philosophical poet cannot describe his past existence is because it was utterly inhuman. To describe the young poet would be as difficult as describing the sublime. Finally, when the present speaker listens to "[t]he still sad music of humanity" (93), it is the human factor in humanity which renders the song "sad." Such is the scope and depth of the selfless sublime in "Tintern Abbey." What is essential about it, as previously mentioned, is that the authority of nature necessarily excludes that of man. In order for the selfless sublime to work, the self has to wither out – and without a self, there can really be no marriage. To prove the exact same thing, only with the two agents switching positions, we now move on to analyze the Wordsworthian egotistical sublime.

Perhaps the best starting point for the description of the egotistical sublime is Coleridge's "Biographia Literaria." There, the author famously defines the quintessential Romantic imagination as "a repetition in the finite mind of the eternal act of creation in the infinite I AM" (2004: 157). For Coleridge, the Romantic poet not only perceives the heart of things, grasps the unifying force of nature, or divinity, but they also encapsulate the entirety of the universe within their mind, through their will. Imagination's counterpart, Fancy – the lesser of the two poetic devices – is mechanical and it must "receive all its materials ready made from the law of association" (2004: 157). In other words, Fancy is nature's impression on the human mind. Yet Imagination works in the opposite direction. Based on the influx of stimuli, it is capable of spreading the power of the human will, impressing its own essence on the surrounding world. Essentially, the argument is that the higher, nobler part of Romantic poetry is only rendered possible by the spirit, or the self. Admittedly,

Coleridge had his reservations concerning this extreme solipsism, but for the purposes of this essay it is precisely the more extreme, polarized philosophies which will serve to illustrate the full extent of the Wordsworthian paradox. In its most developed shape, Romantic solipsism centers everything, including nature and divinity, around the self – hence it is an egotistical sublime. As Bloom puts it, "in Wordsworth's supreme moments […] the inner self expands until it introjects not less than everything, space and time included" (2007: 30).

Yet is this really a paradox? Admittedly, there is the conception of an authoritarian force of nature, and there is its individualized counterpart who essentially creates it, to then submit to it. It is more than obvious that there still can be discussions of a dialectic here – a complicated one, but one nonetheless. Everything which could be dismissed as paradoxical in Wordsworth can very easily be explained away through the power of the Imagination. The all-encompassing Unity is grasped by the self, and the self's imaginative capacity to do that is made possible by that same Unity in the first place. Imagination, therefore, is still natural. What is described here is Coleridge's Aeolian Harp in its more theoretical shape. Ultimately, what it entails, more simply put, is that there is a perpetual give-and-take between mind and nature. Nevertheless, this system comes crashing down the moment the Romantic self is more closely scrutinized.

In his "The Rhetoric of Romanticism," de Man opens the study by underlining a linguistic dilemma in the efforts of Romantic poetry. Building upon the fundamental tenet of Romantic philosophy – the continuous effort to be genuine, simple, close to the ideal truth – de Man goes on to explain the purpose of metaphor in this kind of poetry. Counterintuitively, the Romantics, by using metaphor as a means of getting closer and closer to the truth of things, constantly strive "to banish all metaphor, to become entirely literal" (1984: 5). Essentially, the effort is to render the word a natural object. Much like a plant develops organically in and for itself, a Romantic poet wishes for their words to be self-sufficient, to be truth in and of themselves. Yet this effort is doomed from the very onset. As the linguistic tradition of the 20th century and onwards argues, there is no sense in which a word can ever be real, noumenal. In poetry too, "the [inevitable] existence of the poetic image is itself a sign of divine absence, and the conscious use of poetic imagery an admission of this absence" (1984: 6). And further yet, "critics who speak of a 'happy relationship' between matter and consciousness fail to realize that the very fact that the relationship has to be established within the medium of language indicates that it does not exist in actuality" (DeMan 1984: 7). Consequently, when considering the egotistical sublime, it is not merely a matter of subjectivity, or of interestedness and affective understanding of the world around one through imagination. Rather, the encompassing issue is that the moment Wordsworth sets pen to paper, the moment Imagination begins to work, the imagined entity ceases to exist in and of itself; and not just Wordsworth – following de Man's argument, even Keats, the champion of disinterestedness and objective contemplation, still fails to portray truth, simply

because he wrote poetry. Herein lies the same type of authority which previously belonged to nature. The act of poetic contemplation necessarily demands the exclusion of any other prevailing force, not because imagination modifies or creates the world around one – that would imply a dialectic - but because imagination is a substitute; because imagination is the self's manner of reaching out to a world impossible to interact with. When Wordsworth writes, one must immediately consider that the ensuing sublime is egotistical in nature, and that he has failed to grasp the selfless sublime; his very act of writing is at once an admission of that failure and a continuous act of destroying that sublime. Let us now consider how this predicament is manifested in "Tintern Abbey."

From the very beginning of the poem, the reader is introduced to the principal power of the Wordsworthian speaker – remembering. This poetic device, famously developed in its entirety throughout "The Prelude," has been frequently associated with the concept of 'spots of time.' The mature speaker, in the first part of the poem, reconstructs a past reality – a spot of time – based on the impressions which marked the mind: "But oft, in lonely rooms, and 'mid the din/ Of towns and cities, I have owed to [these beauteous forms],/ In hours of weariness, sensations sweet" (26-28). It is with reference to this that the egotistical sublime is commonly mentioned. Not only does the mature speaker create, through Imagination, a past scenery, but they also employ those impressions for the benefit of the self. Yet the egotistical sublime is much more than this, as has been previously stressed. It is precisely when the speaker wishes to hide it most, when the speaker tries to establish a real connection with the world, that egotism manifests itself in its entirety. Consequently, it is the latter part of the poem which ought to be scrutinized. With regard to it, Bloom considers that "Wordsworth suddenly switches from 'I' to 'me' and 'us' and 'we' He is the part, and all people capable of imaginative experience become the whole" (2007: 37). The 'switch' is supposed to mark the passage from mind to nature – from egotistical to selfless – yet it is not so. As de Man has it, there is no perfectly metaphorical language; the poet knows this, and their anxiety can always be traced in the poem. In this case, the "we" to which we are lead on is conspicuously separated from the speaker. The mature poet's position both when listening to "The still sad music of humanity" (93) and when feeling "something far more deeply interfused,/ Whose dwelling is … / the blue sky, and in the mind of man" (98 – 101) is clearly set aside. The poet stands apart, neither natural nor human, as if they were watching a play, feeling its emotions and thoughts, yet never involved in it because they have written it. Simply put, there is the selfless sublime, masterfully portrayed here, and then there is its creator, anxiously erasing their existence in the moment. Still, the keen reader knows that humanity, the blue sky, the round ocean and the living air are all the poet in the most literal sense of the affirmation. It is so precisely because the poet wrote these lines and created the imagery.

The ending of the poem can also be interpreted in this light. In a heartfelt address to his sister, the speaker urges her not to forget that "after many wanderings,

many years/ Of absence, these steep woods and lofty cliffs/ And this green pastoral landscape, were to me/ More dear, both for themselves and for thy sake!" (159 – 162). In a broader sense, this ending can be read as a plea to the reader themselves. The speaker's desire now, after having concealed himself within 'the presence,' is for us not to forget; to remember not the cliffs, the woods or the landscape, but that they were dear to him. Admittedly, the claim is that it is for themselves and for us, but the essence is that all was dear *to him*. Thus considered, "Tintern Abbey'" ends on an anxious note, stressing the presence which really matters here – the self. Sure, there are 'beauteous forms,' and sure they are enthralling, but it is the 'I' – not 'we,' not 'it,' not 'they' – which is of utmost essence; and it really could not be otherwise, precisely because "Tintern Abbey" as a poem exists.

Up to this point, both the selfless and the egotistical sublime have been scrutinized with a view to underlining the characteristics of each which strictly forbid the other's existence. An attempt has been made to prove that the conception of an overruling, permeating influence of joy, or love, or nature itself, automatically imply that its subjects are dehumanized, while, on the other hand, the very act of conceiving such a power to then artistically portray it implies a solipsistic authority, rendering the contemplated object devoid of self-sufficiency and, ultimately, inexistent. For Wordsworth, in other words, the Romantic Idea exists, and can be contemplated, but it is precisely through its contemplating that the Idea ceases to exist. This is certainly not a dialectic – had it been one, it would have ended the very moment it was commenced. Instead, it is a veritable, genuine paradox; not two forces, vying for control, but only one force at any given moment, depending on what the reader chooses to focus on. It is impossible to consider both, much in the same way it would be impossible to walk in two opposite directions simultaneously.

Such then, to conclude, is Wordsworth's anxiety. It is the dread of acknowledging that one's ideals are not merely impossible to attain, but also degraded by one's very act of admiring them. Such an existential dilemma might verily lead one to ask – "Was It For This…?" Yet even more importantly, it is such an anxiety-inducing paradox which might serve to explain Wordsworth's final and crucial failure in his life's work. Just why is it that Wordsworth never did manage to write "The Recluse?" Among many other, definitely more realistic answers, one might do worse than declare – considering all we've previously explored – that it might have something to do with a paradox at the foundation of one's poetic work. That in the face of not only an impossible, but also agonizing task, of striving to imagine the sublimity of nature and thus ruining it decisively, perhaps the best answer is not to write at all. And maybe, just maybe, it is the blank space where "The Recluse" ought to have been which is Wordsworth's greatest Romantic statement, because in its blankness, the paradox has not yet devoured the joy, the love, and the sublime.

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THE IMPORTANCE OF REPRESENTATIONS OF CRISIS IN REFUGEE PERFORMANCE AND IN TRAUMA RECOGNITION, AS EXEMPLIFIED IN *THE CONTAINER* BY CLARE BAYLEY

Abstract: What does Refugee Theatre mean and how can such an artistic manifestation be of any use when it comes to acknowledging and representing trauma, especially that of the voiceless? How can one understand the tribulations of a group to whom one cannot relate? We can easily deduce that active representations of different ethnical groups, minorities, contemporary manifestations of crises or such other prevalent problems of the modern world, have the capacity of reshaping mentalities and challenging narratives. But how do they do that? The aim of this work is to accentuate the need for diverse representations of particular events when it comes to raising awareness and "giving a voice to the voiceless", as well as to present and analyse the different forms and depictions of trauma, in an attempt to understand the complexity of this phenomenon, having as our prime material "The Container" by Clare Bayley.

> Theatre is a powerful medium for raising awareness, generating discussion, and changing attitudes, particularly when a community is actively involved in telling its own story. Theatre becomes the vehicle for participants' expression of identity, and an emotional catharsis. (Bloodgood and Littig 2011 cited in Borishenko 2016: 150)

Starting from the abovementioned quote from Bloodgood and Littig, we can observe a certain direction, when it comes to the importance of representation in the public sphere. One can easily deduce that active representations of different ethnical groups, minorities, contemporary manifestations of crises or such other prevalent problems of the modern world have the capacity of reshaping mentalities and challenging narratives. The aim of this work is to accentuate the need for diverse representations of particular events when it comes to raising awareness and *giving a voice to the voiceless*, as well as to present and analyze the different forms and depictions of trauma, in an attempt to understand the complexity of this phenomenon, having as our prime material *The Container* by Clare Bayley.

This work neither debates nor analyses the ethics of spectatorship and the relationship between spectators as active or passive witnesses and actors/authors, but rather proposes to bring into discussion the perspective of representation and acknowledgement of trauma, as a means of accepting and working towards a possible alleviation of what Freud considered a "wound inflicted not upon the body but upon the mind" (Caruth 2016: 3). This paper does not intend by any means to perpetuate a narrative of victimhood, nor does it desire to portray a certain dynamic of oppressor-oppressed, victim-savior, but rather to underline the importance and significance of theatrical representation and expression when it comes to raising awareness and adjacently, to presenting the possible repercussions that trauma discourse brings forth in both the academic and popular spheres.

First of all, we shall talk about representation in the public, popular, artistic spheres and their importance as cultural appointers of symbols, for signs and symbols are a powerful stance into re-presenting and representing the "dramatis personae" of the dramatic discourse when it comes to crisis. Should we talk about the importance of such a particular conceptual delineation, it is evident that the representation of a particular crisis, be it environmental, existential, a crisis of identity or refugee crisis has the capacity to create a mental bridge between the agent of the crisis and the receiver of the information. Theatrical representation, as well as any other artistic medium concerned with the reproduction of a particular theme, collapses the mental walls we tend to create around us as soon as we become even vaguely aware of the said crisis, when we delimit ourselves from the subjection to certain potentially traumatic events. In other words, we tend to mentally eliminate any possible threat by the power of dissociation. But representation does just that; through entertaining an artistic medium, it dissipates that fear of getting into unknown territory and allows the receivers of the message to develop a new social paradigm, by making their fears palatable and bringing forth another perspective, while making sure the receiving audience is aware of its natural surroundings. To better understand the necessity of representation on a cultural level, one should take into consideration Stuart Hall's perspective regarding popular culture as a catalyst, a means of societal elevation and modification, as "the ground on which cultural and societal transformations are worked" (Frantz & Smulyan 2012: 2).

