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Then and Now: Serbian Students' Attitudes on Megxit

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The European Conference on Arts & Humanities 2024
Official Conference Proceedings

Abstract
At the time when Harry and Meghan dramatically announced their departure from the UK, that decision came as a surprise even to those who closely observed events on the British Royal Court, and like a bolt out of the blue to others. Although numerous articles and books have been published on *Megxit* over the past four years, the real reasons for this phenomenon have yet to be fully ascertained. This research into Harry and Meghan's chronicle started immediately after *Megxit* happened, with a case study that was carried out with third-year students at the English Department of Belgrade University's Faculty of Philology. The students had one simple task: to describe what they saw as the main cause or causes for *Megxit*, and they were given the liberty to choose the form and length of their writing. It is important to underline that the respondents had already completed three courses in British Studies: about UK's history, institutions and culture, and were starting the fourth course, so their knowledge about the British Royal Family was quite adequate. Nowadays, after a sufficiently long time distance, it is rather interesting to analyse the views of Serbian students regarding *Megxit* and to compare them with what has been revealed so far. The main purpose of this paper is to ascertain whether the students have mastered the topics covered by their British Studies curricula sufficiently enough to provide reasonable causes for *Megxit*.

Keywords: Harry and Meghan, *Megxit*, Serbian Students

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Introduction

> "We do not have knowledge of a thing until we have grasped its why, that is to say, its cause." (Aristotle, *Physics*)

Although a plethora of articles on *Megxit* have been published in various media, as well as a dozen books, since it happened four years ago, the real reasons for this phenomenon have yet to be fully ascertained. Far less was known at the time when British Prince Harry and his wife Meghan Markle, Duke and Duchess of Sussex, dramatically announced their departure from Harry's home and from the UK, so the decision came as a surprise even to those who closely monitored the situation on the British Royal Court, and like a bolt out of the blue to those who were not so well-informed.

This research into Harry and Meghan's chronicle and analysis of the causes for *Megxit* started immediately after it happened, but the insight into the real story gets more complicated with every new article and every new book, with fresh and different perspectives on the event revealed in this never-ending series. As soon as the Sussexes announced their decision, a case study was carried out with third-year students at the English Department of Belgrade University's Faculty of Philology, with one simple task: to describe what they saw as the main reason or reasons for the couple's decision to leave. Students were given the liberty to choose the time, form, length and content of their writing, so the results ranged from short one-sentence answers to entire essays. It is important to underline that the respondents had already completed three courses in British Studies: about the United Kingdom's history, institutions and culture, and were starting the fourth course, so their knowledge about the British Royal Family was quite adequate.

Nowadays, after a sufficiently long time distance, it is rather interesting to analyse the views of Serbian students regarding *Megxit* and to compare them with what has been revealed so far. The results of this analysis will show, by ascertaining whether our students were right in naming what they thought the reasons for *Megxit* are, that they acquired a sufficient knowledge base throughout their courses in British Studies.

The Sussexes in a Nutshell … and Out

Prince Henry Charles Albert David, Duke of Sussex – worldwide simply known as Prince Harry – was born into the British royal house of Windsor, at a time when his late grandmother HM Queen Elizabeth II was the Head of State of the United Kingdom and many other Commonwealth Realms. His father, the then Prince of Wales, is now HM King Charles III and his late mother was Lady Diana Spencer, Princess of Wales. Harry's eldest brother Prince William, who is now heir apparent to the British throne, is married to Catherine Elizabeth (Kate) Middleton and they have three children.

In his recently published memoir *Spare*, Harry thus specifies the basic difference between himself and his brother: "Two years older than me, Willy was the Heir, whereas I was the Spare" (19). Although the mocking phrase about *an heir and a spare* was coined almost a hundred years before the brothers were even born, as it dates from the 19th century, "he felt that he was treated as the “spare” by the media and some members of his family" (*dictionary.com* 2023). And that is exactly the feeling which Harry unambiguously reveals in his biography *Spare*: "I was the shadow, the support, the Plan B. I was brought into the world in case something happened to Willy. I was summoned to provide backup, distraction,

diversion and, if necessary, a spare part. Kidney, perhaps. Blood transfusion. Speck of bone marrow. This was all made explicitly clear to me from the start of life's journey and regularly reinforced thereafter. I was twenty the first time I heard the story of what Pa allegedly said to Mummy the day of my birth: *Wonderful! Now you've given me an Heir and a Spare—my work is done*" (20). Same as his brother, Prince Harry attended the Royal Military Academy and served in the military but, unlike William, Harry also saw combat as a helicopter pilot in a war zone. Namely, at that time William was the second in line to the throne and it was estimated that the risk of sending him to war was "too great", whereas for Harry it was "acceptable" (*nationalpost.com* 2023).

In 2016, Prince Harry met Rachel Meghan Markle on a blind date and they got married in 2018. Despite the facts that Meghan was an American actress, a biracial raised Catholic and had been married before, Harry received explicit permission and full support of the royal family for this marriage. They were conferred with the titles of Duke and Duchess of Sussex, and their son Archie Harrison Mountbatten-Windsor was born in 2019. In January 2020, Harry and Meghan announced that they would "step back as senior members of the Royal Family" (*BBC News* 2020), moved to Canada, and later to the USA, where their daughter Lilibet 'Lili' Diana Mountbatten-Windsor was born in 2021.

Ironically, though the persecution of the royal couple by paparazzi (or 'the paps' – as Harry calls them in his memoir, p. 24), in printed media and on the Internet, has frequently been cited as one of the main reasons for their decision to leave the UK, that event additionally spurred on the interest of – more often than not – malicious reporters of their not only day-to-day but even minute-to-minute life. So many articles, both in the press but also by the academia, as well as entire books, have been devoted to this topic that only a few of them could find place in this paper. However, it is interesting that several in-depth books were published almost as soon as the split happened, and that trend has continued to this day. These are the titles of some of them: *Royals at War: The Untold Story of Harry and Meghan's Shocking Split with the House of Windsor* by Dylan Howard and Andy Tillett (2020), *Meghan and Harry: The Real Story* by Lady Colin Campbell (2020), *Finding Freedom: Harry and Meghan and the Making of a Modern Royal Family* by Omid Scobie and Carolyn Durand (2020), *Battle of Brothers: William and Harry – The Inside Story of a Family in Tumult* by Robert Lacey (2020), *Brothers and Wives: Inside the Private Lives of William, Kate, Harry, and Meghan* by Christopher Andersen (2021), *Revenge: Meghan, Harry, and the War Between the Windsors* by Tom Bower (2022), *Courtiers: The Hidden Power Behind the Crown* (2022) by Valentine Low, again published in 2023 as *Courtiers: Intrigue, Ambition, and the Power Players Behind the House of Windsor*, memoir *Spare* by Prince Harry (2023), and *Endgame: Inside the Royal Family and the Monarchy's Fight for Survival* by Omid Scobie (2023).

The Sussexes' decision to break ties with the Royal Family was nicknamed *Megxit* by jesters on social media. Definitions of this neologism, coined by joining words Meghan and exit, vary in different sources, but they all refer to the same event, for instance: "*Megxit* is a slang term for the decision of couple Meghan Markle and Prince Harry to step back from their senior roles in the British royal family" (*Megxit* 2021) or "a humorous term for the decision of the Duke and Duchess of Sussex to step back from their royal duties" (Balteiro 2022: 37). However, the term had been used with a different meaning long before the event, as many as two years earlier – to be precise, since the couple's wedding: "On social media in 2018–19, some used *Megxit* to insult Meghan Markle and express a desire for her to leave the British royal family. Some of these insults appear to have a racist and sexist character" (*Megxit*

2021). The neologism was originally the trademark of "online trolls who have long used #Megxit as a rallying cry for a campaign of hate against the duchess", and who, using hate speech, "urged Meghan to exit the royal family and trafficked in racist and/or sexist abuse" (Ruiz 2020). Paradoxically, the initial usage of *Megxit* was to mark the phenomenon – persecution and insults in the media and on social networks – which would become one of the main causes for the occurrence of *Megxit* in the sense the word is mostly used nowadays. On a deeper level, the choice of her name and not her husband's name for coining this neologism firmly suggests that it was widely thought the 'culprit' for the event was Meghan alone (Kornilieva 2021: 56) and not Harry, who is allegedly under such a great influence by his wife that he is at times called "Mister Markle" (Kornilieva 2021: 57).

In academic circles, as well, various aspects of this event have been researched, including the linguistic ones, focusing on such elements as the unavoidable pun of *Megxit* as a wordplay on Brexit, or the lexical productivity of the neologism *Megxit*. In her paper From Brexit to Megxit – Leaving Britain in (Royal) Style, the title of which exemplifies the pun, Aleksandrova points to "The parallel between the two neologisms" and stresses that *Megxit* "is used with phrases and in structures typically used with the neologism *Brexit*" (2020: 1452), for which she gives four examples from the press: *hard Megxit*, *soft Megxit, Megxit deal* and *Megxit bill*. Regarding lexicalization and word-formation, the same author underlines that "*Megxit* can function as a noun, as a verb, or attributively to characterize a noun" (2020: 1452), whereas other new words have also been "derived from *Megxit*, such as *Megxitee, Mexiteer*, *Megxiter*, while others are a combination of the personal name *Meghan* and another suffix (*Megulators, Meghangate*)" (2020: 1451).

Analysis of Research Question Results and Discussion

Less than a month after Harry and Meghan posted their decision on Instagram (on 8 January 2020), third-year students at the English Department of Belgrade University's Faculty of Philology who had just started the course in British Cultural Studies 2 were asked (during the introductory class on 7 February 2020) to answer a one-question survey. The focus group consisted of all students who were present in class on that day – 23 of them in total, out of whom 20 were female and 3 male (which is not surprising, bearing in mind that the number of female students at our Faculty of Philology surpasses by far the number of male students). The research instrument was an open-ended one-question survey, and the aim of the case study was to test the students' previous knowledge about British culture and more specifically the British Royal Family, by analysing their assumptions about different factors that had led to *Megxit*. In order for this study to be as non-biased as possible, the question they were asked was extracted as part of a newspaper title: What are Harry and Meghan thinking? (Ng 2020), and the only explanation given to students was that they should describe what they saw as the main cause or causes for *Megxit*.

Prior to the survey, during both semesters of their first year of study, the students had listened to and passed two introductory courses in British Studies (1 and 2), as well as British Cultural Studies 1 in the first semester of their third year of study. These courses primarily focused on background information, involving British history, the study of British civilisation, life and institutions in the UK, but also included cultural studies in general. Although historical development of the UK was an important part of the syllabus, the overall work with students was aimed at interdisciplinary study of contemporary social, economic and political issues in the UK, by exploring the richness and diversity of British culture. It is, nevertheless, vital to emphasise that, as *Megxit* happened during the winter break, it had not been discussed in

class, so students had to rely only on their previous knowledge about the British Royal Family and on what they had read or heard about *Megxit* out of class.

As for the precise instructions regarding their task, the students were told that what mattered the most was their personal opinion, based on the facts and information they had already been provided with in class, but they were completely free to choose the form and length of their writing, and were given as much time as they needed. Some students wrote their answers in point form, but most of them opted for a series of complete sentences in the form of an essay. There were only two short one-sentence answers of 9 and 14 words, respectively. Although 23 respondents took part in the survey, some of them supplied several reasons for *Megxit*, which were then analysed separately, as different aspects that interacted with each other. This is why the total number of reasons for *Megxit* in the results of this research is higher than the number of respondents. Also, the answers have been included in this paper as they were written originally, without changing anything or correcting occasional grammatical or spelling mistakes.

For ease of analysis, the causes students provided will be classified into several groups. Strictly speaking, according to the respondents, there are two essential kinds of factors that resulted in *Megxit*: external and internal. The former are reflected in the fact that the couple were under great pressure that they could no longer endure, coming from multiple outside sources and due to various reasons. Three such external sources of trouble were identified by the students: the media, the Royal family, and society in general (at times narrowed to the fans of the Royal family or more specifically to those of Kate Middleton). The two main reasons for problems that are most often named are Meghan's biracial identity and her not being royal or at least a member of high society. The internal factors can be interpreted either as the couple's lack of willingness to keep bearing the stress of duties or their feeling burdened by a lack of freedom, as they wanted to gain independence and lead a normal life.

Pressure

Most students consider that the reason for *Megxit* was pressure which the couple – to be more precise, Meghan – could no longer endure, either coming from the media or from their responsibilities as royals. This is how the respondents formulated their answers in that group, starting with pressure caused by media and then pressure due to royal duties:

- Meghan wasn't able to deal with the scrutiny of the media
- she received a lot of backlash and criticism, especially by the media in Britain
- Meghan did not expect that level of media attention and wanted more privacy for her family
- Negative comments, discrimination
- Pressure of the media (criticising Meghan for everything), whom Harry blamed for Diana's death – he didn't want Meghan to feel like his mother felt
- The media would always try to crucify his [Harry's] mother, in kind of a same way they are doing that to Meghan
- Meghan didn't really know what being a royalty meant and the disadvantages of it
- Meghan didn't want to comply to too many strict rules the royal family is expected to live by
- Meghan was born a 'regular' person and couldn't endure living in the 'royal' way
- They couldn't stand the pressure and responsibility that come with being royal
- They couldn't stand the pressure of upholding the image expected of them

- They could no longer take the pressure (Meghan is not royalty and could not handle it)
- They want to live without pressure from the Crown

In his memoir *Spare* Prince Harry underscores many times the pressure he and the entire Royal family suffered from "the press's prying eyes" (77) – especially 'the paps', as he calls the dreaded paparazzi: "The paps were such a problem for Mummy, for everyone, it didn't need to be said" (24). This fear turns into a real phobia for the little boy after his mother's death, which he cannot accept, but ascribes it to the press, who he feels will also seal his destiny like that of his mother: "my first intimation that, after torturing my mother and sending her into hiding, they would soon be coming for me" (45).

The genuine, underlying cause for *Megxit* that is mentioned by several respondents is Meghan's unjust treatment by both the media and individuals – be it fans of the Royal family or unnamed sources, due to her ethnic or non-royal origin. Such opinions are formulated in these ways (italic is used when Meghan's origin is explicitly mentioned):

- While Meghan was immensely popular and supported by many [in the US], she received a lot of backlash and criticism, especially by the media in Britain
- Discrimination in media
- Many fans of the Royal family put her down while Kate Middleton was praised (being that Meghan is a *half-black* woman marrying into a white family)
- *Racism* Meghan faced
- Difficulties with media (who treated Meghan different than Kate Middleton and based their opinions on her *race* and that she's *not a royal or a member of a higher society*)
- Meghan is *not royalty* and could not handle it
- Meghan *did not come from a royal family*
- Royal family and British society didn't accept their marriage due to *the social difference*
- *The social ridicule* Meghan Markle faced
- Harassment of Meghan
- To disassociate from the toxic traditions of the royal family

Racism allegations have indeed been referred to several times since the event, for instance in March 2021 during Meghan and Harry's interview with Oprah Winfrey, in which the show host openly mentions 'racist abuse' and Meghan talks about 'racist propaganda' (*The Sun* 2024), or in November 2023 when "Two royal family members appear to have been named as the "royal racists" in the Dutch translation of Omid Scobie's new book *Endgame*" (Sachdeva 2023).

Independence and Freedom

The second cause for *Megxit* underlined by the respondents is independence and freedom the couple wanted to gain both for themselves and for their children. These are the answers in this group:

- Lack of independence and freedom
- They wanted to live a free life
- Independence of their own family
- They want to live and raise children alone
- Going against old traditions
- Younger generation vs. traditionalist views of Royal family

- Meghan enjoyed freedom before so the strict rules and regulations which she was expected to follow became too much of a burden to her

Several students named the specific source of the couple's lack of freedom (the source italicized):
- Seeking freedom from *Royal family*
- They […] decided to break free from the rules of *the Royal family*
- Not to be controlled by *the Crown*
- They did not want to be controlled by *the Queen*

Freedom – and the lack of it – are certainly among the crucial topics in Harry's book *Spare*. For instance, when they heard the news of Diana's death, it occurred to him that: "*Mummy isn't dead! She's hiding! […] She had no choice. It was her only hope of freedom*" (26, italic in the source text). When he grew up, the same aspiration for freedom pervaded him: "I thought: How beautiful. So much peace in the wider world … for some. For those free to search for it" (75).

Some students underlined that gaining independence and freedom meant attaining ordinary/normal way of living:
- They wanted to have an ordinary life (not royal)
- They wanted to have an ordinary life without strict rules
- Normal life without strict rules in the Royal family
- Archie to have normal life without paparazzi

One respondent thought the reason was reciprocal dislike, and explained it simply as:
- Meghan doesn't' like England
- Royal family doesn't' like Meghan

Only a few respondents gave vague answers that could not be classified, such as:
- The Family has weakened through time
- Some relationships in Royal family
- Some personal problems inside the Royal family
- (Not surprised) considering the trend of similar occurrences in royal families across Europe
- Fundamental differences in culture, upbringing and personal values and priorities

Meghan or Harry?

As mentioned previously, the couple's decision is generally blamed on Meghan and this is also the opinion of our students. There is a single respondent who considers that *Megxit* was caused by Harry:
- Harry has proven to be rebellious throughout his life, now he challenged the establishment

Several students did mention that he wanted to protect his family, but that can also be interpreted as having Meghan in the focus of the decision. In all the other answers in which Harry figures, Meghan is still obviously the main reason because she suffered both physically and mentally, and these respondents specifically draw a parallel between Meghan and Harry's late mother Diana, as can be seen below:
- Very wise decision by a man who loves his wife and cares about her *mental* health

- Harry wanted to be supportive of his wife if the hectic life in Royal family was taking a toll on her physically and *mentally*
- Harry is obviously madly in love with Meghan, so he decided to take this step
- Pressure of the media whom Harry blamed for Diana's death – didn't want Meghan to feel like his mother felt
- Harry remembered what happened to Diana (who also had problems with adjusting) and didn't' want Meghan to end up like Diana
- Meghan's *suffering* in the royal family reminded Harry of the similar way his mother had been treated when he was a kid. He didn't' want his wife to end up the same way […] to prevent possible tragic events
- What Harry saw was history repeating itself and I applaud him for making a decision which he felt was best and would keep his family safe
- Harry wanted to stand by his wife so their children grow up with a mother, unlike him
- Harry wanted to shield his family from the media (wanting to crucify Meghan same like his mother)
- Meghan suffering in the Royal family reminded him of Diana

The fact that there are few personal comments (actually, only three of these have been found: they are brave; wise decision; I applaud Harry who wanted to keep his family safe) testifies to the wish of all respondents to try and remain objective, unbiased and to avoid passing any judgment on the couple regarding their decision.

Conclusion

This paper is a case study based on the survey carried out with third-year students at the English Department of Belgrade University's Faculty of Philology. The participants were asked to name the reasons they personally thought were behind the decision made by the Sussexes, Prince Harry and his wife Meghan, just a month before that, to leave the United Kingdom and lead an independent life on their own. As the main cause for this decision, the respondents named pressure coming from the media, the Royal family, and society in general. The second cause regards the couple's wish to become free and live an ordinary life away from the pressure and royal duties.

After four years, their premises have been confirmed by the sources listed in the Introduction of this paper. The most reliable source of information, however, is undoubtedly what the main participants of *Megxit* said themselves, namely, their interview with Oprah and Harry's book *Spare*. In both of these we can find confirmation for the views of the respondents regarding the pressure, racism, and a lack of freedom due to strict rules of the British Royal family – as it was underscored in the previous part of the paper.

Furthermore, it is extremely interesting that almost all of the reasons respondents provided concern either Meghan alone or, much more rarely, the Sussexes as a couple, whereas only one respondent considered that Harry was responsible for the decision. Coupled with the above-mentioned fact that *Megxit* was named after HER and not HIM, this shows that our students are of the same opinion as the media and general public – that *Megxit* was probably caused by Meghan for the most part, while Harry had a less significant, so to say supporting or supportive role in the event.

Therefore, it can be concluded that this analysis has proven that third-year students at the English Department of Belgrade University's Faculty of Philology have mastered the topics

covered by their British Studies curricula sufficiently enough to provide reasonable and plausible causes for *Megxit*.

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Shades of Emotion: Art as Expression Among Conflict-Affected Students

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Abstract
This study explores the emotional response and artistic expressions by students from IDP camps and town students, who live in their stable homes, in the conflict-affected Pekon township of Myanmar after the 2021 military coup. This study describes how living conditions, life experiences, and trauma can be depicted in the artistic expressions of children by evaluating 84 middle-school-aged children's drawings that were part of two separate experiments: a free drawing experiment and an experiment using emotional cues. The findings of the first experiment showed that both groups primarily used colors related to negative feelings, which was representative, in their case, of difficult living situations. IDP children reflected themes of displacement and resilience, while town students expressed peace, beauty, and frustrations against the military junta. In the second experiment, when students were asked to draw based on their emotions, displaced students demonstrated resilience and optimism, showing a strong desire to return home while emphasizing conflict's impact. Town students criticized the military junta and conveyed emotions like hope and frustration, due to their recent experiences with conflict, over the need for peace. This study emphasizes the therapeutic potential of art, the differing emotional expressions of these groups, the influence of instructions on their artwork and highlights the importance of understanding cultural contexts to design effective art-based interventions that help children handle emotional challenges in conflict zones.

Keywords: Children's Drawings, Education in Conflict Zones, Impact of Conflict on Education, Arts as Therapy, Emotional Responses

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Introduction

This study compares the drawings of students displaced by armed conflict with those from stable homes in the aftermath of Myanmar's 2021 coup. By analyzing the artwork of students from conflict-affected Pekon Township in Southern Shan State, this experimental research explores the differences in color and imagery between free and instructed drawing sessions. In the second experiment, the town students were subjected to additional trauma as they observed battles taking place in close proximity of their households and were able to hear the noises of ongoing combat. The trauma was further compounded by the burndown of a building from a closed high school, which influenced their artistic expression.

Background: The Impact of Conflict and Displacement on Education in Myanmar

The coup in Myanmar was transformed into a nationwide anti-military resistance on 1 February 2021, resulting in numerous deaths, injuries, and property damage. Millions of school-age children were among the nearly two million displaced people, having run away from their homes and schools. Eight to ten million children lost their access to education, over 8,100 armed conflicts in Myanmar caused significant internal displacement, leaving only 198 of the 330 townships politically stable, and 60,000 homes burned down (ispmyanmar.com, 2023). In the 2019–2020 academic year, there were 9.2 million students enrolled in grades K–12; by 2022–2023, that number had dropped to 2.3 million (elevenmyanmar.com, 2023). As per the report by the Global Coalition to Protect Education from Attack, Myanmar ranks among the most severely affected nations in terms of educational attacks. An estimated 17 million students are impacted by ongoing conflicts (Wait, 2023). It is estimated that between 300,000 and 500,000 college students are involved in the civil disobedience movement (ispmyanmar.com, 2023). With over 100,000 residents from various minority groups, Pekon Township in South Shan State has become a battlefield as a result of the military's crackdown on protestors. With the help of ethnic armed groups, the youth organized the People Defense Forces (PDFs) to rebel against the military. This resulted in prolonged conflicts with the use of heavy artillery airstrikes by the military, which negatively impacted children's physical and psychological safety as well as the education of 30,000 students in 202 schools. All of the nearby schools had closed, and students from town area were receiving private tuition or home schooling whereas the internally displaced people were accessing education in makeshifts schools in IDP camps. In the second experiment, the town students were more anxious because there were ongoing battles and constant noise from conflict around them. In addition, one of the closed high schools' buildings caught fire, which greatly impacted the students' emotional state and artistic expressions.

Purpose of the Study

This study compares, through two drawing experiments, the emotional responses and artistic expressions of forced displaced students living in internally displaced person camps, under the control of resistant armed groups, with those who are still living in their own home in the urban areas, under the control of military, from war-torn Myanmar. One experiment involves free drawing, while another is aided by emotional prompts on how living conditions, experiences, and recent traumas shape the art works of the students. The study also looks at the therapeutic benefits of drawing sessions for children in conflict areas and how art interventions can be adapted to their emotional needs.

Literature Review

Drawings are regarded as a nonverbal medium through which children can articulate their emotions, thoughts, and past experiences. They provide a visual representation of life experiences and direct access to our understanding of emotional states. Researchers are able to understand the emotional response of the child in conflict areas through the use of the drawings. The most common medium used by children to express and comprehend their emotions, as per Malchiodi (2018), is artistic media, including painting, drawing, and other visual arts. Color serves as an instrument for conveying emotions (Elliot, 2015) . Both warm and cool color groups reflect some kind of emotions. For instance, warm colors such as red and orange evoke intense emotions of passion and anger, whereas cool colors like blue and green evoke feelings of melancholy or a state of calmness. According to Lusebrink (2004), the use of multiple symbolic expressions provides a more detailed depiction of the complex states of emotions which helps in the comprehension of an individual's feeling. Certain symbols are created with personal and cultural meanings that provide an individual with a means of articulating their emotions that are beyond the scope of verbal communication. Hashemi (2011) posits that certain symbols, such as the representation of a house, symbolize familial connections, while the depiction of people demonstrates their anxieties, hopes, and grief. Many researchers have examined these symbols in order to gain insight into the psychological well-being of children. Art therapy has proven effective in addressing children's emotional stresses. Art therapy is defined by Malchiodi (2018) as the use of artistic techniques for self-expression that is both healing and expressive. According to Klorer (2017), children's emotions are processed, and their inner worlds can be explored in a non-verbal setting. According to Cathy and Reynolds (2018), it is a treatment that enables individuals to express themselves when words are too difficult to articulate through the use of symbolism, imagery, and colors.

Colors, symbolism, and imagery serve as profound therapeutic role (Elliot, 2015). Colors express emotions by linking them to a person's feelings. Art intervention enables individuals to use imagery and symbols to reach deeper emotional experiences (Malchiodi, 2018). Symbols normally visualize and fulfill complex human feelings, hence offering the opportunity for self-discovery and insight regarding thoughts and traumas.

Research Method

Setting

This study investigates the artistic expressions of two groups of students from the conflict areas in Myanmar. One group is currently displaced and lives in IDP camps, while the other, the town students, remains in permanent housing. Both groups are residing in Pekon Township, Southern Shan State, which is approximately 36 miles apart but under very different living conditions resulting from the displacement and the ongoing military control and oppression.

Participants

The sample consisted of 84 school-aged children: 42 displaced students from IDP camps and 42 town students who resided in permanent housing. These children attended community-run schools as formal education was affected by conflict. The same drawing and coloring tools were given to all the participants.

Ethical Considerations

The study was approved by the University of Massachusetts Lowell Institutional Review Board (IRB #23-091). Informed consent was obtained from all participants, with assent collected alongside guardian consent for minors. Participants received detailed information about the study's voluntary nature, procedures, and confidentiality measures.

Data Collection

Data collection occurred in two phases. In February 2023, participants created drawings without specific instructions. In June 2023, they produced drawings specifically designed to express their emotions. Students' demographic information such as age, gender, and displacement experiences, as well as the rationale behind their drawings in the second phase were collected.

Coding Process for Analyzing Drawings

The drawings were analyzed by the first author, a PhD student, who maintained a coding manual to classify drawings based on color, imagery, and symbolism. The analysis compared differences in drawings between the two groups and between the free-choice and emotionally prompted sessions.

Table 1: Artwork Categorization Criteria

Categorization Criteria	Explanation
Color Palette	**Warm Palette:** Drawings using warm colors like reds, oranges, and yellows. **Cool Palette:** Drawings using cool colors like blues, greens, and purples.
Imagery and Symbols	Analyzing visual elements, objects, and scenes like war-torn landscapes, destroyed homes, blooming flowers, and symbols linked to their experiences.
Emotions/Themes	Identifying the emotions or themes in each drawing, such as happiness, sadness, conflict, or hope.
Reason for Drawing (Second Experiment)	Examining students' statements explaining why they created a particular drawing.

Findings From the First Experiment

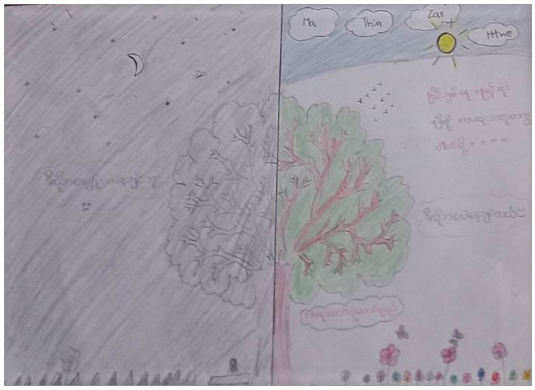

Figure 1: An IDP Student's Drawing Depicts the Past in Colors and the Present in Black and Grey, With Notes Expressing a Longing for the Past and Dissatisfaction With the Current Situation.

In the first experiment, the majority of the town and displaced children used dark colors, including black, brown, blue, and grey, in their drawings. These, according to Boyatzis and Varghese (1994), correlate to negative emotions such as sadness, fear, and anxiety. The limited use of warm or bright colors, which are typically associated with positive emotions, literally gave the impression that these children' drawings lacked happiness or cheer. Approximately 50% of the drawings of the internally displaced and town students groups contained negative emotional content. It is significant to note that only 2.38% of the sample as a whole included instances of positive emotional imagery, and none of these examples came from the internally displaced students. This finding may indicate that their living circumstances prevent them from experiencing positive emotions.

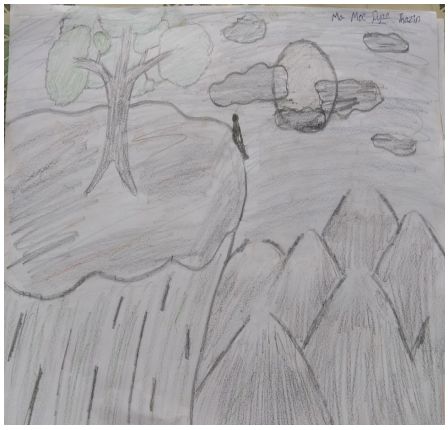

Figure 2: A Drawing by an IDP Student Shows a Person on a Cliff Edge, Surrounded by a Somber Grey Landscape Symbolizing Their Bleak Current Life.

Although the availability of drawing material was the same, the results turned out to be quite different. More town students - 40.48% used vibrant colors, whereas 47.62% of internally displaced students used mostly gray tones in their drawings, expressing their negative emotions and harder living conditions. 71.43% of displaced students drew of the scenes of IDP camps, while only 33.33% of town students did so. The kinds of war-related imagery, like guns and soldiers, were similar between the two groups, appearing in responses from 14.29% of IDP students and 16.67% of town students. However, the emergence of lonely figures may suggest that feelings of isolation are much more common among displaced students. A small proportion in each group resorted to vibrant lively figures, 2.38% of the displaced students while 21.43 % of town students, in an apparent attempt to express energy and vigor amidst hardships. Approximately 21.43 percent of town students resorted to abstract art as a way to express themselves while none of the internally displaced students drew such drawings.

Figure 3: A Drawing by a Town Students Depicts a Vibrant IDP Camp Scene Under a Starry Sky, Symbolizing Resilience and Hope Amidst Conflict.

Findings From the Second Experiment

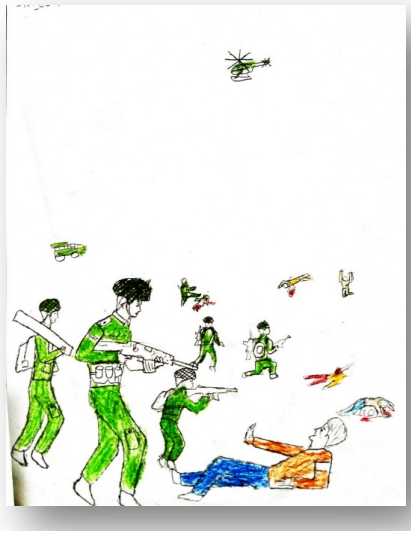

Figure 4: A drawing by a town student portrays a chaotic scene of military violence, capturing the fear and trauma experienced by those in conflict zones.

Figure 5: A Town Student's Drawing Depicts Soldiers Intimidating a Kneeling Woman Holding a Child, Highlighting the Fear and Oppression Faced by Civilians.

The second experiment looked into the effect of specific instruction to express emotions on students' artistic works. They responded clearly by showing distinct patterns between the two groups when they were explicitly asked to express their feelings through drawing. Most of the town students' drawings, 21.67%, reflected the impact of conflict, and 16.67 % shows their longing for peace and beauty. This showed the difficult conditions faced and their urge to have a peaceful environment free from conflicts. Furthermore, the drawings of 13.33% reflect critique towards the military junta with depictions that symbolize frustration and anger towards them and what was damaged or destroyed. The loss and loved-ones drawings account for 10% and depict the emotional impact experienced by the students, most particularly about relationships, separation, and displacement. At the same time, courage and unity comprised 8.33% of the artworks through which the students expressed a desire for community protection, ranging from adversity to eventual standing together. In contrast, a small minority, 5%, were optimistic about the development and progress of this country and ultimately wished for a better future. Importantly, 24.32% either did not give a reason or fell into categories that were not clear, which leaves a significant amount of room for personal interpretation and expression.