Theatre as a form of (popular) culture has the capacity of bringing elements of crisis into the public discourse, leaving the deconstruction of those elements and the possibility of their replacement to be analysed through the public lens. Lipsitz views culture as a commodity (2001: 4) the audience takes for granted, sometimes integrating it unknowingly into their consciousness for "sometimes we forget that the artists have origins or intentions at all, so pervasive are the stimuli around us" (Lipsitz 2001: 5). Following Lipsitz (2001: 4-5), we can say that, through the unconscious integration of certain types of discourses, we become what he calls atomized consumers; allowing this homogenization of history and commercialised leisure to become part of our culture, although a paradoxical hybrid, in essence, we allow ourselves to participate freely and sometimes inattentively in the process of cultural exchange. Thus, we can conclude that there is also a transmutation of experience and identity at play. We can apply this perspective when it comes to theatrical representations, too, for theatre is what Helbo, Avila and Champagne (1977: 172) call a "practical experience – dialogical- which the observer can utilize" in changing their ideals through the proliferations it brings forth. Consequently, theatre becomes an apparatus of identity manipulation and identity forging for the audience, as "to speak someone else's words or to wear someone else's clothes meant hiding one's own identity" (Lipsitz 2001: 5).

Theatrical representation has the potential to reform realities. Should we depart from Lipsitz's deconstructive attitude and follow Helbo et al.'s semiotic approach,

we can deduce that theatre can forge identities by changing its audience's perception of the sense of the veridical through the signs it manipulates, both via textual and sensorial discourses. Helbo et al. mention the deconstruction of reality that dramatic discourse can develop, enunciating Artaud's *disfiguring of the real:* "The relation of the performance to 'reality' is effectively equivocal since theatre is and is not the world. Hence the debates on representation (iconisme) and indexing have not finished enlarging Artaud's formula that theatre is a 'disfiguring of the real'" (Helbo, Avila and Champagne 1977: 176).

The idea of creating a new reality – where the space between our mundane, day-to-day sphere of interests and the cultural sphere created by refugee theatre is filled, becomes observable in the material construction of *The Container*. Should we follow Helbo et al.'s model of analysis, we can delimit the semiotics of the container, both at a textual and visual level. Taken literally, the meaning of the verb 'contain' refers both to containment and refrainment. When it comes to the first meaning of the word, one could simply and logically say that the encapsulation produced by the metal container transported by truck, *the matter*, has one role only: to contain the carried load, be it alive or not. It has to accommodate and physically hold the cargo, at a visual level. However, when it comes to *the mental*, the space of the encapsulation plays with the mind. The container becomes here a mental symbol of control, of some sort of strange social imprisonment destined to become reality the moment you open and reveal its secret, as revealed on multiple occasions by the refugees. From the first moments of the play, when the Kurd refugee tries to listen to the commotion that's happening outside their container, so they could hide, if raided by police, the tension is set high. He tells the other anxiously expectant characters to "[k]eep your (their) voices down" (0:02:07) because "[p]olice could be outside." (0:02:15). The fear of being discovered and deported, thus having their chance of living a safe life taken away from them, is the principal motive of the play. This means that *the containment* of the space becomes both a protective mental barrier and a space of absolute fear; hence the container creates a symbolic dichotomy from the beginning of the play, which gives the audience a pre-set sense of tension. The décor is one of the most important elements, in any dramatic representation, as Helbo, Avila and Champagne (1977: 177) stated: "the décor reflects back upon the production which postulates its audience." In other words, it is not inadvertently chosen, it wants to convey a message, the decor is not loosely used, but it is rather protocoled by the semiotics of the theatrical discourse and creates an accord between the sender and the receiver, as Prieto indicated (qtd. in Helbo, Avila and Champagne 1977:177). Moreover, Helbo, Avila and Champagne continue to remind us of the importance of décor:

> at a secondary level, (the décor) will also be able to communicate information on the content of the setting, establishing a particular dramatic setting and hence acting as a significant direction […] among those which the receiver acknowledges. (1997: 177)

Although this paper is concerned with the representation of trauma, rather than with the elements of a play, I find it necessary to talk about the main trauma-inducing component, for the container creates both spaces of representation and re-presentation of trauma in the context of refugee theatre. Mentally as well, the refrainment comes from the incapacity of the refugee-characters to decide their destiny and from the passive spectators, unable to help them. This, of course, could be interpreted as the harsh and dangerous path refugees have to take in order to live a normal life, a path we are usually unaware of and are most likely unable to elucidate. Consequently, one could say that the space created by the mental image of the container is the first element of traumatic evocation, which together with the scarce lightning creates a "space of recuperation and reunification of the spectator's visual perception, it is a discontinuous place of disintegration in the disposition of desire" (Helbo, Avila and Champagne 1977:177).

To conclude this part of the essay, when it comes to the *realia* in unravelling the complexity of the dramatic representations, following Helbo et al.'s paradigm, using sign and semiotic devices, one can understand that the mere appointing of a symbol to any of the theatrical performances facilitates the creation of a plastic reality which leaves its imprint into the cultural identity of its receivers. By association with Lipsitz, the powerful symbols of a theatrical discourse create an audience prone to involuntarily shape their pop-cultural identity according to the ethos of the specified delineation. However, the most interesting aspect of these theories is that their core praxis is founded on the idea of a certain didactic function, intrinsic to the art of theatre. Thus, I am foreshadowing the main idea I will discuss in this part of my research, in an attempt to prove that the didactics of theatre are of utmost importance when it comes to the aim of "giving a voice to the voiceless; and a face to the faceless" and when it comes to acknowledging, representing and potentially understanding trauma, following Bayley's *The Container*.

That being the case, the second part of my analysis deals with the need of explaining and understanding the power of trauma representations in the visual media of theatre and the didactic capabilities of this large-spectrum medium. As I tried to demonstrate in the first part of my work, representations matter when it comes to our cultural identity and our sociocultural mentalities. Following Caruth's explanation, both as scholars and as humans, we can deduce the paramount importance of trauma acknowledgement in art for one of the functions of art is to connect experiences and mutually heal the participants of the artistic act, as she points out in *Unclaimed Experience: Trauma, Narrative, and History* (1996: 8):

> the story of the way in which one's own trauma is tied up with the trauma of another, the way in which trauma may lead, therefore, to the encounter with another, through the very possibility and surprise of listening to another's wound.

Anyanwu et al. (1970: 29) tell us that "theatre art is preoccupied with humanity." Therefore, should we take into consideration the didactic function of

theatre, one has to look at theatre as a safe space of creation and of representation, a space which exceeds the boundaries of the exterior world, which may prove sinuous in the exact understanding of different traumatic experiences. As "[h]istorically, theatre has been a vehicle for social interaction, for the moulding of public opinion and for the setting of agenda in any given society" (Anyanwu, Okome and Tugbokorowei 1970: 33-34), we can see a clear predilection of plays, as junctions between mental spaces, when it comes to the importance of dramatic representation. One such inquiry is proposed by Laurel Borisenko (2016) – in his research about refugee camps in Kenya – who reminds us about the wonderful power of artistic representations. Not only does he bring into light refugees' stories and tribulations, but he also helps them connect with other survivors and gives them hope, while encouraging them to talk (benevolently) about their fight, in an artistic way. In what concerns the function of art as a medium of salvation he says:

> Such personal exploration (i.e. free writing and other such open discussions that allow refugees to share what issues they brought to the performance) became the material for the theatre performances, as well as a vehicle for deeper self-knowledge. Writing exercises using prompts, such as "I am, I remember, I hope" allowed for personal exploration of their hopes, dreams, and memories. (Borishenko 2016: 152)

Theatre helps people connect and become aware of their trauma, it helps them realize they are not alone and their pain is heard. But what about the unheard, not physically produced trauma? In the book *Trauma: Explorations in Memory* (1995), Caruth frankly prefaces to us the overwhelming need to understand psychological trauma, as much of a quandary it may be, for "trauma involves intense personal suffering, but it also involves the recognition of realities that most of us have not begun to face" (1995: vii) and only after having comprehended the depth of it, can we actually hope for a better outcome.

One of the most striking traumatic elements in *The Container* is, in my opinion, the trauma produced by the *loss of identity*. Apart from that, there is another sort of trauma at play, that of the *loss of morality* when it comes to human values, a certain producer of paranoia and anxiety, as one can see from the behavior of the characters, all extremely secretive and scared of each other, they are dehumanized by their own trials and tribulations and are unable to fully operate and understand when another refugee has a problem which is similar to their own. This is of course, a very complex subject but I will try my best to tackle and correlate it with Bayley's play. One could even argue that this play is challenging the morality of the audience at times, raising the perpetual question: *What would you do in this situation?* It absolutely dwells on the unethical Darwinist idea of "survival of the fittest" and thus challenges our own ethics, if ever found in such a time.

This bending of the moral rules and incapacitation of the characters to produce positive outcomes creates a form of justifiable dehumanizing which can of course determine and create certain, possibly future, traumatic recoil. The trauma of identity

loss is actually hidden in *The Container.* We can distinguish it from the dialogue of the characters, who mentally distance themselves from their former homes, now places of unpleasant memories. When the newcomer Mira comes to the container, she engages in a forced dialogue with the rich Afghan man. She is then met with apprehension from the young Kurd man who tells them "hey you, speak in English" (0:05:01-02) and that "[w]e're all Europeans now. You speak in English" (0:05:07). The tension and paranoia prevail throughout the play and their dialogue. Once they don't know when the situation changes and start talking in their native languages, the tension increases, one of the voices that points out exactly the phenomenon happening in this situation being the rich man who mentions "[y]ou don't like to feel you don't know what's going on, do you?" (0:05:11).

The problem with identity is pointed by Borisenko as a social dilemma of displacement, of not knowing where to situate yourself, for "[t]his is the refugee dilemma: identity is lost with neither a way forward nor a way back" (2016: 154). Displacement is regarded by Madeline Hron as "part of the human condition" (2018: 284) and as a state of perpetual *limbo,* a sad song of the world even Ovid has sung about in his *Tristia* (Hron 2018). However, she fully acknowledges the increase and normalization of refugees and of the exiled in the contemporary world. She also acknowledges how "because of the traumas they may have experienced, refugees often require specialized medical care to deal with the sequelae of torture, war, and, increasingly, life in limbo" (Hron 2018: 286). Precisely this *limbo* she mentionsis what facilitates the propagation of identity loss in a way. In *The Container,* the mental space of the host country becomes sort of *Fata Morgana* they all dream about, where hyperbolicity is a mechanism of solace:

> The aunt: He (her son) says London is a fine city. So big! You can drive a car for three hours and still you are in London. Think of that.
> The Kurd man: What does he say about English people, your son?
> The aunt: They are quite civilised.
> The rich man: The English are good businessmen.
> Aisha: English people are kind. They welcome people from all over the world.
> The Kurd man: Everyone lies to his family back home. (0:07:50-0:08:08)

The identity of the participant in the act of salvation is lost and with that the hope for greatness. The Kurd man says: "[h]e's an agent. I'm a refugee" (0:21:08), Aisha wants to become a servant, believing she will be able to be a royal attendant. The variety of traumatic instances suffered by escaping refugees is portrayed in *The Container* throughout a series of events, which are, of course, depicted as a manifesto for the hardships they have to go through. Hron herself states that "research shows the trauma that migrants experience manifests itself in multifaceted symptoms and may be influenced by a constellation of factors." (2018: 289), most of them having to deal with the problem and trauma brought about by displacement and loss of identity.

To conclude my analysis, I hope I explained why *The Container* is as much an important piece of evidence to the hardships of immigrants as it is a piece of artistic manifestation. Trauma is an important, open dialogue which no matter how uncomfortable it gets, we have to keep unfolding and to take it into consideration if we want to understand ourselves and each other better. Art is a phenomenal medium of social coagulation, for it has the power to connect and unite, as I have stated previously. Borisenko tells us about the healing qualities of art, too, and brings the idea even further to that of cultural identity: "One response to the question, 'how is cultural identity expressed through art?' is that it is expressed truthfully" (2016: 159). I do not know yet how much one can attribute to the material embodiments of the human experiences, but I do believe in the social power of art and in its "true aim of development" (Anyanwu et al. 1970: 32) and I believe even complex subjects such as the trauma of identity loss and of displacement can be approached both academically and humanly through this wonderful medium.

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HOW "ESSAY ON MAN" IS CONCRETIZED IN JONATHAN SWIFT'S *GULLIVER'S TRAVELS* AND MARY SHELLEY 'S *FRANKENSTEIN*

Abstract: This paper considers the way in which Alexander Pope's ideas are concretized in fictional literary works such as Jonathan Swift's "Gulliver's Travels" and Shelley Mary's "Frankenstein". By taking a close look at reality in an objective manner, Pope shared his view on "the great chain of being" and on the multitude of links which constitute the hierarchy of all living organisms. However, his observations were limited to a theoretical domain because his ideas explored dimensions that transcended human control and therefore they couldn't be put into practice. Thus, this paper intends to show how Pope's ideas were put into practice in fictional novels, where alternate realities can be illustrated and how these define by negation Pope's interpretation of the chain of being and how they challenge it through characters that disrupt the perfect order of the universe and the interconnectedness that characterizes it.

This paper considers the way in which Alexander Pope's ideas are concretized in fictional literary works such as Jonathan Swift's *Gulliver's Travels* and Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*. By taking a close look at reality in an objective manner, Pope shared his view on "the great chain of being" and on the multitude of links which constitute the hierarchy of all living organisms. However, his ideas were limited to a theoretical domain because his theories explored dimensions that transcended human control and therefore they couldn't be put into practice. Thus, this paper intends to show how Pope's ideas were put into practice in fictional novels, where alternate realities can be analyzed. These fictional works define by negation Pope's interpretation of the chain of being and they challenge it through characters that disrupt the perfect order of the universe and the interconnectedness that characterizes it.

In *Essay on Man*, Pope explores the different dimensions that characterize man and links his existence to the idea of the great chain of being. The latter represents the multitude of links that constitute the hierarchy of all existing beings, from the lowest to the highest forms of creation. Even though in this system all categories are endowed with their own qualities and attributes, their status as a "creation of God" creates a deep connection between them based on interdependence. Therefore, they all have the same degree of importance and they all are interconnected, so, if any part is broken, damaged or corrupted (even a lower form of life), the whole chain is broken and this system is destroyed.

Analyzing man's position by taking into consideration the proprieties of the chain of being proposed by Pope shows that man is considered neither a perfect nor an imperfect being. He represents just a piece of this composite system and is suited for the role he plays. If any of his attributes were to be changed or altered, then his status as a human being would be threatened. In order to preserve the unity and

perfection of the chain of being, there are not any characteristics that should be added or removed to any of the categories that compose this system: "Why form'd so weak, so little and so blind? […] Why form'd no weaker, blinder and no less?" (Pope 1881: 28). Hence, man can be considered just perfect for the position he takes.

By taking into consideration these fundamental characteristics of the chain of being proposed by Pope, I will show how *Gulliver's Travels* and *Frankenstein* oppose to them.

Pope proposes that human beings should dedicate their time to studying and discovering the world in order to accept the order of the universe as it is. While Divinity is situated at the top of the hierarchy, having knowledge of all the things that compose the world, man can only judge from what he sees and from his limited knowledge.

> Say rather, man's as perfect as he ought:
> His knowledge measur'd to his state and place;
> […] If to be perfect in a certain sphere
> What matter, soon or late, or here or there? (Pope 1881: 28-30)

In contrast to the type of knowledge proposed by Pope, in *Gulliver's Travels* the focus is on the unhealthy obsession that man has with unpractical science and reason. Therefore, through Gulliver's third voyage, it can be observed how man's fascination with science deeply affects his life and even the most basic qualities that he was endowed with by God (such as concentration and consciousness). Man refuses to understand the creation of the Divinity and his position in this algorithm better and chooses to sacrifice a part of his humanity in order to assume a creative role, a position similar to God's due to his pride: "self is that conscious thinking thing […] which is sensible, or conscious of happiness or misery, and so is concerned for itself as far as that consciousness extends" (Locke 1824: 308).

Swift also denounces human pride which is represented ironically through the Lilliputans and their emperor. Although they are small in size, they consider their nation to be the center of the universe and their emperor to be the most fascinating and frightening element of all existence. However, it can be seen how man cannot occupy the place of God and that this misplacement in the position of man ends up affecting him tremendously. Man loses some of the qualities that made him a higher form of creation. For example, laputans end up by losing their ability to carry on a normal conversation tosuch a degree that people even need to hire others to flap their mouths and ears. In a world where people are captivated by becoming Gods instead of using their reason to understand the creation of God, the perfect order of the world is disrupted: "There was a most ingenious Architect who had contributed a new method for building Houses, by beginning at the Roof, and working downwards to the Foundation (Swift 1977: 177).

Frankenstein also focuses on man's thirst for knowledge, on its pernicious consequences and reveals a different reality to the one that Pope conceptualized. It

depicts in a perfect manner how man is seduced and fascinated by science and how his pride makes him believe that he can access a truth that is above his existence. This greed for knowledge even affects man's morality. Once Victor discovers the secrets of life and death he secretly proceeds to create life using very disturbing methods (he uses body parts, taken from mortuaries and graves, in order to build the shape of his creature). The results of his efforts to create life show the reason why human beings should not engage in surpassing the earthly boundaries of knowledge. Victor, blinded by his pride, did not focus on the consequences that his actions would have: he wanted to be a God but he did not take responsibility for the life that he had created. In Frankenstein, man is perceived as a being greedy for power. He longs for strengths and features that do not belong to the human realm, a longing that makes him unhappy and dissatisfied with his own condition and with his own qualities. This stands in opposition with Pope's beliefs that the human being should strip off their pride and base their knowledge on the information gathered while studying and discovering the world with a humble mindset.

Curiously, in *Essay on Man*, even though Pope's ideal world is different from the one depicted in these two novels, he also regards man as a prideful and boastful being who does not know their own position. According to Pope, man believes that he is entitled to criticize God's creation based on the things that he is able to perceive and he criticizes a creation that he cannot fully comprehend. In this literary work, man is referred to as a "fool" (Pope 1881: 44), "vile worm" (Pope 1881: 35) or "presumptuous" (Pope 1881: 28) being, which indicates his narrow vision and his limited knowledge. Given his ignorance, he aspires to surpass his position not knowing the consequences that this could bring and the fact that it would affect his identity as a human being. Man wants to change his position, feeling discriminated, doubting God's judgement.

> Say, here he gives too little, here too much:
> […] Yet, cry, If man's unhappy, God's unjust;
> […] Rejudge his justice, be the God of God.
> In pride, in reas'ning pride our error lies; (Pope 1881: 31)

This is another example of man's ignorance because he doubts the Divinity who has knowledge of all the things that compose the world and who connected all the elements that compose this system.

Gulliver's Travels portrays man as a rebellious creation. However, this relationship between Divinity and the human being can only be seen when the reader pays attention to it because it is portrayed in an indirect way. The main attitude of man towards Divinity is that of defiance. Firstly, in the land of the Liliputans it can be seen how the emperor is considered the most frightening and fascinating being in the Universe. This type of idea places man (a mere mortal) higher than God (the Creator). The attitude of man towards the Divinity can also be characterized as ungratefulness. Man, instead of being happy with the position that he has been

granted, wishes for the position of other beings. This is best portrayed by Gulliver in the land of the Houyhnhnms. There he looks up to horses and even gets to hate his own condition. Even though originally horses were inferior to the human being, it can be seen how the two species change positions and horses become a species that is more virtuous than man. But, this change in positions is incomplete or flawed because the Houyhnhnms base their virtue on a type of rationality which lacks emotion (such as love or courtship). Hence, their virtue is also questionable because compared to the human being they are not actively choosing to be good or to make the right choices (Houyhnhnms were not the subjects of the fight between good and evil)..

Frankenstein portrays the same kind of connection between man and God, especially since the human being intends to surpass their limits and somehow take on God's powers. Therefore, through "Paradise Lost," which appears in this literary work through intertextuality, it can be seen how man represents God and how the monster represents both Adam and Satan. In this case, the creation suffers because of its Creator's flaws and irresponsibility. How can a flawed being want to create life? The result can only be more flawed. The monster could not even receive Salvation after death because his creator was just a mere mortal. Frankenstein acknowledges that it resembles Adam but it also envies him: Adam at least had Eve so he did not feel alone, but the monster had nobody. Victor's monster also relates to Satan because they were both banished by their own Creator. However, the monster was rejected by Victor even though he had done nothing wrong.

Frankenstein notices that not even Satan was as alone as him because the demon had its companions: "Satan had his companions, fellow-devils, to admire and encourage him; but I am solitary and abhorred" (Shelley 2003: 130). Therefore, in *Frankenstein*, God is a benevolent Creator that loves and blesses his creation with life, while man "curses" his creation with the life that he bestows it with.

> For Dr. Frankenstein's crime was not that he invented a creature through some combination of hubris and high technology, but rather that he abandoned the creature to itself. When Dr. Frankenstein meets his creation on a glacier in the Alps, the monster claims that it was not born a monster, but that it became a criminal only after being left alone by his horrified creator, who fled the laboratory once the horrible thing twitched to life. (Latour, 2011:19)

In Pope's essay, the connection between one's actions and the effect that they produce is also emphasized: "*Essay on man* focuses on the way that man must be good in order to obtain happiness, his being's end and aim" (Pope 1881: 58). So, if a man's way of thinking is right and his mind is pure, he is a being that can obtain the blessing of God and salvation. The man that lives his life paying attention to his actions and that always follows the Creator's word, is going to receive unimaginable happiness and rewards: "If we look in the Essay […] we can see discussion of […] happiness in virtue and benevolence as ancient moral common places" (Griffin 1978:

131). God's gifts to man have no connection to this limited world, because the true happiness of humans and virtue's prize cannot have their origins in such materialistic and physical matters. The human mind wishes for insignificant things because it is not really able to see the whole picture and because it is impossible for it to comprehend such an immense power as the one that God possesses. However, the man that indulges in sin and that is dominated by mundane type of values can only be deprived of his blessing and live an unhappy life which will not end with his reunion with the Divinity. Even though he may possess riches or status, these are not values that equal happiness or salvation and such a conception can only denote a lack of common sense: "Who sees and follows that great scheme the best/ Best knows the blessing, and will most be blest" (Pope 1881: 61).

Frankenstein focuses on the myopic perspective that man has. Therefore, it can be seen how during the process of creation of the hideous monster, Victor did not stop once to reflect upon his actions or upon the consequences that they might bring to him or to his loved ones. He just focused on applying his knowledge in order to gain the prestige that this type of scientific innovation would bring him. He sacrificed long-term happiness for momentary satisfaction, for a moment that would assure him of his own value as a human being: "My life might have been passed in ease and luxury; but I preferred glory to every enticement that wealth placed in my path" (Shelley 2003: 13). It can be seen how during the process of creation Victor loses all moral values. The creation of the monster disturbs his sanity and his peace of mind. It is almost as if the creation of the monster itself is the punishment that Victor receives for overstepping the boundaries of a mere mortal. Once the monster is brought to life, Shelley portrays more than just the psychological consequences of Victor's actions. She also shows the physical consequences of his greed and irresponsibility through the various deaths that happened in his family.

In *Gulliver's Travels* man's short sightedness is also depicted through Gulliver who does not really think about the consequences of his actions or thoughts. In Luggnagg he finds out about the Struldbruggs (immortal beings) and he considers their condition ideal, fantasizing about the multitude of things that he could obtain, such as wealth or knowledge, if he were immortal. But Gulliver's conception could not be further from the truth because the Struldbruggs were miserable beings. Aging was not affected by immortality. Therefore, they had to live with a poor physical condition for the rest of their lives. Immortality also affected their mental health because once they reached 80 years old they got cantankerous and eccentric.

In conclusion, it can be seen how the complexity of man allows for so many different interpretations on human life to be created and developed. Neither is correct or wrong because they just represent different interpretations on man's existence. And still, despite being so different, these takes on human life are also similar, managing to express the same ideas in certain occasions because the core ideas that Pope preached can be found in both novels as was shown in this paper.

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FEMALE FERTILITY AND CHILDBEARING
ANALYSING THE CONCEPT OF FERTILITY IN THE NOVEL *THE HANDMAID'S TALE* BY MARGARET ATWOOD IN CORRELATION TO OUR CURRENT SOCIETY

Abstract: Throughout history, the concept of fertility and childbearing has been ever so present in our lives, as well as in our society. For many decades, we were able to witness the instances in which fertility and childbearing have become the defining factors regarding a woman's purpose and importance. Different forms of media, such as TV, books, movies and so on have helped to propagate the idea that a woman's fertility is directly proportional to her value and importance. A novel which illustrates this mentality is "The Handmaid's Tale". This study claims that the concept of fertility as it was portrayed in "The Handmaid's Tale" has become directly correlated to a woman's importance and purpose in our current society. Therefore, the present research analyses the portrayal of fertility and childbearing and its meaning in correlation to our society as it appears in Margaret Atwood's *The Handmaid's Tale*.

Introduction

Margaret Atwood's novel *The Handmaid's Tale* portrays a fictional society in which fertility, religion and patriarchal values are promoted as being ideal and right. This society based on religion, or "theocracy", as Atwood calls it in her novel, presents two different sides of the same coin to the reader. On the one hand, we are shown the possible benefits that the male population have inside of this society and, on the other, we are exposed to the oppression that the women in this society face. This oppression can only be compared to a nightmare scenario from a feminist point of view. This results in a juxtaposition between a male-dominated utopia and a female-oppressed dystopia. It is due to this contrastive perspective presented by Atwood in her novel that the possibility of analysing the concept of fertility and its effects on the female population from the novel is available.

Feminist features in the novel

M. Keith Booker describes *The Handmaid's Tale* as being "a feminist dystopia written in direct reaction to the growing political power of the American religious right in the 1980s", claiming that the novel "projects a nightmare future in which such forces have established control of the government". Furthermore, he uses the following words in order to give a more detailed insight into the way in which the Republic of Gilead functions from a socio-political point of view: "the United States has been replaced by the Republic of Gilead, in which the ideology of religious fundamentalism is imposed by brute force on a stupefied populace". He goes on to

describe Gilead as "a police state, with the movements and activities of its citizens closely monitored and controlled" (1994: 78). The feminist ideology from the 1980s has its origins in second-wave feminism. According to Selden et al., the beginnings of this 'second wave' have been linked to the publication of Betty Friedan's *The Feminine Mystique* in 1963. Its release managed to put feminism on the national agenda for the first time, especially in relation to "the frustrations of white, heterosexual, middle-class American women – career-less and trapped in domesticity" (2017: 118). Taking into account Booker's description of Atwood's novel, as well as the social context in which second-wave feminism was born, we can identify a clear link between the political context that inspired Margaret Atwood to write this novel and its dystopic features that make it adhere to the science fiction genre.