Figure 6: A Town Student's Drawing Depicts Family Members Mourning Their Father Who Died Resisting the Military Junta's Oppression.

Figure 7: A Student's Drawing Compares Life Under Democratic Rule and Junta Control, Showing Scenes of Peace and Normalcy Disrupted by Conflict, Highlighting the Impact of War on Education and Community Life.

In the second experiment, 74% of the IDP students presented a preference for bright, diverse colors. This may be indicative of their optimism and resilience in the face of adversity. On the other hand, 77% of students in the town employ grayscale colors, which may have been influenced by the emotional impact of the recent armed conflict. The primary desire of IDP students was to return home, as evidenced by the 31.43% of them who cited this as their reason for drawing. This result indicates that they are dissatisfied with the current camp conditions in which they are residing. Both groups addressed the effects of conflict, with IDP students (25.71%) focusing slightly more on this topic than town students (21.62%). Unexpectedly, 11.43% of IDP students depicted nature and freedom, recalling beauty from the past, while town students did not include this imagery. Regarding the negative portrayal of the military junta, town students (13.50%) surpassed IDP students (8.57%), showing deep resentment towards the junta. More IDP students (8.57%) expressed a desire for a brighter future compared to town students (5.47%). Family and loss were depicted slightly more often by town students (10.81% vs. 8.51% for IDP students), emphasizing the importance of family. Town students also focused more on peace and beauty (16.22%) than IDP students.

Figure 8: An IDP Student's Drawing Contrasts a Peaceful Village Life With Scenes of Violence and Conflict, Highlighting the Stark Reality of War and Its Impact on Communities.

Discussion

The first experiment showed how living conditions and recent trauma can really affect how students express their emotions through art. It turned out that both IDP and town students tended to use dark colors, which are usually associated with negative feelings, indicating that they were carrying a heavy emotional burden (Boyatzis & Varghese, 1994). However, the town students, in that first experiment, used more vibrant colors, which indicates that having a stable environment can lead to a more positive emotional outlook. One interesting thing that stood out in their drawings was that many of the displaced students drew scenes of IDP camps, showing how much they longed for stability and a sense of normalcy.

In the second experiment, it was found that when students are explicitly instructed to express their emotions, it had a big impact on their artwork. The contrasting use of colors between the IDP and town students highlights how their differing emotional experiences are expressed through art. The vibrant colors used by the IDP students suggest a sense of resilience and hope despite their hardships, while the darker, more subdued tones used by town students reflect the emotional burden of living in close proximity to conflict, as well as their frustration with the military junta. Previous research supports the idea that color can serve as a medium for expressing complex emotional states, with brighter colors linked to optimism and darker tones often representing negative emotions such as fear or sadness (Boyatzis & Varghese, 1994;

Elliot, 2015). These findings really highlight how the emotional landscapes of IDP and town students differ, and how their living conditions shape their emotional responses and artistic expressions (Hashemi, 2011; Elliot & Maier, 2014).

Conclusion

Generally, the research highlights the significance of tailored art-based interventions in meeting emotional needs of displaced or conflict-affected children. In war affected regions, Art therapy enables young students to understand their feelings and become better in times of hardships (Malchiodi, 2018). Integrating art programs that give children a chance to let out their feelings and deal with challenges through creativity would make schools and IDP's safer for children in amidst adversity.

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Declaration of Generative AI and AI-Assisted Technologies in the Writing Process

I declare the use of Grammarly and Quillbot, AI tools, for paraphrasing, grammar and writing assistance, which helped improve the clarity and readability of this manuscript.

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The Intimate World of Alice Springs Portraits

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Abstract
This paper discusses the works of Alice Springs aka June Newton, wife of Helmut Newton who was a very famous fashion photographer in the 20th century. Alice Springs worked in three genres: portraiture, nude, and fashion/commercial photography – just like her husband, but to differing degrees. In particular, her incomparable portraits continue to resonate today with their authenticity and intensity. Unlike Newton, Springs photographed in a different manner and style. Her portraits were much more intimate and showed her empathy towards others. Social status was not a decisive factor for Alice Springs, even if most of her protagonists counted among the cultural jet set. Besides prominent actors, directors, and writers, her work includes equally compelling portraits of people from other walks of life – including members of the Hells Angels, the punk scene in Los Angeles, and dancers backstage at the Crazy Horse cabaret in Paris. Although Alice Springs got closer to her subjects and responded more spontaneity to unexpected situations than other photographers, she consistently captured the individuality of every one of them. In doing so, she contributed new and surprising images, free of clichés, to the familiar trove of celebrity depictions. Possibly it was her solid grounding in acting that enabled her to look simultaneously at and behind the facade of human expression with her lens.

Keywords: Alice Springs, Portrait Photography, Fashion Photography

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I don't know anyone who takes portraits like hers.
- Helmut Newton, Alice Springs: Portraits (1986)

Introduction

Alice Springs was a fashion and portrait photographer born in Australia and married to famous fashion photographer Helmut Newton. Unlike Newton, Springs photographed in a different manner and style. Her portraits were much more intimate and showed her empathy towards others. Social status was not a decisive factor for Alice Springs, even if most of her protagonists counted among the cultural jet set. Besides prominent actors, directors, and writers, her work includes equally compelling portraits of people. Although Alice Springs got closer to her subjects and responded more spontaneity to unexpected situations than other photographers, she consistently captured the individuality of every one of them. In doing so, she contributed new and surprising images, free of clichés, to the familiar trove of celebrity depictions.

The Beginnings of Her Career

Alice Springs, aka June Newton, was born as June Browne in 1923 in Melbourne, South Australia. Initially, she worked as a model and actress. In 1947, while posing for a photo shoot, she met German fashion photographer Helmut Newton, with whom she quickly became a personal and professional bond. In the 1970s, June Newton, after ending her acting career, first became Newton's assistant and then a photographer herself. Her photographic career was launched by an about of flu, temporarily preventing Helmut Newton from working. June then offered to help him complete an assignment. Her husband taught her how to use a camera and a light meter, and in 1970 she shot an advertising image for the French cigarette brand Gitanes in Paris. Her portrait of a smoking model was the first photograph in a new career for the trained stage actor, who could not get acting work in France due to the language barrier. Then José Alvarez, who was then running an advertising agency in Paris, commissioned her to take promotional photos for pharmaceutical companies. She became particularly famous for a major campaign in the 1970s: her photos for the legendary Parisian hairdresser Jean Louis David, which were published as full-page ads in numerous magazines for years. From the mid-1970s, portrait assignments increasingly joined product photography. In 1983, Alvarez – now the founder of Editions du Regard – published the first compendium of Alice Springs' work, containing many of her iconic portraits, representations full of empathy and intimacy.

Three Genres of Photography

Just like her husband, Helmut Newton, she focused on three genres of photography: portrait, nude, and fashion/commercial photography, but she devoted most of her attention to portrait photography, which was completely different from the portraits of other photographers of the second half of the 20th century and the beginning of the 21st century. Her photographs are distinguished by their extraordinary intimacy and exceptional presentation of the inner world of the presented subject and their everyday life captured unconventionally. Her unparalleled portraits still resonate with their authenticity and intensity, and the admiring viewer is unable to confuse them with the work of other photographers. In the photographs of Alice Springs, she managed to capture not only the external appearance of her subjects but also their aura. The wordless dialogue that led to the creation of these extraordinary portraits seemed to be based on a kind of spiritual kinship that connects the photographer and the photographed.

Four Names

She worked under the nickname Alice Springs – this is the name of a town in Australia, which the photographer chose based on fate, because with her eyes closed she pointed it out on a map of the country, deciding that from then on it would be her artistic name. She did not want to be associated with the name Newton. Nevertheless, it is worth noting that throughout her life she existed under a total of four names: June Brunell, June Browne, June Newton, and Alice Springs. Did this multitude of identities influence her work? It certainly did. Perhaps by using each of these names she was, or perhaps she just wanted to be, someone else. Perhaps it is just a facade for artistic purposes, but undoubtedly the name used by an individual becomes a whole with them and to a large extent defines them. Experiences gained over the years influence the art of every artist, but in the case of the heroine of this article, it is worth considering which years of her life had the greatest influence on the specific aura and atmosphere around her photos. Whether it was the years of her early career as an actress in Australia, a painter in France, a photographer, but also a muse and wife of the great artist Helmut Newton, or finally a businesswoman responsible for the development of both their careers, manager of the Helmut Newton Foundation and a person who constantly inspired and assessed his staff.

Extraordinary Intimacy

Her photographs appeared in magazines such as “Elle”, “Vanity Fair” and “Vogue”, and these works were completely different from those taken by her husband. She photographed her subjects in their natural environment – in their homes, and gardens, so that they felt as much themselves as possible. She brought the humanity of her subjects to the surface and let it remain there, creating suggestive, natural, and intimate portraits in which sensuality, not sexuality, is the measure of all things. Her photographs were calm, and unprovocative, unlike Newton's photographs. They had an intimacy that he lacked. Sometimes they both took pictures of the same person, but in each of them, they looked completely different. This can be seen in the photographs of Gianni Versace, who in Helmut's photograph is naked but self-confident. In the version taken by Alice Springs, he is dressed, but even more exposed, because his soul is shown. Unlike Newton's photographs, her photographs were direct, without the complicated portrait technique, like uncut diamonds. Thanks to this, the people shown in them seem more natural to the viewer, stripped of the veneer that accompanies their public appearances. Here, everyone is different, and at the same time the same - natural, sincere, and unpainted by the media. The photos are not without flaws, just like the people depicted in them. Alice Springs shows the viewer that no one is without flaws, and even that these flaws are worth showing, so that they become advantages because they testify to the uniqueness of the character. The viewer can therefore identify with the viewed character because they are closer to them than the same person they saw on the pages of the glossy press or television. The light is the same as that found at the place of the photograph. Most often natural, daytime, but also often on the verge of twilight. She usually worked alone, without assistants. This is what connects her workshop with the one preferred by her husband because he had only one assistant on the set, which is unusual for professional photo shoots. Simplicity was important to both of them. The background of the photo was often a raw wall of a building, to make the photographed person even more expressive. So that nothing would obscure it, drown it out, or distract the viewer from what was really important to the author. Springs' photos are mainly in black and white, but it is her seasoned eye that gives them color. It is an eye that can capture the moment, draw out the true nature of a person, and show depth. Her most important camera is the internal one, in herself, but also in the person being photographed. Thanks to her exceptional empathy, she was able to feel the world of the experiences of the person posing for her and expose them to the audience. Empathy and an extraordinary bond with the models also allowed them to relax. As they recalled, while working with the photographer, they did not feel as if someone was

stripping them of their souls, but on the contrary, as if someone was extracting the most interesting things from it, and even enriching it. This incredibly interesting experience allowed them to open up even more. I believe that this is an extraordinary art that was appreciated many years ago when June Newton was experiencing the best years of her career, but it is worth remembering it today, in a busy world where one can get the impression that each photo is meticulously directed and then processed, which causes the portrayed person to lose their true soul and inner strength.

Social Status Is Not Important

She photographed celebrities, but also just ordinary people she met on the street. Social status was not a factor for Alice Springs, even if most of her subjects were part of the cultural jet set. Alongside her distinguished actors, directors, and writers, her work includes equally compelling portraits of people from other walks of life—including members of the Hells Angels, the Los Angeles punk scene, and backstage dancers at the Crazy Horse cabaret in Paris. So we encounter not only the rich and beautiful, but also the bohemians who caught Alice Springs' attention.

Studio shots are rare; her favorite places are public spaces, as well as indoors or in front of a person's home, using natural light. In her portraits - taken quickly, spontaneously, and with simple camera techniques - we encounter a whole range of expressions, from vain poses to natural self-confidence and open or shy faces. The effect is a visual commentary, an interpretation of characters without pretense of unmasking or criticizing them. Although Alice Springs got closer to her subjects and reacted more spontaneously to unexpected situations than other photographers, she consistently captured the individuality of each of them. In this way, she added new, surprising, non-stereotypical images to the familiar collection of celebrity images. Perhaps it was her solid acting foundation that allowed her to look through the lens at the façade of human expression and behind it at the same time. Her photos will enable us to follow the private lives of the people she photographed - how they look and what they do in their free time, off stage, without the glare of paparazzi flash. Is their image the same or completely different from the one seen in public?

A standout work in her oeuvre is a portrait of Ricardo Bofill, in which the photographer focuses almost exclusively on the Spanish architect's radiant smile by using strong shadows on the left and right of the image. The result recalls the experimental theatre of Samuel Beckett, who premiered his monologue "Not I" in New York in 1972 on a pitch-black stage, with a single light illuminating only the mouth of the speaking woman. Rarely has Alice Springs used light so radically as in this motif, characterized by intense contrasts of light and shadow and formal minimalism. Her black and white portraits were published frequently in the large-format French magazine "Egoïste" from 1977 onwards, often appearing on its cover. Her last advertising campaign was for Gillette women's razors, photographed in color in 2004. The series was shot a few days after her husband's death in Los Angeles. He was actually hired as the shoot photographer, but Alice Springs eventually took over and did the job. Only a few more shots were taken after that, so this commercial sequence marks the end of Alice Springs' career, which began in 1970 with a Gitanes ad in Paris when she also replaced Helmut Newton as the photographer.

Us and Them

Self-portraits and portraits of her husband occupy a special place in her works. She often took them during Helmut Newton's work sessions. They complement the joint project “Us and Them”. One is unthinkable without the other – and vice versa.

In the early 1990s, in 1994, a film directed by the photographer was made – “Helmut by June”. It had its American premiere only three years after the photographer's death. The one-hour long documentary in the style of a home movie is at once a recollection, a free-form reflection on the master at work, a portrait of a fifty-four-year marriage, and an exceptionally intimate critique. Above all, however, it shows Helmut as he was – funny, spontaneous, inventive. The viewer sees him through the eyes of his wife – and she is gentle with him, but can also be ironic. The main asset of the film is showing how Newton transforms women into goddesses. In one scene, he arranges a photo shoot for “Vogue” in which Cindy Crawford comes down the stairs. June shows us a model walking in real-time, then plays the scene back, slowing down the speed, so that we can see one frame fade into the next, and watch the minutes of movement and muscle tension and daylight. In the film, June says that when Helmut turned seventy-four, she expected him to finally slow down a bit—how disappointed she was.

In 2003, a year before his tragic death, Helmut Newton founded a foundation in Berlin bearing his name, which to this day presents photographs by him, his wife, and other photographers thematically or aesthetically related to selected areas of Newton's work. Alice Springs and her husband have presented their joint works several times, primarily as part of the joint project “Us and Them”, which was also on display at the Helmut Newton Foundation in Berlin. In 2010 and 2016, the Foundation organized large exhibitions of Alice Springs, accompanied by a monographic publication. After her husband's death, Alice Springs became the president of the Helmut Newton Foundation. She died in Monte Carlo in 2021 at the age of 97. In 2023, on the occasion of the artist's centenary, the Helmut Newton Foundation in Berlin hosted a comprehensive, largest exhibition to date of over two hundred of her works, also previously unseen. Extensive research into the internal archives, including the entire collection from the Newtons’ Monaco residence, which had only recently been brought to Berlin, has provided new insight into the Alice Springs oeuvre. The surprising results are on display for the first time in the form of vintage, late, or exhibition prints, shown alongside iconic images for which Alice Springs is renowned. These include portraits of fellow photographers Richard Avedon, Brassaï, Ralph Gibson, Jacques-Henri Lartigue, Sebastião Salgado, and Robert Mapplethorpe, as well as celebrities such as Nicole Kidman, Audrey Hepburn, Isabelle Adjani, Christopher Lambert and Claude Chabrol, to name just a few.

What is a Portrait?

Alice Springs redefined what a portrait is and what it can be (French portrait; Latin portrayer – to bring into the light of day, to reveal, to show; contrafact – to imitate). This is a very popular genre of photography, which in the classical definition focuses on the figure, its pose, and the place in which it is shown. There are many types of portraits:

By the position of the head:

- En face (frontal)
- Profile
- Half-profile (intermediate shot between profile and en face, close to en trois quarts)
- En trois quarts (with the face turned to the side)
- Profil perdu (quarter-profile)

By the position of the figure:
- Head
- Bust
- Half-length
- Knee-length portrait
- Full-length portrait (en pied, contrapposto)
- Lying, standing, sitting, equestrian portrait
- Nude

By the number of people:
- Single
- Double (wedding, marriage, friends)
- Triple
- Quadruple
- Conversation pieces
- Collective (multi-form, group)

Depending on the circumstances of creation:
- Wedding
- Posthumous (mummy, coffin, epitaph)
- Assistant (image of the founder in religious paintings and altars; adorer)

Depending on the social position of the model:
- Male, female, child, family
- Ruler, artist, scholar, guild, or professional group
- Generic (image of a person busy with work)

Depending on the purpose and function:
- Official (representative, courtly)
- Private

In terms of the method of creation:
- The posing person
- Realistic (reflecting the actual appearance of the model)
- Ideal, imaginary, fictional (made in accordance with specific aesthetic canons, e.g. the series of portraits of Polish rulers by Jan Matejko or Marcello Bacciarelli)
- Idealized (beautifying, giving the portrayed person dignity and seriousness)
- Historicized (portraits of contemporary people, presented as historical, mythological, or biblical figures, in appropriate costumes and with appropriate attributes)
- Memory (based on details provided by witnesses to the crime)
- Caricature (exaggerated presentation of individual features of the appearance or psyche of the character, often in order to ridicule them)

In terms of specific factors:
- Self-portrait (the artist's own portrait)
- Crypto-self-portrait (an image of a historical or biblical figure endowed with the facial features of the creator of the work)

- Dimensions (medallion, miniature)

The history of portrait photography is as long as the history of photography. Its emergence was a natural consequence of artists' interest in the representation of the human figure in their works and a form of extension of portrait painting. At first, we can observe the proximity of some photographs to the most classic painted portraits. Then, the art of photographic portrait gradually freed itself from the painterly model, inventing and refining its own vocabulary, and consequently influencing the genre from which it broke away. Thanks to photography, it is possible to obtain a representation of reality independent of human perception. The first photographic portraits of the daguerreotype were fixed and formal. In workshops lit with indirect light, in order to avoid too pronounced shadows, the portraits had to hold a pose for several seconds, the neck immobilized by special support. In 1842, Louis-Auguste Bisson considered the process of creating a portrait to be magical. Following his example, Théophile Gautier and Gérard de Nerval attributed something supernatural to the photographic portrait.

In photography, portraits can be divided into:

- natural portrait - photography without special make-up and imposed facial expressions or body position, very often taken in an environment that does not distract attention;
- posed portrait - found especially in fashion photography; poses play an important role, and models are required to be very aware of their own body and its motor skills; usually the model works with their entire body and facial expressions to draw the viewer's attention to the vision that the photos are to convey;
- artistic portrait - this type of photography is usually devoid of any rules, and does not have a sales goal; what is important here is the implementation of the main theme and the refinement of every detail of the frame; many gadgets are usually used for artistic photography; the purpose of the portrait is to arouse emotions in the viewer;
- reportage portrait - reportage photography is very demanding for the photographer himself; a reportage portrait is taken in an environment characteristic of the person being photographed, who is busy with their everyday life; reportage portraits include concert photos, where the musicians are focused on singing and their relationship with their fans, not on someone taking their picture. The most famous 20th-century photographers involved in portrait photography, apart from the Newton couple, include Felix Tournachon (known as Nadar), Henri Cartier-Bresson, Richard Avedon, Dorothea Lange, Robert Doisneau, Patrick Demarchelier, Annie Leibovitz and others.

Conclusion

The work of Alice Springs is admired all over the world until this day. She was mostly focused on portrait photography, which she revolutionized. Portrait photography is considered one of the most difficult areas of this art. A good portrait requires the involvement of emotions of both the photographer and the photographed. It should depict not only the external appearance but also the internal appearance of the character. Surely Alice Springs' portraits manager to achieve these goals.

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Springs A. (1986). Portraits, Gay Men's Press.

Szulc M. (2023). Feminista Helmut Newton, Adam Mickiewicz University Press.

The Dynamics of British Counter Terrorism Strategy in the Post 9/11 Environment: An Analysis of Evolution, Prospects and Challenges

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Abstract
The Scourge of terrorism has emerged as a gigantic threat to global peace and humanity since the events of 9/11 which guided the states to adopt new counter terrorism strategies to contain and crush the threats and activities of the perpetrators. The United Kingdom along with its collated partners applied a strict mechanism and measures to destroy the sanctuaries of the dissidents for the sake of lasting global peace. The British government has strongly emphasized on certain soft and hard policies through social, political, economic and military deterrence. How the Britain's Counter Terrorism policy paradigms evolved, applied and faced certain challenges to be enforced? There are domestic and external actors involved facilitating the home-grown terrorism in England. The work focuses on the ratio of success and failure of the current British Counter Terrorism policy along with its drawbacks and flaws reflecting in the Counter Terrorism synergism. Has the credibility of British security agencies been compromised in the context of operational obligation and interactive coordination with Global Counter Terrorism Strategies? The British security agencies and counter terrorism authorities have contributed a lion's share in countering domestic and global terrorism but yet to do a lot of work remains ahead. The study comprises prospects and implications of British counter terrorism policy in the context of comparative approach that how much United Kingdom has contributed and achieved the determined targets while fighting the global war on terror in its domestic and external as an ally of the United States during 2001-2023.

Keywords: Genesis, Deterrence, Zero Tolerance, Coercive Measures, Security Challenges

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Introduction

National security aims to protect socio- political economic and strategic assets of a nation with in its governing and territorial jurisdiction of political system. The contemporary world both developing and developed faces a gigantic threat of the perpetrators. Therefor the security paradigms have been shifted from an individual effort of a state to the collective security parameters in the name of global coalition and war on terror. Different states like, Australia, Britain, Canada France, Germany and the united states have learned an immense experience to deal the terrorist activities through a coherent and smart planning of inspection, interrogation watch and ward system, application of disease, war and crime oriented method in the post 9/11 environment. The British counter terrorism strategy reflects its national security challenges i.e. sectarianism, religious extremism, focusing on criminal gangs, imported jihad, ethnic and sectarian domestic violence with reference of Irish and Scottish freedom movements. The overwhelming influence of jihadi organizations especially from Pakistan, Bangladesh and Middle East on the British culture has nurtured the manse of terrorism in the oldest society of the world. The British security agencies and political stakeholders face serious challenge of terror sponsoring funding to the deviators and dissidents of peace in England. The issues like information warfare, cyber security threat, the critical infrastructure of terrorism, human and drugs trafficking, communal stratification and perception of the clash of civilizations have generated the soil and security issues for the British states and society in the post 9/11 era.

Genesis and Evolutionary Development

The British counter terrorism strategy and approach has been originated decades back due to the presence of certain threats in the domestic environment as well as due to the probable encroachment of the external dissidents and the perpetrators. There were multiple efforts and legislative measures to contain the internal and external terrorist's activities by the British decision making authorities as the political and legal dogmas of counter terrorism strategy back in interwar period. The responsible stakeholders institutions in Great Britain ever developed a compatible environment with international community and non-state actors to bring peace & stability through the discouragement of the hardliners, fundamentalists, extremists and the anti-state elements, organizations and its other associates with the promulgation soft and coercive measures in the post-world war II era. The British legislature approved Emergency Powers Act 1920 to combat the terrorist's activities and attacks from the pro- Irish Liberation dissidents as a gigantic threat to the integrity, solidarity, peace & stability challenges had to be faced by the British state and society.[1] The British House of Commons again passed the Prevention of Violence Act 1939 to contain the continual threats from Irish Republican Army (IRA) as the most dangerous non state actor for the key responsible of sponsoring terrorism in the United Kingdom. The British counter terrorism strategy and policy perspective was reviewed and revised to meet the emerging challenges of the time particularly in the wake of Birmingham terrorists attacks of 1974. Since the Birmingham carnage, the British counter terrorism policy has had been updated and renewed under transitional process of the responsible authorities, stakeholders and concerned quarters of law enforcement agencies during 1974 to 1990. The anti-terrorism legislation process remained as a continual factor in British political system as the parliament brought terrorism act in July 2000 for the elimination of terrorist activities and groups from British society through all peaceful and coercive measures as the permanent

[1] Allison, R. (2008). *Global terrorism: Ideology and operations.* Delhi: Global Vision Publishing House.

determinant of British counter terrorism strategy.[2] The very Terrorism Act of 2000 strengthened the domestic and external peace in the region due to an addition of various new policy paradigms for the homeland security of Great Britain coupled with the successful counter terrorism approach incorporated by the United States and United Nations to cope with the expected and forthcoming threats of regional and global terrorism.[3]The Terrorism Act of 2000 empowered British law enforcement agencies and police to use various soft and hard tactics of watch and ward, investigation, search and detention of the suspected people inside the British society. The freezing of funds accounts and the checking of complete and comprehensive foreign financial assistance of the dissidents and the perpetrators has been added an additional provision of the terrorism British Terrorism act 2000. [4]

Reformative Phase in the Post 9/11 Environment

The British counter terrorism policy perspective and approach towards the domestic and external terrorist activities in the region continued to be updated and progressed according to the manifestation of International standard right after the occurrence of the drastic terrorists attacks of 9/11 on the soil of the United States. The British parliament drafted out another anti-terrorism bill to curb the program and activities of terrorist groups inside the England. Thus, the Anti-Terrorism, Crime and Security Act (ATCSA) was discussed, debated and finally approved from both houses i.e. House of Commons and House of Lords on December13, 2001. The new anti-terrorism legislation sought to contain both the domestic and external terrorists' culture and aimed to include socio- political, economic, cultural and religious motivated reasons of sponsoring terrorism in England, Europe and the entire World.[5]The British national security, law enforcement agencies, statesmen, political leadership and media provided full swing support to the parliament for the enactment of new anti- terrorism laws adhered to International law, global peacemaking efforts and coalition forces fighting against the terrorists in different parts of the world particular in Afghanistan, South Asia and Middle East. The anti-Terrorism Crime and Security Act 2001 considered respect and rescue of fundamental human rights in the British society without and discrimination of color, creed, race, religion status and community. The July 2005 London Bombing massacre led the British parliament to bring certain additional provisions in the anti- terrorism law to check out the offences of terrorism in the British society in the perception of internal and external security threats. Consequently the Prevention of Terrorism Act 2005 was approved and promulgated by the British parliament and law enforcement agencies.[6]

Responsible Authorities & Stakeholders

[2] Boer, D. M. (2003). The EU counter terrorism wave: Window of opportunity or profound policy transformation?. In Marianne van Leeuwen (Eds.), *Confronting terrorism: European experiences, threat perceptions and policies* (p. 189). The Hague: Kluwer.
[3] Botha, A. (2006). Terrorism in ALGERIA: The role of community in combating terrorism (eds).In Peter Katona, Michel D. Interligator & John P. Sullivan. *Countering terrorism and WMD: creating a global counter terrorism network*. London and New York: Routledge.
[4] Donohue, L. K. (2008). Britain's counter terrorism policy. In Doron Zimmerman Andreas Wenger. *How states fight terrorism*. New Delhi: Viva Books.
[5] Stevenson, J.(2004). Counter Terrorism: containment and beyond. Adelphi paper 367.Oxford : Oxford University press.
[6] Mezer, Jonathan, Githans. (2008). Islamic radicalization among north Africans in Britain: London political studies association

The British Home Department works as the core responsible authorities of the protection of security to the people of England as the home secretary becomes the chief security officer of the country with the obligation of the assurance of homeland security standards of the United Kingdom. The home secretary decides about the initiation of all the security and military operations in England to uproot the activities and sanctuaries of the terror sponsoring organizations along with their foreign funding associates. The British Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) make all arrangements of dialogues and manifestation of international treaties to crush and counter the scourge of terrorism. Apart from the external diplomatic arrangements of military operations the British home secretary takes responsibility to provide feedback and inputs to British parliament for the up gradation of ant-terrorism legislation and shifting of the Counter Terrorism Policy Paradigms. The British home department generates a close collaboration, compatibility and working relationship with British terrorism protection unit and crime directorate work to prevent domestic and external terrorists activities. The British government has established another precious anti-terrorism forum in the name of the cabinet office briefing room (COBR) as a Center of the crisis management in respect of countering terrorism in United Kingdom. The COBR comprises of a cabinet member, Home minister, and the high rank government officials from different security agencies with senior officials and linked government liaison officer (GLO), and a civil servants who reaches at the scene of the incident with a team including security service officer and a press officer.[7] The British authorities decided to join the war with NATO forces on October 7th, 2001 in the wake of September 11 terrorist attacks. The London administration took serious measures against any kind of terrorist planning, project or activities on its own soil. The London metropolitan police evacuated important places like 10 Downing Street, airports and civil aviation authority banned all air traffic over Central London. The British government initiated a coherent and comprehensive review of its preparedness and contingency plans against the terrorists. The British intelligence community developed a joint terrorism analysis center and directed further resources for nonproliferation and international terrorism.[8] Furthermore, the British government launched certain initiatives to curb and control terrorism through other international forums, i.e. United Nations, European Union and NATO. The British authorities adopted measures for countering terrorism, being an important and active participant of global coalition i.e. policy actions grounded in law, training and exercise of military forces, intelligence and surveillance of the doubtful individuals, organizations and aliens, consequence and crisis management, public and parliamentary debates, legislative reviews and public awareness through the enhancement of quality of antiterrorist forces, institutions and mechanism.[9]

British Counter Terrorism Measures

The counter terrorism authorities in the United Kingdom have prepared different counter terrorism measures as an integral part of its policy. These counter terrorism tactics can be discussed as follows:

Deterrence & Constraint to the Terrorists

[7] Taylor, T. (2003). United Kingdom. In Yonah Alexander (Eds.), *Combatting terrorism: Strategies of ten countries* (pp. 190-91). New Delhi: Manas Publications.
[8] Griffin R. (2012). *Terrorist's creed: Fanatical violence and human need for meaning*. Palgrave: Macmillan.
[9] Guelke, A. (2010). The new age of terrorism and international political system. London, New York: I.B. Taurus& Co. Ltd.

It is a paramount element of British counter terrorism preparedness, rapid response and vigorous prosecution of perpetrators of terrorism, creating maximum deterrence for the terrorists. Threats of severe consequences to the dissidents, the credential stance of action and winning the confidence of the people are important features of British counter terrorism policy. There are several contingency plans included in British counter terrorism measures responding to any terrorist attack on British before and after the occurrence of the incident. The home department controls and covers the entire situation when incident takes place in any government office, public and prayer place.[10]

Training & Single Set of Standard Operating Procedure

The effectiveness of responding to a terrorist attack in the United Kingdom is adhering to a single set of standers operating procedure (SOPs). A similar set of machinery, instruments, skilled persons and apparatus is used in the case of any incident due to coherent learning on the job. The SOPs system is more beneficial for maximum mutual coordination and to minimize the errors. The British home department provides specific training that plays a vital role in the implementation of contingencies, SOP to obtain the required results for fighting against terrorism. Location of the sight of the incident, travel to the sight, and communication with relevant authorities, i.e. police, ambulance, medical staff, fire brigade, water, gas and electricity are the necessary phases of training.[11]

Equipment & Minimizing the Threat

There are special units established in the British counter terrorism cell which facilitate equipment like devices, electronics instruments and fighting weapons to counter and contest the terrorist before or after the incident. The bomb disposal team, remote control vehicles and robots are other valuable devices used in counterterrorism strategy. The diffusion and control of threats from the terrorist is another policy objective and counter terrorism measure.[12] The military and government installation, Radars and Satellite system makes screening and assessment of the conversation, communication and correspondence of the overseas networks and organizations involved in the promotion of terrorism. The blast resistance building, design of government offices, office layout, metal detector screening and security procedures have been constituted by authorities.[13]

Early Warning Intelligence

The British security service and secret intelligence services have established and expanded their early warning intelligence system throughout the country. This wing deals with intelligence, threats and dangers rumored by the terrorist. The experts of secret services make

[10] Jones G. Seth and Fair Christine. (2010). *Counter insurgency in Pakistan*. Washington D.C.: Rand Corporation.
[11] Gupta, D.K. (2005). Exploring Roots of Terrorism. In T. Bjorjo(eds) Root Causes of Terrorism, Myths, Reality and ways forward, 16-32: Canada Routledge.
[12] Niaz, U. (2011). *Wars, insurgencies and terrorist attacks: A psychological perspective from the Muslim world*. London, LDN: Oxford University Press.
[13] Coolsaet, R. (2010). EU counter terrorism strategy: Value added or chimera. *International Affairs*. *86*(4), 857-60.

a clinical analysis and provide pre-incident information to the relevant police authority and other government officials.[14]

Detection and Zero Tolerance Approach

The British counter terrorism authorities believe in not making any kind of trust or concessions to all the terror sponsoring groups, organizations and individuals inside the territorial jurisdictions of United Kingdom. Since the terrorists attacks on the soil of United States on September 11, 2001, British government has picked up zero tolerance approach against all the malicious networks and suspected terrorist organizations associated with Al-Qaeda and Taliban in the contemporary international environment. The principle objective of zero tolerance policy refers to narrow down the influence activities of the terror prone groups by imposition of strict detection and deterrence.[15] The deterrence and zero tolerance approach have been borrowed by the British government from the American counter terrorism policy which has titled the movement and activities of the terrorists in the internal and external fronts of Great Britain. Thus the detection and deterrence approach provides to contain the freedom of the working of terrorists cells for the incidents of hostage taking, aircraft hijacking, bomb blasts, seizure of embassies aiming to prevent the commencement of brutal activity of the terrorist organizations.[16]

The Punitive and Coercive Measures

The British counter terrorism policy has been refined and rearticulated through the application of coercive and punitive measures against the terror sponsoring individuals and organization. The British parliament has approved certain laws related to eliminate terrorists threats with the execution of a variety of sanctions, punitive action and coercive military operations to uproot the networks and organizations are engaged in sponsoring terrorism in the British society. The financial assistance, illegal funding to the jihadi groups in England has been strictly watched and interrogated to prevent the proliferation of terrorists activities as the prime principal of homeland security.[17] The British security agencies and political authorities have decided to adopt certain physical protective measures to secure the public places, like, railway stations, government offices, shopping malls, airports, public banks and other important places through the use of CCTV cameras, walk through gates detected metal, searching mirrors and other secret electronics devices to discourage and avert the activities and attacks of terrorist organization.[18]

Cooperation With International Structure

The United Kingdom gives much importance on putting efforts to combat international terrorism. The British authorities have shared intelligence information and extended cooperation to contain terrorists. It strongly supports and is actively involved in the negotiation

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[14] Jalalzai M. K. (2010). *Britain's national security challenges: Extremism, cyber terrorism, sectarianism and takfiri jihadism*. London, LDN: Afghan Academy International.
[15] Graham B. (October 23, 2003). Rumsfield questions antiterrorism efforts. *Washington Post*.
[16] Purdy, M. (2008). Canada's counter terrorism policy. In Doron Zimmermann & Andreas Wenger (Eds.), *How states fight terrorism: Policy dynamics in the West*. (p. 115). New Delhi: Viva Books Private Limited.
[17] Ochmanek D. (2003). Military operations against terrorist group abroad: Implications for United States air-force, MR-1738-AF Santa Monica, CA: RAND.
[18] Rosenau, William. (2008). US Counter Terrorism Policy. In Doron Zimmermann and Andreas Wenger (Eds.), *How States Fight Terrorism: Policy Dynamics in the West*. (p. 139). New Delhi: Viva Books Private Limited.

of international conventions in which different forms and aspects of terrorism were banned and curtailed. The British government ratified all international terrorism conventions resolved and approved under UN Security Council.[19] The United Kingdom views UN as the more suitable international forum to deal with the issues of global terrorism. The London administration participated and appreciated the G-8 countries (the group of Eight Leading democracies: Japan, France, Germany, Italy, Russia, Canada, Britain and the United States), the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), the European Union and other technical institutions like Interpol that may become involved in combating terrorism. The Counter Terrorism Policy Department (CTDP) of the United Kingdom has the leading role on international aspects of fighting terrorism.[20] The British home department adopted 'informing the public policy' in the context of terrorism. General awareness of the British people, media coverage, analysis of counter terrorism strategies and tactics, counter terrorism state policies, impacts of terrorism and counter terrorism on British society, formation of legislative and legal code of conduct against the domestic and international acts of terrorism, official and public perception of religious and extremist spheres of terrorism are important features of British anti-terrorism campaign.[21]

The British Security Challenges

The National Security Strategy of Great Britain has been designed to acquire the national interests of the country and to secure the people of England from the daunting challenge of ethnic and sectarian issues in Northern Ireland and Scotland, communal, ethnic and sectarian violence, religious extremism, imported Jihad from different areas of the world yet the continuing law & order deterioration in the United Kingdom has posed a huge threat to national security and interest of Great Britain. The London bombing attacks of 7/7 was the result of a flexible and questionable British security policy reflected the presence of extremist organizations networks, illegal immigration, organized crime cells, ethnic and sectarian violence, residential and religious segregation, communal hater and prejudice in British culture.[22] The British national security and intelligence agencies have worked on the improvement of surveillance and private system to combat the organized criminal gangs butt yet the danger of cyber terrorism and information warfare exists in the fabrics of British society. The question of national security, drugs, human and terrorists trafficking yet arises in the United Kingdom as a serious threat to national security. The ethnic deprivation has generated reluctance to national integration in the British society and the anti-religious mind set of youth in England has promoted somatic disorder in the culture. The British government has occasionally wanted about the nuclear and dirty bomb attacks due to the actively working Jihadi and extremist organizations in England.[23] The national security structure of United Kingdom has remained under the question of credibility, infrastructure, weaker system of police surveillance and intelligence agencies. A frequent occurrence of racists incidents in schools and colleges of England have reported the conflict and ethnicity which ever invited the number of the sympathizers of associate and extremists groups of Al-Qaeda in England. The watch and dog surveillance system in Great Britain along with the cyber terrorism still exposes vulnerability of British intelligence and law enforcement agencies.[24] A plenty of terrorist

[19] Schmid, A.P. (2011). *The routledge handbook of terrorism research.* New York, NY: Rouledge.
[20] Tatyana Kelman. (2012). Definition and Dimensions of Counterterrorism. In Frank Shanty (Eds.), *Counterterrorism: From the Cold War to the War on Terror*, Volume one, Combating Modern Terrorism (1968-2011). California: Praeger.
[21] Lutz, M. J. & Lutz, B. J. (2008). Global terrorism. New York, NY: Routledge.
[22] Anwar, Muhammad. (1986). Race and politics minorities and British political system: London tavistok.
[23] The Guardian, 2009, march 28.
[24] Alexander, Y. (ed.). (2003). combating terrorism: Strategies of ten countries. New Delhi: Manas Publications.

groups are reported to use modern information technology in respect to make their targets possible and to keep in contact with their external wings in different areas of the world especially through Afghanistan, Pakistan, Africa and Middle East.[25] The world's most dangerous terrorist network Al-Qaeda gains partnership with different terrorist groups working in England are well involve to plot the terror related activities and incidents in the United kingdom. The black market economy and criminal trade has also been promoted in the country involved in different financial irregularities, drugs trafficking and illegal immigration to England. The smuggling of uranium particles from central Asia to Europe via Afghanistan has posed a serious security threats to the British society. The home ground terrorism in United Kingdom reflects a question of credibility and credibility in performance of the British security agencies stakeholders and decision making authorities.[26]

Conclusion

The menace of terrorism has become a serious concern and a constant danger to human beings throughout the world. The giant of terrorism has emerged as a multifaceted phenomenon that can be understood through the application of different psychological and psycho-social approaches. Although the definition of terrorism has proved controversial and different governments of the states have used different definitions of terrorism in their respective legislative procedures, divergence has made it difficult and complicated to define a legal and acceptable definition of terrorism. The practice of terrorist activities has been observed and exercised throughout the history of mankind. The terrorism phenomenon continued in different regions of the world, i.e. Asia, Africa, Middle East and Europe. The world politics were divided into the bipolar system under the capitalist and communist ideologies. The clash of socio-political ideologies, cultural and geographical conflicts and certain other factors led to manipulate peace and stability in an international environment especially after the occurrence of dreadful terrorist's attacks on the United States immediately after the dawn of 21st century. The adepts of social and behavioral sciences have identified demographic, socio-economic, political and religious factors standing as responsible for regional and international terrorism. The experts of criminology, defense affairs and sociology have evaluated different major types of terrorism i.e. nationalist terrorism, state terrorism, anarchist terrorism, religious terrorism, cyber terrorism, communist terrorism, pure terrorism and global terrorism. Most of the sociologists and researchers of social science have argued that the phenomenon of terrorism leaves direct or indirect implications on the state and society. The occurrence of a terrorist attack intensely affects individuals and institutions, financial markets; it creates psychological disorder, economic repercussions, political instability and imprints negative social impact on different public and private institutions of the society. Consequently the United Kingdom applied a coherent and competent counter terrorism policy with the collaboration of different states and international organizations to contain the evil of terrorism in its domestic jurisdiction and different parts of the World. The strategy of single or collated state against the global terrorism is known counter-terrorism. The British counter terrorism policy attributed with the combination of homogeneity and interaction in international politics. It has been manifested and exercised within the domestic environment of British society to curb different kinds of terrorist activities. The British Counter terrorism strategy is an organized practice of its security agencies and political leadership to prevent different possible threats at national and international level by using the Terrorism early Warning intelligence, strict watch and ward

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system. The British responsible authorities and decision makers have adopted the fool proof policy of freezing the financial funding of the terrorists organizations and various Jihadi groups work inside the United Kingdom and create security concern in contemporary international environment. The British counter terrorism policy includes the legal provisions of a tight security system, effective detention, disruption of financing, better prevention, repression, retaliation, formation of pre-emptive strike, formation of special counter terrorism units and maintenance of a coherent intelligence system. The British government has articulated different techniques of countering terrorism applied by the other states and institutions to curb the objectives and sanctuaries of the dissidents.

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Communicating Social Justice Through the Dance Performance of Amona by Eda Theatre International

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Abstract
Nigerian society grapples with issues related to ethnic conflict, religious violence and corruption. These forms of social injustices have led to a disregard for human dignity, rights and freedom, undermining economic development and limiting opportunities. Additionally, they have destabilized government institutions and democratic processes. In an effort to create a better and more equitable society, contemporary dances are being performed. One such dance performance is entitled *Amona*. Staged on October 1st, 2023, in Lagos State, this performance combines cultural and contemporary movements as a means of communication. The focus of this study is to explore the social justice messages conveyed through the movements in the *Amona* dance performance. By Applying John Swales' rhetorical moves and critical discourse analysis method, the findings reveal that this performance conveys powerful messages about achieving an equitable and fair society.

Keywords: Social Justice, Dance, Amona, Eda Theatre International, Rhetorical Moves

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Introduction

Reports by diverse agencies reveal a deepening corruption in Nigeria. In 2015, Nigeria was ranked 136th out of 170 countries assessed. In subsequent years, the rankings continued: 139th out of 176 countries surveyed in 2016, 148th out of the 175 countries surveyed worldwide in 2017 and 144th out of the 175 countries surveyed in 2018. By 2019, Nigeria's ranking had dropped further to 146th out of the 180 countries considered (Transparency International, 2020). Nigeria failed to meet virtually all the basic conditions for development and found itself stuck in the vortex of perpetual poverty. It is currently ranked as the world's 15th most fragile country (Fund for Peace, 2023).

In the health care sector, funds meant for healthcare have been embezzled, medical equipment and supplies have been stolen. Money meant for development projects, such as the Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC), has been misappropriated. Diversion of resources intended for education to personal projects. Billions of dollars have been lost in the oil industry due to corruption, including the infamous Malabu oil deal (Global Witness, 2023).

The 2023 general elections were marred by allegations of fraud, voter suppression and rigging. The Nigerian Police Force has been accused of widespread bribery and extortion, with officers demanding bribes from citizens. Fake employees and pensioners have been discovered on government payrolls, with millions of dollars lost to fraud (Amnesty International, 2024). These corrupt practices and many others have subverted the rule of law, democratic institutions and public trust, and most importantly, increased poverty, inequalities and discrimination.

Equally, multiple armed groups continue to perpetuate harm and discrimination against individuals and communities. For instance, ongoing attacks and counter-attacks between Fulani herdsmen and indigenous communities (mostly Christian) in States like Plateau, Benue and Taraba. Inter-ethnic clashes and banditry in Kaduna State, involving various ethnic groups like Hausa-Fulani and Kanuri. Clashes between farmers (mostly Christian) and nomadic herders (mostly Fulani Muslim) over land and resources. Unrest and militancy in the Niger Delta region over oil resources and environmental degradation. Tensions and protests by the Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) for an independent state in the Southeast region. Furthermore, these situations have led to killings and jeopardized the livelihood of millions across the country, hindering efforts to build a harmonious and inclusive society.

As a means of contributing to building a better and more equitable society, the *Amona* dance is performed by Eda Theatre International. *Amona* was staged on 1st October, 2023 in Lagos State at an event organized to sensitize citizens. The performance featured only seven dancers and utilized body movements as the primary means of communication. Additionally, the movements of the seven dancers were accompanied by minimal costumes, props, set design, sound and lighting. Therefore, the focus of this study is to explore the social justice messages conveyed through the movements in the *Amona* dance performance.

Dance as Communication

Dance serves as a powerful form of expression, using movement to convey meaning and evoke emotion. Movement lies at the heart of dance, providing the framework for expression, storytelling and communication (DeFrantz, 2020). It emerges from the parallel interface of a dancer's kinesthetic sense of movement and their awareness of space (kinesphere), allowing them to convey profound messages. Unlike other art forms that rely on paint, words, or sounds,

dance employs space, time, and force as its materials. Within dance, these materials unite seamlessly: the body moves through space, requiring time and utilising energy as its force. In various combinations, they create images perceived through visual-kinesthetic senses.

In African dance, movement becomes a potent form of non-verbal communication, transcending language barriers. Dancers convey messages and emotions without relying on words. Rhythm and timing play a critical role in conveying meaning and emotion, with complex polyrhythms and precise timing forming a rich and nuanced language of movement. The use of space and proximity allows dancers to express relationships and emotions. While, facial expressions add depth to their performances. Specific body parts, such as the hips, arms, or legs is isolate to convey meaning and emotion. Connecting with the earth, dancers use weight and gravity to create powerful movements that infuse performances with depth and emotion. Paraphernalia like music, costumes, make up, props, set design, lighting, verbal utterances, texts/poetry enhance the dance experience (Mensah, 2016; Asante, 2018; Albright, 2019).

Across most African Societies, dance serves as a conduit for communicating cultural values. Examples include the *Mhondora* dance among the Shona people of Zimbabwe and *Gelede* dance in Nigeria, both conveying belief systems. Additionally, dances that mark communal life such as agricultural festivals, seasonal transitions, rites of passage, successful project completions and the hope for prosperity. Carry cultural heritage, traditions and identities. Notable examples include the Zulu Reed Dance in South Africa, the Dogon mask dance in Mali and *Koroso* dance in Northern part of Nigeria.

Social Justice and Dance

Social justice means to foster and encourage, in and through partnership, the highest possible development of all human faculties in all its members; and this end is justice or right ordering of such a society. It is a disposition toward recognizing and eradicating all forms of oppression and differential treatment extant in the practices and policies of institutions (Murrell, 2006). Social justice is a process and a goal, aimed at creating a society that values equality, justice and human rights. It seeks to challenge and transform the systems, structures, and institutions that perpetuate inequality, oppression, and social injustice (Sen, 2009; Horton, 2019).

Through the use of body movement, dance exposes social injustice and promotes equality, human rights, empathy, respect and dignity. For example, traditional dances such as *Toyi-Toyi* and *Pantsula* in South Africa, *Adumu* dance among Maasai community in Kenya, *Ndombolo* dance in the Republic of Congo, *Ngoma* dance in Tanzania have been used to resist and protest against the apartheid regime. Protest against land grabbing and advocating for rights of citizens. Promotes peace and reconciliation in conflict affected areas. Educate communities about HIV/AIDS prevention and reduce stigma.

In the South-Western part of Nigeria, dances such as *Bata*, *Egungun* and *Obatala* have been used to mobilize communities against oppression and political marginalization. Promote respect for ancestors and challenge cultural appropriation. Promote agricultural sustainability and challenge environmental degradation. Promote physical and mental well-being and challenge healthcare disparities. In the Eastern part of Nigeria, *Atilogwu*, *Efi* and *Ogwu* dances have been utilized to promote peace and nonviolence in communities. Challenge gender-based violence and advocate for women's rights. Promote environmental sustainability. Equally, In the Northern part of Nigeria, dances like *Bori*, *Shadi* and *Yanjuwa* are used to address mental

health issues and challenge stigma around mental illness. Promotes cultural heritage and challenge cultural erasure. Promote youth empowerment and challenge ageism.

Furthermore, in 'Dance against Human Trafficking', 'Dance Against Gender-Based Violence', 'Dance for Change' and 'Dance for Education', body movement is utilized to advocate for disability rights and inclusion. To raise awareness about human trafficking and support survivors. Exposes gender-based violence and advocate for women's rights. Raise awareness about reproductive health and challenge stigma around sexuality. Equally, In the face of several social injustices such as corruption, ethnic conflict and religious violence, body movement is utilized to convey social justice messages in order to build a just society and inspire positive change. Hence, this study set out to explore the messages conveyed through movements in Amona dance performance.

Theoretical Framework

This study is anchored on John Swales' rhetorical moves. This approach originated from the educational objectives of supporting the teaching of academic writing and reading for non-native speakers of English (Swales, 1990). Rhetorical moves are a framework for analyzing and understanding the rhetorical strategies used in communication, particularly in academic and research writing. Swales' framework identifies six rhetorical moves that writers or performers use to achieve their goals:

> Establishing the research area and claiming its significance, identifying a specific gap in the existing research and claiming its importance, establishing the research question, objectives, and methodology, presenting the research findings and occupying the niche, interpreting the findings and making a claim about their significance, providing evidence and justification for the claim. (Swales, 1990; Swales, 2004; Bhatia, 2004; Henry and Roseberry, 2001; Samraj, 2005)

Eda Theatre international's *Amona* dance performance can be situated within the context of the aforementioned rhetorical moves framework. The performance raises awareness about social injustice issues such as corruption, ethnic conflict and religious violence. It creates a space for reflection and action on social justice matters. The audience is encouraged to engage with the performance, grappling with the complexities of social justice. By applying Swales' Rhetorical Moves framework, this study analyses the social justice messages conveyed through movements in the *Amona* dance performance.

Social Justice Messages in *Amona* Dance Performance

In the dance performance of Amona, social justice messages such as transparency, accountability, unity and equality are conveyed. In conveying these social justice messages, contemporary dance such as Waack, one of the fundamental dance styles in Hip-hop is expressed. Dancers performed Waack with a slight bend in the knees and a relaxed posture. Followed by a quick contraction of muscles in the arms, legs and a release of the contracted muscles. Another movement is Chest Pop. Dancers express a sudden, sharp contraction of the chest muscles accompanied by a slight freeze with the chest and shoulders being the focal point. Also, dancers engage in patterns of foot placement, such as forward and backward walks, side steps, and turns. Shifting their weight onto one foot and distributing it evenly between both feet. The positioning and orientation of the feet and legs are in relation to the body and

the direction of movement. The dance steps are performed in a rapid and repetitive manner to the music titled *Amona Tete Mabo* by J. A. Adelakun.

Figure 1: Waack movement indicating transparency. **Figure 2**: Chest pop demonstrating transparency

Figure 3: Footwork conveying transparency

Aforementioned dance movements such as Waack, chest pop and footwork depict the importance of transparency in leadership and governance. The movements also showcase the negative impact of secrecy and deception on individuals and groups. Emphasises the need for transparency in community organizing and collective action. Celebrate the courage and resilience of individuals who demand transparency. Envision a future where transparency is prioritized and social justice is achieved. The dance steps are accompanied with light and shadow which symbolize the contrast between transparency and secrecy. Equally, speech is incorporated to emphasize the importance of transparency on personal, collective healing and growth.

Dancers also engaged in *Gbekuru* and *Kiniun* forms of Bata dance which is a rapid vibrations of the legs, arms, and torso. Characterized by light footwork involving rapid tapping, stamping and turns. Another movement expressed along with these forms of Bata dance is the Nae Nae. This is a popular dance move in the dab gesture Hip-Hop style. It is a sharp movement of the arms and hands. Quick swaying and snapping of arms down and up. Followed by movement of hips and torso in a subtle way and flipping of the hands up and out to the sides with palms facing upwards.

Figure 4: *Gbekuru* movement representing unity

Figure 5: *Kiniun* movement signifying unity

Figure 6: Nae Nae movement depicting unity

This set of dance movements challenge systemic divisions. Illustrate the principle of ensuring individuals having equal rights, opportunities and treatment, regardless of their gender, religion, socioeconomic status, or any other characteristic. They struggles and triumphs of groups coming together to achieve social justice. Highlight the importance of individual and collective actions in achieving social justice. Portray alternative futures of a united and equitable society free from ethnic conflict, religious violence and corruption. Promote unity and solidarity in purpose, vision and action.

Furthermore, dancers convey ideas through voguing a series of precise and angular movements, poses, and gestures. Involving intricate tosses, quick flicks of the wrist, sharp finger snaps held

briefly in a specific position, creating tension and release. Next comes a dipping movement, involving a swift and controlled descent into a squatting position, a brief hold and a quick ascent back to standing position. Dancers take a lateral position and move forward. Lastly, dancers glide their feet while rotating their bodies clockwise around a central axis. They also glide their feet inward, outward, forward and backward while rotating their body.

Figure 7: Vogue movement portraying equality

Figure 8: Dip movement conveying equality

Figure 9: Glide turn illustrating equality

The aforementioned dance moves expose systems that perpetuate inequality. Illustrating the need for equal access to resources and opportunities. Showcase the resilience and strength of people fighting for equality. Illustrate the value of unity and cooperation in attaining equality. Highlight a future where everyone has equal rights and opportunities. Depict empathy and understanding as traits that promote equality. Present a society where cultures are valued and celebrated equally. Project an alternative futures with equal representation of diverse voices and experiences. Illustrate the duty of individual and collective action in the pursuit of equal opportunities.

In addition, *Apepe Oniyo* is a form of *Apepe* dance that dancers use to convey messages. It involves expressive hand, arm and hip movements accompanied by subtle facial expressions. The dancers execute slow and controlled movements, emphasising their poise. Dancers also perform *Etighi Ogene*, characterized by quick footwork, rapid rotations and arm swings. They slightly bend their knees, maintaining a slight crouch. This is followed by rapid stomping and jumping, incorporating dynamic hip movements. Finally, the dancers express another dance style referred to as *Kpakujemu*. In this movement, they perform while seated, legs stretched out. The focus is on shoulder, chest and hip movements, each moving independently.

Figure 10: *Etighi* movement depicting accountability

Figure 11: *Apepe Oniyo* movement implying accountability

Figure 12: Kpakujemu movement suggesting accountability

These movements illustrate the power of accountability in achieving social change and justice, including the fight against corruption and embezzlement. Portray alternative futures featuring accountable leadership and governance, free from oppression and discrimination. Depict groups holding leaders accountable for their actions, including instances of corruption and human rights violations. Highlight the positive impact of accountability on both individual and collective growth. Emphasis the importance of self-reflection and introspection. Emphasis the

significance of collective care and support in advocating for accountability and achieving social justice. Showcase personal responsibility in advocating for accountability and working towards social justice.

Conclusion

The *Amona* dance performance conveys powerful messages about achieving an equitable and fair society. By holding leaders accountable, confronting social injustices, ensuring equal access to resources and promoting openness, a just society can be built. Equally, the cultural and contemporary dance movements in *Amona* performance further emphasizes the urgency of supporting positive change. It is the submission of this paper that Eda Theatre International's *Amona* performance plays a vital role in shaping understanding of social justice.

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Walls, Spray Paint and the Urban Space: The Graffiti Artists of Durban and Their Navigation of Boundaries

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Abstract
Graffiti, while adding vibrancy to spaces, often carries the stigma of illegality due to its unsanctioned nature. Recognizing this complex interplay and the varying public opinions about graffiti, this paper explores the visible and hidden expressions of Durban's graffiti artists on city walls. The research focuses on how these artists navigate ownership and spatial boundaries in public domains, guided by the central question: How do graffiti artists in Durban reconcile the conflicting dynamics of spatial boundaries and (il)legality in their practice? Using qualitative methods and snowball sampling, five active graffiti artists were interviewed, and their insights were analysed thematically. A key finding is the shifting perception of graffiti from an illegal activity to a more accepted form of public art, as space custodians increasingly allow their walls to be used for graffiti.

Keywords: Durban Graffiti, Public Art, South African Graffiti, Graffiti in the Public, Graffiti and Boundaries

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Introduction

Graffiti has historically been linked to crime, violence, and gang activities. The designation of graffiti as acts of vandalism and the banning of the practice originated in New York in the 1970s. Internationally, installing graffiti on public surfaces has been termed an act of rebellion (Lovata & Olton, 2015). For instance, Taylor, Pooley and Carragher (2016) explain the creation of graffiti as a function of attention-seeking adolescence, where the aspiring youth engages in socially deviant activity to gain social recognition and some sense of momentary ownership of a public space in which their tags occupy. The authors hint that such adolescents are often from unsettled and non-conformist family backgrounds. Thus, their activities are mostly fuelled by the rush of adrenaline experienced while putting up such tags without being caught, and the recognition and the longing for admission into graffiti crews.

In Taylor, Pooley and Carragher's (2016) attempt at describing the protocol for attaining the membership of a graffiti crew, the authors summarily equate graffiti crews to gangs. In similar manner, researchers have reported the use of graffiti to claim territories and contest place-based identities. Derogatory as this may seem, this negative perception stems from the disruptive, transformational, and non-conformist dimensions of the art (Shobe, 2018). Regardless of the negativities surrounding Graffiti, it can be a viable communicative tool for expressing and denoting social needs, concerns, and identities and negotiating differences and boundaries. Nonetheless, the presence of Graffiti in the public space is a confrontation with the restriction placed on who and what belongs in the public.

The 'broken window theory' by Wilson & Kelling (1982) argues that allowing minor infractions like graffiti to persist leads to more serious crimes. Graffiti, seen as a quality-of-life crime (Shobe, 2018), is viewed as a sign that needs immediate removal to prevent further criminal behaviour. However, Ferrell and Weide (2010) point out flaws in this logic. They find that quickly erasing graffiti often results in less detailed and aesthetically pleasing work being created in those spaces, as graffiti artists regard such spots as poor investments. This action does not deter graffiti production but leads to less sophisticated pieces that are easier and faster to produce.

Ferrell and Weide (2010, 54) note that "a spot that won't last long doesn't merit serious artistic investment," which leads to more transient, less refined graffiti. The state's efforts to maintain order are continuously challenged by graffiti artists, who frequently replace removed pieces, creating a cycle of imposition and resistance (Penfold, 2017). Boundaries in urban spaces, while contested, are essential for graffiti, as they provide the canvases needed for the art form (Penfold, 2017). In Durban, graffiti adds vibrancy to the urban landscape but often remains unsanctioned, reinforcing its perception as illegal. The acceptability of graffiti is context-dependent (Shobe, 2018), with some viewing it as a sign of criminality and others as public art. Graffiti artists prioritize high-visibility locations, making these spaces highly contested. This study explores how Durban's graffiti artists navigate ownership and spatial boundaries in their practice, addressing the research question: How do graffiti artists in Durban reconcile the conflicting dynamics of spatial boundaries and (il)legality in their practice?

Perspectives on the Nature of Graffiti

Before the 20th century, graffiti can be traced to cavemen who created signs on cave walls (Parker, Khanyile & Joseph, 2019). Modern graffiti originated in the 1960s and 70s among marginalized groups in the U.S., particularly in New York City, often regarded as the birthplace of modern graffiti (Zieleniec, 2017; Shobe, 2018). Subcultures like punk music, skateboarding, and rap coexisted with graffiti in areas like New York and California (Wrest, 2012; Penfold, 2017). While South African graffiti borrowed from these origins, it also incorporates indigenous elements reflecting the country's culture (Penfold, 2017). Initially focused on lettering, graffiti evolved as it gained popularity, encompassing various visual expressions (Fowler & Fowler, 2000). Graffiti can be categorized into tags, throw-ups, and pieces, each representing different levels of complexity and skill. Tags, the simplest form, were popular in the 1970s in New York. Throw-ups are more elaborate, using multiple colours, while pieces, or masterpieces, are the most detailed and time-consuming, often created by experienced graffiti writers (Wrest, 2012).

The spread of graffiti internationally was driven by external observers, graffiti writers' self-published magazines, and the internet, which enabled artists to learn and improve their work (Wrest, 2012). The South African graffiti scene emerged in the 1980s, challenging the stereotype that graffiti is solely a lower-class activity. In Johannesburg, for instance, many graffiti artists are White, postgraduate students at the University of the Witwatersrand (Penfold, 2017). Forssman and Louw (2016) highlight graffiti's role in reconstructing histories and addressing difficult experiences. In their study, women and children's graffiti in Telperion shelter during wartime served as a form of resistance, leading the authors to categorize it as graffiti rather than rock art due to its empowering and rebellious nature.

South African graffiti is deeply tied to political struggles, serving as visual resistance against oppression (Parker, Khanyile, & Joseph, 2019). The state often removes unsanctioned graffiti based on the broken window theory, which argues that visible disorder leads to further crime. Ironically, the removal of graffiti has become a business, benefiting from the notion that graffiti is inherently illegal (Shobe, 2018). The perception of graffiti's legality is subjective and context-dependent. For example, graffiti in Florence, Italy, which references the traditional sport Calcio Storico, is celebrated rather than condemned, demonstrating that public appreciation of graffiti often depends on cultural context (RugbyPass, 2023).

One controversy in graffiti discourse is the term for legal graffiti. Wrest (2012) suggests "graffiti-influenced art" to distinguish between commissioned works and true graffiti, which is rooted in resistance and vandalism. This distinction helps clarify the difference between graffiti and street art, the latter being broader and less threatening (Shobe, 2018). The creators of graffiti are variously termed artists, writers, or vandals. This terminology reflects differing perspectives on their work. Some prefer 'graffiti writers' to emphasize the writing aspect, while others, like Patrick Thompson, advocate for 'graffiti artists' to acknowledge the creative diversity within the subculture (Landry, 2019). This paper aligns with Thompson, recognizing graffiti creators as artists who contribute to the cultural fabric of urban spaces.

Methods

This study employs a qualitative research methodology to explore the experiences and practices of graffiti artists in Durban. The snowball sampling technique was utilized to identify and engage with five graffiti artists who are actively contributing to the urban art scene in the city. This approach was chosen to leverage the close-knit nature of the graffiti community, allowing participants to recommend others, thus facilitating access to a diverse range of artists.

Data collection was primarily conducted through semi-structured interviews, which were later transcribed for analysis. These interviews provided the flexibility to explore specific themes while allowing the artists to express their thoughts and experiences in their own words. In instances where the artists were initially unreachable, the interview questions were sent electronically, and responses were retrieved via the same medium. To ensure the validity and depth of these responses, follow-up one-on-one interviews were conducted.

The qualitative data gathered from these interviews were subjected to thematic analysis. This method was chosen for its ability to identify and analyse patterns within the data, enabling a nuanced understanding of how these artists navigate and reinterpret urban spaces through their work. To protect the anonymity of the participants, and in alignment with how they present themselves to the public, the artists are referred to by their creative identities rather than their real names throughout this study. This approach respects their chosen personas and maintains consistency with their public representation.

Defining Spatial Boundaries and Ownership

Before analysing the themes that emerged from the qualitative data, it is crucial to define the concepts of spatial boundaries and ownership within the context of this study.

Pena (2023) argues that borders and spaces are inherently interrelated, forming a cohesive whole; borders exist within space, and space is defined by borders. This interconnection is a fundamental attribute of the modern state. According to Yilmaz (2018), a key characteristic of the modern state is its tendency to establish political and social borders and territorialities. The claim to space and territories has been one of the most contentious issues throughout human history, leading to wars, the decimation of populations, and the development of extreme measures, including nuclear weapons, to either expand or protect territorial claims. Yilmaz (2018) introduces the term 'forgery' to describe human territoriality and the claim to space, suggesting that spaces are forged as manifestations of the human quest for spatial order. The term 'forge' carries a dual meaning: it can refer to the creation or manufacturing of spaces, but it also implies falsification. This duality is significant when questioning the ownership of forged spaces and boundaries: To whom does public space truly belong—the state or the people?