The focus placed on the concept of fertility and on the reproductive function of Gilead's women only reinforces the nightmarish and dystopic scenario that we are faced with: a world in which women are left with no choice but to play the part of a walking uterus in order to propagate and maintain the twisted beliefs of the Republic of Gilead's political leadership amongst the future generations. The highlighted importance of reproduction is intertwined with the social value of marriage, a right granted only to those at the top of the social hierarchy "in the Christian theocracy of the Republic of Gilead", or, to be more specific, to those who have proven themselves loyal to the state through their service. In this society, wives are being "issued" to the men who hold high positions in the Republic of Gilead, which suggests the fact that women have become nothing more than "brand names" coinciding to being "members of well-defined social groups", as well as "commodities" belonging to the men who hold the power (Booker 1994: 78).

When reading the novel, we are shown Offred's subjective perspective on the way in which the Republic of Gilead functions. Through her narrative, we have access to the inner workings of this society, as well as to the direct impact that it has on her from a personal point of view. In the first chapter of the novel, "Night", we are introduced to the genesis of the Republic of Gilead, to the place in which the Handmaid training took place. Throughout this chapter, a few specific moments that emphasise the oppressive nature of this theocracy stand out, such as:

> No guns though, even they could not be trusted with guns. Guns were for the guards, specially picked from the Angels. The guards weren't allowed inside the building except when called, and we weren't allowed out, except for our walks, twice daily, two by two around the football field, which was enclosed now by a chain-link fence topped with barbed wire.
> The Angels stood outside it with their backs to us. They were objects of fear to us, but of something else as well. If only they would look. If only we could talk to them. Something could be exchanged, we thought, some deal made, some tradeoff, we still had our bodies. That was our fantasy. (Atwood 1986: 13-14)

The excerpt above help us visualise the strict and oppressive manner in which the women were treated at the Red Centre, the place in which the Handmaid training had been organised. These women were not viewed as or considered human beings anymore; instead, they became a piece of property that had to obey the rules of the Republic of Gilead.

In the fifth chapter of the novel, "Nap", we find a very expressive passage which highlights not only the importance of fertility, but, even more, the sanctity of pregnancy for the society of Gilead. These passages depict the act of Testifying, an important ritual considered to be special in the novel:

> Two-thirty comes during Testifying. Aunt Helena is here, as well as Aunt Lydia, because Testifying is special. Aunt Helena is fat, she once headed a Weight Watchers' franchise operation in Iowa. She's good at Testifying.
> It's Janine, telling about how she was gang-raped at fourteen and had an abortion. She told the same story last week. She seemed almost proud of it, while she was telling. It may not even be true. At Testifying, it's safer to make things up than to say you have nothing to reveal. But since it's Janine, it's probably more or less true.
> But whose fault was it? Aunt Helena says, holding up one plump finger.
> Her fault, her fault, her fault, we chant in unison.
> Who led them on? Aunt Helena beams, pleased with us.
> She did. She did. She did.
> Why did God allow such a terrible thing to happen?
> Teach her a lesson. Teach her a lesson. Teach her a lesson. (Atwood 1986: 83-84)

The episode above highlight not only the importance of pregnancy and childbearing for the Republic of Gilead, but also the condescending way in which the woman was view by the people of this society. In this particular case , we can see the amount of blame that Aunt Helena and Aunt Lydia place on Janine for being raped. Janine is told that she was the reason and the factor that lead to her being raped. At the same time, we can also notice the pressure that is put on the other Handmaids to take part in shaming Janine for her rape and abortion.

Female fertility in the 1980s and connections to *The Handmaid's Tale*

Fertility is one of the focal points in Margaret Atwood's novel *The Handmaid's Tale*, and certainly it represents one of the requirements that women have to meet in order to be valuable for the Republic of Gilead. Throughout the 1980s, which is the period in which this novel was published, a shift occurred regarding societal views about women, especially due to the importance of second-wave feminism. While fertility became a requirement in order for a woman to be considered valuable in the eyes of Gilead's society, the reality of the 1980s showed a decline in childbearing and reproduction. John C. Caldwell claims that "the growth of real income doubling in the Offshoots between 1950 and 1978" ("Offshoots" referring to the United States of America, Canada, Australia and New Zealand), as well as the fact that "the new

economy demanded educated employees, especially once the computer came into widespread use" resulted in a direct clash between "women's employment and maternal functions". Caldwell also claims that the economic growth mentioned earlier "permitted the development of the consumer society, tempting both husbands and wives to maximize their incomes". Along with this, the context of "the new economy" resulted in a setting that allowed "the women's movement" to encourage "female education, employment and independence" (2006: 236).

Furthermore, Caldwell asserts that along with "the birth control revolution" came "the new certainty of being able to determine the timing of childbirth". The possibility to access birth control "meant that couples could plan the wife's work with greater confidence", and, on the other hand, "the breaking of the connection between sexual activity and pregnancy made it easier to postpone marriage and childbearing". Last but not least, Caldwell also claims that "in both the Offshoots and Northwestern Europe the fertility decline had bottomed out by the 1980s" (2006: 237).

Conclusion

There are multiple conclusions we can draw from this data related to fertility. Firstly, the contrast between the male-centred world depicted in Atwood's novel and the social realities related to the feminist movement highlights the differences between the reality of that time and the fictional universe of the novel. Secondly, this stark contrast accentuates the oppressive nature of the universe created by Margaret Atwood, a universe created as a direct response towards "the growing political power of the American religious right in the 1980s" (Booker 1994: 78). Thirdly, this novel still manages to leave a strong impression on its readers even nowadays, in the 21st century, especially through its violent, yet brutally honest depiction of a dystopian society.

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MONEY AND FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS IN *LONG DAY'S JOURNEY INTO NIGHT* AND *DEATH OF A SALESMAN*

Abstract: The paper aims to recompose the misinterpretation of the American Dream through the consumerist perspectives of two main characters, who place at the center of their existence the pursuit of enrichment, vanity, and greed. By examining the psychological and social dimensions of Eugene O'Neill's play Long Day's Journey into Night and Arthur Miller's Death of a Salesman, this work seeks to demonstrate the futility of a life devoid of deep moral values, happiness, and freedom. If O'Neil builds the consumerist era through James Tyrone's cruel selfishness, eager to sacrifice his family for a few extra dollars, Miller analyzes the influence of fame, marketing and technology, while transforming suicide intro a means of enrichment through the insurance policy. In this way, the authors socially map a facet of the American Dream and provide, by the power of the counterexample, a code of ethics in a consumerist era.

This paper seeks to explore the different angles through which the American Dream, or a version thereof, is depicted in *Long Day's Journey into Night* and *Death of a Salesman*. According to James Truslow Adams, who coins the term in his *Epic of America*, this Dream is intended to be a metaphor for accessibility, equality, and a symbolic eradication of all boundaries between people: racial, stereotypical, religious or sexist boundaries (1931). However, the term has become, in the view of many, a guarantee of enrichment or success. Thus, Eugene O'Neil and Arthur Miller construct greedy and superficial characters, and whose image is probably their most valuable asset. Money becomes a totem, while family connections, moral values, happiness, and freedom deteriorate.

O'Neil's universe revolves around the Tyrone family, which includes Jamie and Edmund, their mother, Mary, and the family patriarch, James. The action occurs on a single day in the summer of 1912. As the clock ticks, the play maps a significant portion of the family's history, gradually revealing more about their past, vices, personalities, and hardships. Miller maintains the same framework, except that his character, Willy Loman, craves in vain popularity as a means of survival. Because their familial systems are destroyed by early betrayal, James and Willy's histories are similar, emphasizing a lack of paternal guidance. For instance, as James Tyrone explains in the play, he is abandoned by his father as a child:

> When I was ten my father deserted my mother and went back to Ireland to die. [...] My mother was left, a stranger in a strange land, with four small children, me and a sister a little older and two younger than me. [...] There was no damned romance in our poverty. Twice we were evicted from the miserable hovel we called home. (1976: 147)

For only "fifty cents a week," he has to work "twelve hours a day in a machine shop, learning to build files" (1976: 117). The ramifications of abandonment are felt not only immediately, in the tough circumstances that his family are forced to endure, but also in the long run, with James Tyrone becoming a greedy man willing to sacrifice anything in life to save a few dollars.

If James' father abandons him by committing suicide and mistaking "rat poison for flour, or sugar, or something" (1976: 147), Willy's father abandons him when he is "just three or four years old" and emigrates to Alaska. Willy's older brother, Ben, tries to rebalance the situation by promising to "find Father in Alaska." This is where Ben's journey begins. But because of a certain kind of luck or because he has a "very faulty view of geography, (...) he discovered after a few days that (...) he was heading due south, so instead of Alaska, (...) ended up in Africa" (1998: 33). Therefore, Arthur Miller depicts the American Dream as a game of chance in which luck plays a significant role, arguing that there is no prerequisite or guarantee of becoming wealthy. Still, we learn from the start that Ben is dead, appearing in the play through Willy's illusions. A possible key to reading this conveys the lesson that the ultimate goal of the Dream should not be money.

In *Long Day's Journey into Night*, Edmund is a central element and character through which his father's vanity and greed are revealed. Despite the fact that his son has tuberculosis and must be placed in a sanatorium, James is worried about the amount of money he has to spend. Because of that, he chooses a cheap sanatorium with poor conditions, arguing that "I know it's an Irish peasant idea consumption is fatal. It probably is when you live in a hovel on a bog, but over here, with modern treatment" (1976: 34). Note how the US is depicted as the country of all possibilities. Plus, if Jamie's thesis is true, several aspects would differ, such as finding a job would be easier. Because James is an actor, his influence is limited to that sector, while other enterprises and industries around him are marked by a fiercely competitive market to which Jamie is unable to adapt. Likewise, Biff encounters the same problem in *Death of a Salesman*. The market instability and the individual's incompatibility with general values make him change several jobs: "I've had twenty or thirty different kinds of job since I left home before the war, and it always turns out the same" (1998: 11). Edmund shares this sense of incompatibility, portraying the human life experience as a *disease* and emphasizing his outsider condition: "It was a great mistake, my being born a man, I would have been much more successful as a sea gull or a fish. As it is, I will always be a stranger who never feels at home" (1976: 153).

Biff's brother, Happy, also contributes to the construction of a consumerist version of the American Dream. He adds a short story about his merchandise manager, who "just built a terrific estate on Long Island. And he lived there about two months and sold it, and now he's building another one. He can't enjoy it once it's finished". Every character who manages to achieve financial support is doomed to lose on another level or be stuck in a loop frame. This scene is relevant because Happy reveals to Biff that he is thinking "(...) of the rent I'm paying. And it's crazy.

But then, it's what I always wanted. My own apartment, a car, and plenty of women". Besides, Happy gives up the value of friendship: although the manager is "a good friend of mine", he envies him "sometimes I want to just rip my clothes off in the middle of the store and outbox that goddam merchandise manager" (1998: 12). Equally, Mary, James' wife, feels isolated and without friends after she lost them a long time ago when his husband's affair came to light:

> At the Convent I had so many friends [...] and right after we were married, there was the scandal of that woman who had been your mistress, suing you. From then on, all my old friends either pitied me or cut me dead. I hated the ones who cut me much less than the pitiers. (1976: 86)

This paper will also explain how Miller portrays the father-son relationship as selfish on Willy's behalf. Willy "had the wrong dreams. All, all, wrong" (1998: 111), and wants Biff and Happy to be well-liked and for Biff to continue his legacy by becoming a respected and well-known salesman: "How the hell did I ever get the idea I was a salesman there?" (1998: 81). Therefore, Willy is not at all receptive to their wishes and Biff's behavior is judged by the reaction of others, rather than by any moral values "You did? The kids like it?" (1998: 93). After a long journey, by the end of the play, Biff is "finding himself", realizing that "Pop! I'm a dime a dozen, and so are you!" (1998: 105). He chooses his own path, different from the one enforced y his parents or society "How can he find himself on a farm? Is that a life?", and breaks the illusion of the *Consumerist* Dream by saying "Will you let me go, for Christ's sake? Will you take that phony dream and burn it before something happens?" (1998: 106). Through his dreams and aspirations, Biff closely resembles Edmund, who is full of poetry, but who is the only one capable to accept the reality: "Mama! It isn't a summer cold! I've got consumption!" (1976: 174).

This being said, when Biff "looked at the pen and said to myself, what the hell am I grabbing this for? Why am I trying to become what I don't want to be?" (1998: 105), Happy aspired to be a miniature version of Willy Loman, with the goal of impressing executives and conquering the dream, which he reaffirms at the end of the play:

> I gotta show some of those pompous, self-important executives over there that Hap Loman can make the grade. I want to walk into the store the way he walks in. Then I'll go with you, Biff; "(...) show you and everybody else that Willy Loman did not die in vain. He had a good dream. It's the only dream you can have — to come out number-one man. He fought it out here, and this is where I'm gonna win it for him. (1998: 13)

Biff and Happy are two characters who strengthen the image of the dysfunctional family from O'Neil's world, and they prove the nullity of an American Consumerist Dream each in his own way: Biff shows how his individuality and

desires are almost lost to the collective ideals of society, while Happy joins all the other characters who, with the exception of Edmund, have had or still desire wealth and adulation.

More than that, Miller presents how the human values are removed from the American Dream, using the relationship between Biff and Willy, which is not only unstable, but also real, alive, quickly moving from love to repulsion. In contrast, their neighbors, Bernard and Charley, two people who have succeeded in life and who are "liked, but (...) not—well liked" (1998: 18), imitate Ben's pattern of mechanical, insensitive interaction, this time in a father-son relationship. Moreover, Charley's family never appears described in full, which can suggest a failed marriage. Looking at the marriages of Willy and James, we can consider that both have issues. In James' case, there is a strong mismatch between him and Mary, although they both care about each other. Linda sincerely cares about her husband, Willy, but this is not enough to keep the family together. The existence of affairs in both marriages demonstrates the superficiality of family foundation and the lack of implication. While Willy is constantly looking for recognition, being ready to throw himself into a woman's arms because of loneliness "my clothes, I can't go out naked in the hall" (1998: 94), James seeks love in an affair and lets Mary carry him drunk to bed.