In the context of graffiti, the selection of spots is based on the writer's intimate knowledge of the urban landscape and active participation within their crew. The negotiation and selection of these spots become a ritual through which the city and graffiti are interwoven. Ferrell and Weide (2010) liken graffiti to a sport, where the chosen spot becomes the arena. They argue that "graffiti writers charge the urban landscape with new cultural significance as they navigate it" (Ferrell & Weide, 2010, 51). Another factor in selecting graffiti spots is the promise of longevity and durability. Graffiti writers often choose locations where their work is likely to remain visible for longer periods, avoiding spots that the municipality might quickly repaint. The potential for longevity motivates artists to invest their best efforts in these spots, as they see it as a worthwhile investment of their aesthetic skills (Ferrell & Weide, 2010).
However, in the world of graffiti, certain spaces are considered off-limits, such as cemeteries and places of religious worship. Other spaces are selected based on strategic factors like wall size, location, visibility, potential longevity, availability of materials, time, risk, and ownership. On the whole, the locations and boundaries navigated by graffiti artists can be categorized into four groups:

1. Publicly owned spaces: e.g., government buildings, parks, public infrastructure (bridges).
2. Privately owned spaces: e.g., private residences, office spaces, and buildings.
3. Cultural institutions: e.g., galleries and museums.
4. Operational boundaries defined by graffiti writers: e.g., crew territories.

The concepts of ownership and territoriality are central to this categorization, raising critical questions: In which spaces do graffiti artists typically operate? Who are the true owners or custodians of these spaces?

The Politics of Navigating Ownership and Spatial Boundaries in the Public

Based on the thematic analysis of the qualitative data, this section explores the strategies adopted by graffiti artists in Durban in navigating territorial boundaries within the earlier-defined spatial categories.

Alternative Surfaces & Spaces

Graffiti artists in Durban, like their global counterparts, are often seen as rebellious figures disrupting urban spaces. However, graffiti is guided by unwritten codes that dictate where artists can operate. Certain locations, such as houses of worship, cemeteries, and private properties, are typically off-limits, as noted by Ferrell and Weide (2010) and Penfold (2017). These restrictions push artists to creatively navigate around these boundaries, finding alternative surfaces and spaces for their art. A way Durban's graffiti artists overcome these spatial limitations is by expanding beyond traditional urban walls. Rose highlights this by noting that their work isn't limited to conventional mediums but extends to "shoes, shirts, walls, digital and computer," and even "tattooing." Damn Vandal also illustrates this adaptability, mentioning the customization of high-profile items like a Lamborghini and painting in shopping malls, showcasing how graffiti can defy traditional constraints of public space.

Strategic location choices are crucial for navigating spatial boundaries. While some artists, like Meek, choose spots "where it's either accepted or it's out of the eyes" to avoid trouble, others, like Damn Vandal, explore cities like Johannesburg, where there are "fewer restrictions." This geographic flexibility allows artists to continue their work in environments more conducive to their creativity, avoiding legal and social repercussions in places like Durban. The concept of 'liquid spots,' as discussed by Ferrell and Weide (2010), provides another way to bypass spatial limits. These mobile surfaces, like freight trains, delivery vans, and storefront grates, offer dynamic platforms for graffiti that transcend static urban walls, increasing visibility and reach as the art travels across regions. Graffiti thus becomes a fluid, ever-moving art form that defies traditional notions of space and permanence.

The digital realm further enhances this fluidity. As Shobe (2018) notes, social media and photography allow graffiti artists to document and share their work with a global audience, overcoming the ephemeral nature of graffiti. These platforms give artists more control over public narratives, turning the digital space into a new kind of 'liquid spot' where graffiti can exist and be appreciated far beyond its physical location.

Cultural institutions like galleries and museums often act as gatekeepers, curating which artworks gain exposure. To circumvent this, graffiti artists choose to display their work in public spaces, bypassing the control of traditional art venues and asserting their independence.

This choice challenges conventional art hierarchies. Lastly, the selection of graffiti spots is not only about visibility and legality but also about credibility within the graffiti community. Ferrell and Weide (2010) observe that artists often choose secluded areas known only within the graffiti subculture to showcase their skills and gain recognition among peers. These spots, whether legal walls or hidden corners of the city, offer a space for competition and pushing the boundaries of their craft in a supportive yet challenging environment. Public spots are chosen for their potential to attract a wider audience, with riskier locations often earning the artist greater respect and recognition.

Aesthetic Considerations

Graffiti artists in Durban strategically create visually appealing pieces that resonate with the communities where they are placed. Rose highlights the importance of aesthetics, stating that if the artwork is "not appealing to the people around that community, they're not going to be happy." However, when the art is pleasing, "the chances of them being unhappy and actually charging you is much less." Meek echoes this sentiment, explaining that spreading "good vibes" through art can lead to positive interactions, with people gathering to watch the artist at work rather than reporting it as vandalism. This approach not only helps artists avoid legal repercussions but also fosters a sense of ownership and pride among community members. The Westdene Graffiti Project exemplifies how graffiti can blur ownership lines and create a more fluid relationship between public and private space (Penfold, 2017). In this project, residents donated their public-facing walls for graffiti, resulting in shared ownership of the artwork and increased community pride as passers-by admired the walls.

Graffiti artists in Durban also distinguish between vandalism and artistic expression. They see their elaborate, detailed pieces as contributions to society rather than acts of vandalism. Rose explains that when graffiti is done well, even initial disapproval can turn into appreciation for making surroundings more attractive. In contrast, simple tags, which are less aesthetically developed, are more likely to be seen as vandalism and result in legal issues.

This distinction is further highlighted by the different approaches of South African cities. While Durban and Cape Town have by-laws criminalizing all graffiti, Johannesburg adopts a more relaxed stance, embracing graffiti as long as it is 'aesthetically tasteful' (Penfold, 2017). This difference underscores the importance of aesthetics in how graffiti is perceived and regulated. In cities like Johannesburg, where visual quality is emphasized, graffiti thrives as a legitimate form of urban expression rather than being dismissed as vandalism. Artists like Damn Vandal and Meek also stress the importance of style and quality in their work. Damn Vandal describes his work as having a "very unique style that looks like digital work," which people appreciate for its vibrance and detail. Meek argues that graffiti should be 'attractive,' incorporating elements like animals, plants, and colourful names to gain acceptance from the community.

Free Public Access

Graffiti artists in Durban strategically use public space to bypass the spatial boundaries imposed by traditional art institutions like galleries and museums. Unlike other art forms confined to controlled environments, graffiti thrives in the open, democratizing art by bringing it directly to the public. Rose highlights this, noting that while traditional artists often "pay for promotion" by exhibiting in galleries, graffiti artists go "directly into the public eye," using the

city as their canvas. This unrestricted access allows graffiti artists to reach a broader audience, bypassing the traditional gatekeeping of the art world and challenging the exclusivity of cultural institutions.

Dane shares an anecdote of a graffiti artist who views the gallery as a 'caged bird,' refusing to confine his work within walls. For these artists, painting in public spaces is not just an aesthetic choice but a core part of their artistic identity. Dane argues that graffiti should not be treated differently from studio art, seeing it as an extension of traditional practice, but one that exists outside the constraints of the gallery system. This approach aligns with Dawud Osaze Kamau Anyabwile's comparison of graffiti to social media, as cited by Degand (2022). Anyabwile likens graffiti's immediacy and visibility to social media, where the lack of institutional gatekeepers allows for direct engagement. Graffiti, like social media, serves as a form of visual communication that bypasses traditional pathways to exposure. Creating graffiti in public spaces can also be seen as resistance against exploitation by cultural institutions. Graffiti artists avoid the micro-management, commercialization, and exploitation that can come with gallery representation. By displaying their work in public, they reclaim control over their art and its reception, using public space as a platform for free expression without institutional interference.

Permission and Respect for Spatial Ownership

Graffiti artists in Durban often navigate the tension between legal and territorial boundaries. As Rose and Meek explain, graffiti can be a battleground where artists assert dominance and claim spaces through their work, leading to conflicts when one artist encroaches on another's territory. Rose emphasizes this competitive nature, where dominance is secured by making one's name visible on walls. In contrast, seeking permission serves as a strategic way to avoid such conflicts. Damn Vandal illustrates a shift towards legal and community-focused graffiti, preferring to obtain permission from property owners to mitigate the risks of illegal work. This approach reflects a broader trend among artists who, as they mature and assume more responsibilities, prioritize urban beautification and legal compliance. Meek, even when targeting potentially illegal spots, ensures he has the consent of relevant parties, thus respecting property rights and avoiding legal issues.

Ewok introduces the concept of self-permission, where artists claim public walls as a form of resistance against the commodification of urban spaces. He argues that graffiti's social commentary lies in its act of reclaiming space rather than in the content of the art itself. By choosing prominent walls without explicit permission, Ewok challenges societal norms about ownership and asserts artistic presence against commercial control. Additionally, peer permission is crucial in this context. Meek's practice of collaborating with other artists, especially when their work overlaps, highlights the importance of respecting fellow artists' contributions. This fosters a collaborative environment, reducing potential conflicts and leading to more cohesive murals.

Collaboration With Community and Peers

Collaboration is a key strategy for graffiti artists in Durban to navigate and circumvent spatial and social boundaries. By working together with other artists and the local community, these artists enhance their creative output and foster shared ownership and legitimacy, allowing them to operate within and sometimes transcend environmental limits. Rose emphasizes collaboration as central to his practice, noting that most of his work is done in partnership with

others. This strengthens the local graffiti scene and bridges generational gaps between younger and older artists, aligning with the idea that graffiti can uplift and engage the community. Involving multiple artists in a project results in a collective expression that reflects diverse voices and styles. Ewok further highlights the importance of building relationships with the local community, noting that when community members are involved in the conceptualization and execution of a mural, the artwork becomes a part of the community's identity rather than an external imposition.

Seeking permission from other graffiti writers often leads to creative collaborations, transforming potential conflicts into opportunities for cooperative creation. Meek exemplifies this by actively seeking out other artists to work with, rather than being territorial. Damn Vandal also discusses the benefits of brand collaboration, noting that it can provide valuable exposure and resources, though he cautions against partnerships that may not align with an artist's values. Dane and Ewok's experiences of organizing large-scale projects involving multiple artists further illustrate the collaborative nature of graffiti in Durban. These efforts not only produce impressive and diverse artworks but also reinforce the sense of solidarity within the graffiti community, helping artists navigate the challenges of limited legal spaces and societal acceptance.

Skill Development and Building Relevance

Graffiti artists in Durban navigate spatial boundaries by refining their skills and strategically building relevance within local and global communities. As their craft evolves, these artists cultivate legitimacy, allowing them to transcend the illegal connotations associated with graffiti and effectively bypass legal and social constraints. Rose highlights the importance of developing a strong portfolio or 'catalogue' to secure a lasting legacy in the graffiti world. He references artists like Banksy and Cope, who began with illegal activities but eventually gained recognition where their past actions became secondary to their art. For Rose, overcoming the stigma of illegality lies in becoming so skilled and recognized that the art itself gains cultural and societal value, diminishing the relevance of legal boundaries. Damn Vandal echoes this idea, noting the pressure to continually improve. As South African artists refine their skills, public perception shifts from viewing graffiti as vandalism to recognizing it as an art form that enhances the urban environment. This gradual acceptance reduces legal enforcement and opens new spaces for artistic expression.

The global context is also crucial. Parker, Khanyile, and Joseph (2019) observe that the international success of artists like Banksy and the booming graffiti tourism in cities like Melbourne have blurred the lines between vandalism and public art. Durban's graffiti artists must master practical skills to succeed, including developing a distinctive style, mastering spray can control, and strategically selecting work locations, as noted by Ferrell & Weide (2010). These skills not only create visually appealing pieces but also help navigate the urban environment. As Damn Vandal suggests, the local graffiti scene is evolving, with artists pushing boundaries to create more detailed and ambitious work. This collective advancement helps establish graffiti as a respected part of Durban's cultural landscape, weakening the spatial boundaries that once confined it. The more sophisticated and recognized the graffiti community becomes, the harder it is for authorities and the public to dismiss their work as mere vandalism, making it an acknowledged and valued aspect of urban culture.

Decreased Appetite for Risk

As graffiti artists in Durban transition into adulthood, their approach to the art form evolves with the responsibilities and expectations that come with age. The need to support a family and maintain a stable income reduces their willingness to engage in high-risk graffiti activities. Instead, many artists shift towards sanctioned, community-oriented projects that allow them to continue their creative practice while navigating the spatial boundaries that typically restrict graffiti work. Damn Vandal's reflections illustrate this transition: as his responsibilities grow, such as raising a family and managing property, his appetite for risk diminishes. He now prefers obtaining permission to paint on dilapidated walls, aiming for 'urban beautification' and creating lasting, impactful pieces.

This trend aligns with broader observations in graffiti culture. Taylor, Pooley, and Carragher (2016) note that adulthood prompts many graffiti artists to seek stable income and engage in financially rewarding creative activities, leading them to transition from illegal graffiti to more legitimate forms of art. This shift not only accommodates their adult responsibilities but also helps them navigate the spatial and legal boundaries that often constrain graffiti. Damn Vandal's comments further highlight how time constraints from family and work limit his opportunities for spontaneous, high-risk graffiti. His approach becomes more deliberate and calculated, reflecting a broader trend among older graffiti artists who prioritize stability over the thrill of illegal activity.

Gender dynamics also influence how artists navigate these boundaries. Lohmann (2020) notes that contemporary graffiti is predominantly young and male, with fewer women involved. The risky nature of graffiti, appealing more to men driven by ego and the desire to assert themselves in public spaces, may explain this imbalance. As artists age and their risk tolerance decreases, the shift towards legal projects may also reflect a move away from the more aggressive, male-dominated aspects of graffiti culture. Lohmann's historical analysis suggests that women have historically had less access to graffiti due to lower literacy levels and restricted access to certain spaces. This historical exclusion might explain why, even today, women are less likely to engage in illegal graffiti and more likely to operate within sanctioned boundaries.

Conclusion

This study illuminates how graffiti artists in Durban navigate the complex and often conflicting dynamics of spatial boundaries and (il)legality. Graffiti, by its nature, exists in a liminal space where the tension between legality and illegality, public and private ownership, and artistic expression versus societal norms plays out in real-time. This study reveals that Durban's graffiti artists have developed nuanced strategies to reconcile these conflicts, grounded in their evolving identities, skills, and responsibilities. A key finding is the role of personal growth and maturation in shaping an artist's relationship with illegality. The study also highlights the polarized public perception of graffiti. While some view it as a form of urban decay, others recognize its potential for placemaking and community building. The broken window theory, which suggests that visible signs of disorder like graffiti can lead to further crime and social decay, has been a dominant narrative against graffiti. However, this study takes a critical stance against this theory, arguing that graffiti, when created with intention and skill, does not degrade urban spaces but rather enriches them by fostering dialogue and reflecting the diverse stories of the community.

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Assessing the Impact of Artificial Intelligence Assisted Software Development Within the Game Industry: A Study of Player and Industry Perspectives

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Abstract
In an era where artificial intelligence (AI) is revolutionizing various sectors, its integration into video game development presents a novel frontier. This study aims to evaluate the influence of AI on game development and its perception by critical stakeholders: players and industry professionals. The primary objective is to understand how AI assistance impacts the development process, game quality, and user experience in the context of a college football simulation game. Can AI tools close the barrier of entry for small game developers and studios? This study employs a mixed-methods approach, incorporating both artifact creation and survey methodologies. Specifically, quantitative surveys collect detailed feedback following participants' interaction with an AI-assisted Java Swing college football video game. Players and industry professionals are surveyed to rate various aspects of the AI-assisted game, including usability, gameplay experience, and overall quality. The survey employs a Likert scale for quantitative evaluation, complemented by three specific questions to capture nuanced insights into the AI's effectiveness and potential areas for improvement. The research addresses a crucial gap in the existing literature by focusing on the technicalities of how the game was developed using AI Large Language Model's (LLM) coding. By analyzing the feedback, the study offers a unique perspective on the acceptability and viability of AI in game development. Findings are expected to provide valuable insights into the evolving landscape of video game development, where AI assistance plays an increasingly significant role. This research is pivotal for developers, designers, and stakeholders in the gaming industry.

Keywords: Artificial Intelligence in Game Development, AI-Assisted Game Development, Development Studios, Java College Football Simulation, Coding Artifact, Quantitative Study

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Introduction

In recent years, the rapid advancement of artificial intelligence (AI) has significantly transformed various industries, from healthcare to finance. The video game industry, in particular, stands on the brink of a revolution driven by AI integration. AI's potential to enhance game development processes, improve gameplay experience, and elevate overall game quality is immense. This study delves into this emerging frontier, evaluating the impact of AI on game development and its perception by critical stakeholders, including players and industry professionals.

The primary focus of this research is to understand how AI assistance influences the development process, game quality, and user experience within the context of a college football simulation game. By utilizing AI tools, particularly for automated code generation and integration with development environments, this study explores whether AI can lower the barrier to entry for small game developers and studios, allowing them to compete with larger, more established entities.

This study employs a mixed-methods approach, combining artifact creation with survey methodologies. The artifact, a college football simulation game, was developed from scratch using Java Swing with OpenAI's GPT-4.0 API. The development process involved generating code snippets through natural language prompts, refined and integrated into an integrated development environment (IDE). The author, the CEO and creative director of a fictitious video game studio oversaw this process. Collaboration with OpenAI's API was facilitated via email, serving as the primary interaction mechanism with the AI called "Engineer 0." This back-and-forth exchange, spanning approximately 103 hours, culminated in completing the simulation game.

Quantitative surveys were administered to gather comprehensive feedback from players and industry professionals after game interaction. The surveys, consisting of 30 questions including 27 Likert scale items and three open-ended questions, were designed to assess various aspects of the AI-assisted game. Participants were asked to rate the game's usability, gameplay experience, and overall quality, providing insights into the perceived effectiveness and areas for improvement of AI integration in game development.

The research addresses a crucial gap in the existing literature by focusing on the technicalities of developing a game with AI-assisted natural language processing (NLP) coding. By analyzing feedback from a diverse group of participants, this study aims to offer a unique perspective on the acceptability and viability of AI in the game development landscape. The findings are expected to provide valuable insights into the evolving role of AI, highlighting its potential to streamline development processes, reduce costs, and close the overall gap for small development studios.

Ultimately, this research is pivotal for developers, designers, and stakeholders in the gaming industry. It underscores AI's transformative potential, not only in improving game quality and user experience but also in democratizing game development by empowering smaller studios and independent developers. As AI advances, understanding its impact on video game development will be essential for staying at the forefront of this dynamic industry.

Literature Review

Integrating artificial intelligence (AI) into various sectors has been a transformative force, revolutionizing industries and altering traditional methodologies. In video game development, AI is no longer just complex code that was your rival opponent; AI in video game development presents novel opportunities for enhancing game design, development processes, and player experiences. This literature review synthesizes existing research on AI's impact on game development, focusing on key themes such as AI-generated content, development tools, user experience, and the broader implications for small game developers.

Risi and Preuss (2020) provide a comprehensive overview of how AI has evolved from basic applications in games like Chess and Atari to more complex integrations in modern games such as StarCraft. They highlight AI's significant role in creating more sophisticated and dynamic gaming experiences. Similarly, Yannakakis and Togelius (2015) explore the broad applications of artificial and computational intelligence in games, emphasizing how AI-driven algorithms enhance game mechanics and player engagement.

Procedural content generation (PCG) is crucial in understanding AI's role in game development. Shaker, Togelius, and Nelson (2016) delve into PCG, discussing how AI algorithms can autonomously generate vast amounts of game content, thereby reducing the development time and effort required from human developers. Tang et al. (2020) echoes this, exploring the application of AI algorithms in games and underscoring their ability to create varied and complex game environments.

Another significant area of focus is the use of AI tools within integrated development environments (IDEs). Rivières and Wiegand (2004) discuss Eclipse as a platform that integrates development tools, which can now be enhanced with AI capabilities to streamline coding processes. The comprehensive review by IDEs (2023) further elucidates how these environments facilitate AI integration, providing real-time coding suggestions, autocompletion, and code refactoring.

The impact of AI on user experience is a critical aspect of game development. Mekler et al. (2014) systematically reviewed quantitative studies on the enjoyment of digital entertainment games, highlighting the factors contributing to a satisfying gaming experience. Sužnjević, Skorin-Kapov, and Matijašević (2013) investigate the impact of user, system, and context factors on gaming quality of experience (QoE), offering insights into how AI can enhance or detract from player satisfaction.

AI's role in education and ethical considerations are also pertinent to its application in game development. García-Martínez et al. (2023) analyze the impact of AI and computational sciences on student performance, suggesting parallels in how AI can be used for educational purposes within games. Zhou et al. (2020) provide a survey on the ethical principles of AI and its implementations, emphasizing the need for ethical considerations in AI-driven game development to ensure responsible use and creativity.

Ray (2023) discusses AI's challenges, biases, and limitations, providing a balanced view of its potential and pitfalls. The review by Java Engineer (2023) highlights the specific requirements and career paths for Java engineers relevant to the context of developing AI-assisted games. Herrity (2020) offers insights into object-oriented programming (OOP), a foundational concept

for game developers leveraging AI tools. Hudlicka (n.d.) explores the requirements for effective game engines, adding another layer of complexity to AI's role in game design.

This literature review underscores AI's multifaceted impact on game development, from enhancing procedural content generation to improving user experience and addressing ethical considerations. Integrating AI tools within IDEs and the broader implications for small game developers suggest a transformative potential for the industry. As AI continues to evolve, its role in game development will likely expand, offering new opportunities and challenges for developers and stakeholders alike.

Methodology

This study adopts a mixed-methods approach, integrating both artifact creation and survey methodologies to evaluate the impact of AI-assisted game development on user experience and perceived game quality. The research design encompasses the development of a college football simulation game and the subsequent collection of feedback from both players and industry professionals.

Artifact Creation

The artifact, a college football simulation game, was developed using Java Swing and the AI capabilities of OpenAI's GPT-4.0 API. The development process involved several vital steps. Initially, code snippets were generated using natural language prompts directed to the OpenAI API. These prompts were crafted by the author, who took on the CEO and creative director role of a fictitious video game studio. The generated code snippets were then integrated into an Integrated Development Environment (IDE), specifically Eclipse, where they underwent minimal adjustments to incorporate into the final game.

Human oversight was an integral part of this process, ensuring that the generated code met the game's creative and technical requirements. This iterative process of code generation and refinement spanned approximately 103 hours. Interaction with the AI referred to as "Engineer 0" was conducted through a back-and-forth email exchange set up once via Microsoft Outlook and Open AI's API. This method allowed for continuous feedback and iteration, enhancing the game's overall quality.

Survey Methodology

To assess the perceptions of the AI-assisted game, quantitative surveys were administered to gather comprehensive feedback. Participants included 55 Sports Management students from the University of South Florida (USF), 64 Computer Science students from Stetson University, and 12 industry professionals from Steamroller Studios and Electronic Arts (EA). The survey consisted of 30 questions, with 27 Likert scale items and three open-ended questions, covering various aspects of the game, such as user interface, graphics quality, gameplay experience, and overall quality.

The survey was designed to be user-friendly and was administered electronically. Participants interacted with the college football simulation game for 20 minutes using a laptop computer, followed by a 10-minute survey to provide feedback on their experience. The data collected from the surveys were analyzed to determine mean values, standard deviations, and median values for each question. To identify statistically significant differences, comparative analysis

was conducted between different participant groups, such as USF vs. Stetson students and EA vs. Steamroller studios. The analysis focused on understanding variations in perceptions of game usability, gameplay experience, and overall quality, with p-values less than 0.05 considered statistically significant.

Game Development Process

The game development process involved creating a detailed college football simulation game with several key features. The game was programmed in Java, with a hand-coded pixel-by-pixel graphical user interface developed using Java Swing. OpenAI's GPT-4.0 API provided AI assistance, and graphics were generated using DALL·E 2. Over 100 hours of coding were invested in the development, resulting in more than 6000 lines of code. The game included dynamic weather effects, real-time box scores, comprehensive team statistics, team selections, play-by-play text-based commentary, and more.

Figure 1 – Welcome Screen

Figure 2 – Fictious College Logo Examples

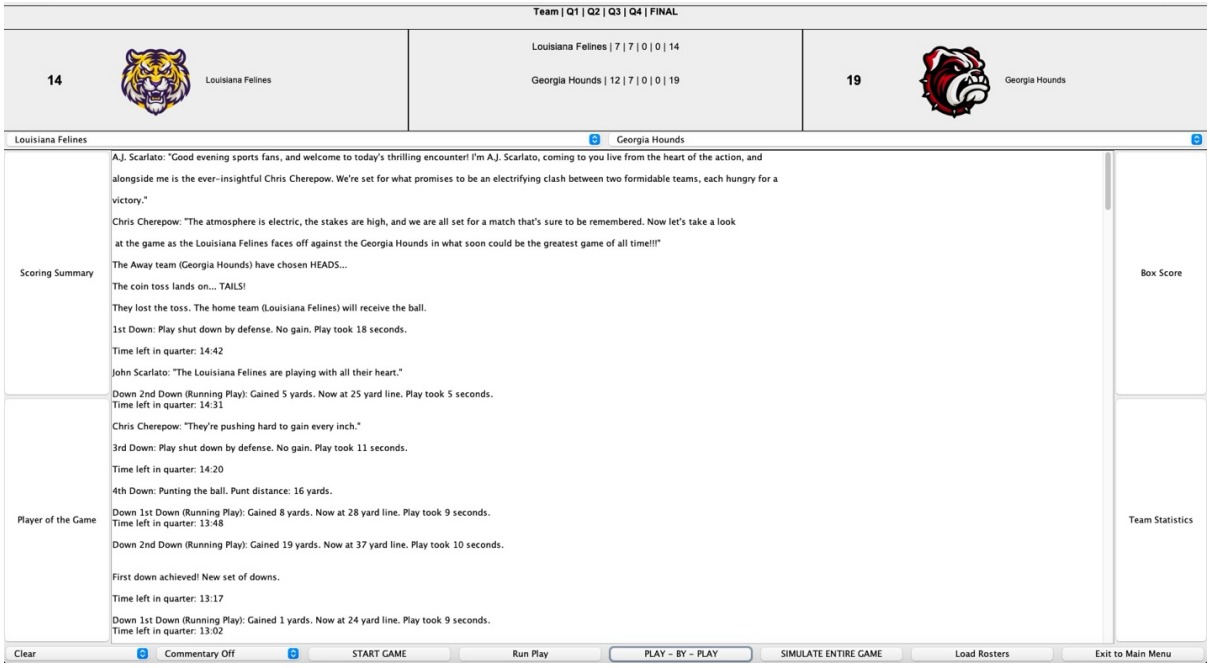

Figure 3 – Play-by-Play Simulation

This structured methodology ensured a thorough evaluation of the AI-assisted game development process, providing valuable insights into the potential and challenges of integrating AI into video game creation. The findings from this study are expected to contribute significantly to the understanding of AI's role in enhancing game development and its acceptance among players and industry professionals.

Data Collection

Data collection for this study involved a systematic approach to gather comprehensive feedback on the AI-assisted college football simulation game from diverse participants, including students and industry professionals. The primary tool for data collection was a quantitative survey administered after participants had engaged with the game for a set period.

Participant Engagement

Participants, comprising 55 Sports Management students from the University of South Florida, 64 Computer Science students from Stetson University, and 12 industry professionals from Steamroller Studios and Electronic Arts, were asked to interact with the game for 20 minutes using a laptop computer. Following this gameplay session, participants completed a 30-question survey to evaluate various aspects of the game.

Survey Design and Administration

The survey included 27 Likert scale questions and three open-ended questions. The Likert scale questions covered vital areas such as the user interface, graphics quality, gameplay experience, AI behavior, and overall game quality. The open-ended questions provided additional qualitative insights into specific aspects of the game and allowed participants to elaborate on their experiences and perceptions.

Statistical Analysis

Upon collection, the survey data were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistical methods. Mean, median, and standard deviation values were calculated for each Likert scale question to summarize responses' central tendency and dispersion. These metrics provided a clear picture of the overall participant feedback and identified any variations in perceptions.

To determine the statistical significance of the differences in responses between various groups (e.g., USF students vs. Stetson students, students vs. industry professionals), comparative analysis was performed using p-values. A p-value less than 0.05 was considered statistically significant, indicating that the observed differences were unlikely to have occurred by chance.

Data Interpretation

The analysis focused on critical areas where statistically significant differences were identified. For instance, differences in perceptions of game usability, gameplay experience, and overall quality were highlighted. This rigorous statistical approach ensured that the findings were robust and reliable, providing a solid foundation for interpreting the impact of AI-assisted game development.

The quantitative data comprehensively understood the participants' experiences and perceptions. This approach enabled the study to capture both the broad trends in participant feedback and the nuanced insights into the AI's effectiveness and areas for improvement, ultimately contributing to a deeper understanding of AI's role in game development.

Results

Quantitative Analysis

The survey results provided a wealth of data regarding participant perceptions of the AI-assisted college football simulation game. The data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, including mean, median, and standard deviation, to summarize the central tendencies and response variability. Additionally, inferential statistics were employed to identify statistically significant differences between various participant groups.

Descriptive Statistics

Overall, participants rated the game positively across several dimensions. The mean values for most questions indicated general satisfaction with the game's user interface, graphics quality, and gameplay experience. For example, the mean rating for the overall user interface was 4.2 out of 5, indicating high satisfaction. The standard deviation for this question was 0.6, suggesting relatively low response variability.

Similarly, the game's graphics quality received a mean rating of 4.0, with a standard deviation of 0.7. This positive reception was mirrored in the ratings for gameplay experience, which had a mean value of 4.1 and a standard deviation of 0.8. These descriptive statistics highlight that most participants found the AI-assisted game highly quality.

Comparative Analysis

A comparative analysis between different participant groups revealed several statistically significant differences. Using a p-value threshold of 0.05, the analysis identified significant variations in responses between students from Stetson University and the University of South Florida (USF), as well as between professionals from Electronic Arts (EA) and Steamroller Studios.

1. USF vs. Stetson Students

- **Familiarity With College Football Games (Q1):** Stetson University students reported a higher familiarity with college football games than USF students. The mean rating for familiarity was significantly higher among Stetson students, with a p-value of less than 0.05.
- **Notice of Glitches/Bugs (Q6):** USF students reported noticing more glitches than their Stetson counterparts. The difference in mean ratings for this question was statistically significant, suggesting a disparity in-game performance perception between the two groups.
- **Loading Time Reasonability (Q8):** The mean rating for loading time reasonability was significantly lower among USF students, indicating a perceived longer loading time. This difference was statistically significant, with a p-value of less than 0.05.
- **Smooth Performance (Q10):** Stetson students rated the game's performance smoother than USF students. This difference in ratings was statistically significant, highlighting a potential discrepancy in the game experience between the two groups.
- **Balance of Realistic Statistics (Q14):** There were significant differences in how students from both universities perceived the realism of the game's statistics. Stetson students gave higher ratings for realistic statistics, with a p-value indicating statistical significance.
- **Redundant Features (Q15):** Responses indicated differing opinions on the necessity of certain game features. USF students were more likely to find some features redundant compared to Stetson students, a statistically significant difference.
- **Audio and Sound Quality (Q16):** Perceptions of the game's audio and sound quality varied significantly between the two student groups, with Stetson students giving higher ratings.
- **Enhanced Enjoyment by Play Simulation (Q28):** Stetson students reported greater enjoyment from the game's play simulation aspect, a statistically significant difference.
- **Estimated Development Hours (Q30):** There was a significant difference in the estimated development hours between students and industry professionals, with professionals generally estimating higher development hours.

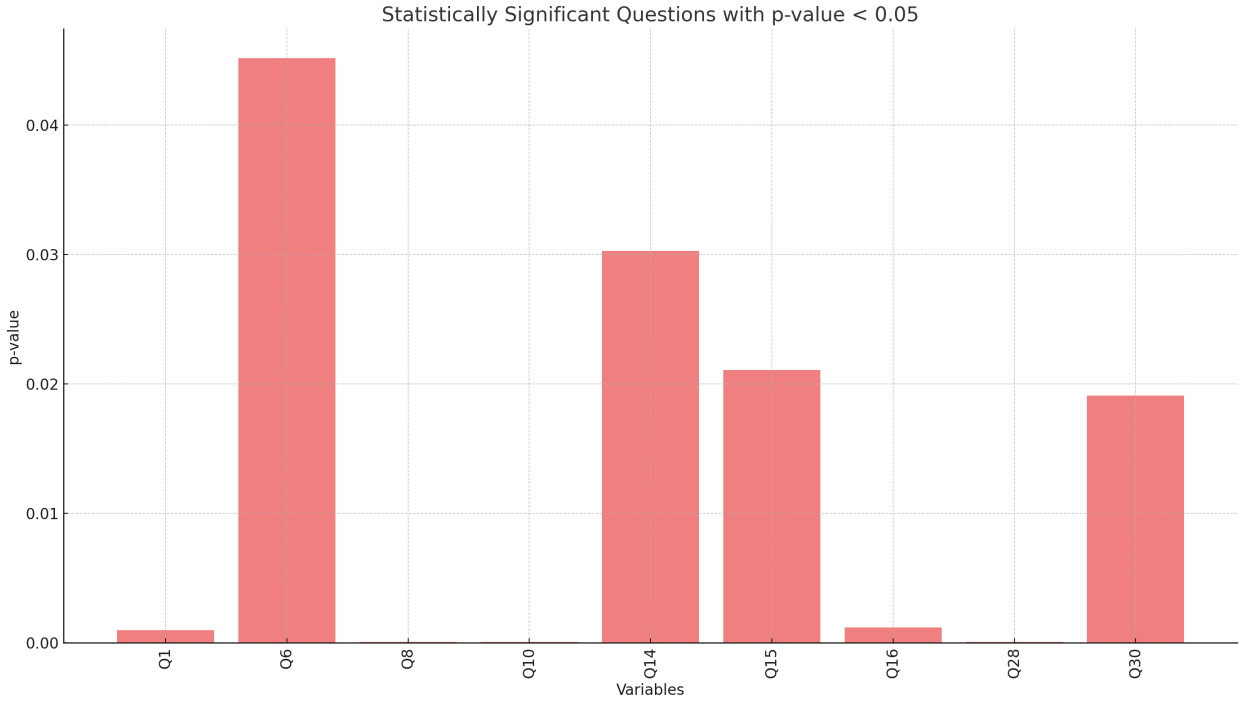

Figure 4 – Statistically Significant Questions - USF vs. Stetson

2. EA vs. Steamroller Studios

- **Menu Design (Q3):** EA professionals rated the menu design as more user-friendly than Steamroller professionals, indicating a preference for EA's approach to user interface design.
- **Audio Quality (Q16):** There were significant discrepancies in the perceived audio quality, with EA professionals rating it higher than their Steamroller counterparts.
- **Variety of Gameplay Options (Q19):** EA professionals expressed higher satisfaction with the variety of gameplay options available in the game, highlighting an area for potential improvement for the Steamroller team.

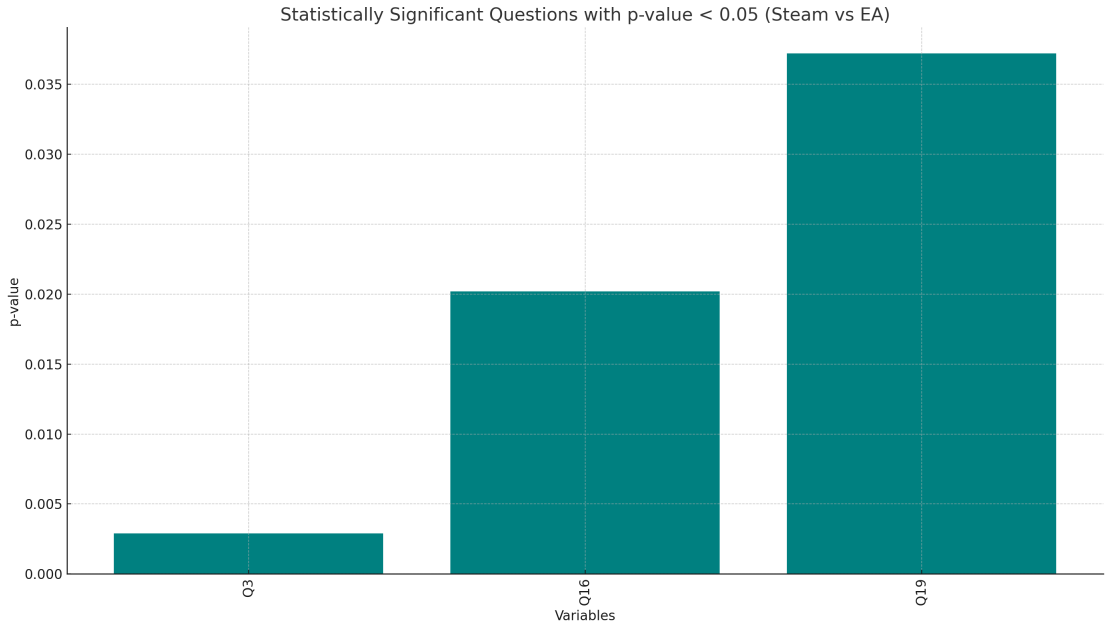

Figure 5 – Statistically Significant Questions – Steamroller vs. EA

Future Work

Future research will focus on adding layer of data analysis by more deeply comparing the perceptions of industry professionals with those of players and students. This comparison aims to identify nuanced differences and similarities in their evaluations of AI-assisted game development. It provides a richer understanding of how these distinct groups perceive usability, gameplay experience, and overall quality.

Additionally, further coding efforts will be undertaken to complete the game/artifact fully. Once finalized, a 30-day Kickstarter campaign will be launched to assess the game's financial viability. This campaign will gauge market interest and potential funding and offer valuable insights into the commercial prospects of AI-assisted game development.

Conclusion

The survey results demonstrated that the AI-assisted college football simulation game was generally well-received, with positive ratings across various dimensions of usability, gameplay experience, and overall quality. Statistically significant differences between participant groups provided valuable insights into specific areas of improvement and highlighted the varying expectations and experiences of different user groups.

The findings underscore the true potential of AI tools in game development, particularly in enhancing productivity and quality. They also point to the importance of addressing specific user feedback to improve the gaming experience. Notably, the results show that a single-person studio, working for 103 hours, can produce a game that is perceived to be on par with top-tier games.

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Echoes of Creativity: Bridging Pedagogy and Innovation Through a Real-World Design Project

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The European Conference on Arts & Humanities 2024
Official Conference Proceedings

Abstract
During the second semester of 2022/23, a pedagogical practice was implemented at Porto Lusófona University for second-year Communication Design undergraduates. The rock band *Squeezos*, consisting of five young musicians from Porto City, challenged the 2nd-year Design class to create a graphic image for their upcoming album cover. This request came from one of the band members who was also a student from the first-year course. In response, the students generated design proposals, and the band selected one for the album cover. The project followed the *Design Thinking* methodology, from problem definition to project ideation, prototyping, and implementation. The article is structured into four sections: Introduction, literature review, work methodology, and conclusion. This initiative was mutually beneficial for the musicians, who are university students and cannot afford to pay professional designers. Design students are allowed to participate in a real-world project and apply the tools and methods acquired during their coursework; it exemplifies a successful initiative, where pedagogical activities converge with collaborative involvement as a motivational force for students; it was an excellent way to prepare graduates for the professional sphere by fostering engagement through innovative practices; engaging in the design process for an actual music album cover lets students to gain hands-on experience, equipping them with valuable skills and insights beyond traditional classroom activities; furthermore, provides a tangible learning opportunity and enhances the practical value of students' academic endeavors by allowing them to showcase their work in the market, thereby improving the quality of their portfolios.

Keywords: Pedagogical Practice, Lusofona University, Communication Design Students, Design Album Cover, *Squeezos*

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Introduction

During the second semester of 2022/23, a pedagogical practice was implemented at Porto Lusófona University for second-year Communication Design undergraduates. The rock band *Squeezos*, consisting of five young musicians from Porto City, challenged the 2nd-year Design class to create a graphic image for their upcoming album cover. This request came from one of the band members who was also a student from the first-year course. Since the band members are university students and cannot pay for the album design, they asked one of their colleague's band, a Design student, to develop a graphic proposal in the class, and the best solution would be selected and printed. The student whose project was selected applied it to the vinyl cover and prepared the documents for the printer. As a prize, the winning student could attend the rehearsals, and receive an album, and a ticket for the concert, in addition to their name in the album credits.

The *Squeezos* have been wandering around since 2004. A group of friends and neighbors would jump from house to house and from cellar to cellar, trying out music and taking breaks from rehearsals to pool games, darts, and pinball. The purpose was to do what they like and thus have access to more of the world: what is reserved for the stars. The rockstar dream never awoke. However, many others were happening to the size of the country and what was possible. The world did not open up, but they forced a gap. Their music can be generically called Rock, but they do it because they need to get closer to what has been done. They like freedom of expression without having to call them any names; the band's name itself is ambiguous but partly means sketch. This sketch gradually gains clearer contours.

In 2005 they presented the first model of 8 songs in English, which allowed them access to several concerts, some television appearances, and participation in band competitions. In 2007, they presented two singles, "Independence Day" and "Teach Me How to Fish", which earned them dozens of concerts and won 5 band competitions, one European. Académica do Porto and Step into Europe Art Contest). They also had the privilege of opening shows by artists such as David Fonseca, Trabalhadores do Comércio, Ena Pá 2000, Blind Zero, and Mesa. In 2013, they promoted their first work in Portuguese, the EP "Homem Nu", whose single "Coisas da Lei" was shown in several countries through a television production with which it was associated. During this period, the band's lead singer was among the 12 finalists in RTP 1's Voz de Portugal program, and some of the musicians became residents at Galerias de Paris in Porto. Since 2016, the *Squeezos* have had 3 songs on the soundtrack of national television productions. Currently, they intersperse the concerts with studio sessions where they are producing the new album "Mais Perto de Acabar". With an evident intensity of feelings that fill their lyrics and melodies, *Squeezos* present songs of war and peace, of love and its opposite. They are the antidote to expected music and the antithesis of themselves: ugly on the outside, beautiful on the inside, or *vice versa*.

This is an example of a successful initiative where pedagogical activities converge with collaborative involvement as a motivating force for students; it was an excellent way to prepare graduates for the professional sphere through innovative practices.

Literature Review

According to Moreira (2015), the presented complexity and a variety of design practices and design education approaches, accompanies the complex and fast world in which they operate, challenging designers and design educators in navigating such ambiguous waters.

The latest curriculum models in design education show a trend towards increased empathy and inclusivity (Fleming, 2013). Research indicates that higher education in design should be more flexible to accommodate evolving design approaches (Martin, 2010; McWilliam and Haukka, 2008) and should prioritize critical thinking over following set procedures (Tschimmel, 2006). Also, McAra-McWilliam (2007) suggests that a new model can better prepare future designers to embrace ambiguity in processes and handle complex and contradictory realities, leading to innovative solutions.Designers, as Manzini (2005) argues, should consider themselves as part of the communities they work with and collaborate closely with other members to develop meaningful cases, rather than just acting as experts. Empathy, defined by the Oxford Dictionary as the understanding and sharing of another person's feelings, has gained popularity as designers increasingly adopt a user-centered approach to product and service design. Design processes such as user-centered design (UCD), human-centered design (HCD), participatory design (PD), and co-design incorporate methods to elicit empathy from users. Perspective-taking is an important skill for designers to create more effective and enjoyable products and services. Empathizing with participants in co-design processes is essential to establish a culture of dialogic design (Manzini, 2016) and leads to the creation of relational goods.

Much of the education for Social Responsible Design (SRD) has been influenced by Papanek's book. He also asks, "In what real-world situations can students learn best?" (Papanek, 1985, p. 316).

To Greenbank (2014), in today's highly competitive job market, students need to be well-prepared for the recruitment and selection processes used by potential employers. However, even though students often cite obtaining a "good" job as their primary reason for pursuing higher education, many of them do not take part in activities that would improve their chances of success in the job market after graduation. Brown, & Hesketh (2004) emphasize that to effectively compete in the job market, students must showcase their "personal capital" to attract employers. This includes both "soft currencies" and "hard currencies". The "soft currencies" encompass skills, values, and personality traits that are highly desirable to employers, such as decision-making, leadership, teamwork, adaptability, enthusiasm, and confidence. On the other hand, "hard currencies" are the tangible evidence that students can use to demonstrate that they possess these attributes. This evidence can be acquired through participation in both curricular and extracurricular activities.

Methodology

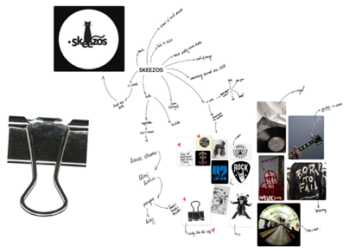
The *Design Thinking* methodology guided the creative process in the following steps: problem definition, ideation, prototype, and implementation (Brown, 2005, 2009; Ideo, 2015; Lupton & Philipps, 2011; Tschimmel, 2011; Wyatt & Brown, 2010).

Problem definition: The process began with the briefing with goals taking into account the theme, available time, and a schedule with all relevant dates. In the first class of the project, students received a briefing with all the information needed for the project's development. In addition to the vinyl cover, the students would have to adapt the image to the CD cover and develop the book with the lyrics songs and the book card. In the same class, a student who is part of a band, presented to the class the band's background and previous albums and highlighted the characteristics of the old and new albums. They also shared the songs and video clips, so that the students could have a better understanding to develop the album cover (see figure 1). Additionally, a Google Drive folder containing all the necessary information such as the band logo, previous albums, video clips, lyrics from the new album, the layout of the vinyl

and CD cover, some mockups, and photos of the band's concerts and rehearsals were created and shared on Google Drive.

Figure 1 – Starting the project: The design student, also a member of the band, presented the background of *Skeezos* and their previous albums, highlighting the characteristics of both the old and new albums.

During the *Ideation* phase, ideas were generated with tools such as words, images, colours and shapes through brainstorming, keywords, action verbs, brain dumping, a mind map and a mood board (see figures 2, and 3). During the creative process, meeting groups facilitate dialogue and share ideas rather than issuing instructions. Creating a collaborative class is a way to learn through engaging students, sharing insights, and gathering feedback from the group. A collaborative process where everyone involved benefits from a positive discussion where solutions are found and sometimes lost ideas are rescued.



Figures 2, and 3 – The creative process from the *Ideation* phase. Mind map from the French Erasmus student Manon Thomas (on the left), and the Polish Erasmus student Gabriela Osóbka (on the right).

In the *Prototype* phase, concepts were tested using an experimental approach. Students explored various materials and techniques to create the cover artwork and find the best solutions. Students developed ideas using resources such as words, typography, photos, colors, and forms. They showed their creative process and a range of concepts, starting with a divergent approach to generate different alternatives. This phase aimed to encourage creativity and open-mindedness, guiding students through an experimental process that encouraged innovative thinking and the generation of different ideas. Students used a variety of tools and methods in the early stages of design, laying the groundwork for future refinement and implementation (see figures 4, and 5).

Figures 4 and 5: The creative process during the *Prototype* phase, featuring initial notes and sketches by Ivan Vecerek, a Checquia Erasmus student.

This time around, students discussed the benefits and drawbacks of each possible solution in a convergent way after testing their ideas. From each critique, students were expected to analyse and consider all feedback to make progress on their projects. At this stage, there is an middle evaluation and the attendance of the students is mandatory, otherwise they are penalized in the final evaluation. This phase allows the teacher to speak out and that the student and the whole class can learn and correct the work in time. Sometimes colleagues also express themselves by giving valid opinions for the work progress. This procedure allows: (i) students assess their impact on the final evaluation, and prepare for the job market; (ii) presentation and defense of ideas (enhancing presentation skills, outlining the working process, and evaluating the benefits and drawbacks of various solutions); (iii) teacher Feedback and Guidance (teacher feedback in learning, identification, and correction of mistakes, improving knowledge with instructor insights); (iv) peer learning and collaboration (benefits of peer feedback, promoting collaborative learning, facilitating diverse viewpoints and solutions); (v) continuous Improvement and Iteration (learning from failures and improving ideas, the importance of iterative processes in creative work); (vi) skill Development (enhancing critical thinking and problem-solving abilities, fostering creativity and innovation, building confidence in defending ideas and receiving feedback).

The presence of Erasmus students in the Portuguese class, from various countries, including France, Poland, and the Czechia, provides several advantages. These include: (i) diversity in techniques (Introduction of new design techniques from different countries); (ii) varied perspectives (Fresh perspectives on design problems and solutions); (iii) cultural enrichment (Exposure to different cultural approaches to design); (iv) enhanced problem-solving (Broadened understanding of how to approach and solve design issues); (v) collaborative learning (Opportunities for collaborative learning with peers from different backgrounds); (vi) global networking (Building a network of international contacts and future collaborators); (vii) innovation boost (Increased innovation through the blend of diverse ideas and methodologies); (viii) cultural exchange (cultural experiences and practices that can influence design sensibilities).

In the last step the *Implementation (problem-solving):* The ultimate solution was conceived, completed, and presented to the entire group using the creative process, with all phases justified appropriately. The final assessment emphasizes the creative process, dedication, student progress, and tight deadline adherence. In cases of absence, as expected there was a noticeable impact on the student's development and learning. Students have prepared a 10-minute presentation about their project (see figures 6, 7, 8, 9, 10 and 11).

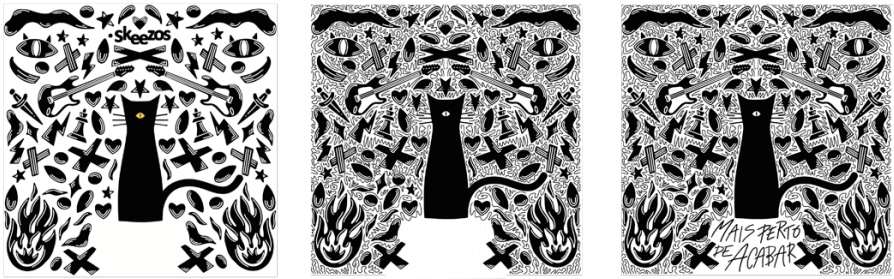
All projects presented were submitted to the band group for selecting the best proposal. The band chose the proposal from the Erasmus French student, Manon Thomas (see figures 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20 and 21).

Figures 6 and 7: *Implementation (problem-solving):* The ultimate solution was conceived, completed, and presented to the entire class, with all phases justified appropriately. Project from Ivan Vecerek.

Figures 8 and 9: *Implementation (problem-solving):* The ultimate solution was conceived, completed, and presented to the entire class, with all phases justified appropriately. Project from Gabriela Osóbka.

Figures 10 and 11: *Implementation (problem-solving):* The ultimate solution was conceived, completed, and presented to the entire class, with all phases justified appropriately. Project from Joana Oliveira.

Figures 12 and 13: Manon Thomas presented the final solution of his project.



Figures 14, 15 and 16: CD and vinyl cover illustration evolution, from Manon Thomas.

Figures 17: Color study from Manon Thomas.

Figures 18 and 19: The final solution from Manon Thomas, and the selected one from the band members. On the left side, is the book containing the song lyrics, and on the right side, are the lyrics book, the CD box and the CD.

Figures 20 and 21: Vinyl cover front and back. Student author: Manon Thomas, Communication Design, 2nd year.

The Collaborative Practice and It's Value

The advantages for undergraduate Design students having the opportunity to design a vinyl and CD cover for a new album of a classmate's band are as follows:

- **Practical Experience:** Hands-on experience in designing real-world products.
- **Portfolio Development:** A tangible project to add to their professional portfolio.
- **Creative Expression:** Explore and express creativity in a high-visibility medium.
- **Collaboration Skills:** Work collaboratively with musicians, understanding their vision and translating it into visual design.
- **Understanding Client Needs:** Learn to interpret and fulfill client requirements and feedback.
- **Deadline Management:** Experience managing a project with specific deadlines.
- **Problem-Solving:** Tackle design challenges and find solutions that balance aesthetics and functionality.
- **Interdisciplinary Learning:** Learn about the music industry and how design intersects with other creative fields.
- **Networking Opportunities:** Build connections with peers and potentially industry professionals through the project.
- **Confidence Building:** Boost confidence by seeing their work used in a professional context.
- **Feedback Loop:** Receive constructive feedback from peers, instructors, and the band members, helping refine their skills.

Students love music, which is advantageous for motivating the class. These factors combine to create a motivating and enriching educational experience for the entire class. These are some of the benefits:

- **Increased Engagement**: Working on something they love, like music, makes the project more relatable and enjoyable.
- **Creative Inspiration**: Music can serve as a powerful source of inspiration, sparking innovative and creative design ideas.
- **Collaborative Spirit**: Shared interest in music fosters a collaborative and supportive classroom environment.
- **Personal Connection**: Designing for a classmate's band creates a personal connection to the project, increasing investment and effort.
- **Fun Learning Experience**: Combining music with design creates a fun and dynamic learning experience, breaking the routine of traditional assignments.
- **Real-World Relevance**: Students see the direct impact of their work on something they care about, reinforcing the relevance of their skills.
- **Skill Application**: Applying design skills to a music project shows students the diverse applications of their talents in various industries.
- **Increased Participation**: The excitement around a music project can lead to higher participation and collaboration among students.
- **Boosted Morale**: The joy of working on a beloved topic can boost overall morale and create a positive classroom atmosphere.
- **Positive Peer Pressure**: Seeing classmates excited and engaged can motivate others to put more effort into their work.
- **Enhanced Creativity**: The emotional and cultural connection to music can enhance students' creativity and expression in their designs.

Conclusions

As stated in the article, this educational project had numerous advantages and received excellent feedback from students. They were highly motivated from the beginning, and their final results proved it. Working on music-related projects makes tasks more relevant and enjoyable, serving as a powerful source of inspiration for innovative design ideas and fostering a collaborative and supportive environment in the classroom. This initiative was mutually beneficial for the musicians who still are university students, and cannot afford to pay professional designers; and also for Design students allowing to participate in a real-world project and apply the tools and methods acquired during their coursework; it exemplifies a successful initiative, where pedagogical activities converge with collaborative involvement as a motivational force for students; it was an excellent way to prepare graduates for the professional sphere by fostering engagement through innovative practices; engaging in the design process for an actual music album cover lets students to gain hands-on experience, equipping them with valuable skills and insights beyond traditional classroom activities; also it was a way to learn to interpret and fulfill client requirements and feedback. Furthermore, provides a tangible learning opportunity and enhances the practical value of students' academic endeavors and boost confidence by seeing their work used in a professional context, allowing them to showcase their work in the market, thereby improving the quality of their portfolios.

However, we have identified some limitations. The university currently requires additional studio space for practicing screen printing (serigraphy), engraving, lithography, and other techniques that are essential for developing alternative solutions. Fortunately, the university is planning to begin expansion work on a new building, which will provide a brighter future for Design course students.

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Identity and Subjective Sense of Cohesion and Unity: The Bulgarian Case

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Abstract
The present paper examines the different dimensions of the identity of Bulgarian citizens and its specificities among various ethnic groups. The main implications of identity are the states of cohesion and unity of people, which are also prerequisites for well-being and quality of life. It is on the sense of connectedness and identification that people have with: the 'national', the 'regional', the 'local' or the 'European'/'global' that the current analysis focuses on. The empirical basis of the paper is a nationally representative sociological survey conducted in Bulgaria in 2021, on which a secondary analysis is made within the project "Quality of life and well-being in the context of professional communities and their activity" funded by National Science Fund - 2023. The purpose of the paper is to show how Bulgarian citizens perceive themselves today - more like Bulgarians or more like Europeans, where they look for their identity along the local-national-supranational axis and whether permeability of national borders also means the permeability of identity boundaries, and how this reflects on their quality of life.

Keywords: Identity, Ethnic Communities, Quality of Life

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Introduction

The topic of identity is gaining more and more relevance in the contemporary world of global social changes and polycrises, which increasingly question identities built and affirmed for centuries and necessitate the study of its contemporary dimensions and specificities. Insofar as the contemporary world is a world of increasingly intense interactions between ethnic, national and cultural communities, the formation and assertion of one's own identity, both on an individual and collective level, is becoming a value of the highest rank.

It is the collective identity of contemporary Bulgarian citizens, unfolding along the axis: national - supranational - ethnic - local, that is the focus of this article. The use of the notion of collective identity expresses the fact that in every individual identity there is a collective origin or, more precisely, contents whose origin is not from the individually perceived and assimilated. This distinction has its roots in the differentiation that E. Durkheim makes between individual and collective representations. According to E. Durkheim, "collective representations" are a supraindividual phenomenon having their own content and irreducible to the sum of individual representations (Durkheim, 1937). They reflect the shared nature of social cognition and express what is called "common sense". In this sense collective identity refers to the shared notion of experience lived together by a particular community. It expresses a set of semantic structures that are social structures of meaning insofar as their acquisition and possession are based on participation in social practices and the overall life of the community.

To understand identity, it is necessary to consider the actual social frameworks of existence of individuals and communities as a point of reference. If we use M. Halbwachs' (Halbwachs, 1997) notion of "social framework" (cadres sociaux), which reflects Halbwachs' fundamental conception of society as a reservoir of resources of meaning for the individual, and E. Goffman's (Goffman, 1956) notion of 'frames' as organizing the everyday experience of individuals and groups, we can argue that there are 'collective identities' that reflect the dependence of identity on the 'social frame', i.e. that there are social frames of identity and collective identities, such that each individual identity unfolds within these social frames and each individual forms his or her identity along with others in the respective group/community to which he or she belongs.

A person at every moment of his life is in a socially determined situation, i.e. in a certain socio-cultural environment. The world always exists for him as intersubjective, i.e. as a meaning universe, a set of meanings which he must interpret in order to be able to interact with others. Prior experience in the form of available knowledge exists as a schema to which one relates all one's perceptions, notions, beliefs, values. In other words, everyone lives in a common "symbolic meaning space" (Assmann, 2011) with others. This common space of meaning is the precondition for the formation of both individual and collective identity. It makes the processes of interaction and communication possible by delineating the boundaries of a unified 'meaning horizon' (Assmann, 2011), which totality defines the intersubjective meaningfulness of identity. In this connection, P. Burger and T. Luckmann note that regardless of differences, there is always a correspondence between "my meanings and their meanings in this world ... precisely because it refers to a world common to many people" (Berger & Luckmann, 1991, p. 37). That is why collective identities are preserved in communication. If it is interrupted, respectively if the frames of the communicated reality are changed, the consequence is a change of identities. This is why all major changes in human society are always accompanied by changes in the identification of communities - in the understanding of their own identity and the identity of others. It is for this reason that the question "Who am I?" has its enduring

significance in all epochs, for all peoples and cultures. And its answer changes depending on the historical time and socio-cultural situation. Identity is both inherited and constantly changing. Some values, meanings, traditions are passed down through generations, while others, especially in the modern world of globalization, increased intercultural contacts and communication, undergo profound changes. Critical social situations stimulate the redefinition of identity not only for individuals but also for entire groups, and are therefore capable of producing, for example, acute inter-ethnic confrontations and even armed clashes and conflicts, examples of which abound in history and in the contemporary world in recent years. This is why the formation of an idea of one's own identity - individual and group - and the identity of others, different from us, turns out to be one of the milestones of contemporary international and inter-state relations and in many cases determines the nature of these relations - of peace or conflict and war. This is because the specificity, the nature of the constructed notions of the identity of others are indicative of the trends in the development of international relations, while in not a few cases they are full of errors and biases, provoking negative attitudes and oppositions. All this explains the need to study the transformations that occur in collective identities under the influence of changing socio-historical conditions and shows why studying the contemporary state of collective group identities is a matter of fundamental importance.

On an individual level, each person carries multiple group identities depending on the many and varied social communities/groups in which he/she is involved and perceived to be a part of. Some collective identities are relatively independent of each other, while others can be correlated in a certain way, forming a certain hierarchical structure. The set of group identities shared by an individual has a dynamic nature - he or she may adopt a particular group identity at one moment, and lose it at another moment, thus joining or leaving a group. The totality of group identities shared by an individual forms his individual identity, revealing its different facets. The same is true at the collective level. Contemporary Bulgarian citizens share different collective identities depending on the specificities they ascribe to themselves and the social communities they belong to. Bulgaria, as is well known, is a multi-ethnic country where different ethnic communities coexist. Here we will focus on the contemporary identity of only three of the ethnic communities represented in Bulgaria - the Bulgarian, Turkish and Roma ethnic groups. The reason for focusing on them is that these are the three largest ethnic communities in the country and in the specifically Bulgarian configuration of the ethnic structure of the population their joint share represents 90.4%[1] of the total population, therefore it can be considered that the processes of identification taking place among them allow us to understand the nature of identification at the national level. On the other hand, as the three largest ethnic communities in the country, their relations and the specificity of their self-identification, as well as the specificity of the reciprocal processes of identification of the "other ethnicity" and the differentiation from it are determinant for the contemporary social and political situation in Bulgaria, for the maintenance of ethnic peace and tolerant inter-ethnic relations in the country, and to some extent for the country's foreign policy orientation.

The Collective Identity of the Contemporary Bulgarian Citizens

At a time of increased integration processes between countries, particularly characteristic of the countries of Europe, which began their development in the middle of the 20th century, but have become particularly intense since the beginning of the new millennium, the identity of the citizens of the countries of Europe is undergoing changes. When borders are more and more "open" and huge distances are crossed in a very short time, questions about identity changes

[1] According to the data of the last population census of the country from 2021.

become more and more important. Today, Bulgarian national identity is in a period of constant transformation - Bulgarians are beginning to feel and define themselves as European citizens, citizens of the world. It begins processes of formation of a supranational identity, understood more often as a common European identity ("citizen of Europe and the EU") and less often as a global identity ("citizen of the world"). On the other hand, however, when transformation becomes a permanent feature of society and radical changes often occur in extremely short periods of time, all this creates the preconditions for identity dissonance. And sometimes instead of the formation of a supranational identity, the opposite processes of closure, localisation, regionalisation are observed. It can be said that in contemporary Bulgarian society the processes of European integration are accompanied by the opposite processes of "atomization" of society and "closure" of individuals into smaller than national communities. Therefore, the integration of a country into various supranational organizations at the EU level does not always mean a corresponding change at the level of public consciousness and does not always mean a weakening of national identity and the development of a supranational identity. EU integration in itself creates opportunities for such processes to take place, but whether they will start, how deep they will be and how far they will go depends on the interplay of many other factors, both internal and external, part of which are the ongoing migration processes within the EU.

Bulgarian national identity has been built in many different historical periods, with various interruptions, uniting several ethnic communities through common values and goals, together with their own community interpretations. This means that it has one main advantage, formed in the process of historical development, but particularly adequate to the modern era - it creates a space for the coexistence of the different, imposes multiculturalism, sets patterns of integration and differentiation. And one of the reasons for this is that the historically formed notion, understanding of national identity has as a basic principle the compatibility, the coexistence of differences. This is the specificity and vitality of the Bulgarian national identity and the Bulgarian ethnic model. At their core is the ability to live with the other, the combination of different cultural patterns, the integration of specific ethnic rituals and practices. It is the openness of ethnic communities and therefore their identities that allows negative attitudes and relationships to be experienced quickly. As a continuation and extension of these processes are the processes of transformation of ethnic and national identities in Bulgarian society today in the direction of a more universal and adequately situated in relation to current events supranational European identity. To what extent have these elements been formed, what structural changes are occurring in the national identity of Bulgarian citizens and what is the role of ethnic and local identity today we will try to show through the results of a nationally representative study on "National and European Dimensions of the Contemporary Identity of Bulgarians", conducted in 2021 under a project funded by the National Science Fund of Bulgaria. At the same time, these results have been secondary processed and reinterpreted within the project "Quality of life and well-being in the context of professional communities and their activity" funded by National Science Fund - 2023 and linked to quality of life. Traditionally, in the study of quality of life, in addition to objective indicators of quality of life, subjective indicators are also derived, mostly related to life satisfaction, subjective well-being and feelings of security and peacefulness. An important precondition for their achievement is the perception of identity - individual and group identity, the sense of one's place/position in society, as well as the existence of similarity in the self-identification of ethnic communities coexisting in society, which creates opportunities for cohesion and tolerant interethnic communication and interaction, in turn representing indicators of a subjective sense of well-being and security, i.e. for a better quality of life.

Within the framework of the conducted nationally representative survey we have used two different methodological approaches to derive the structure of the contemporary identity of Bulgarian citizens in its ethnic dimensions and specificities. The first one is an application of Kuhn and McPartland's famous "Who am I?" test (Kuhn & McPartland, 1954), which allows delineation of an individual's overall "self-concept" with all of his or her group affiliations, character traits, kinship relationships, major occupations, hobbies, etc. The second one is a directly asked question with a suggestion to choose the three most important identities for the respondent from a list of pre-formulated different identity types. The specificity of each of these two methods and the differences between them stem from the fact that each of them activates different levels and unlocks different layers of people's consciousness, thus actualizing their different self-concepts. Through the first method, an idea of the overall self-identification of the person is achieved, and among the complex of characteristics mentioned, the presence of those expressing his national, European, ethnic, local identity can be sought. The result is the derivation of the proportion of people who self-identify themselves through characteristics related to national, European, ethnic, local identity, when nothing in the question points them to the fact that this is what the researcher is interested in. The second method is used to rank the types of identities of interest to the research subject, namely: national, supranational (European and global), ethnic, and local identities. Here, any other characteristics, respectively types of identifications, beyond the ones we are interested in are excluded. This specificity of the two methods also determines the differences in the results obtained: in the first case, due to the high variance of the responses, the shares that accumulate the identities of interest are usually not very large, while in the second case they accumulate much larger shares insofar as individuals have a much more limited set of characteristics/types of identities to choose between and hence the accumulations are much larger. This also explains some differences that appear between the results obtained by one method and the other. In such cases, in order to infer the structure of the identity of the respective ethnicity in the perspective of interest (national - supranational - ethnic - local), we have used the results obtained through the second method, insofar as they allow us to infer which of the identities of interest the individuals attach more importance and which less importance, and respectively what share each of these identities occupies in the overall identification matrix set by the relation: national - supranational (European and global) - ethnic - local identity. More specifically, we will show how the two methods work and what results they lead to by analysing the data obtained from the nationally representative survey.