The relationship between James, Edmund and Jamie shows similar dynamics, hiding the frustration and regrets that each character has regarding their destiny. Their acid conflicts provide credibility, so even though the characters run away from reality, their anxieties are real. Jamie is jealous of his brother: "Never wanted you succeed and make me look even worse by comparison. Wanted you to fail. Always jealous of you. Mama's baby, Papa's pet!" (1976: 165), while Mary regrets that she abandoned her teenage dreams, she regrets her marriage to a drunken man and is looking for *something*, while James seeks happiness in vain.

The struggle to be integrated in society is also caused by the massive changes that take place. The market has become effervescent and dynamic in post-war America. Industrialization has replaced much of the manual labor, and technology enters not only the work sphere, in companies, but also people's homes. It is the beginning of a strong marketing era, with radio and television commercials and competitiveness "They got the biggest ads of any of them!" (1998: 23). The achievements that a man should have change in the form of a contest of material goods.

This contest for material goods is also included in the plays. Arthur Miller presents the relationship differently than O'Neill does. If in his youth, O'Neill's James superficially wants more and more possessions to transform them into achievements, Miller builds the relationship as a curse that haunts you all your life. As the Second World War brings great economic growth, products become more expensive since the demand is bigger. The American Dream necessarily means owning a house, a car, a good refrigerator, an aesthetic similar to a universal one presented in media; things for which if you do not have enough money, you have to

borrow. Thus, a person's life and freedom become limited to the credit they have to pay. "Figure it out. Work a lifetime to pay off a house. You finally own it, and there's nobody to live in it" (1998: 4). Ads direct buyers to valuable products, because if a company has enough money to appear on TV, there is the belief that it also develops high quality products, which are meant to gain your trust:

> Whoever heard of a Hastings refrigerator? Once in my life I would like to own something outright before it's broken! I'm always in a race with the junkyard! I just finished paying for the car and it's on its last legs. The refrigerator consumes belts like a goddam maniac. They time those things. They time them so when you finally paid for them, they're used up. (1998: 54)

People want to feel that they have succeeded in life, especially after their hopes are once again shattered by the Great Depression. If we look at James and Willy, they both manage to obtain property, but while Willy still pays the loan to it and does not own it, James does not invest any money to improve it:

> I've never felt it was my home. It was wrong from the start. Everything was done in the cheapest way. Your father would never spend the money to make it right. It's just as well we haven't any friends here. I'd be ashamed to have them step in the door. (1976: 44)

> Why don't you light the light, James? It's getting dark. I know you hate to, but Edmund has proved to you that one bulb burning doesn't cost much. There's no sense letting your fear of the poor-house make you too stingy. (1976: 117)

In addition, space is used in the characterization of consumer society and the ethics towards which it is oriented. Owning land means controlling, selling, changing, granting or limiting access to it. From the talks Willy has with his wife, we find out that nature has lost its importance, it has become barren, and now constructions are the ones that prevail:

> The street is lined with cars. There's not a breath of fresh air in the neighborhood. The grass doesn't grow any more, you can't raise a carrot in the back yard. They should've had a law against apartment houses. Remember those two beautiful elm trees out there? [...] They should've arrested the builder for cutting those down. They massacred the neighborhood. There's more people! That's what's ruining this country! Population is getting out of control. The competition is maddening! Smell the stink from that apartment house. (1998: 6-7)

In these conditions, Willy's strategy of succeeding only because you are well-liked is hardly applicable (at least, for him). People, as Miller describes them, seem to have lost their humanity, their characteristic warmth, their unity. An example to support this claim is Willy's boss, Howard. The interaction between the two is frigid,

although Willy is respected and liked by Howard's father for his fidelity and for all the work done during the thirty-four years there. Moreover, Howard does not even provide any solution when Willy begs him to work from New York. Instead, after ignoring and interrupting him countless times, he harshly rejects him, stating that there is no room for him in the office. Howard's impassivity demonstrates the altered dynamics of the interaction between people, as well as the importance of the hierarchical scale in reaching or obtaining a simple favor. Important to mention that Willy is aware of his mistakes and the few sales he has made, but he refuses at all costs the job offered by Charley, which would have brought him more money and peace of mind. His decision is based on the fact that he does not want to give up his profession, because it would be proof of a personal failure (1998).

There is also a keen interest in technology, which is shown through Howard and his obsession with wire machines. He records his entire family on the device, but remains indifferent to his five-year-old son, who recites the capitals of the U.S. in alphabetical order. Rather than being proud of him, he is obsessed with technology and its new functions that simplify human life, strongly asserting that "I tell you, Willy, I'm gonna take my camera, and my bandsaw, and all my hobbies, and out they go. This is the most fascinating relaxation I ever found" (1998: 56). The conversation between Willy and his boss typifies the exploitative behavior of consumerism. Despite the fact that Howard "can't take blood from a stone", he is able to purchases technical devices, which he prioritizes over loyal employees. Nevertheless, the exploitation reaches its climax when Willy says nervously a possible thesis of exploitative consumerism: "You can't eat the orange and throw the peel away—a man is not a piece of fruit!" (1998: 61-62). In this way, he describes a cynical process through which a person is turned into junk, as soon as their resources or skills no longer bring maximum profitability to the company. Similarly, O'Neil shows us how the drug seller encourages Mary's morphine addiction in order to make good and constant profit "Yes, he knows me" (1976: 103). Not to mention, James' greed leads him to take Mary to a cheap doctor in the first place, one who gets her addicted to morphine.

In conclusion, as we have seen, America went through massive changes in the twentieth century that influenced people both directions: the First World War, the Great Depression, the Second World War and so on. Owning goods becomes a contest and you are naturally forced to play, if you want to share the same ideals with society. This thesis intended to investigate the harmful impact of money and the misperception of the American Dream that both families in Miller's and O'Neill's plays share. Willy tries all his life to be well-liked, to succeed, but he is unable to. In the end, perhaps understanding his personal and professional failure, he commits suicide. By doing so, his family can enjoy his insurance. James also makes efforts for his family, but always has the inner rule of not spending too much on his wife or sons. Consumerism and the desire to get rich in a country of all possibilities, where

you have to be well-liked to succeed, determine two families to break their ties and isolate themselves in their own dream or drama.

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A CHILD'S COMPOSURE DURING WORLD DISCLOSURE – IDENTITY SHAPING IN MARK TWAIN'S *ADVENTURES OF HUCKLEBERRY FINN* AND SUE MONK KIDD'S *THE SECRET LIFE OF BEES*

Abstract: This paper seeks to explore the ways in which Mark Twain's Huckleberry Finn and Sue Monk Kidd's Lily Owens (from the novel *The Secret Life of Bees*) discover certain aspects of the world around them (a patriarchal and, respectively, a matriarchal one). Readers gradually get to witness how both characters shape their identity, while inquiring into particular attitudes that they are exposed to. Although the action takes place in two different contexts in America (the Antebellum period and the times during the Civil Rights Movement), Huck Finn and Lily Owens display mutual traits as they tackle issues concerned with authenticity and morality.

One's development as a child might be intriguing to follow due to multiple reasons which could be encapsulated within two main ones. On the one hand, the "witness" learns – or even recalls – how a child's mind can work and adapt to its surroundings. On the other hand, the observer has the opportunity to view a certain world through the eyes of an equally innocent and mature person. This is precisely one of the principal ways in which young literary characters uncover the "secrets" of the world, more or less unwillingly. At first, it is tempting to believe that children are resourceful enough to "decode" the underlying significance of values and issues within their environment. However, while I do believe that people can rely on their inner assets even at a young age, it is important to consider that beliefs originating from a family or a community immediately "affect" one's early development in life. The following paper seeks to trace the manner in which two American characters, Mark Twain's Huckleberry Finn and Sue Monk Kidd's Lily Owens (from *The Secret Life of Bees*), shape their identities, while both taking on particular attitudes *and* challenging them when confronted with new facets of reality. Although their evolution occurs in two different types of worlds (a patriarchal and, respectively, a matriarchal one), we will gradually notice how the characters end up sharing common traits, as they explore their connections with those around them.

To contextualize the two stories, Twain places his novel during the first half of the 19th century (more precisely in the so-called Antebellum period), in the fictional town of St. Petersburg, Missouri, while Kidd creates a narrative taking place in the second half of the 20th century, in the imaginary Sylvan, South Carolina. In both cases, we are dealing with an interracial framework which brings forward issues of slavery and civil rights. The Antebellum period specifically points the readers towards the idea of slave culture and how it manifested itself in pre-Civil War times. Twain's young hero, Huck Finn, grows up in the slave state of Missouri, having access only to people who unashamedly consider black people to be inferior. Later on in

American literature, Kidd's heroine, Lily Owens, watches the televised signing of the Civil Rights Act, in 1964. Admittedly, the girl gradually discovers that a mere "piece of paper" does not alter deeply ingrained behaviours of white people. Regardless of the historical context, the two children roam among similarly biased individuals, although, their interactions with the black community differ in certain ways.

In what follows, it will be helpful to look at the smaller contexts in which the young characters grow up. Essentially, both children are parentless, despite having fathers who are alive. Huck's father, Pap, comes and goes in the boy's life, acting rather as a ghostlike figure. The only impact he has is when he manages to instil fear in his son, whom he also deems to be the Angel of Death, during one of his drunken performances:

> By and by he rolled out and jumped up on his feet looking wild and he see me and went for me. He chased me round and round the place, with a clasp knife, calling me the Angel of Death and saying he would kill me and then I couldn't come for him no more. I begged, and told him I was only Huck, but he laughed *such* a screechy laugh, and roared and cussed, and kept on chasing me up. (Twain 2020: 26)

Even in such a scene that suggests a frantic atmosphere, we may notice the fact that, at a symbolic level, Pap would not even know who Huck truly is, since he has never bothered to spend time with him or ensure a secure household for him. However, the father does know that Huck has received education from Widow Douglas, someone close to an adoptive mother, and intuits that his boy may always have the upper hand further on:

> 'You're educated, too, they say – can read and write. You think you're better'n your father now, don't you, because he can't? *I*'ll take it out of you. Who told you you might meddle with such hifalut'n foolishness, hey? Who told you you could? (…) And looky here – you drop that school, you hear? I'll learn people to bring up a boy to put on airs over his own father and let on to be better'n what *he* is. You lemme catch you fooling around that school again, you hear? Your mother couldn't read, and she couldn't write, nuther, before she died. None of the family couldn't, before *they* died.' (2020: 18)

We instantly learn that Huck is the first member in his family to "break the chain" and get educated, despite his own initial signs of reluctance towards the notion of being "sivilized" (2020: 3). Pap does not want his "attempts" to perpetuate a miserable state in his family to be in vain; therefore, he tells Huck to stop going to school or quit getting help and instruction from townspeople. As much as he tries to assert dominance, Pap, in fact, reveals a vulnerable side of his, as a result of a lack of the most basic education one can get. This is a rather meagre representation of Pap Finn that we are provided with, helping us turn our glances towards Huck at all times, given his emerging potential. What is discouraging to discover, though, is that

the hero of the story is still treated as an outsider, because of his "orphanhood" and instability within a society which treasures a solid family structure. All of this becomes more apparent when Huck finds himself tagging along with Tom Sawyer's Gang:

> Some thought it would be good to kill the *families* of boys that told the secrets [of the gang]. Tom said it was a good idea, so he took a pencil and wrote it in. Then Ben Rogers says:
> 'Here's Huck Finn, he hain't got no family – what you going to do 'bout him? (…) Yes, he's got a father, but you can't never find him these days. (…)'
> They talked it over, and they was going to rule me out, because they said every boy must have a family or somebody to kill, or else it wouldn't be fair and square for the others. (…) I was most ready to cry, but all at once I thought of a way, and so I offered them Miss Watson – they could kill her. Everybody said:
> 'Oh, she'll do, she'll do. That's all right. Huck can come in.' (2020: 8-9)

Despite the amusing "resolution" within an informal gang of robbers, Huck is immediately pinpointed as an outcast, who could not possibly follow the traditional rules set up, ironically, by kids of his age. Interestingly enough, the same position of an "outsider" can also be discerned in the case of Lily Owens. In this case, however, she is not forbidden from going to school, since one such situation would be virtually impossible; rather, she has a restricted social life, conducted by her father, Terrence Ray (or T. Ray, for short):

> He didn't believe in slumber parties or sock hops, which wasn't a big concern as I never got invited to them anyway, but he refused to drive me to town for football games, pep rallies, or Beta Club car washes, which were held on Saturdays. He did not care that I wore clothes I made for myself in home economics class, cotton print shirtwaists with crooked zippers and skirts hanging below my knees, outfits only the Pentecostal girls wore. I might as well have worn a sign on my back: I AM NOT POPULAR AND NEVER WILL BE. (Kidd 2003: 17)

Lily's attitude cannot be fully condemned or taken as shallow. Instead, we are shown her continuous effort to gain validation in a world where her father often mistreats her, in which she also lives with the burden of having accidentally shot her mother when she was four years old. Ten years later, the girl deals with the same hazy memories of her mother and gains comfort only from a few items left behind by Mrs. Owens, Deborah.