Results and Conclusion

As a primary and most general indicator for inferring the identity structure of Bulgarian citizens, we used the importance attached to different types of group membership in self-identification, following Kuhn and McPartland's "Who am I?" test. In this regard, the questionnaire with which the national representative survey was conducted was specifically designed in such a way that the first question that all respondents had to answer was "How would you define yourself?", requiring them to indicate their three most important, in their own opinion, characteristics with which they would define themselves. To avoid any kind of suggestiveness, they were given the opportunity to choose the characteristics they considered most important for their self-identification. In the table below, all responses are summarised in categories as types of identification: national identity, ethnic identity, supranational identity (EU citizen and citizen of the world), local identity (identification with the locality or region). In addition to these identifications, respondents indicated others such as: religious identity, identification by name, identification by character traits, by social characteristics, by gender,

age, work status, profession and occupation, etc., the data for which are not provided here as this is not the purpose of this paper.

Types of identification	The Bulgarian Ethnos	Types of identification	The Turkish Ethnos	Types of identification	The Roma Ethnos
Bulgarian, Bulgarian citizen	44.2%	Ethnicity (ethnic Turk)	14.8%	Bulgarian (of Roma origin), Bulgarian citizen	24.6%
European, EU citizen	5.9%	Bulgarian (of Turkish origin), Bulgarian citizen	14.1%	Ethnicity (Roma/Gypsy)	23.0%
Regional/local affiliation	4.5%	Regional/local affiliation	6.6%	European, EU citizen	1.6%
World Citizen	2.6%	European, EU citizen	5.8%	Regional/local affiliation	0%
-	-	World Citizen	0.8%	World Citizen	0%

Table 1: Types of self-identification in the three ethnic groups - Bulgarian, Turkish and Roma

As can be seen from the presented data, for the representatives of the Bulgarian ethnic group the most important is the national identity represented by the identifications "Bulgarian" and "Bulgarian citizen". Here a specificity of the identification of the Bulgarian ethnic group is manifested - as this is the largest and leading ethnic group in the country, its representatives usually identify their ethnicity with the national one, which is why the identification "Bulgarian", which is generally an ethnic identification, is used as identical to "Bulgarian citizen" or "citizen of Bulgaria". To some extent, this also affects the representatives of minority ethnic groups - Turks and Roma - some of whom also self-identify as "Bulgarians", but with the qualifier "of Turkish origin" or "of Roma origin", and for them this self-identification is also identical to "Bulgarian citizen".

The structure of the identity of the Bulgarian ethnos shows that the leading place in it is occupied by the national identity, followed by the European and the local, which have much lower shares, and the global identity "citizen of the world" is even below the statistical error, which is why it is insignificant for the Bulgarian ethnos. But the fact that European and local identities are represented with almost equal shares shows that the processes of globalization and localization that are taking place in the world today are equally represented in Bulgarian ethnic group. At the same time, however, if we sum up the shares of European (5.9%) and global identity ("citizen of the world" - 2.6%) we get a share of 8.5%, which represents the emerging supranational identity and which is almost twice as large as the local identity.

The identity structure of the Turkish ethnic group shows a leading position of ethnic identification with a share of 14.8% and this is understandable insofar as the Turkish ethnic group as a minority ethnic group emphasizes its ethnic identity in an effort to underline its specificity as an ethnic group and at the same time to assert its place in Bulgarian society. Very close to the ethnic identity with an almost equal share of 14.1% is the national identity, which shows that for the Turkish ethnos, like the Bulgarian one, national identification is very important. The lower shares of national and ethnic identity in the Turkish ethnic group (14.1% and 14.8%) compared to the Bulgarian ethnic group (44.2%) are explained by the fact that the

representatives of the Turkish ethnic group put more emphasis in answering this question on such characteristics as their position and role in the home and family - husband, wife, mother, father, brother, sister, daughter, son, etc., which, however, we do not consider and analyze here. At the same time, for the Turkish ethnic group, the local identity is of greater importance than the European one, but the sum of the shares of the European (5.8%) and the global ("citizen of the world" - 0.8%, which in itself, as in the case of the Bulgarian ethnic group, is statistically insignificant) forms a share of 6.6%, which is equivalent to the local identity (6.6%) and shows that in the case of the Turkish ethnic group, too, the processes of localization and globalization that are taking place in the world today are running in parallel.

The Roma ethnic group shows similarities with the Bulgarian ethnic group, insofar as national identification takes a leading place with a share of 24.6%. At the same time, however, like the Turkish ethnic group, the Roma ethnic group gives great importance to ethnic identity, which occupies the second place with a share of 23.0%. On the one hand, for the Roma ethnic group, as also a minority ethnic group, ethnic self-identification has its significance because it is a way of asserting their place in society precisely as an ethnic group with its own specificities. On the other hand, however, insofar as the Roma ethnic group is the most vulnerable and the lowest-status ethnic group in Bulgarian society, it always seeks to prove that it is part of the Bulgarian nation, which is why the phenomenon of preferred identity is typical for it and most of the representatives of this ethnic group identify themselves as Bulgarians. Because of this, the proportion of national identity is also high in the Roma ethnic group. However, it is characteristic of the Roma ethnic group that local identification is not significant, just like global identification, and European identity is the least represented in its identity structure.

In summary, it can be said that the three ethnic groups show similarities in identification as well as differences arising from the position of each of them in society, but more importantly, they are all aware of themselves as members of Bulgarian society and for them national identity is one of the most important, which determines the possibility of tolerant interethnic coexistence and makes Bulgarian society consistent.

However, when the identity question is posed in a different way and the respondents are asked directly to choose from several proposed identities (including national/Bulgarian citizen, ethnic, European/EU citizen, global/world citizen, regional/region of the Balkans, local/settlement, religious, professional, belonging to a certain friendship circle), ranking them by the degree of importance for them, then the identification with the national community reached impressive results for all three ethnic groups - 90.8% for the Bulgarian ethnic group, 74.3% for the Turkish ethnic group and 86.9% for the Roma ethnic group. These results as a ratio repeat the results from the previous question, i.e. the highest identification with the national community is for the Bulgarian ethnic group, followed by the Roma and the last one is the Turkish ethnic group.

Types of identification	**The Bulgarian Ethnos**	**Types of identification**	**The Turkish Ethnos**	**Types of identification**	**The Roma Ethnos**
I am a Bulgarian citizen	90.8%	I am a Bulgarian citizen	74.3%	I am a Bulgarian citizen	86.9%

I feel connected to my place of residence (where I live, study, work)	53.4%	I feel connected to my place of residence (where I live, study, work)	58.7%	I feel connected to my ethnic community	42.6%
I feel connected to my friendship circle	42.2%	I'm an EU citizen	31.4%	I'm an EU citizen	37.7%
I'm an EU citizen	31.5%	I feel connected to my friendship circle	29.8%	I feel connected to my place of residence (where I live, study, work)	31.2%
I feel myself a citizen of the world	20.3%	I feel connected to my ethnic community	28.9%	I feel connected to my friendship circle	29.5%
I feel connected to the Balkans region	15.6%	I feel myself a citizen of the world	24.8%	I feel myself a citizen of the world	19.7%
I feel connected to my professional community	14.6%	I feel connected to my professional community	19.0%	I feel connected to my religious community	19.7%
I feel connected to my religious community	12.6%	I feel connected to my religious community	16.5%	I feel connected to the Balkans region	13.1%
I feel connected to my ethnic community	9.3%[2]	I feel connected to the Balkans region	4.1%	I feel connected to my professional community	11.5%

Table 2: Types of identification in the three ethnic groups - Bulgarian, Turkish and Roma

In this case, the structure of the identity of the Bulgarian ethnos shows a leading national identity (90.8%), followed by the local identity (the sum of responses " I feel connected to my place of residence (where I live, study, work)" - 53.4% and "I feel connected to the Balkans region" - 15.6%) with a total share of 69.0%. In third place is the supranational identity with a share of 51.8% (the sum of answers " I'm an EU citizen " and " I feel myself a citizen of the world "). Ethnic identity ranks last with the lowest share (9.3%), since, as already noted, the identification of ethnic and national identity is characteristic of Bulgarian ethnos, which is why there is no special emphasis on ethnic identity.

As for the identity structure of the Turkish ethnic group, national identity is the leading one with a share of 74.3%, followed by local identity (the sum of responses "I feel connected to my place of residence" - 58.7% and "I feel connected to the Balkans region" - 4.1%) with a total share of 62.8%. In third place is supranational identity with a total share of 56.2% (the sum of responses "I'm an EU citizen" and "I feel myself a citizen of the world"). And for the Turkish ethnic group, ethnic identity is in last place with a share of 28.9%. The similarity in the structures of the identity of the Bulgarian and Turkish ethnic groups is obvious.
For the Roma ethnic group, national identity is the leading one with a share of 86.9%, followed by supranational identity with a total share of 57.4% (the sum of answers " I'm an EU citizen " and "I feel myself a citizen of the world"). In third place is local identity (the sum of responses "I feel connected to my place of residence" - 31.2% and "I feel connected to the Balkans region" - 13.1%) with a total share of 44.3%. And in this case, ethnic identity is in last place with a

[2] The sum of the percentages exceeds 100% as respondents indicated more than one answer.

share of 42.6%, i.e. the specifics of Roma identification established in the previous question are manifested, namely, for them, local identity has less importance, which is why in this case it takes third place after supranational identity, and also ethnic identity has greater importance for the Roma ethnic group as a minority ethnic group compared to the significance that ethnic identity has for the Turkish ethnic group as a minority ethnic group as well, which is related to the position of the Roma ethnic group as the lowest-status ethnic community in the country, which is why it strives to assert its equality with the rest ethnic communities in the country.

As can be seen, the identity structures of the three ethnic communities derived with the use of two different methods show both differences and similarities, which is understandable, as each of the two methods activates different levels of consciousness and hence different ways of self-identification. But still, it is obvious that the similarities are more. Similar dependencies in the self-identification of the ethnic groups are confirmed and the leading role of the national identity in all three ethnic groups is confirmed. And this, in turn, means affirming the self-perception of each of the ethnic groups as part of the Bulgarian nation and of each of its representatives as a citizen of the Bulgarian state. This creates conditions for tolerant inter-ethnic coexistence, builds the coherence and unity of Bulgarian society, and creates a sense of security and well-being in each of the ethnic groups, which is directly related to a better quality of life.

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Approaches to a Semiotics of Visual Language: Reconstructing Images of the Filipino Superheroines

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Abstract
The approaches to a semiotics of visual language were presented to provide background on semiotic analysis and interpretation of Filipino Superheroines. Saussure's Structuralism; Dyadic Model [Signifier-Signified], Peircian Triadic Model, and Morris' Semiotic Model. Three superheroines, Darna, Volta, and Krystala were used as subjects for semiotic interpretation of its images. It is Morris' semiotic model {syntactic, semantic, and pragmatic} that was used as an approach in reconstructing the images of the three Filipino superheroines. In the introduction, a brief background on women's status was mentioned (years, years back) on how they struggled to have a place in society. This paper in a way complemented such evaluation on women's status; thus, a semiotic interpretation on these images helped in establishing concepts on the changing role and status of women in the society.

Keywords: Semiotics, Images of Filipino Women, Superheroines

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1. Background of the Study

> "*There was no renaissance woman, only renaissance man.*"
> *-RJR*

As I was writing my paper in English Literature, I realized how women that time struggled to have "a place" in the society. In the early 1600's, critics described this period to be "radical" because of the "great economic shift," that is from Feudalism to Capitalism. However, what made this period radical was not because people were using "money" as a means of acquiring goods; but the **changing status of women** in England made it even more radical.

Looking back to that period where oppression of women was so prevalent, it is a relief for 21st century women to have finally found their **place** in the society. They are now playing a role that is more overwhelming than they have ever imagined. Women in the 21st century, as the term described, are empowered to educate themselves and to learn immeasurably and to perform unimaginable tasks.

It was in the 20th century when such empowerment was fully achieved. Although fiction yet it has shown the capabilities of a woman in helping, protecting, and fighting for what was just and right. Thus, a **superheroine** was born and a paper about it was conceptualized.

With this, the study aimed to determine theories and approaches in reconstructing images of Filipino superheroines. This further aimed to utilize the theories and approaches to semiotics of visual language. This is also to provide the underpinnings of Filipino superheroines such as **Darna, Volta, and Krystala**.

2. The Images of Filipino Superheroines

Mars Ravelo's Darna: The Superheroine

Darna was created by the genius of Mars Ravelo and was illustrated by Nestor Redondo in Bulaklak comics/magazine. She was an epitome of woman's compassion to the weak and avenge them by fighting the forces of evil.

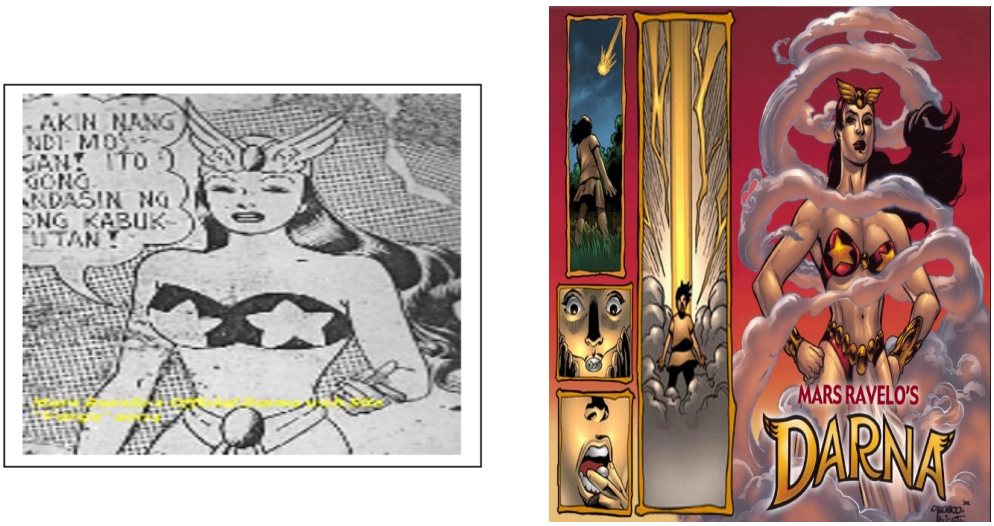


Figure 1: Darna

DARNA is a cultural icon born at a time when the Philippines was struggling to come out of the devastation of World War II. "She served as a salve to a country looking for champion." ("Darna", "Darna - Mars Ravelo comics - Philippines - Character profile", Larry V. Sipin, The Manila Times).

VOLTA: 21st Century Pinay Superhero

Volta is a 21st century Pinay superhero. Her alter ego is Perla, the dressmaker, who was hit by lightning thrice after which she discovers and develops her superpowers: "she can generate heat and electricity with her hands and lightning flashes come out of her hands" (Wikipedia, 2024).

Figure 2: Volta
Source: https://www.google.com/url

KRYSTALA: The New Superhero of the Next Generation

Krystala is the new generation's superhero who was anointed by the diwatas of the mountains of Banahaw. She was prophesized to be the savior of their tribe from the evils of the "engkantos." She was raised by Aleta who was guided by the Ima who is the village "diwata" and called her Tala.

Figure 3: Krystala
Source: https://www.filmaffinity.com/us/movieimage.php

3. Approaches to a Semiotics of Visual Language

This study on visual language aims to determine the semiotic approaches and theories in reconstructing images of Filipino superheroines. The whole meaning-finding or signification on the images is the goal of this paper. This study involves interpretations of signs, symbols, and symbolic elements of the images (pictures) of Filipino superheroines.

SEMIOTICS: Defined

Ferdinand de Saussure, a Swiss linguist (1857-1913) and American Philosopher, Charles Sanders Peirce (1839-1914) are the key figures in semiotics. Theories or models of other semioticians like Charles William Morris (1901-1979) and Umberto Eco (1932) were also used as the basis in this study of semiotics of a visual language.

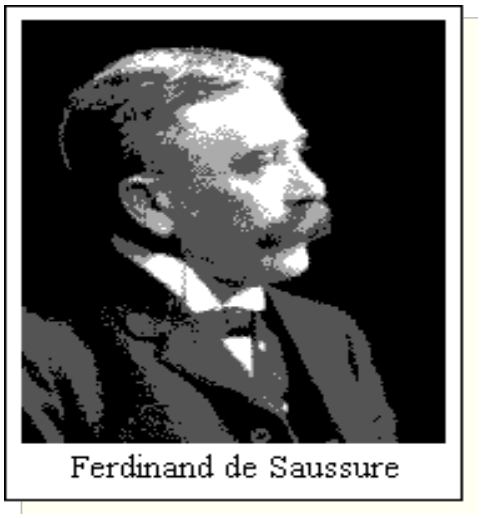


Figure 4: Ferdinand de Saussure

Saussure's 'semiology' was 'a science which studies the role of signs as part of social life. ("Role of Semiotics in Linguistics - IJSER") Citing from Saussure's lecture on General Linguistics, he posited that "It is... possible to conceive a science *which studies the role of signs as part of social life, w*e shall call it *semiology* (from the Greek *semeîon*, 'sign'). " Saussure views the discipline of semiology that which aimed to investigate the nature of signs and the laws governing them (Saussure 1983, 15-16; Saussure 1974, 16). http://visual-memory.co.uk/daniel//Documents/S4B/sem13.html#Saussure_1983

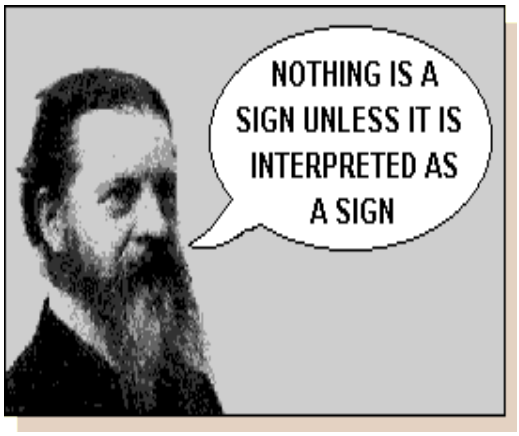


Figure 5: Charles Sanders Peirce

Peirce, on the other hand, defines sign as something which stands to somebody for something in some respect or capacity. (Peirce 1931-58, 2.228). He declared that 'every thought is a sign' (Peirce 1931-58, 1.538; cf. 5.250ff, 5.283ff).

For Charles W. Morris (deriving this threefold classification from Peirce), semiotics embraced semantics, along with the other traditional branches of linguistics ("untitled [web.pdx.edu]"):

Semantics: the relationship of signs to what they stand for, ("Semiotics for Beginners: Introduction - visual-memory.co.uk").

Syntactics (or *syntax*): the formal or structural relations between signs, *("Semiotics: A Primer for Designers - Boxes and Arrows").*

Pragmatics: the relation of signs to interpreters (Morris 1938, 6-7).

Meanwhile, Umberto Eco believes that 'semiotics is concerned with everything that can be taken as a sign' (Eco 1976, 7). Semiotics involves the study not only of what we refer to as 'signs' in everyday speech, but of anything which 'stands for' something else. In a semiotic sense, **signs take the form of words, images, sounds, gestures, and objects** (Semiotics for Beginners: Introduction - visual-memory.co.uk).

Theories of Signs

Men are *homo significans,* that is*,* **meaning-makers** where meanings are created through creation and interpretation of signs (Chandler, 2004). Signs take the form of words, images, sounds, odors, flavors, acts, or objects, but such things have no intrinsic meaning and become signs only when we invest them with meaning ("symbols and signs"; "What Do Images Mean in Visual Semiotics? - DergiPark).

Two Dominant Models of Theories of Signs (Chandler, 2004)

B.1 Saussure's Dyadic Model

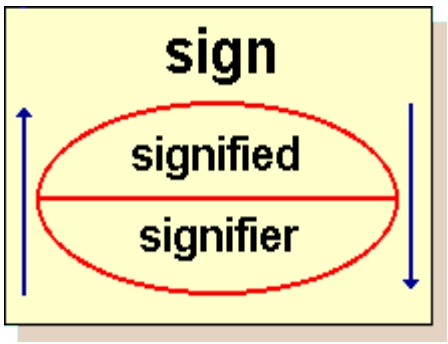


Figure 6: Saussure's Dyadic Model

Saussure offered a **'dyadic' or two-part model** of the sign. He defined a sign as being composed of: ("Term of art for ontological evasion - Philosophy Stack Exchange"):

* A 'signifier' (*signifiant*) - the *form* which the sign takes; and ("Semiotics for Beginners: Signs - Princeton University").
* The 'signified' (*signifié*) - the *concept* it represents.

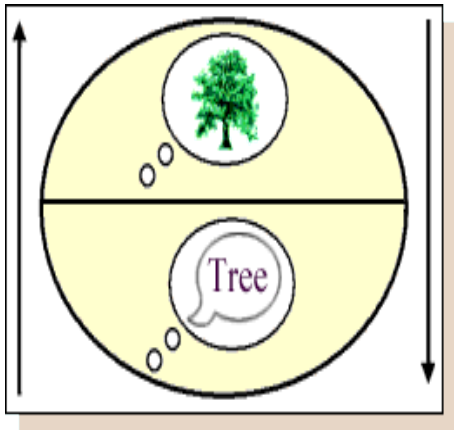


Figure 7: An Example of Saussure's Dyadic Model

The *sign* is the whole that results from the association of the signifier with the signified (Saussure 1983, 67; Saussure 1974, 67). ("Semiotics for Beginners: Signs - Princeton University") The relationship between the signifier and the signified is referred to as 'signification', and this is represented in the Saussurean diagram by the arrows. The horizontal line marking the two elements of the sign is referred to as 'the bar' (Models of the sign | Meryem AB - Academia.edu").

B.2 Peirce's Triadic Model

At around the same time as Saussure was formulating his model of the sign, of 'semiology' and of a structuralist methodology, across the Atlantic independent work was also in progress as the pragmatist philosopher and logician Charles Sanders Peirce formulated his own model of the sign, of 'semiotic' and of the taxonomies of signs. "In contrast to Saussure's model of the sign in the form of a 'self-contained dyad', Peirce offered a triadic model" ("Significance of Teaching Semiotic Pedagogy - CORE").

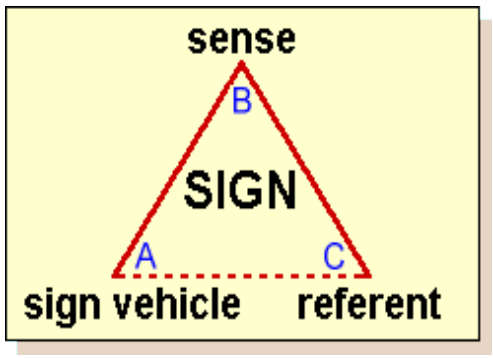


Figure 8: Peirce' Triadic Model

The **Representamen**: the form which the sign takes (not necessarily material),
An **Interpretant**: *not* an interpreter but rather the sense made of the sign, and
An **Object**: to which the sign refers.

Peircian Semiosis is an interaction of the sign [representamen] that stands to somebody, the equivalent sign [interpretant] that creates in the mind of a person, and the sign that stands for something [object] is in reference to a sort of idea which is also called the *ground* of the representamen. (Peirce 1931-58, 2.228). Within Peirce's model of the sign, the traffic light sign for 'stop' would consist of a red-light facing traffic at an intersection (the representamen);

vehicles halting (the object) and the idea that a red light indicates that vehicles must stop (the interpretant).

Theory of Symbol

Signs are of three types—icons, indexes, and symbols according to Peirce. Symbols are arbitrary but icons and indexes are "motivated" that is they are likely to resemble their object in some way.

A symbol is 'a sign' which refers to the object that it denotes by virtue of a law, usually an association of general ideas, which operates to cause the symbol to be interpreted as referring to that object. The symbol relates to its object by virtue of the idea of the symbol-using animal, without which no such connection would exist (Chandler, 2004). The philosopher Susanne Langer quoted by Chandler argues that the "picture is essentially a symbol, not a duplicate, of what it represents: "we tend to recognize in an image are analogous relations of parts to a whole."

Semiotics of Signification

The Peircian idea of semiosis is the idea of an infinite process of interpretation. The principle of interpretation says that "a sign is something by knowing which we know something more." The signal is not merely a stimulus but arouses an interpretive response in the addressee. A code is a system of signification when something is presented to the perception of the addressee, and it stands for something else. A signification system is an autonomous semiotic construct that has an abstract mode of existence independent of any possible communicative act it makes possible.

The theories presented clarify the goal of this paper for they will serve as a framework or a model to the proponent in reconstructing the image of a Filipino superheroine. While it is important to review theories of the key figures in semiotics, the proponent chose to work on the framework proposed by Charles William Morris.

Charles W. Morris' Semiotic Model of Interpretation

Charles Morris divided semiotics into three branches: syntactics, semantics and pragmatics.

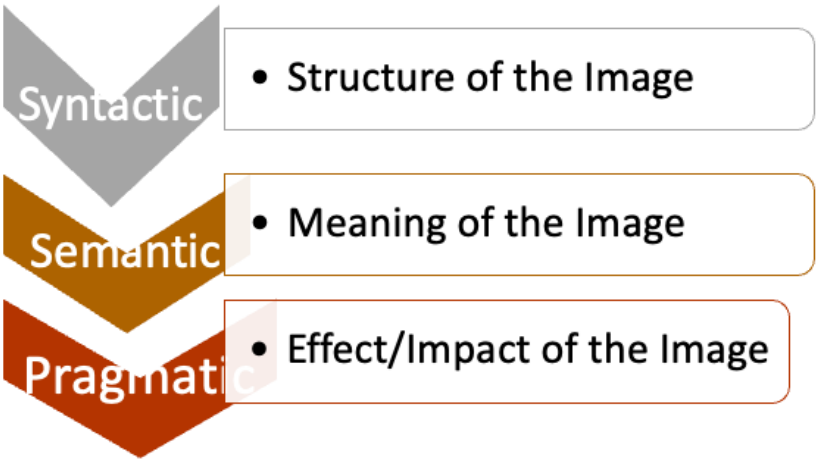


Figure 9: Charles W. Morris' Semiotic Model

4. Reconstructing Images of the Filipino Superheroine

A.1 Darna (Rosa Del Rosario) 1950s

Figure 10: Darna (Rosa Del Rosario) 1950s

Syntactic	Semantic	Pragmatic
Structure of the Image	**Meaning of the Image**	**Effect/Impact of the image**
A wing designed head cap	Flight; swiftness; fastness	To dream high; aim high; To reach for the sky
Wrist cuffs	Invincibility, protection, shield	To protect oneself To achieve power
Boots	Independence, Strength	To be strong To be confident
Upper Garment (Tube) with two stars in the middle	Womanliness, fame, popularity	Empowered Woman
White cloth hanging in front of the lower garment (Underwear)	Chastity Belt, Purity Inconsumable character	Upholding one's dignity through purity

Table 1: The Detailed Interpretation of the Image of Darna

The image of Darna on its first release emphasized the characteristics of an empowered woman; invincible, independent, and inconsumable. The image projected a strong, confident, and dignified woman as structured in the symbols of head cap, wrist cuffs, boots, upper garment with two stars, and a white cloth hanging in the lower garment.

As shown in the table, the syntactic, semantic, and pragmatic framework, adapting the triadic model of analysis of Peirce, provided the detailed interpretation of the image of Darna.

Syntactic or the structure of the image; head cap, wrist cuffs, boots, upper garment (tube) with two stars in the middle, and white cloth hanging in front of the lower garment (underwear) revealed the fully restored woman from the aftermath of war. Her participation in the society posited greater improvement on her position as a woman specifically shown in the semantics of the image; swiftness or fastness (cap), invincibility, protection, and shield (cuffs), independence and strength (boots), womanliness and fame (tube), and finally, purity and inconsumable character (white cloth). As regards the pragmatics or the impact of the image, Darna is a source of inspiration to the audience. She projects an image that prompts everyone to dream high or aim high, or to reach for the sky. She also sends the message of the importance of protecting oneself and achieving power. A woman has to be empowered, strong, confident, and most of all dignified.

The semiotics of Darna in the 1950s repositioned the women by showing great strength despite the discrimination they were suffering from due to colonization. “Although women’s social standing was improved, it was not until the late 1950s that the majority of women achieved equal rights.” As the country transitioned from commonwealth to a republic, women also transitioned into mere housewives to women of status in the society, enjoying their rights to education, suffrage, and government.

Apparently, the Philippines responded to the call of the United Nations for the full development women by Presidential Decree in 1975. Also, the government ratified the United Nations Conventions on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW).

A.2 Darna (Vilma Santos) 1970s

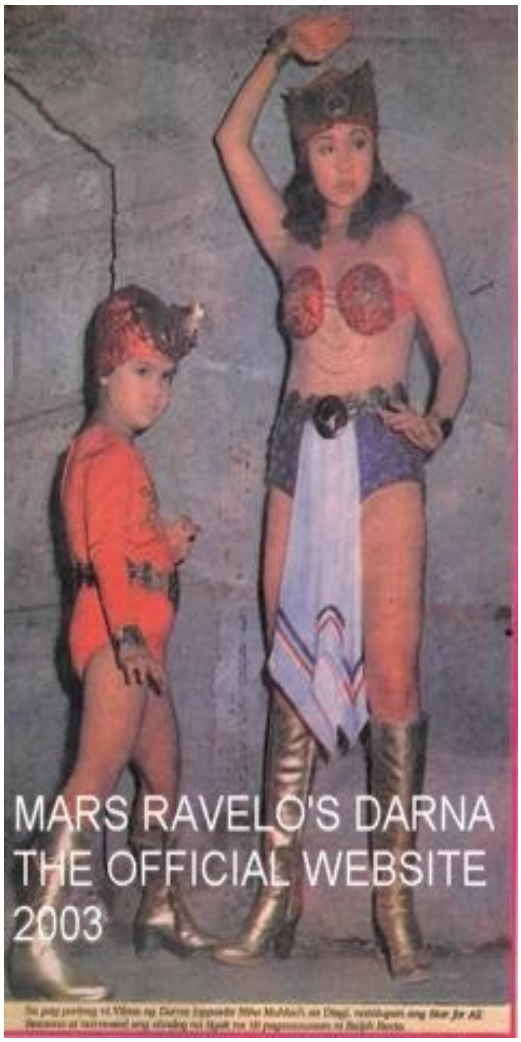


Figure 11: Darna (Vilma Santos) 1970s

Syntactic	Semantic	Pragmatic
A wing designed head cap	Flight; swiftness; fastness	To dream high; aim high; reach for the sky
Wrist cuffs	Invincibility, protection, shield	To protect oneself To achieve power
Upper Garment, A modified brassiere with strings	Womanliness, fame, popularity, daring	Empowered Women To recognize boldness among women
Boots	Independence, Strength	To be strong To be confident
White cloth hanging in front of the lower garment (Underwear)	Chastity Belt, Purity Inconsumable character	Upholding one’s dignity through purity
A blue-colored underwear	Serenity, Tranquility, Peace	To be advocate of peace

Table 2: The Detailed Interpretation of the Image of Darna

The image of Darna has greatly changed twenty years later from its color to the style of her undergarment. The 1970s Darna has truly brought women to a much advantageous position. As shown in the table, the semantics of the 70s Darna projects serenity, tranquility, and peace. The strings in her upper garment asserted boldness and recognition of an empowered woman. Her image further affirmed the upholding of purity, dignity, strength, and power in a peaceful way.

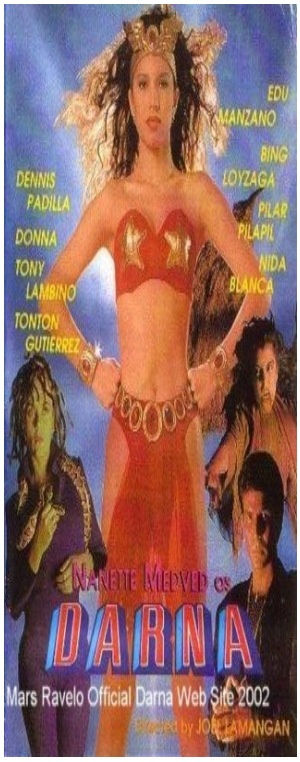
While this image of Darna in 1970s revealed a more daring woman having the upper garment modified with strings that symbolized boldness or a more empowered woman, her power is complemented with peace and tranquility as shown in her blue-colored undergarment. To wit "women are potent force in the community. When it comes to civic work and community services, they are always in the forefront."

The increasing desire for women to earn societal recognition as projected in the image of Darna creates an overwhelming response from the audience. In fact, her image has invited women to continue to strive to earn that favorable position in the society. Her earnestness, humility, and calm spirit brought every woman to a much enjoyable societal position at present.

To wit: "The 21st Filipina is the best of both worlds. She is old world because she keeps her traditional values like respect for parents, importance of family, and fear of God. She is a new world because she is innovative, brave, and ambitious. She is not afraid of change and would in fact welcome it. We see Filipinas all over the world, leading strong organizations and nurturing strong families" (Benitez, 2021).

The impact of Darna to women is undeniably present in the various roles that they play in the society, and this proves to show that women in this age and time are capable and unstoppable. Thus, there is no limit to what women can achieve and contribute to the country and to her fellow women.

A.3 DARNA: Ang Pagbabalik (Anjanette Abayari & Nanette Medved) 1990s



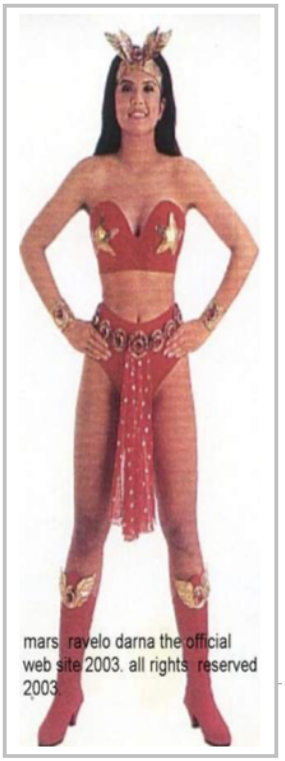


Figure 12 & 13: DARNA- Ang Pagbabalik (Anjanette Abayari & Nanette Medved) 1990

Syntactic	Semantic	Pragmatic
A wing designed head band (no longer a cap)	Flight; swiftness; fastness	To soar high; aim high; to reach for the sky
Wrist cuffs	Invincibility, protection, shield	To protect oneself To achieve power
Upper Garment (a tube) with two stars in the middle	Womanliness fame, popularity, daring	Empowered Women To recognize boldness among women
Boots (with wings as a design)	Independence, Strength Speed	To be strong To be confident
Red cloth hanging in front of the lower garment (Underwear)	Chastity Belt, "A more radical view on sexuality" Inconsumable character	Upholding one's dignity through chastity
Color Red	Power, warrior, boldness	To be fighter, protector of justice

Table 3: The Detailed Interpretation of the Image of Darna

As shown in the image, the color red and the two stars in the upper garment have been restored twenty years later. Red, the color of braveness and strength, was used again in this 1990s image of Darna to highlight the plight of women. This 20th century image of Darna posited a more

compelling claim of her position as the center of the universe. The rings in her belt explicitly showed her assertion for power, and to exercise this power with conviction, confidence, independence, and dignity.

The evolving semiotics of Darna as shown in the symbols used in its image affirmed the claim on the changing status of women. Red symbolizes power and boldness emphasized her being a warrior, a fighter, and a protector of justice. Rings in her belt symbolized her being at the center of the universe establishing the fact that her importance or value equates that of man as she continues to soar high or to aim high projected by her wing-designed headband or headdress.

Women in position of power or decision-making structures remain crucial in advancing women's empowerment. The dominant patriarchal framework of politics and governance has made it hard for women to assert themselves in traditional center of power like states, courts of law, congresses, and even local governments. However, for a developing, Catholic, and patriarchal society, the Philippines exceeded expectations when it ranked 7th in the Global Gender Gap Index (World Economic Forum, 2016) which measure factors like gender equality, health, economic and political opportunities, and political empowerment (Hega, Alporha & Evangelista, 2017).

The plight of Filipino women in gaining the status of equality and equity in the society has a long history of struggles and challenges. Apparently, as shown in each period, the role and/or the status of women also changes. They have small victories each time but with courage, persistence, and diligence, they have gained a much more important position in society. Their participation in nation building and transformation is monumental and nowhere in the world where women have been cited to have greater participation in government, legislation, and decision-making than the Philippines.

B. VOLTA: The 21st Century Filipino Superheroine (2004)

Syntactic	Semantic	Pragmatic

Spiky headdress (with edges)	Electricity, swiftness; speed of light, power	To achieve goals through strength in character
Gloves extending to arms (silver & red color)	Invincibility, protection, shield, source of power & strength	To protect oneself To live in powerful spirit
One piece clothing with a tube cut extending up to the torso to thigh (underwear cut)	Femininity, fame, popularity, daring	Empowered Woman To recognize boldness among women
Boots	Independence, Strength Speed	To be strong To be confident
White Belt with letter V	Chastity Belt, Letter V- for **v**olt, **v**ictory Inconsumable character	To uphold purity & to be in constant service to people
Color Red	Power, warrior, boldness,	To be fighter, protector of justice
A mask	A protection to the alter ego	To be discreet To have reservations

Table 4: The Detailed Interpretation of the Image of Volta

Figure 14: VOLTA The 21st Century Filipino Superheroine (2004)

The table provided the detailed analysis of the image of Volta using Morris's framework, Triadic Semiotic Analysis; syntactic (image) semantic (meaning) and pragmatic (impact).

The syntactic (image of Volta) showed spiky headdress (with edges), gloves (extending to the arms), one-piece red clothing with a tube cut extending up to the torso to thigh, white belt with letter V, boots, and mask. These signs in the image of Volta revealed that she carries the same characteristics of an empowered woman drawing her power from electricity as shown in her spiky headdress. The semantics of this image revealed her invincibility, power, strength, femininity, boldness, and swiftness are shown in her gloves, one-piece red clothing, belt, and boots. Interestingly, Volta uses a mask to cover her alter-ego, Perla. This image projects discreetness, reservation, as well as preservation of her inconsumable character.

The creation of images of Filipino superheroines has inspired artists both in film and television. The 2004 film Volta echoed the transformation of an ordinary woman into a powerful woman who aims to uphold justice and peace and protect those who are oppressed and are suffering. Volta was the image of the 21st century Filipina; a woman of character who has powerful spirit, a fighter, and protector of justice and in constant service to the people.

The semiotics of Volta provides salient information to the evolving role of women in the Philippine society. Volta's power which is electricity, alluded to the power of the lightning god, Zeus, amplifies the claim for the rightful position of women in the society. Her invincibility, strength, and boldness exemplify the character of a modern Filipina; however, captivating due to her femininity, chastity, and purity in serving the people who cannot protect themselves. Her victories as captured in the symbol "V" sends a clear message that women have won many of her battles in the past. Accordingly, each battle fought, no matter whether won or lost, is a victory, nonetheless. And for the Filipino women's movement, every day is

taking a step toward the envisioned equality, empowerment, and social justice (Hega, Alporha, & Evangelista, 2017). Thus, Volta's inconsumable character gives hope to the weak and justice to the oppressed.

C. KRYSTALA: The New Superhero of the Next Generation (2004)

Figure 15: KRYSTALA
The New Superhero of
the Next Generation (2004)

Syntactic	Semantic	Pragmatic
A golden headband with crystal stone right in the forehead	Power, nobility for being chosen, mystic character	To establish character in highest regard for a noble cause
A cape (golden yellow and blue color)	Plight Swiftness fastness	To soar high, To aim high To reach for the sky
Bright yellow wrist cuffs	Invincibility, protection, shield, source of power & strength	To protect oneself To live in powerful spirit
An over-all clothing tightly fitted from upper part of the body to feet (tight pants)	Femininity, bravery, heroic	Empowered Women To recognize boldness among women
Boots	Independence, Strength Speed	To be strong To be confident
Belt with circles as design	Chastity Belt, Inconsumable character, center of the universe	To uphold purity, to be in constant service to the people
Color Blue and bright yellow	Peace, Tranquility, Serenity, Glory & Fame	To be keeper of peace and ever protector of justice

Table 5: The Detailed Interpretation of the Image of Volta

The above table shows the detailed description of the syntactic, semantics, and pragmatic analysis of the image of the 21st century superheroine, Krystala. The syntactic or the structure of the image; a golden headband with crystal stone right in the forehead, bright yellow wrist cuffs, an over-all blue clothing tightly fitted from upper part of the body to feet (tight pants), boots, and belt with circles as design, revealed the nobility and mystic character of Krystala. Furthermore, her power, swiftness, strength, femininity, braveness, heroism, independence, and invincibility are revealed in these signs or images. Similarly, the colors, gold and blue, in their pragmatic sense project the character of Krystala as peacekeeper and protector of justice. Her nobility as shown in the medallion and stone in her forehead signifies her being powerful, dignified, and in constant service to the people.

Based on the narrative of this 21st century superheroine, Krystala's name was coined from the word "star" or tala in Filipino symbolizes a promise of hope to people who have lost their way. Her image of bravery and heroism was showcased in her unique "overall clothing" that emphasized boldness among women. Her belt with circles manifested her trait of being at the center of the universe carries nobility for being chosen. Her colors, blue and bright yellow characterizes her being lover of peace and justice and that she is the protector of the oppressed abused, and marginalized people. She is the embodiment of justice, peace, and strength among her people.

Benitez (2021) in her article, "Filipina Empowerment: Onwards, 21st Century Filipina" mentioned that Filipino women are more fortunate than other female counterparts around the globe. She wrote:

> "Belonging to a country which ranks 7th among 145 in gender equality according to the most recent World Economic Forum Report, and 2nd among all nations with the most female senior business leaders according to Grant Thornton's Women in Business Report of 2016, we are surrounded by females who not only take care of the family and home, but also keep the wheels of business and government turning. We have Filipinas in virtually all fields of endeavor, and we have heroines in our history, as well as everyday heroes who toil in faraway lands to provide for their loved ones."

The increasing awareness of the role of women in transforming society and contributing to nation building made them important figures in various fields that in the recent past, only men were given the opportunity to perform. The possibility of involvement in other important functions (that were used to be played by men) are now open to women who have demonstrated excellence in these fields. As Benitez puts it, "women in the 21st century have become strong, intelligent, capable modern, whose resolve and ability to accomplish and prevail is undeniable."

5. Conclusion

Reconstructing the images of Filipino superheroines through semiotic analysis was not only the goal of this study, but also to showcase the changing role and participation of Filipino women in the society.

The approaches to semiotics of visual language were presented to provide background on semiotic analysis and interpretation. While it is significant to note Ferdinand de Saussure's *signifier-signified* theory of signs as well as Charles Peirce' *representamen, interpretant, and object,* Charles Morris' approach in reading images is the most appropriate strategy in reconstructing images of Filipino superheroines. *Syntactic, semantic, and pragmatic* concepts were used to interpret the images of the superheroines.

At this point, the author would like to explain certain intentions made in this study. It was the intention of the author to make the whole paper to be highly visual so to emphasize the power of visual language- that is the 21st century is a visual age. Thus, skills in interpreting visual communications are necessary. Other than this, the questions why semiotics and why on women need to be answered.

In this paper, three superheroines were used for semiotic interpretation of its images. It is semiotics, the study of signs, which was used as an approach in putting meaning to those images. Why women? It has been 70 years since this character of superheroine was introduced to the Filipinos and in the year (2004) two new breeds of Filipino superheroines were born. In the introduction, a brief background on women's status was mentioned (years, years back) on how they struggled to have a place in society. This paper in a way complemented such evaluation on women's status, thus semiotics interpretation on these images helped in establishing concepts on the status of women.

The semiotics of Darna, Volta, and Krystala paved a way for a linguistic interpretation of the images through *visemics* (visual semiotics). Images such as the wearing of headdress, head cap or headband, wrist cuff, upper garment, lower garment, boots, as well as the colors carry meaning that established the status of women in the society. The evolving image of Darna, for instance, translates the changing roles of women as they continue to assert their rightful position in the society. As manifested in the images of Volta and Krystala where both carry the message of nobility or of being the "chosen one" strengthen their claim for equality, justice, and peace. These images as captured among these superheroines inspired Filipino women to be courageous in upholding justice and to be bold in fighting for their rights because women are invincible!

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Artistic "License": Kagan's Charismatic Dissent in Warhol v. Goldsmith

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Abstract
Our study explores the rhetorical demystification of artistic "license" via an analysis of United States Supreme Court Justice Elena Kagan's dissent in Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts, Inc., *v.* Goldsmith et al. (2023). The case question presented revolves around what constitutes transformation in a work of art. The Writ of Certiorari determines the Question Presented: Whether a work of art is "transformative" when it conveys a different meaning or message from its source material (as this Court, the Ninth Circuit, and other courts of appeals have held), or whether a court is forbidden from considering the meaning of the accused work where it "recognizably derived] from" its source material (as the Second Circuit has held). A metaphor sorting chart (see Appendix) derived from the official case transcript provides a framework for analysis.

Keywords: Artistic Cognition, Charisma (Rizz), Demystification/Mystification, Fair Use Doctrine, Fair Use Defense, Transformation

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Introduction

"The soul never thinks without a mental picture."[1] Attributed to Aristotle, this view of artistic cognition is the underlying premise in arguments crafted by United States Supreme Court Justices in their 2023 decision: Andy Warhol Foundation For The Visual Arts, Inc., *v.* Goldsmith et al. At issue is the work of two individuals depicting American pop icon Prince. Artist Andy Warhol's creation is inspired by rock/pop photographer Lynn Goldsmith's snapping of Prince, her work a springboard for a depiction published by *Vanity Fair* in 1984 featuring the color purple. Andy Warhol's work was used again in 2016, after Prince's death, this time using orange adjustments, in a commemorative *Conde` Nast* magazine. Goldsmith contested the second use, claiming it was granted one-time licensed publication and therefore was a violation of fair use because it was not transformative.[2]

While the Court Majority (7-2) ruled against the Andy Warhol Foundation's (AWF) Fair Use Defense because they did not find Warhol's work transformative, Justice Elena Kagan offered a compelling counterpoint[3], refuting the Court's logic as an attempt to demystify art, to simplify its meaning and mantra, to reduce artistic entrepreneurship to an avatar status. In short, to strip art and artist of charismatic qualities by quantifying *to what extent* a work may be regarded as bearing originality. Instead, Kagan argues, art is ineffable, its origin of inspiration cumulative and at least partially mysterious—perhaps even serendipitous. (The authors of this study are refining their analytic approach to this selected case serendipitously. Oxford's 2023 Word of the Year "rizz," derived from charisma, is the catalyst for a dialog about mystery).

The purpose of this study is to provide a template depicting charismatic arguments about artistic "license." Ultimate (charismatic) terms including metaphors and other linguistic ways of encoding meaning will be charted. Exemplars including both judicial and literary form, especially derived from Henry Louis Gates, Jr.'s (2019) *STONY THE ROAD: Reconstruction, white supremacy, and the rise of Jim Crow* are considered. Gates, as a literary critic, would agree with Kagan; past works of art should be seen as a form of "structuring principle" leading to new, authentic creations, new ways of seeing and representing. Newness and authenticity define arguments about Warhol's work in one phrase.

On this 40th anniversary year of Prince's "Purple Rain" album and film debut, our premise is that not only will this template illustrate issues pertaining to the selected case, but also will provide a dialogic forum for definitions of the meaning of art and the role of artists in illustrating—perhaps even transforming—artistic cognition.

Analysis: Garden Acronym

[1] For the authors' perspectives on art vis-a`-vis this case, see our ECAH Virtual presentation, conducted in an interview style.

[2] What constitutes transformation denoted by Justicia: "One of the most important questions in applying the fair use doctrine is whether the alleged infringer's use of the copyrighted work was transformative. This means that the new work has significantly changed the appearance or nature of the copyrighted work. If the use is transformative, this does not necessarily mean that a fair use defense will succeed, but it will weigh heavily in favor of the defendant in an infringement lawsuit. The transformative use concept arose from a 1994 decision by the U.S. Supreme Court. In *Campbell v. Acuff-Rose Music*, the Court focused not only on the small quantity taken from the copyrighted work but also on the transformative nature of the defendant's use."

[3] Justice Kagan was joined by Chief Justice John Roberts in her Dissenting Opinion, both citing the Majority's "stifling creativity" and the inherent rhetorical nature of being inspired by previous works. Kagan and Roberts recognized artistic cognition is not a tabula rasa.

RQ: What Drives Artistic Cognition?

To answer the Research Question, a GARDEN Acronym is introduced.[4] The acronym includes Genesis, Art aesthetic, Rhetorical rizz, Derivative, Existential easel, and New nexus. Derived from a domain of artistry, the term GARDEN refers to the sphere of artistic cognition via planting, transplanting, or transforming.

The GARDEN acronym is represented through the iconic structure of Versailles. Courtesy of a tour guide's narration,[5] visitors learn that Versailles is one of the top-ranking tourist sites in the world. Gradually transformed from a hunting lodge beginning in 1661 by King Louis XIV, who liked to be referred to as the "son-god," its elaborate furnishings were lost during the Revolution when King Louis XVI and his Queen, Marie Antoinette, were displaced.

France realized the property, located thirteen miles west of Paris, should be maintained for historical reasons, restoring it to much of its original glory. The vast, 236 feet long, Hall of Mirrors has hosted numerous peace accords, as well as originally providing the setting for elaborate balls, with 17 massive windows, reflected by an equal number of mirrors. This overlooks the massive maze of gardens, spread over 250 acres with as many as 1,400 fountains and other water features, some of which were designed to entertain the royal children, who could, with their mother, pretend they were living on a little farm, tended with lambs lolling about.

Like art, Versailles' transformation was an iterative process. From hunting lodge to palatial headquarters, Versailles is iconicity incarnate. Reframed and replenished by evolving vision, Versailles illustrates artistic cognition. The elements in Versailles' saga of design displacement and subsequent transformation are analogous to the transformative claims made by Petitioner Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts, Inc. versus the displacement claims made by Respondent Lynn Goldsmith.

G: Genesis - *Art Is "An Iterative Process" (p. 35)*

The letter G premiering the GARDEN acronym means that Versailles is inseparable from the *genesis* of legends and legendary "mirrors" invoked therein. Although creation stories typically begin with a void, upon which the creator fashions life, Kagan argues for a co-creative version of genesis: "For let's be honest, artists don't create all on their own; they cannot do what they do without borrowing from or otherwise making use of the work of others. That is the way artistry of all kinds—visual, musical, literary—happens (as is the way knowledge and invention generally develop)" (Kagan, p. 3).

Just as a garden design is generated via the vision of an aesthetician, works of art are generated by vision as seen and foreseen through the lens cap of a photographer or the line and contour crafting of an artist.

At issue in the Warhol case is the *genesis* of artistic vision. Photographer Goldsmith claims that Warhol's Prince merely mirrors her photography, reflecting her own image of the pop icon.

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[4] The GARDEN acronym was devised by the authors.
[5] Betty Brown and her husband, Roger Brown, toured Versailles July 2015. Their taped audio tour was narrated by Rick Steves.

Kagan refutes this view, describing an "iterative process" (p. 35) essential to artistic flourishing. Artistic vision accumulates through a folding and unfolding: "Creative progress unfolds through use and reuse, framing and reframing" (p. 34). "That is how art, literature, and music happen: it is also how all forms of knowledge advance" (p. 19). The ancestry of artistic vision "does not happen in a vacuum" (p. 11) but "from building on—and, in the process, transforming—those coming before" (p. 24).

A: Artistry Aesthetic - *Warhol's Prince Is "Reframed" and "Reduced" (P. 9)*

The letter A in the GARDEN acronym means that Versailles is inseparable from an artistry aesthetic. Just as a garden designer envisions how visitors will encounter the experience, an artist reveals through a selected medium a vision and vitality of the subject.

In this aesthetic form is fundamental: "And with the change in form came an undisputed change in meaning" (p. 9). By equating a change in form with a change in meaning, form is not just a formality but a transformation: "The differences in meaning that arose from replacing a realistic—and indeed humanistic—depiction of the performer with an unnatural, disembodied, masklike one" (p. 16). In this sense, Prince, as painted by Warhol, puts on a "'mask-like simulacrum'" wherein the pop artist is simultaneously "reframed" and "reduced" (p. 9).

This represents a marked departure from the Opinion in which "the majority plants itself firmly in the 'I could paint that' school of art criticism" (p. 18). Instead, Kagan concludes that "Warhol had effected a transformation" (p. 10).

R: Rhetorical "rizz" - *"Warhol's Paintings Landed Like a Thunderclap" (P. 5)*

The letter R in the GARDEN acronym means that Versailles is inseparable from rhetorical "rizz" or charisma. Though we usually think of people, not gardens, as charismatic, the qualities of charisma can be applied here, as noted in the etymology of the term: from kharis "grace, beauty, kindness" (Charis was the name of one of the three attendants of Aphrodite), which is related to khairein "to rejoice at" (from PIE root *gher- (2) "to like, want").[6]

Whether grace and beauty stem from a gardener's rake or artist's paintbrush, these qualities distinguish what captures our attention and stimulates our imagination versus what we gloss over. Whereas Justice Kavanaugh in Oyez leans toward a demystified interpretation of Warhol's Prince as that which "merely supersedes," Justice Kagan refers to this charismatic quality identifiable in art as something beyond the original. Chief Justice Roberts, in Oyez, observes that the two princely versions, in a side-by-side comparison, convey different messages, conjuring different meanings.

Charismatic ("rizz") terms identified in the selected case are defined by rhetorical theorist Richard M. Weaver (1964) as ultimate terms held in high reverence or regard in a culture, often tinged with an aura of mystery. Invoking a charismatic term, such as liberty or destiny, is itself thought to carry persuasive freight. Such words are attached to having a magnetic power: "The words with the greatest magnetic power, then, all embody core values of the society in which

[6] See https://www.etymonline.com/word/charisma

they are used. Such expressions 'carry the greatest potency' in all situations and are known as "ultimate terms."[7] Weaver defines these words or concepts as occupying the strongest sanction.

Justice Kagan vouches for her view of Warhol's artistic prowess, which she terms "dazzling creativity" (p. 17). Evidenced in the silkscreen portrait of Prince, it "enabled him to make brilliantly novel art out of existing images" (p. 4). Insofar as "Warhol's paintings landed like a thunderclap" (p. 5) they also signal "a biting critique of the cult of celebrity" (p. 6).

Rhetorical rizz is seen throughout Kagan's refutation of Majority logic:[8] "A thought experiment may pound the point home. Suppose you were the editor of Vanity Fair or Conde` Nast, publishing an article about Prince. You need, of course, some kind of picture. An employee comes to you with two options: the Goldsmith photo, the Warhol portrait. Would you say that you don't really care? That the employee is free to flip a coin? In the majority's view, you apparently would" (p. 10). Of this thought experiment Kagan wryly observes, "All I can say is that it's a good thing the majority isn't in the magazine business" (p. 10).

Kagan projects what artistic harms may accrue from adopting the Court's logic: "a copyright regime with no escape valves" would diminish and even suffocate creativity (p. 12) by rejecting the artist's vision: "The majority spurns all that mattered to the artist" (p. 20). The result is an erroneous ruling: "In belittling those creative contributions, the majority guarantees that it will reach the wrong result" (p. 18).

The effect, according to Kagan "will be dramatic" (p. 25), stifling "creativity of every sort. It will impede new art and music and literature. It will thwart the expression of new ideas and the attainment of new knowledge. It will make our world poorer" (p. 36).

D: Derivative - *"The Resulting Venus of Urbino Is a Prototypical Example of Renaissance Imitation—The Creation of an Original Work From an Existing Model" (P. 31)*

The letter D in the GARDEN acronym also means that Versailles is inseparable from the derivative. Just as gardens are a part of our cultural landscape, dating in literature at least to the Garden of Eden, Goldsmith argues that her landscape is the foundation of Warhol's photograph, rendering Warhol's work derivative.

Kagan dismisses the Court's view with a series of derivative examples spanning the muses of literature, music, and art.

In literature the Justice cites examples from Frankenstein to Shakespeare to Ovid (p. 26); she includes romances from Romeo and Juliet to Lolita to Robert Louis Stevenson's *Treasure Island* (p. 27). In this line of reasoning the "treasures" of literary works such as *Treasure Island* are not from a tabula rasa, but from deposits in the savings of artistic heritage.

Music, Kagan notes, also is an art form replete with examples: "Or how about music? Positively rife with copying of all kinds" (p. 28). From Haydn to Hendrix, Stravinsky to Beethoven, Clapton to Charlie Parker to Bill Haley (p. 28) Kagan finds examples derived from musical influences inspiring composers.

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[7] "The Uncommon Sense Revolution" (2023). https://theuncommonsenserevolution.com/winning-words-richard-weaver-and-ultimate-terms/

[8] See Metaphor Sorting Chart, Appendix, for a detailed listing of case terms.

Returning to painting, Kagan cites examples from Renaissance art's Sleeping Venus depicted by Giorgione to pupil Titian, "But things were not destined to end there. One of Giorgione's pupils was Titian, and the former student undertook to riff on his master. The resulting Venus of Urbino is a prototypical example of Renaissance *imitation*—the creation of an original work from an existing model" (p. 31).

She also draws from Manet's Olympia to support her logic: "It is an especially striking example of a recurrent phenomenon—of how the development of visual art works across time and place, constantly building on what came earlier" (p. 32).

Religious depictions, too, are etched on this canvas, wherein we see how "converting Velasquez's study of magisterial power into one of mortal dread" (p. 33) constitutes a profound difference. She sums this argument: "So too here, presumably, the stolid Pope, the disturbed Pope—it just doesn't matter. But that once again misses what a copier accomplished: the making of a wholly new piece of art from an existing one" (p. 34).

E: Existential Easel - *"It's As Though Warhol Is an Instagram Filter, and a Simple One at That" (P. 18)*

The letter E in the GARDEN acronym means that Versailles is a representation of an existential easel. So too does the photograph and print of Prince come to life on an existential easel. This easel is marked by the artist's ability to "reframe" and "reformulate" (p. 1), the linguistic equation of transforming.

In Warhol's techne Kagan views "flipsides" of the existential easel: "this appropriation and his originality were flipsides of each other" (p. 4), resulting in an image "miles away from a literal copy of the publicity photo" (p. 6). Zeroing in on the image created she notes, "That image isolated and exaggerated the darkest details of Prince's head" (p. 8), manifest in "a range of unnatural, lurid hues" (p. 8).

In contrast to what Kagan sees in Warhol's art, she rues that "The majority does not see it. And I mean that literally" (p. 17). Instead, their lens is "an aesthetic gloss" (p. 17). She finds the majority description "disheartening. It's as though Warhol is an Instagram filter, and a simple one at that" (p. 18). With such descriptors Kagan discounts the Majority approach, calling it an "undervaluing of transformative copying as a core part of artistry" (p. 24).

N: New Nexus - *"His Work Turned Something Not His Into Something All His Own" (P. 35)*

The letter N in the GARDEN acronym means that Versailles is inseparable from what seeds a new nexus. Justices Sotomayor and Brown-Jackson ask in Oyez about newness, linking it to importance. This might include a new purpose, character, meaning, and/or message. Whether encoded through a photograph, painting, or garden design, newness compels, projecting anew the scene and seen.

Kagan contends that the majority is "uninterested in the distinctiveness and newness of Warhol's portrait" (p. 1). While Goldsmith claims the easel as her canvas, Warhol claims that his version of the easel brings forth the new—it is transformed, not merely transplanted. As

Marcus Tullius Cicero paints it, "The face is a picture of the mind with the eyes as its interpreter."[9]

Kagan casts the Court's current approach as contrary to its prior logic in preceding cases: "This Court has long understood the point—has gotten how new art, new invention, and new knowledge arise from existing works" (p. 11). This view refutes the tableau of Homo Narran as tabula rasa. Kagan's rejoinder casts Warhol as "a towering figure in modern art not despite but because of his use of source materials. His work—whether Soup Cans and Brillo Boxes or Marilyn and Prince—turned something not his into something all his own" (p. 35).

Acronym Summative:

In sum, the GARDEN acronym provides a template for viewing what drives artistic cognition.

By referring to the iconic Parisian GARDEN Versailles we unearth postulates of transplanting versus transforming our artistic eye. Perhaps a Versailles is not just a Versailles.

Conclusion: Artistry & Charisma Epilogue

We began this essay with Aristotle's contention that "The soul never thinks without a mental picture." In the case of Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts, Inc., *v.* Goldsmith et al. (2023) the United States Supreme Court exhibits two different "mental pictures" that portray artistic license differently. The Majority privileges the original artist (photographer Goldsmith) with arguments protecting fair use and fair use defense doctrine while the Dissent favors artistic mystique. The encoding of this mystique—its very postulates about artistic cognition—is inseparable from the charismatic language of Justice Elena Kagan's dissent.

Further research warrants an exploration of this rhetorical contest between demystification and mystification, perhaps in a case analysis centered on the symbolic construction of executive immunity.