The overall seclusion and confusion regarding their worth lead us to observe that Huck and Lily cannot help but be insecure about their identity. This is not as surprising as the idea that both end up creating a stronger bond with black characters, further emphasizing the interracial backdrop I have briefly touched upon earlier in the paper. The motherless kids have the opportunity to distance themselves from their abusive fathers and ultimately find a friend in Jim the slave or Rosaleen the housekeeper, alongside the Boatwright sisters (in *The Secret Life of Bees*). Huck's companionship with Jim forms a bit later, when the boy has already run away from "home". Lily, however, survives in South Carolina due to her daily interactions with

Rosaleen, the "stand-in mother" (2003: 9). In this entire context, what is even more compelling is the fact that Huck and Lily set off on their journeys with Jim and Rosaleen. The circumstances are, indeed, distinct from one another, if we are to reconsider the status of the latter duo. While Jim becomes a runaway slave who fears that his master, Miss Watson, would sell him down to the dreaded New Orleans, the farthest location from his family, Rosaleen barely manages to escape the threats of three white men. Having been discredited for showing up to register for voting through the ironic "We got ourselves a model citizen" (2003: 51), Rosaleen confronts the three racists, by pouring snuff juice on the men's shoes, while seemingly writing her name on the ground, as she practiced beforehand (2003: 52). Undoubtedly, the three men echo Pap Finn's own indignation at the mere likelihood of black people being allowed to vote in certain states: " 'when they told me there was a state in this country where they'd let that nigger vote, I drawed out. I says I'll never vote agin.' " (Twain 2020: 25). What follows is a fight, or rather a full-on attack against Rosaleen, which unjustly ends with the woman's arrest, falsely accused of "assault, theft, and disturbing the peace" (Kidd 2003: 53). This is most likely the first instance which determines Lily to pay additional attention to her friend and the life she leads.

The previously mentioned journeys imply a shifted focus on behalf of the two children. This is due to the fact that, in the presence of Jim and Rosaleen, Huck and Lily "challenge" not only their partners, but also themselves. Initially, we come across two young characters who exercise power more or less unconsciously. For instance, on one occasion, Huck's canoe and Jim's raft get separated on a foggy night; they reunite shortly, but Huck decides to fool Jim, for no particular reason, telling him that he has only dreamt their temporary separation. The slave soon discovers that he has been tricked and it is, perhaps, the first time when Huck revises his behaviour and regrets having made his traveling companion feel ashamed:

> It made me feel so mean I could almost kissed *his* foot to get him to take it back.
> It was fifteen minutes before I could work myself up to go and humble myself to a nigger – but I done it, and I warn't ever sorry for it afterwards, neither. I didn't do him no more mean tricks, and I wouldn't done that one if I'd a knowed it would make him feel that way. (Twain 2020: 74)

The image of Huck hypothetically kissing Jim's foot can easily be placed in opposition to the famous portrayal of Daniel Defoe's Friday, who swears loyalty to Robinson Crusoe by placing the new master's foot on top of his head: "[Friday] kneel'd down again, kiss'd the Ground, and laid his Head upon the Ground, and taking me by the Foot, set my Foot upon his Head; this it seems was in token of swearing to be my Slave for ever" (Defoe 2007: 172). Surely, Huck does not create this mental picture in order to suggest a fixed reversal of "roles"; rather, he promises himself that he will treat Jim in a decent manner, allowing them both to be on equal terms. Keeping this pledge in mind, some readers may still be disoriented regarding some of the boy's remarks, particularly ones like "[Jim] was most always right; he

had an uncommon level head, for a nigger" (Twain 2020: 66) or "I knowed he was white inside" (2020: 234). Given his situation, none of us should forget that Huck is heavily influenced by the mentalities predominant during his childhood, as Henry Nash Smith also puts it: "Huck's conscience is simply the attitudes he has taken over from his environment" (qtd. in Lofflin 2009: 24). Smith also deems Huck an "outcast" (qtd. in Lofflin 2009: 24) because the boy is struggling with his conscience in a context where people avoid contesting the status quo or do not even consider doing anything like it. Huck's struggle implies that he is already facing new aspects of reality when Jim proves to him that he is as caring and smart as any other person. When the child claims that his friend is "white inside", we cannot fully view him as a prejudiced individual, even though he quite literally seems to maintain a "black-and-white" perspective . For Huck, "whiteness" is an exemplary point of reference only at a "theoretical" level. Since he has been taught that white people are superior from all points of view, he cannot help but place Jim among the "esteemed", as a definite equal. Overall, we are more likely to perceive Twain's main character as a child who *can* go beyond preconceptions and experience small revelations, making him aware of the fact that people should actually be valued with the help of other criteria, not those based on skin colour.

Meanwhile, Kidd's heroine ponders upon the same matters concerned with skin colour and human connections. As stated previously, Rosaleen as the "stand-in mother" turns out to be a soothing retreat for Lily; however, that does not stop the girl from imagining the housekeeper as a white person, married to T. Ray, thus becoming her "real mother" (Kidd 2003: 23). The child does not show any hesitation in also visualizing herself as a "Negro orphan", found in a cornfield and adopted by Rosaleen (2003: 23). When reaching the end of her train of thoughts or daydreams, Lily touchingly declares that she and the housekeeper would be better off moving in "a foreign country like New York, where [Rosaleen] could adopt [her] and [they] could both stay [their] natural color" (2003: 23). It is during such moments when readers become conscious of Lily's possibility of having her identity branching out into another direction (a case pertinent to Huck, as well). Questions are asked and her conscience expands. Nonetheless, at times, the girl also has her own slips, e.g. when calling Rosaleen "dumb" for pouring snuff juice on the men's shoes and not apologizing to them if that meant saving her own life (2003: 83). Rosaleen never responds to this, letting Lily come to her senses and apologise later on for the outburst. This scene in the book is extended in the 2008 film adaptation directed by Gina Prince-Bythewood, when Rosaleen resumes the "discussion" and says the following to Lily: "I know you can't understand. Apologizing to those men would've been just a different way of dyin', 'cept I have to live with it" (21:20). We are shown the woman's need to stand up for herself in a time period in which it is possible (unlike Huck's context), but requires supplementary courage. Within this environment, Lily has every right to ask about the purpose of the Civil Rights Act, since plenty of white people are still keen on degrading black individuals:

'Well, what was the point of the Civil Rights Act?' I said, coming to a full stop in the middle of the road. 'Doesn't that mean people have to let you stay in their motels and eat in their restaurants if you want to?'
'That's what it means, but you gonna have to drag people kicking and screaming to do it.' (Kidd 2003: 91)

Inaction and submission are slowly eliminated from the mentalities of black communities in this transition from Twain's universe to Kidd's fictional world. The former has a distinctive touch, though, when he has Jim speaking up for himself after Huck tries to trick him into believing that their separation has never happened. As I have already stated, this leads to Huck's obligatory sense of guilt, which builds up a new path for the boy, in order for him to contribute to his own identity-shaping.

So far, we have seen how Huck Finn and Lily Owens are best influenced by adults of the same gender as them, Jim and Rosaleen. Consequently, in the last part of the article, we are to take into account that the two children explore a patriarchal and a matriarchal world. Along this premise, Steve Redford outlines the following trajectory for each main character:

while Lily runs away from a man's world, finds shelter in a woman's world, and finally, refuses to be led back to the man's world she's escaped, Huck gets pulled out of a woman's world, journeys through a man's world, and neither having found a place for himself in the man's world, nor feeling comfortable returning to the woman's, sets off for a no-person's land – 'the Territory' (2011: 89)

Certainly, Redford makes a good point when writing that Huck is taken away from a woman's world, made out of Widow Douglas and Miss Watson, who look after him when Pap is out of the picture. However, it may be significant to indicate that a woman's world is not quite the equivalent of a matriarchal structure. Twain's story features a patriarchal society at its best, regardless of the presence of women in Huck's life. At the same time, however, we should not exactly view the patriarchy and the matriarchy in a contrasting fashion. Heide Göttner-Abendroth offers a refreshing take on the concept of matriarchy:

Matriarchies are not just a reversal of patriarchy, with women ruling over men – as the usual misinterpretation would have it. Matriarchies are mother-centered societies, they are based on *maternal values*: care-taking, nurturing, motherliness, which holds for everybody: for mothers and those who are not mothers, for women and men alike. (2009)

If we were to work with this definition, we would reach the conclusion that Kidd is the one who guarantees an actual matriarchal world through the Boatwright household. Lily travels to Tiburon, South Carolina to find out more about her and her mother's past. Towards the end of the novel, it is confirmed that the Boatwright sisters (August, June and May) knew Deborah Owens and sheltered her, just like they end up doing with Lily many years later. This miniature matriarchy is centred

around a bee farm, a world which reveals the power of nurture, structure and routine to Lily. Naturally, in the background, the patriarchal society is still present, but it cannot cause much concern any longer, for Lily's bee veil makes her say the following: "If this was a man's world, a veil took the rough beard right off it. Everything appeared softer, nicer" (Kidd 2003: 137). A similar line from the 2008 movie also captures the beneficial isolation of Lily: "It's like [the bee farm]'s got its own spot in the world, where the outside don't come in" (29:12).

While the girl's journey turns out to be more of a symbolic one, since she arrives at her final destination early in the novel, Huck proves to his audience that he has no clear end point. He and Jim are meant to proceed to Cairo, Illinois, where the latter can earn his family's freedom, but, as T. S. Eliot proposes, "Huck Finn must come from nowhere and be bound for nowhere. His is not the independence of the typical or symbolic American Pioneer, but the independence of the vagabond" (qtd. in Lofflin 2009: 44). Huck may leave the impression that he is supposed to discover and conquer new lands if we also reconsider the book's ending: "I reckon I got to light out for the Territory ahead of the rest, because Aunt Sally she's going to adopt me and sivilize me and I can't stand it. I been there before" (Twain 2020: 248). However, a new reading of it may reveal that Huck is destined to witness the world from the "outskirts", having the advantage of being ahead of others on a metaphorical level, with a special kind of insight into the inner workings of society. The base may be the patriarchy, but it takes an exceptional character to venture beyond gender and skin colour and proclaim that what he is exposed to is "enough to make a body ashamed of the human race" (2020: 139). One should not overlook the underlying power of these seemingly passing thoughts, referencing humans altogether, past the boundaries of a patriarchal society.

It is no surprise that, the more people Huck comes across on-shore whenever he and Jim diverge from the initial path, the more he desires to be back on his raft, avoiding trouble with multiple impostors. J. Hillis Miller intriguingly differentiates between "the true speech of the raft and the false speech of the shore" (qtd. in Thomas 1982: 7), alluding to Huck being forced to lie about his identity every time he is in contact with new people. The same strategy is visible in the case of Lily, who changes her surname to Williams when she meets the Boatwright sisters. Her "excuse" is that she wants to be "normal for a little while – not a refugee girl looking for her mother" (Kidd 2003: 118), until she asks August Boatwright for information about Deborah Owens. Having embarked on a longer journey, with more stops along the way, Huck successively becomes Sarah Mary Williams, George Jackson, an English servant, even Tom Sawyer himself. When borrowing Tom's name, the boy confesses that it feels as if he's "being born again": "I was so glad to find out who I was" (Twain 2020: 191). This appears as a glorious discovery, especially when compared to the final disclosure of his real name, treated in a humble manner:

'(…) why, where is Tom? He was here a minute ago.'

'You mean where's Huck *Finn* – that's what you mean! I reckon I hain't raised such a scamp as my Tom all these years, not to know him when I *see* him. That *would* be a pretty howdy-do. Come out from under that bed, Huck Finn.'

So I done it. But not feeling brash. (2020: 246)

We may be inclined to believe that Huck has the most prominent peace of mind when traveling on the Mississippi River, free to be his true self when speaking with Jim. Otherwise, on the shore, the young boy is forced to transform into a fraudulent character. In the end, both Huck and Lily are aware of the immorality surrounding them. They condemn liars, as Lily claims "People who tell lies like [T. Ray] should rot in hell" (Kidd 2003: 65); but they still resort to falsehoods in moments of crisis. The main characters frequently pressure themselves into questioning their own actions and motives. For example, Huck keeps Jim's intentions of escape as a secret or even hides him from fellow travellers until he falls prey to his urge of writing a letter to Miss Watson, through which he informs her about Jim's plan. Meanwhile, Lily accumulates hatred when she feels misunderstood or disregarded, but, concurrently, she reproaches herself for even experiencing feelings of antagonism and for lying to those she interacts with:

'I don't mean to be a bad person. (…) I can't seem to help it. (…) I do all the wrong things. I tell lies, all the time. Not to you [August]. Well, I have – but for good reasons. And I hate people. Not just T. Ray but lots of people. The girls at school, and they haven't done anything to me except ignore me. I hate Willifred Marchant, the poet of Tiburon, and I don't even know her. Sometimes I hate Rosaleen because she embarrasses me. And when I first came here, I hated June.' (2003: 347)

Ultimately, what sets Huck and Lily apart in a corrupted world is the notion that they tell "the lies of children" or, in other words, "they do not tell the ultimate lie of adults: they do not lie to themselves", being enwrapped in "moral sensitivity" (Pinsker 2007: 69). This is one of the crucial aspects meant to be borne in mind by readers when encountering the two characters. During turbulent endeavours, in the search for a secure place in the world, no one could blame young literary characters for changing and testing beliefs or for having poor judgement in the first stages of their development. It is a bold direction to head towards the moment one begins to doubt what is actually moral or not and decide to create change.

To conclude, this paper has sought to explore some of the main ways in which Twain's Huck Finn and Kidd's Lily Owens confront American society in two different contexts: the Antebellum period and the times of the Civil Rights Movement. Despite these distinct circumstances, the characters and the readers alike are faced with issues of morality and authenticity, while being challenged to stop taking the world itself for granted. Huck and Lily equally demonstrate that a particular type of freedom can be obtained as soon as people willingly choose to be

true to themselves and act in accordance with what is virtuous and, above all, humane.

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"KUCH ISHQ KIYA, KUCH KAAM KIYA"
LOVE, REVOLUTION, AND NATIONAL IDENTITY IN THE POETRY OF FAIZ AHMED FAIZ

Abstract: After the partition of 1947, Pakistan ideologically distancing itself from Indian-subcontinent was trying to emerge as a new republic operating on the Islamic precepts. Its progress was soon arrested as the national politics came under the command of the moneyed capitalists and religious extremists resulting in a culture of institutionalized subjugation which ultimately caused a crisis of nationality. This project analyses how the poetry of Faiz Ahmed Faiz bridges the concepts of love and revolution and assuages this crisis of nationality by re-imagining an alternative Pakistaniidentity rooted in the cultural memory of Urdu tradition that he deftly infuses with the spirit of socialism.

Benedict Anderson defines a nation as an "imagined community" constructed upon the idea of belonging that rests in the collective socio-linguistic memory of a shared past (1983: 6). Contrastingly, Pakistan came into being out of an ideology. Thus, the geographical partition also meant the conscious disremembering of the shared culture and history of the Indian subcontinent in an endeavour to create a novel Pakistani identity as dreamt of by thelikes of Jinnah and Iqbal. But this zeal of nation-building soon fell prey to corrupt democrats, military despots and extremist *ulemas*. This created a rift between the envisioned and the real Pakistan and resulted in a crisis of nationality, materialized in collective despondence with the dismal state of the nation and disillusionment with the idea of a brighter future.

Against this backdrop, Faiz's poetry emerges as a voice against authoritarianism and "re-imagines" Pakistan as a community of "deep, horizontal comradeship" (Anderson 1983: 23) by proposing an alternative national identity based on the cultural memory of the Urdu tradition. His poetry synthesizes traditional elements, including eroticism from the Persian *qasida*, religiousness from the Islamic and mysticism from Sufi Urdu poetry. Additionally, his poetry is marked by Ghalib's sensuality, Iqbal's revolutionary fervour and Marx's ideology, documenting the distinctive cultural heritage for this imagined identity which was to be adopted in order to revolutionize the socio-political landscape of Pakistan. Thus, the *ghazal* conventionally associated with the idea of longing for the beloved as well as the *nazm* impregnated with the classical tropes and imagery of the *ghazal* form become tools of rehabilitation of a fragmented national psyche in the hands of Faiz. This research project investigates how the traditional and the revolutionary complement each other in the poetry of Faiz Ahmed Faiz and can thereby aid in conceptualization of an alternative national identity for the people of Pakistan to adhere to, to find strength in and to fight for during the era of widespread corruption, despotic regimes and normalized atrocities.

Literature Review

Gopi Chand Narang, in his seminal paper on Faiz titled "The Tradition and Innovation in the Poetry of Faiz", argues that Faiz's poetry achieves its effect as "[it] reflects at once the heritage of the past and the quest and restlessness the present" (1991: 24). Narang elucidates how classical tropes of the Urdu poetry are up-cycled in Faiz's poems to carry revolutionary undertones. Published back in 1985, this article heavily informed the succeeding scholarship on Faiz. However, lacking the benefit of hindsight, Narang failed to account for the political ramifications of the traditional-innovative binary he explored in Faiz's poetry.

Almost thirty-five years down the line, when Jennifer Dubrow writes her article "The Aesthetics of the Fragment", she expands Narang's argument to assert that progressivism of Faiz, who is at once traditional and revolutionary. She critiques the conventional definition of modernity and expands the frontiers of modernism to accommodate the literature which was "paradigmatically aligned with social realism" (2019: 1). While her paper attempts to deconstruct the politics behind literary theories, it conveniently overlooks the practical realities within which Faiz's poems operate.

Ali Sethi, a renowned classical vocalist associated with Coke Studio Pakistan responded to the commotion in India regarding "Hum Dekhenge" during the anti-CAA protests. In an interview with *Scroll.in*, he urged for the *nazm* to be read not on literal but on literary terms, i.e. the context, literary techniques, and the poetic allusions. Taking this approach, Sethi concludes that Faiz's poetry is "an algebraic equation of oppression-and-retribution that is rooted in the imagery of Islam but eternally extendable to the plight and fight of humanity" (2020).

The literature review reveals that the academic engagement with the politics of Faiz's poetry has been very superficial. While Faiz has been credited appropriately for his poetic mastery over tradition and innovation, very little has been done to explore its socio-political nuances. This is the academic gap that this project aims to redress. Avoiding the derivative mode of Dubrow, this project will adopt Narang's descriptive method and adapt it to Sethi's approach. He locates the poet in his geopolitical context, which in turn informs the analysis of the literary tropes within Faiz's oeuvre expounding his role as a poet of resistance and revolution.

Research Methodology

This paper is premised upon the qualitative, analytical method of research. The primary data which informs the discussion comes from the published collections of Faiz's poetry. As Faiz wrote in Urdu, the researcher has referred to credible translations to develop the argument. The secondary data is sourced from multiple books and scholarly articles on the poet.

Discussion

In 2018, Coke Studio Pakistan announced its 11th season with the opening track "Hum Dekhenge", originally penned by Faiz Ahmed Faiz and recorded for this project by more than 70 vocalists representing different geographical regions and musical styles of Pakistan. The producers, Ali Hamza and Zohaib Kazi have described this *nazm* as "a track which inspires the 'Pakistaniat' in all of us" (Lodhi 2018), whereas the YouTube description states that it is "a song sung FOR the people of Pakistan, BY the people of Pakistan!" (CokeStudioPk 2018). This discussion around Faiz's *nazm* briefly summarizes the objective of the present paper. Herein Faiz's poetry gets credited for the celebration of democracy and articulation of an alternative national identity, i.e. the "Pakistaniat" in opposition to the absolutist Islamized identity Zia regime forced upon Pakistani citizens. We will now try to define the essence of Faiz's "Pakistaniat".

It is important to note that, early in his career, Faiz composed his *nazms* and *ghazals* in line with the contemporary scene of Urdu poetry. His first collection of poems, *Naqsh-e-Faryadi*, published in 1939, develops upon the dialectic of love and separation, as exemplified in title of a famous *nazm* of this collection: "The Ashes of Separation and The Flowers of Union" (*Hijr kī Raakh aur Visāl ke Phuul*, Faiz 2017: 56). Thus, before being a revolutionary, Faiz was a humanist whose poetry reflected the mortal and philosophic sufferings of mankind. As Faiz got introduced to Marxist thought and witnessed the India-Pakistan partition followed by a tussle for political power that resulted in the breakdown of democracy, his humanism transformed into dissent, later translated into his poetry. Instead of breaking away from the love and longing dialectic, he deployed it as a tool in professing national revolution (Coppola 1992: 150).

The trope of unrequited love, which defines Faiz's early poetry, had been a staple of Urdu *ghazals* inherited from the Persian *qasida*. Before reaching Faiz, the classical lover of *qasida* had already been developed as the devotee of Allah or a Sufi mystic in early Islamic poetry, a drunkard in Ghalib's couplets as well as an Islamic nationalist in Iqbal's poetry (Jabbar 1991: 156). Havingundergone persecution and subsequent incarceration on the charges of conspiring against the regime, Faiz tried to capture in his poetry what Foucault calls "counter-memory" (1977) to puncture the meta-narratives promulgated by the state. For this purpose, like his predecessors, Faiz also picks up the classical trope of the lover and reinvents it. Faiz's lover is the revolutionary and his beloved is the motherland.

This is well-illustrated in his *ghazal* "Slate and Pen" (*Lauh-o 57alam*) from the collection *Hand of the Wind* (*Dast-e sabä*) which he wrote during his time in Central Jail of Hyderabad, Sind (Coppola 1992: 154). In the *matla*, i.e. the opening couplet of this *ghazal*, the poet decides to "write about [the] things which happen to the heart" (Faiz 1952: 25). Initially, this appears to be an extension of the love and longing binary

of Faiz's early poetry, but the second couplet of this *ghazal* places the "sorrows of love" vis-à-vis the "desolation of the times" (1952: 25). Hence, the "heart" here is not only a seat of the lover's experience but also of a revolutionary's sensibility. Later, in the 5th and the 6th couplet,Faiz states:

> As long as the wine shop is still standing, then with red wine
> We will go on decorating the walls and doors of the mosque.
> If blood remains in the heart, then we will make from every
> Tear colour for the lips and cheeks of the beloved. (Faiz 1952: 25-26)

Here, following the footsteps of Ghalib, Faiz employs the imagery of the sacred and the profane to denote revolutionary fervour, as the forbidden wine besmirches the walls and doors of the mosque. In these couplets, the inebriation induced by wine indicates the zeal of the revolutionary, while the wine itself transforms into his life force, i.e. blood, which then spills out as tears to adorn the beloved or the motherland. This lover-revolutionary duality is also discernible in Faiz's *nazms*, including "For Your Lanes My Country" (*Nisār Maiñ Tirī Galiyoñ Ke*, Faiz 1995: 39-42) and "Do Not Ask of Me,My Love" (*Mujh se Pahlī sī Mohabbat Mirī Mahbūb na Maañg*, Faiz 1988: 39-42).

By re-conceptualizing the classical trope, Faiz is not only establishing himself as a legitimate successor to Urdu literary giants, but is also envisioning an alternative Pakistani identity or "Pakistaniat" derived from the "collective-memory" which would facilitate political subjectification of the subaltern (Coppola 1992: 164). Thus, in examining the construction of this alternative national identity in Faiz's poetry, the analysis of this trope is paramount. It brings us to the question of what romantic ideals Faiz's lover/revolutionary upholds. The answer to this is found in his nazm "We Too Shall See" (*wa-yabqa-wajh-o-rabbik*), popularly referred to as "Hum Dekhenge" in which Faiz writes:

> When from the *Ka'ba* of God's world
> All the idols will be taken away
> When we the pure ones/ those who believe, and those who have been barred from
> the sacred sanctuary?/ *Mecca (Haram)*
> Will be placed on the high cushion/ throne
> When all the crowns will be tossed
> When all the thrones will be brought down (Faiz 2017: 55)

In these lines, the lover/revolutionary of Faiz's poetry is given a collective identity in the form of "we" constituted of the marginalized populace. Like most of Iqbal's poetry, this *nazm* by Faiz is rich in Quranic allusions, but unlike his predecessor, Faiz refuses to employ it as a means to proselytize Islamic revival. Instead, Faiz's Quranic imagery ironically deflates the Islamic fundamentalism of the Zia regime. Therefore, Faiz's revolutionary, while being a devout Muslim, endorses

a secular humanist approach. For the poet, the guileless proletariat is comprised of true believers against the self-serving authoritarians who revoke human rights in the name of Allah. Finally, the poem culminates with the lines "And God's creation will rule/ Which is I as well as you" (Faiz 2017: 55), in which the poet envisages a socialist revolution which would overturn the power hierarchy and establish a democratic system of "deep, horizontal comradeship" (Anderson 1983: 7) in Pakistan.

Conclusion

The discussion has established that for Faiz, the socialist revolutionary is the herald of an egalitarian Pakistan where citizens would be liberated in the true sense and their individual rights would be inviolable. This romantic vision is packed within and built upon the rich poetic heritage of Urdu. Thus, in Faiz's poetry, the present is informed by the past, which it improves in order to move towards a promising future. The ideal of "Pakistaniat", he proposes, is essentially religious yet secular, angry yet tolerant, traditional yet innovative, romantic yet revolutionary.

Having met the objective of the paper, the avenues of research it opens up must be addressed. The discussion began with a reference to the Coke Studio version of "Hum Dekhenge", but there this paper strategically glossed over the politics behind this rendition. Coke Studio's rendition was released exactly three days prior to the 2018 Pakistani General Elections which, being open to ISI interference and military meddling, parodied the entire democratic process. In this politically charged climate, Coke Studio conveniently erases the revolutionary core of the poem, i.e. the exact part that this paper chose to use to elucidate the politics of Faiz's poetry. Thus, in an attempt to maintain a politically neutral stance, the producers defanged the *nazm* of its revolutionary ardour and historical significance as an anthem of subaltern resistance. Their neutrality in this case of injustice aligns them with the oppressors. Consequently, when the producers say that this *nazm* inspires the "Pakistaniat", their understanding of "Pakistaniat" is starkly at odds with what Faiz advocates for in his poetry.

Thus, while this paper provides the framework to study Faiz's conception of "Pakistaniat", it also directs the upcoming scholarship to question the way in which Faiz is interpreted textually and performatively. While Faiz was seen as anti-Islamic by Zia, he was also seen as anti-Hindu by the ruling political party and the media houses during the anti-CAA protests in India. Such misinterpretations go hand in hand with performative appropriations like Coke Studio's and serve as excuses for further oppression of the subaltern. It is beyond the scope of the paper to develop upon these examples, but they have the potential to serve as significant cues for further scholarship on Faiz.

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SYMBOLIC CONSTRUCTIONS OF THE "FOLK DEVIL" IN AMERICAN PRO-LIFE MEDIA DISCOURSES
A MORAL PANIC PERSPECTIVE

Abstract: The present article is part of a more significant research endeavour that examines how the public problem of abortion in the U.S. is constructed following the moral panic paradigm. It seeks to analyse the discourse surrounding abortion in the U.S. drawing from the above-mentioned paradigm. To the best of my knowledge, analysis of abortion discourse from a moral panic angle has only been conducted for Australia (O'Brien 2004) and Poland (Żuk & Żuk 2019).

My study draws from a purposively selected corpus of 30 media texts produced by right-wing U.S. mainstream and advocacy groups. To be more precise, the articles were gathered from the advocacy groups Texas Right to Life (RTL) and Texas Values (TxV) and the media outlet FOX NEWS (FOX), found by Groseclose (2005) and Dellaviga (2007) to be right-leaning. Because this research is conducted for my MA dissertation* due in July 2022, the time frame of the corpus selection started in October 2021 and ended in May 2022. Of course, given the reduced size of the corpus and its exploratory nature, the findings cannot be thought as applying to the whole pro-life discourse in the U.S. For their generalization, the study can be extended to a bigger corpus comprised of a larger number of articles and right-wing media outlets. The research as a whole is significant because its purpose is to expose the manner in which pro-life media set out to manipulate the targeted public's perception of abortion with the help of imprecise factual evidence, combined with stylistic means, such as: the use of particular or panic/crisis-inducing lexical and syntactic constructions, exaggerations, etc.

I decided to undertake a moral panic examination of the U.S. pro-life media and civil actors' discourse due to the current anti-abortion legislation promulgated in the U.S., such as the Texas Senate Bill Eight act (May 15, 2021). The act bans abortion as soon as eight weeks of pregnancy. It is of note that shortly after my more extensive study had been finalized, the U.S. Supreme Court overruled the Roe vs. Wade decision in what is now a historic Supreme Court decision, namely Dobbs vs. Jackson Women's health (June 24, 2022). The Dobbs decision adds worth to the study, because it can be argued that the legislative changes preceding it and their coverage by media and civil actors such as those analysed here created a path that culminated in this decision.

My examination is elaborated from a social constructionist standpoint. In other words, this study begins from the hypothesis that a particular situation may develop into a social/public problem when "the collective definition of that condition is seen as a problem, that is the degree of felt concern over a given condition or issue"

is high in society (Goode and Ben-Yehuda 1994: 151). This process involves public actors in different institutional and power positions symbolically struggling to impose their definition of an issue and, hence, their solution to it. In certain cases, such as the one under scrutiny, certain actors may resort to the strategy of creating a moral panic (or, in broader terms, a crisis), so as to put pressure on authorities or policy makers, via public opinion, to take the course of action they propose (Cohen 2011).

To identify elements of moral panic in the discourse of the right-wing mainstream and advocacy media in my corpus, I use a combination of Fowler's approach to the "hysterical" style (1991), Cohen's (1972) and Goode and Ben-Yehuda's (1994) research on moral panics, and Berlet's research on the U.S. political religion (2008). When trying to identify hysteria in the media, Fowler suggests it is of use to look out for "terms denoting emotive reactions, always negative around the concepts of fear and confusion". Examples of such words may include but are not limited to: "stress, danger risk, hazard". Fowler also makes mention of a "rhetoric of quantification" used to presumably draw shock and empathy from the reader and moral high ground (1991: 164). Cohen argues that moral panic is identifiable in media if the text presents the deleteriousness of the situation disproportional to the danger it actually represents (2002: vii). Another analytical instrument Cohen proposes is to look at what articles leave out of the story. Suppose certain potentially panic-inducing aspects of the story are put in centre stage, and others are not mentioned because they might affect the impact or the message that one wishes to be transmitted. In that case, the article may be considered to dissipate moral panic (2002: 1-17). Chip Berlet has analysed the emergence of fascist organizations when researching political-religious discourses in the U.S. Nonetheless, some tools he uses, such as identification of hyperbolic paradigms, apocalyptic worldviews, or the demonization of the so-called "other side" (2008: 220), may, on a more temperate level, be applied to identify moral panic discourse as well.

In this paper, I argue that, from a moral panic perspective, the consequences and what is left out of the pro-life media texts analysed all point to a scenario where the abortion industry plays the role of the "folk devil" (Cohen 2002). To give a clearer context of what is meant under the folk devil, I begin by briefly defining a public problem, a moral crusade, a moral panic, and finally, the folk devil. After this, I present excerpts from the pro-life texts analysed and my interpretation regarding why they may lead the reader to interpret a scenario where the role of the folk devil, as defined within the moral panic paradigm, is played by the abortion industry.

The emergence of an issue as a social problem may be said to depend on "specific social-cultural circumstances, groups and categories, social structures and societies, historical eras, individuals or classes" (Goode and Ben Yehuda 1994). In other words, a situation regarded as a social/public problem by a generation may not hold the same status for the previous one. It may not be a social problem for the next generation either. The reason for its state fluctuation is not necessarily because the

current generation has resolved the problem or the first was too ignorant to identify the issue, but because the discourse around it may have changed throughout generations. Thus, as Goode and Ben-Yehuda state, a "social problem may be interpreted as constructed phenomena- what constitutes a problem is the concern [a specific] segment of the public fell about a given condition" in a specific historical period (1994: 149).

Public problem was introduced in the literature by Gusfield to underline the constitution of a problem in the public sphere. He argues that for a given case to become a public problem, society first needs to understand the said case as distressing, unpleasant, or causing pain in some way. Meeting this requirement does not, however, guarantee that the case will become "a matter of public activity and target of public action" (1981: 3). In order for this to happen, the issue needs to be at the centre of public debate and, as noted earlier, to become the object of symbolic struggles by public actors in positions of authority and power (to different degrees). The public actors who manage to impose their definition of the problem in the public arena may be regarded as the symbolic "owners" of the problem, which means that they take on responsibility for providing the solution to the problem. In this context, *owner* has an illustrative function pointing out "control, exclusiveness, transferability and potential loss" (1981: 10) over the problem. The owners may be regarded as unsatisfied with controlling only their behaviour concerning the issue. In terms of Foucault's "governance of the self and governance of the others" (Foucault qtd. in Critcher 2013: 108), the owners feel the urge to control the behaviour of others as well. The need to regulate society's behaviour can be classified as a moral crusade (Critcher 2013: 173). The problem owners are usually agents or institutions visible and influential in the public arena, also referred to as public actors. These can be, for example, The Senate, the Supreme Court, celebrities, or any dominant authority.

Attempting to investigate how the dominant authority reacts to specific social categories and types of livelihoods when it becomes the owner of a public problem can be identified as one of the primary goals of moral panic research (Critcher 2013: 4). Thus, moral panic research attempts first to identify reactions and behaviours labelled as deviant by dominant public actors. Second, moral panic research assesses through what means the involved social players try to present the situation as morally deviant from the social norm. Thus, they find the means through which they attempt to persuade the general public to view their proposed solutions as legitimate.

When it comes to moral panics, the media play a vital role. The media are not just the means through which panic is propagated, but the media can also be active public actors involved in the emergence and maintenance of the panic itself (Critcher 2013: 173). Cohen states that to judge if the coverage or interpretation of a story can be interpreted as disseminating a moral panic, one must look for: "drama, emergency, and crisis; exaggeration; cherished values threatened; an object of concern, anxiety, and hostility" (2002: xxxiv). In other words, when media channels present the situation as a "concrete danger to society" (Gusfield 1981: 16) that needs

to be urgently resolved to avoid dire consequences, elements of moral panic may reside in their discourse. One characteristic that gives the media power to manipulate and propagate a moral panic is, according to Cohen, its ability to "set the agenda". This can be translated into the media's control over what is considered newsworthy and how it will be presented (2002: xxviii). Another feature is its power to make claims, meaning the media are not content with observing and mediating societal issues concerning social order and moral values; instead, they actively get involved in these matters (2002: xxix).

By mixing the elements that enable them to become involved in a moral panic, the media may discursively construct, in their coverage, the so-called folk devil (Cohen 2002: 154). The folk devils may be interpreted as the embodiment of "the deviant stereotypes, identifying the enemy, the source of the threat, selfish, evil wrongdoers responsible for the issue" (Goode and Ben Yehuda1994: 154). Thus, the folk devil represents the enemy, a mythical "threat that is found in an object rather than a deviant social group" (Critcher 2013: 134). According to Goode and Ben Yehuda, the degree of angst in media coverage of the folk devil is usually higher than the actual threat it represents to society (1994: 47).

With the definitions given to the folk devil in mind and within the theoretical and analytical framework presented above, I illustrate below how the analysed right-wing media and NGOs construct the folk devil in their pro-life discourse when they present the case for making abortion illegal by linking legalized abortion to causes and consequences that can be seen as creating a moral panic. In the examples below, the role of the folk devil is assigned to the "abortion industry" and to Planned Parenthood, blamed for, among others, genocide, selling organs, and corrupting public officials:

"They [the abortion industry] pretended they wanted abortions to be rare. They claimed they did not make a profit, they denied selling organs, and they […] ignored the terrible impact and tragic impact on the most vulnerable families and the black family in particular […] the abortion agenda is always more important." [Fox 4]

"Their [Planned Parenthood's] desperation to profit off of genocide has led them to attack our mere existence as an organization." [RTL 1]

"The abortion Mills are always after money" [Fox 9]

In the examples above, one may argue that formulations such as "desperation to profit off of genocide", "abortion mills always after money", or "judges catering for the abortion industry" are liable to induce moral shock because of the accusation of profit-making out of human life. Genocide, for example, could remind the audience of Nazi Germany. But even if the connection is not made, the meaning of genocide alone, "the deliberate killing of a mass group of people" ("Genocide" n.d.) is presumably enough to cause panic. Thus, because the abortion industry seems the

only one to profit from this arguably apocalyptic scenario, it may be said that it fits the definition of a folk devil, "the source of the threat, selfish, evil wrongdoers responsible for the issue" (Goode and Ben Yehuda1994: 154).

Of course, "legal" abortion was possible in the U.S. at the time of my study due to the historic Roe vs. Wade Supreme Court Decision (1973). The articles in my corpus present the decision and its consequences as follows:

".… the 1973 decision of *Roe v. Wade* [which] forced abortion on demand onto the American public." [TxV 3]

"Since this disastrous decision, an estimated 50 million unborn children have been killed" [TxV10]

"This is the legacy of *Roe v. Wade*: Judges catering to the abortion industry " [RTL3]

"Roe was a badly decided decision and had no constitutional grounding" [Fox 2]

"Roe vs. Wade has short-circuited the legal conversation about abortion" [Fox 4]

Displaying Roe in the media with negative hyperbolic language and by using the rhetoric of quantification, as illustrated above, may be presumed to have an emotional impact and/or to cause outrage in the reader regarding the legality of abortion. Thus, the reader could be indirectly influenced to view the abortion industry, the only ones who seem to have a gain from this "short-circuited legal conversation", as the ultimate reason behind abortion and as an evil that needs to be handled.

It is also worthy of mention that when speaking about abortion, the articles seem to refer to it exclusively as murder and reference the large number of "killings" Roe caused. Presented as such, the situation may alarm the readers and make them feel that abortion is a danger that needs to be dealt with as soon as possible. However, it may be argued that the articles do not give a complete picture of the consequences for women not going through with an abortion. The CDC website reveals that the number of maternal deaths during childbirth is much higher than during abortion. For example, in 2018, the maternal mortality rate per 100,000 birth was 17.4. In 2019, 20.1, and 2020 the rate was 23.8 (Kortsmit et al. 2022). Thus, even though pro-life discourse portrays abortion as dangerous to the mother, it seems that childbirth generates more female victims than abortion. The articles also do not make mention of women who might find abortion as a viable solution which would allow them to pursue a carrier or continue their studies. From this, it is plausible to assume that the articles might provoke moral panic because of the information left out of the articles.

Another way through which the vilification of the abortion industry is presumably achieved is the "us vs. them" dichotomy, which is arguably taken to unnecessary extremes as in the following transcript:

"The good and evil of our country are going head to head. The outcome will affect *generations* of people. […] These attacks have taken an enormous toll on us, and we need your support to defeat them!" [RTL 1].

While "us" represents the pro-life side, which can be interpreted as "doing God's work" and being on the path of moral and societal "good", "them" represents the pro-choice side, described as evil (i.e., the folk devil). Moreover, the article signals the pro-choice supporters as "attacking" "us" and possibly enables the audience to view them as people not following morally accepted norms, as aggressors. They may be seen to represent "the others" put in contrast to "us", those in society portrayed as having morally acceptable standards. Thus, the articles can be argued to display an "us vs. them" dichotomy in which those who support the pro-choice side (the abortion industry) are labelled socially deviant.

To conclude, the findings point to a scenario in which the abortion industry plays the role of the folk devil. As mentioned, because the corpus was comprised of only 30 articles from two advocacy groups and one mainstream media outlet, generalizing and assuming the findings apply to the U.S. pro-life media discourse as a whole is not feasible. The research so far shows the study is worth expanding to include more articles and a significant number of diverse right-wing media outlets. Nevertheless, the research has proved fruitful. It can be said that the analysis has achieved its goals, not only of identifying moral panic elements in the discourse of the pro-life side but also, and more importantly, of illustrating how they work. The study has revealed the use of a moral panic style in the pro-life discourse, intended to provoke emotional reactions from the reader, such as fear, anger, resentment, or even disgust, and thus functioning persuasively. In addition to a more in-depth analysis of the pro-life discourse for further validation, a look if perhaps the pro-choice media also use elements of moral panic in abortion discourse seems worthy of further investigation.

Acknowledgements

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