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[9] OCLI Vision https://www.ocli.net/blog/famous-quotes-about-eyes/#:~:text=%E2%80%9CFor%20she%20had%20eyes%20and%20chose%20me.%E2%80%9D&text=%E2%80%9CThe%20face%20is%20a%20picture,the%20eyes%20as%20its%20interpreter.%E2%80%9D&text=%E2%80%9CAlmost%20nothing%20need%20be%20said%20when%20you%20have%20eyes.%E2%80%9D&text=%E2%80%9CI%20shut%20my%20eyes%20and,and%20all%20is%20born%20again.%E2%80%9D

Appendix

Metaphor usage in Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts Inc v. Goldsmith et al with a focus on NEW

Section	Page	Tenor	Frame	Category
Syllabus				
	Authored by Reporter of Decisions			
	2	distinct purpose or character	descriptive	**relevant new expression**
	3	shedding light	imagery	illustration/emphasis not literal
	4	parody	makes point	illustration/emphasis not literal
	4	silkscreen image of photograph	analysis of image	**new expression (used twice)**
	5	recast, transform or adapt	repetition	**new expression (used twice)**
	5	stand on its own two feet	descriptive	justification
Opinion of the Court				
	Authored by Justice Sotomayor			
	1	trailblazer	Goldsmith's career	**new**
	1	shot to the top	Goldsmith's career	like Warhol
	3	self-starter	Goldsmith's career	**new**
	3	groupies	Goldsmith's career	unique
	9	side by side	use	**new expression**
	9		creativity	**new aesthetics**
	10	secondary work	use	**new aesthetics**
	10		use	**new expression**
	10	overarching	purpose of two works of art	**new or original**
	10	narrow	purpose of two works of art	**new or original**
	10	Warhol	easily recognized	transformation
	12	differences weighed	use	**new expression**
	13	commercial nature	use	**new expression**
	13	balancing act	purpose of two works of art	**creativity/new works**
	14	balancing	purpose of two works of art	judicial application
	15	original creation		**new work**
	15	supplanting the original	substitution	**adds something new**
	16	secondary work	use	
	16	matter of degree	purpose of two works of art	original work
	17	shedding light	transformation	**new creation**
	17	new lyrics	purpose of two works of art	**new message**
	18	different character	use	**new work**
	18	enriching public knowledge	use	**new, transformative purposes**
	19	mimicking makes its point	purpose of two works of art	**new purpose**
	19	matter of degree	purpose of two works of art	difference
footnote	20	Android platform	use	**new system created for new products**

	21	sleight of hand	purpose of two works of art	analysis
footnote	23	rap label	purpose of two works of art	**new sound and lyrics**
				new aesthetic and message
footnote	25	addition to definition		**new expression**
footnote	27	Warhol soup can label		**new meaning or expression**
	28	Warhol soup can label	purpose	**new meaning or message**
	28			**new meaning or message**
	28	film and stage adaptions, sequels, spinoffs		**add new expression, meaning or message**
	28			**new information, new aesthetics, new insights**
				and understanding
	29	meaning of classic novel		**important new expression**
	29	remix		**added new expression or had a different aesthetic**
	29	version of song	convey	**new meaning or message**
	29	parody		**new meaning or message**
	29	Hail Mary	purpose of two works of art	example of books to films analogy
	30	stand on its own two feet	parody versus satire	**creativity/new or copying**
	30	go back to school		
	31	secondary work	definition	**adds a new aesthetic of new expression**
	31	secondary work		**convey a new meaning or message**
	31			**new artistic purpose**
	32	larger than life figure	Warhol purpose	transformation
	32	Prince as a kind of icon or totem/mask	descriptive	
	34	targeting	film adaptation	transformation
	35	target	purpose of two works of art	original or borrowing
	35	stand on its own two feet	purpose of two works of art	original or borrowing
	35	copying the photograph	convey	**a new meaning or message**
	35	copying the photograph	convey	**a new meaning or message**
	36	stifle creativity of every sort		**thwart the expression of new ideas attainment of new knowledge, make world poorer**
	36	snuff out the light	purpose of two works of art	innovation or copyright
	37	miss the forest for a trees	focus of argument	value of copying or value
	37	unbalance theory and tone		**adds new meaning or message**
	37	escape valves	focus of argument	a general rule
	37	ample space for artists and other creators		**valuable new works**
	37	engine of creativity		

Concurring

Authored by Justice Gorsuch and Justice Jackson

1	question	narrow	descriptive
1	Warhol intention	application	**new aesthetic**
2	trains our attention	imagery	focus is similar to purpose of art
2	overlap		
3	endowed		**new aesthetic**

	4	chain of questions	purpose	focus is similar to purpose of art
	4	Prince as icon or in vulnerable light	description	
	4	tangle	imagery	purpose of law
	5	strike a balance	imagery	really? How do you do that?
Dissent		*metaphors are a type of "rizz" using humor to create images of disagreement*		
	Authored by Justice Kagan and Chief Justice Roberts			
	1	eye-popping	descriptive	not a physical reaction
	1	stepped into his shoes	descriptive	substitution
	1	Warhol portrait		**newness**
	1	reframed	descriptive	substitution
	2	copying use adds something		**new and important**
	2	go back to school	humor	description of majority opinion
	2	does copier's work add?		**something new**
	3	different from original photo		**new expression, meaning or message?** **new expression, meaning or message?**
	3	building on work of others	imagery	construction
	3	breathing space for artists to use existing materials		**fundamentally new works**
	4	avatar	imagery	Warhol as icon
	4	flipsides	imagery	opposite viewpoints
	5	Warhol paintings		landed like a thunderclap
	5	Warhol paintings	creativity	**something new**
	6	miles away	imagery	transformation
	7	disembodied magically suspended in space	imagery	
	8	out of kilter lines	imagery	exaggeration
	8	picture worth a thousand words	humor	
	9	reframed	imagery	humorous when considered how art is framed
	10	pound the point home	imagery	not with a hammer but with argument
	10	flip a coin	humor	description of editorial decision
	11	Warhol's addition		**new expression**
	11	creative work does not happen in a vacuum	humor	oxygen is a necessity
	11	Court understanding of existing works		**new art, new invention, and new knowledge**
footnote	11	From Gershwin to Sondheim book themes		**even most radically new music builds on existing work** songs make history and history makes songs
	12	borrowing much of which was well know and used before		**few…things… new and original**
	12	no escape valve		creative process
	12	put manacles	imagery	limiting the artist
	12	boils on to	imagery	limiting the artist
	12	factors sometimes point in different directions		Court guidance
	13	free-loading filmmaker		would be favored
	13	back pocket test		to deal with problems
	13 and 14	raw material		**transformed in creation of new information,**

					new aesthetics, new insights
	14	original creation			**superseded with new work**
	14	different character	purpose		**added with new work**
	14	first work alteration			**new expression, meaning, or message**
	14	commercialism significance			**transformative new work**
	15	does copier's use	purpose		**add something new**
	15	slicing the baloney	humor		illustration
	15	Google use of Sun code	purpose		**does it add something new**
	16	Prince portrait from Goldsmith photo	purpose		**new purpose or character**
	16	mask like depiction	purpose		**new messages about celebrity culture**
	17	showstopper	purpose		transformation
	17	might not get Warhol all the way home	humor		illustration of fair use
	17	started with old photo	imagery	Kagan quote	**created a new new thing**
	17	Warhol's characteristic style	clear recognition		**new expression versus modest alterations**
	18	I could paint that	satire		school of art criticism
	18	plants itself	humor		not in a garden
	19	comment on society			dehumanizing culture of celebrity
	19	text as strong suit			**precedents' inquiry into new expression**
	21	swallow those uses	humor		deprive of protection
	21	blockhead		Johnson quote	would write for anything but money
	22	equation striking a balance	focus		**new expression, meaning, or message**
			purpose		**new work adds something new to copyrighted one**
	22	commercial context	purpose		**copier's addition of new expression,**
					including meaning or message
	22	role of follow-on work			**newness**
	22	oddity of Court Opinion			**if newness matters**
	23	Warhol portrait licensed to Condi Nast			**dismiss newness**
	23	commercial context	purpose		**convey new meaning or message**
	23	2 Live Crew use of Roy Orbison catchy song			**significant new meaning, meaning and message**
	24	use of code by Google	purpose		**new work**
	24	there's the rub	humor		quoting Shakespeare
	24	building on	purpose		**transforming new creations**
	26	build			**new construction on something given**
	27	monopoly on talking birds	humor		practiced piracy
	28	worth their salt steal others	humor		construction
	28	backbone of your compositions is identical	humor		**new notes written by Mozart and Beethoven**
	28	I won't point fingers	humor		jazz musicians use of Stravinsky lurking
	29	feeding frenzy	imagery		borrowing from others
footnote	29	launched a thousand ships	humor		use of Bob Dylan pound of acoustic guitars
	30	nothing comes from nothing theme	purpose		Sleeping Venus copied by Giorgione from woodcut

31	riff on master		Venus of Urbino by Titian, student of Giorgione
32	building on what came earlier	imagery	reconstruction transformative painting of Manet's Olympia
33	portrait of Pope copied by Velázquez into Bacon portrait		**imitation transformed with new expression,**
			meaning and message
34	copier accomplishment	purpose	**making a wholly new piece of art from an existing one**
34	framing and reframing	imagery	building on borrowed ideas
34	one work builds on what has come before	imagery	construction
34	later works build on that one	imagery	construction
35	use of existing materials	purpose	**to fashion something new**
35	turns its back	imagery	limiting the artist
35	Warhol as proof		**artist working from a model**
35	Warhol is a towering figure in modern art		use of source materials
35	Warhol accomplishment	purpose	**did new work add something new?**
35			**did it alter the first**
36	inhibiting writers and artists from improvements		**will stifle creativity**
			thwart expression of new ideas
			and attainment of new knowledge

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The Impact of Rural Women's Perception of Gender Roles on Household Food Security: A Study of Women Chama Members in Kakamega County, Kenya

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Abstract
Against the backdrop of global efforts to achieve food security and gender equality, understanding women's perceptions of their roles in the food value chain is vital. This paper examines women's perceptions of gender roles along the food value chain and its impact on household food security. Focusing on women Chama members in Kakamega County, the study sheds light on complex dynamics influencing food security. Using purposive and snowball sampling, 50 respondents were selected and engaged through semi-structured interviews. Thematic analysis method identified five themes from the data: gendered division of roles, Women's gender roles perception, Chama influence on bargaining power, and Chama's impact on food security. The findings reveal that gender role perceptions influence women's participation in the food value chain, impacting household food security. Women's dominance in low-capital activities with limited returns is attributed to gender roles. Respondents believe that division of roles along gender lines increases gendered gaps in land ownership, financial and labour access, and technology adoption, challenging women's contribution to food security. Chama membership addresses these challenges by fostering women's access to collateral free credits for business ventures, land acquisition, technology investment, and health and nutrition knowledge acquisition. Notably, women with progressive views of gender roles perceive more balanced gender roles across the food value chain than their conservative counterparts. The study indicates that women's empowerment through Chama can influence their gender roles perception, leading to improved household food security. The study urges policymakers to formulate inclusive policies supporting women's initiatives and roles in food security.

Keywords: Household Food Security, Gender Roles, Perceptions, Rural Women, Value Chain, Chama

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1. Introduction

Food security is a pressing global issue. Over 820 million people experience hunger and undernourishment, particularly in Sub-Saharan Africa (FAO, IFAD, & UNICEF 2020). In Kenya, more than ten million people face chronic food insecurity and poor nutrition, with two to four million requiring emergency food assistance at any time (Emongor, 2014). Organizations like the Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) work with governments to address hunger and malnutrition by promoting equal access to food, resources, and information. The FAO defines food security as a state where everyone has consistent access to sufficient, safe, and nutritious food for an active and healthy life (FAO, 1996). This definition indicates that food security encompasses four dimensions: availability, accessibility, utilization and stability, highlighting the complex factors beyond agricultural productivity (Ashby et al., 2016; Brooks & Matthews, 2015; Gross et al., 2000). This implies that achieving food security requires meeting all the four dimensions. According to Gross et al. (2000), food availability can be achieved through agricultural productivity; accessibility depends on the distribution and the financial means to acquire food, while utilization requires a consumer's good health for proper nutrient use. Lastly, food stability involves maintaining consistency in the other three dimensions over time to manage risks effectively (Brooks & Matthews, 2015).

Given the complexity of the concept of food security, several studies have examined the factors that determine household food security. They have identified economic factors such as asset ownership (Sikwela, 2005; Maharjan & Joshi, 2011; Muhoyi et al., 2014; Harris-Fry et al., 2015), and household income (Quisumbing et al., 1996; Pankomera et al., 2009; Babatunde & Qaim, 2010; Abubakari & Abubakari, 2015; Kalansooriya & Chandrakumara, 2016; Mesele, Asefa, & Anuja, 2018; Galie et al., 2019) as significant determinants. These studies suggest that households with assets and sufficient income are more likely to be food secure. However, some studies (Kalansooriya & Chandrakumara, 2016; Galie et al., 2019) indicate that household food security is not solely dependent on income levels but also on who earns and controls the income. These studies found that income controlled by women positively impacts household food security more than when men control the income.

Studies also found that social factors impact food security. These factors include educational status (Maharjan & Joshi, 2011; Muche et al., 2014; Mutisya et al., 2016; Zouh et al., 2019), Access to information, communication channels and technology (Harris-Fry et al., 2015; Nagamani & Veni, 2016; Masamha et al., 2018; Del Prete et al., 2019; Safari et al., 2020; Wegenast & Beck, 2020), as well as family sizes and dependency ratio (Pankomera et al., 2009; Muhoyi et al., 2014; Muche et al., 2014). Most studies link higher education levels among household members to better food security outcomes. However, Zouh et al. (2019) argue that women's higher education is insignificant to food security in households where women lack decision-making power. This suggests that the effect of women's education on food security depends on their decision-making power within the household. Larger family sizes are associated with greater food insecurity, but Muche et al. (2014) note that the number of dependents, rather than the total family size, directly impacts food security. They argue that larger families with fewer dependents are more likely to be food secure.

Studies on gender and food security have discussed how gender dynamics, such as the gender of the household head and prescribed gender roles, impact on the determinants of household food security. Several studies indicate that male-headed households enjoy greater food security due to better access to resources (Tibesigwa & Visser, 2016; Mudege et al., 2017; Mesele, Asefa, & Anuja, 2018; Bolarinwa et al., 2020; Akukwe, 2020). On the other hand, female-

headed households face challenges due to limited access to resources (Ali & Niehof, 2007; Kassie et al., 2012). These studies found that female-headed households in Pakistan and Kenya have limited access to extension officers, markets, capital and social support. In addition, gender roles, defined by social and cultural expectations (Thobejane & Khoza, 2014), further hinder women's contributions to food security. Women play a critical role in agricultural production, food preparation, and resource management (Chebuche & Wakhungu, 2021), however, societal perceptions of gender roles either empowers or constrains their effectiveness in food value chains (World Bank, 2015). These roles often dictate behaviour, responsibilities, and opportunities based on gender, presenting challenges in labour division, decision-making, and resource allocation within households (Senait, 2002). In Kenya, like other patriarchal societies, men are expected to engage in economically strategic tasks, and women to handle household chores (Chebuche & Wakhungu, 2021). These traditional norms socially subordinate Kenyan women to men, where men dominantly take roles in decision-making, especially in rural areas (Ondiba and Matsui, 2019).

To overcome these challenges, Kenyan women come together in mutual self-help groups known as *Chama*, a Swahili term that means an association (KAIG, 2013). Through *Chama* rural women have defiled all odds and contributed greatly to the society. Despite male dominance, women's collective actions have been identified as key to household food security in SSA. While studies have explored the determinants of food security, and constraints from gender roles, there is a gap in understanding how an individual's perception of these roles affects their contributions to food security. This study fills this gap by examining the impact of rural women's perceptions of gender roles on household food security, focusing on *Chama* members in Kakamega County, Kenya.

2. Research Question and Objectives

The study's main research question is: How does rural women's perception of gender roles influence their contribution to household food security? By focusing on women *Chamas,* the study aims to:

i. Analyze how rural women's perception of gender roles influences their participation in the food value chain.
ii. Explore how *Chama* membership influences women's bargaining power in households regarding food security.
iii. Investigate how women's experiences within *Chamas* influence their perception of gender roles and contribution to household food security.

3. Methodology

Study Area

The study area is Kakamega County, in Western Kenya. The County was selected because it's predominantly rural, and its main economic activity is agriculture (KNBS, 2019). The population mainly cultivate subsistence crops like maize and beans, and cash crops such as sugarcane, tea and coffee. Livestock rearing is also common. Women primarily manage the farms (Ireri & Ngugi, 2016; Barrow & Mogaka, 2007). The County has 12 sub-counties with a population of 1,867,579. Females comprise the largest population of 970,406 (KNBS, 2019). Kakamega is inhabited by the Luhya tribe, who traditionally assign men as household heads and women as homekeepers. Cultural practices like polygamy and dowry payments continue

to influence gender dynamics, leading to women's subordination and dependence on men for financial support and decision-making. These factors make Kakamega County an ideal case for studying the impact of gender perceptions on food security.

Sampling and Data Collection

The study mainly focuses on rural women. Purposive and snowball sampling techniques were used to select the participants. A total of 35 women Chama members were selected using the snowball method. Accordingly, 12 Chama leaders and three organization officials were selected through purposive sampling. The twelve Chama leaders represented each of the 12 Chamas (Table 1), sampled from WEF and Kenya Women Microfinance Bank (KWFT)'s reports. Selection was based on their activities and locations in the county (Table 2). The three officials represented each of the selected three organizations (Table 3), based on their expertise and experience dealing with rural women and women Chamas. Chama leaders and organization's officials served as key informants for the study. Chama members were referred for the study by Chama leaders. To minimize biases, members were selected based on their punctuality at meetings. A total of 50 samples were interviewed, 47 women and three men.

***Chama's* name**	***Chama* type (activities)**	**Sub county (Chama location)**	**Date of leader's interview**
SWG	Entrepreneurial	Mumias East	2022/4/30
SSWG	Entrepreneurial	Shinyalu	2022/4/27
OWG	Entrepreneurial	Lurambi	2022/7/28
UWG	Welfare	Khwisero	2022/3/15
SUWG	Welfare	Lugari	2022/5/6
FWG	Entrepreneurial	Likuyani	2022/7/14
LWG	Entrepreneurial	Ikolomani	2022/5/17
SYGWG	Entrepreneurial	Matungu	2022/7/8
ICWG	Entrepreneurial	Navakholo	2022/4/28
MSWG	Entrepreneurial	Malava	2022/6/25
AUPWG	Entrepreneurial	Mumias West	2022/7/22
BWG	Welfare	Butere	2022/4/30

Table 1: Sampled Women *Chamas*
Source: Author, 2022

Major Activities in *Chamas*	**Specific Activities**	**No of Chama**	**Chama Type**
Loans and credits	Table banking	12	Entrepreneurial & Welfare
Income generating Activities	Agribusiness, & Off-farm SMEs (food vending, small retail "kiosks", pharmacy & beauty shops, clothes & shoe lines, pottery & beading, mobile money services)	12	Entrepreneurial & Welfare
Savings	Merry go – round	11	Entrepreneurial & Welfare
Investments	Real estate, and land property	8	Entrepreneurial
Social welfare support	Seminars, Trainings, workshops, monthly meetings, welfare kitty, community charity	12	Entrepreneurial & Welfare

Table 2: Major Chamas Activities
Source: Author, 2022

***Organization's* name**	**Mission**	**Organization's headquarter location**	**Date of leader's interview**
Western Focus Community Organization (WEFOCO)	Promote community welfare	Kakamega	2022/7/27
One Acre Fund (OAF)	Improve agricultural productivity	Kakamega	2022/5/15
Women Enterprise Fund (WEF)	Women Empowerment	Nairobi	2022/5/4

Table 3: Sampled Organizations
Source: Author, 2022

Data Collection Methods

The study used semi-structured interviews to collect data. Interviews were conducted online between March and August 2022, with 30 to 90 minutes lasting depending on the participant's availability. With the participant's consent, interviews were audio recorded. Additionally, a demographic questionnaire was used to gather detailed information on participants' age, marital status, education, occupation, income, Chama membership, household headship, and household size. The demographic and household data collected was used primarily to understand the participants' backgrounds and were not directly used for the study's analysis.

Ethical Considerations

Careful steps were taken to protect participants, ensuring their sensitive information was always protected. Participation was voluntary, with informed consent. Interviews were conducted in private, with informed consent obtained for recording and using the information. Cultural, religious and educational considerations were made, with translations provided in Swahili and Luhya for non-English speakers.

Data Analysis

Data was analyzed thematically. The thematic analysis identifies themes or patterns to generate meaning from raw data (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Following Braun & Clarke's six-step approach, audio-recorded interviews were transcribed. The transcripts were reviewed, manually organized into an Excel spreadsheet, and sectioned according to the interview questions. Five main themes were identified based on the relationship between the codes and the number of times they occurred. These themes include the gendered division of roles in the food value chain, gender roles perceptions and food value chain participation, women's challenges along the food value chain, the Influence of Chama on women's bargaining power within the household, and the Impact of women's Chama experiences on household food security.

4. Results

Demographic and Household Characteristics

The demographic data reveals that most participants were over 30 years old and married. The average education level was secondary, although most participants only completed the primary level. Participants were mostly self-employed in on-/off-farm businesses. A few were employed in teaching, nursing and caregiving jobs. Many participants belonged to multiple Chama, with experience ranging from 1- 10 + years (Table 4). Notably, income increased post-Chama membership (Table 5). Household characteristics show that most households are male-headed,

with some female-headed households. Male heads were 40+ years old, typically in formal employment with several few in manual labour. Family sizes ranged from 4 to 7 members, with a few smaller (1-3) and larger (8-10) families. Most households owned land predominantly through inheritance, a few households did not own land (Table 6). The households' monthly food spending rose after women joined Chama (Table 7).

Variables	Categories	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Age	Below 20	0	0
	20 – 29	4	8
	30 – 39	12	26
	40 – 49	14	30
	50 and above	17	36
	Total	**47**	**100**
Marital Status	Single/Never married	3	6
	Married	37	79
	Divorced/Separated	1	2
	Widowed	6	13
	Total	**47**	**100**
Education level	Primary	20	43
	Secondary	10	21
	Certificate/Diploma	11	23
	Undergraduate	4	9
	Postgraduate	2	4
	Total	**47**	**100**
Employment Status	Emplo1yed	9	19
	Self-employed	25	53
	Housewife	13	28
	Total	**47**	**100**
Number of Chamas	1	6	13
	2 – 4	38	81
	More than 4	3	6
	Total	**47**	**100**
Years of Membership	Less than 1 year	**0**	**0**
	1-2 years	2	4
	3-5 years	7	15
	6-8 years	9	19
	9-10 years	8	17
	More than 10 years	21	45
	Total	**47**	**100**

Table 4: Demographic Data of the Respondents
Source: Author, based on field data, 2022

Category	Before joining Chama		After joining Chama	
	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Frequency	Percentage (%)

Income				
Less than 1,000	27	58	4	9
1,100 – 15,000	10	21	17	36
15,100 – 30,000	2	4	11	23
30,100 – 45,000	7	15	6	13
45,100 – 50,000	1	2	8	17
Above 50,000	0	-	1	2
Total	**47**	**100**	**47**	**100**

Table 5: Individual Monthly Income
Source: Author, based on field data, 2022

Variables	Categories	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Household head (HH)	YES	15	32
	NO	32	68
	Total	**47**	**100**
Age of HH	31- 40	4	12
	41- 50	12	38
	Above 50	16	50
	Total	**32**	**100**
HH Occupation	Civil Servant	12	38
	Company Employee	10	31
	Self-employed	4	12
	Others	6	19
	Total	**32**	**100**
No. of Household members	1-3	4	9
	4-6	25	53
	7-9	14	29
	10 & above	4	9
	Total	**47**	**100**
Agricultural land ownership	YES	40	85
	Inheritance (Men owned)	*(25)*	*(53)*
	Purchased (men owned)	(5)	(11%)
	Purchased (women owned)	(7)	(15%)
	Purchased (Joint ownership)	(3)	(6%)
	NO	7	15
	Total	**47**	**100**

Table 6: Respondents' Household Characteristics Tabulation
Source: Author, based on field data, 2022

Category	Before joining Chama		After joining Chama	
	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Frequency	Percentage (%)

Monthly Food Expenditure				
Less than 5,000	23	49	0	-
5,000 – 10,000	17	36	29	62
10,100 – 15,000	6	13	11	23
15,100 – 20, 000	1	2	3	6
Above 20,000	0	-	4	8
Total	**47**	**100**	**47**	**100**

Table 7: Household Monthly Food Expenditures
Source: Author, based on field data, 2022

Gendered Division of Roles in the Food Value Chain

Findings on rural women's understanding of traditional gender role expectations in the food value chain reveal a distinct division of roles between men and women in production, processing, retailing, and consumption. In crop and animal farming, women focus on subsistence farming and management of smaller livestock and poultry, while men engage in large-scale cash crop farming and handle larger livestock. Labour is also divided, with men taking on physically demanding tasks like ploughing and women performing labour-intensive activities like planting and weeding.

Processing is categorized into traditional methods, dominated by women, and modern techniques engaged by men. The findings show that Traditional processing methods such as salting and smoking are performed at home, while modern processing techniques are performed in factories. The division of labour is also evident, with women primarily engaged in secondary manual tasks, while men are employed in operating and maintaining machinery, and driving roles. In retailing, findings indicate that men dominate formal retailing, controlling large-scale wholesale enterprises, while women are more active in informal and small-scale trading enterprises. There is a noticeable gender gap in labour within retailing, where men occupy higher-paying managerial positions, while women are often overrepresented in lower-wage roles like clerical. Regarding consumption, the study found that women mostly manage food availability and household food decisions in households that mainly rely on family farm-obtained foods. In households dependent on purchasing food, men provide financial resources and oversee decisions related to food purchases.

Gender Role Perceptions and Food Value Chain Participation

The study found that rural women's perceptions of gender roles influence their participation in the food value chain. Two main perceptions were identified: conservative and progressive. Conservative views, which are more common among older women, align roles in the value chain with traditional gender roles, confining women to subsistence farming, traditional processing, and small-scale retailing. These women believe that financial decisions are the domain of men, as the household providers. They limit their involvement in food consumption to food preparation and distribution tasks.

In contrast, progressive views, mainly common among younger women, view roles in the value chain as opportunities for empowerment. They challenge traditional norms by engaging in innovative farming, land ownership, and entrepreneurial activities. They advocate for shared financial responsibilities and decision-making within the household. These differing views immensely impact women's empowerment and broader participation in the food value chain.

Women's Challenges Along the Food Value Chain

The study identifies several key obstacles hindering rural women's participation in the food value chain in Kakamega County. The study found that a major barrier is limited access to land. Women's limited access to land is worsened by the patriarchal inheritance system that complicates land ownership for them. Widows, in particular, face challenges from male relatives claiming their late husband's land. Financial constraints also pose significant challenges. The findings reveal that women face challenges in obtaining credit, due to collateral requirements, insufficient savings, and low levels of education and financial literacy.

Another obstacle is the technology adoption gap. The study identifies that mobile phone use is common among women in Kakamega County; however, internet usage remains uneven, with limited and restricted access to technological information, particularly among older women. Traditional norms further restrict women's access to modern agricultural practices by limiting their interaction with male agricultural extension officers.

Additionally, women face labour challenges due to cultural and financial barriers that prevent them from hiring male labour. Some women avoid employing men due to fear of societal judgement, while others cannot afford the wages men demand. The caregiving role further complicates women's ability to manage their labour and access additional female labour.

Chama's Influence on Women's Bargaining Power Within Household

The findings on the influence of Chama on women's bargaining power reveal that Chama greatly enhances rural women's household bargaining power through economic empowerment and social support. Chama provides women with access to savings and credit, enabling them to contribute financially to their households, thereby increasing their influence over financial decisions. Chamas also facilitates collective investments and income-generating ventures, further strengthening women's voices in household matters.

Additionally, Chama offers a supportive network where women share experiences, resources, and advice, strengthening their confidence and negotiation skills. Many participants reported gaining leadership and negotiation abilities through their roles in Chama, which improved their decision-making capabilities at home. Chamas also organizes seminars and training sessions on financial literacy, business management, nutrition, healthcare, and women's rights, empowering women to advocate for their interests within their households.

Moreover, joint decision-making and collective bargaining within Chamas aid assertive negotiation strategies that women can apply in their households and communities. Furthermore, successful community projects led by women Chamas influence societal norms towards gender equality, further enhancing women's bargaining power. Regular Chama meetings also contribute to increased self-esteem and confidence, enabling women to express their views on important household matters and develop a sense of identity beyond traditional roles.

Impact of Women's Chama Experiences on Household Food Security

The study explored food security through the FAO's three core elements: availability, accessibility, and utilization, and found that Chama membership immensely enhanced household food security in all three areas.

In food availability, the study found that Chama membership increased agricultural productivity by enabling women to invest in essential inputs like fertilizers and seedlings. Using Chama's financial resources, progressive members extended their investments to modern farming technologies, leading to surplus crop production that ensured year-round food availability. Interviews with key informants revealed that organizations such as OAF and WEF play a crucial role by providing access to credit and advanced farming technologies through collaborations with Chamas. Additionally, Chama members collectively invest in agricultural production by leasing and buying land, benefiting both conservative and progressive members. Progressive members also use Chama-provided funds to lease land and independently cultivate crops and rear livestock, further enhancing food availability.

In food accessibility, findings indicate that Chama membership improved food accessibility by providing women with financial resources, training, and support, which empowered them to engage in diverse income-generation activities (Table 2). This led to increased household income, financial literacy, and savings. Progressive members optimized their food purchasing strategies through bulk buying, which resulted in cost savings and improved accessibility. Additionally, Chamas contributed to human development by enabling members to invest in their children's education, which was seen as a long-term strategy for enhancing household food accessibility. Participants shared their expectations from their educated children bringing practical benefits such as agricultural knowledge, financial advice, and nutritional information.

Chama membership also impacted food utilization positively, as food consumed transitioned from primary carbohydrate-based diets to more varied diets rich in proteins, vitamins, and micronutrients. This dietary improvement is particularly pronounced among progressive members, who use their increased purchasing power to diversify their household's food intake. Chamas also improved water access and sanitation through investments in water storage facilities, enhancing hygiene and reducing time spent collecting water.

Meal frequency increased significantly after joining Chamas (Figure 1). Many households shifted from one or two meals a day to three or more meals, particularly among progressive members. Health improvements were also reported, with Chamas educating members on nutrition and promoting the use of smoke-free cooking stoves known as "rocket jikos", to reduce exposure to harmful smoke. Chamas also play a crucial role in preserving Indigenous food knowledge. Older members share knowledge of the nutritional benefits of indigenous vegetables with the younger generation, enhancing the overall health and well-being of families.

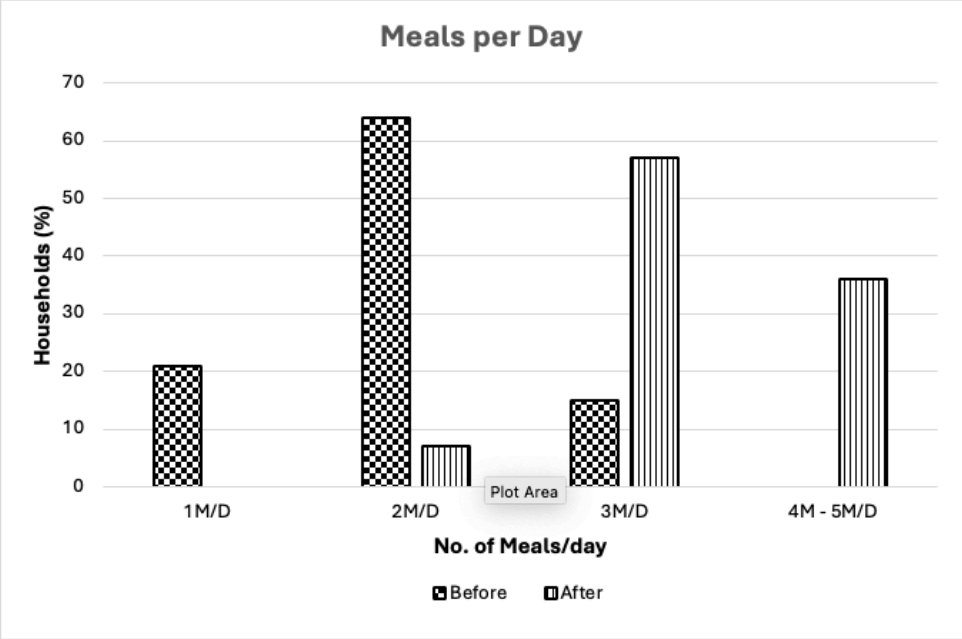

Figure 1: Household's Number of Consumed Meals per Day
Source: (Fieldwork data, 2022)

5. Discussion

The findings emphasize the crucial role of Chama membership and the influence of women's perceptions in enhancing household food security focusing on the three dimensions outlined by FAO: availability, accessibility and utilization.

The Impact of Women's Perception of Gender Roles on Their Participation in the Food Value Chain

The study reveals a deeply entrenched gendered division of labour across the food value chain in Kakamega County. It links women's predominant relegation to subsistence-oriented, and lower-value-added activities to the societal norms that assign them the caregiving roles. In this context, women, who are socially subordinated to men, are expected to rely on provisions from men, who are conditioned to be providers and occupy higher-status, income-generating roles. Such gendered labour division limits women's access to productive resources, deepening their economic dependence and restricting their involvement in high-value food value chains. The findings align with previous study by Ondiba & Matsui, (2019), which demonstrate how patriarchal norms and structures constrain women's empowerment and limit their contribution to household food security. However, women's dominant roles in subsistence farming, traditional processing and informal retailing emphasize their essential contributions and highlight the need for greater support to enhance their economic participation and decision-making power.

This study argues that despite equal impacts of gender roles on rural women, individual women's perception of these roles significantly influences their participation in the value chain and contribution to household food security. For instance, women with conservative perceptions typically confine themselves to traditional, low-value tasks, limiting their participation in the value chain. These limitations perpetuate their economic dependence,

reinforce traditional household power dynamics, and restrict their decision-making power, thereby reducing their ability to contribute to household food security.

In contrast, women with progressive perceptions challenge these traditional norms and actively pursue opportunities for empowerment. Their involvement across various stages of the food value chain reflects a shift towards greater economic independence and empowerment. These women engage in diverse economic productive activities, including entrepreneurial ventures and modern technology adoption, which enhance their financial independence and decision-making power. This shift enhances their economic outcomes and improves household food security. Their aspirations for greater autonomy and control over their lives are crucial for driving positive change within their households and communities.

Influence of Chama Membership on Women's Bargaining Power in Households

Power dynamics within households are often shaped by factors rooted in economic, social and psychological dimensions. These factors have been identified in this study as structural barriers that limit women's participation in the value chain. The study highlights how the barriers intertwine with gendered power dynamics to affect household food security. For instance, limited access to land and other resources in Kakamega is skewed towards men due to the patriarchal inheritance practices. This limits women's ability to engage effectively in agricultural production. Additionally, women's lack of access to credit combined with low education and financial literacy, limits their ability to invest in agriculture and businesses, perpetuating a cycle of poverty. Technological disparities worsen these challenges. For example, the widespread mobile use in Kakamega contrast sharply with a digital divide in internet access and literacy. This divide prevents women from accessing vital information, market opportunities, and agricultural extension services. Women's knowledge acquisition and technological utilization is also hindered by traditional gender norms, which discourage their interactions with male extension officers. This finding corresponds with the previous study by Mudege et al., (2017), which posits that gender norms play a major role in prohibiting women from accessing agricultural extension services in Malawi. The gendered division of labour and financial constraints contribute to labour shortages for women, as domestic responsibilities reduce their time for productive work, and financial limitations restrict them from hiring male labour. These challenges are deeply rooted in socio-cultural and gender norms, making individual perceptions of these norms critical in overcoming them.

This study found that Chama membership is a key factor in empowering rural women and enhancing their bargaining power in households. The findings highlight Chama's role in providing economic empowerment, social support, and educational resources, which help shift gender dynamics and strengthen women's decision-making power. Access to savings and credit through Chama enables women to contribute financially, increasing their influence within the household. The social networks foster confidence and negotiation skills, allowing women to take on leadership roles and challenge existing power dynamics. Education in financial literacy, business management and women's rights further empower women to advocate for themselves and address gender inequalities. While Chama membership is particularly more effective for women with progressive views, it also gradually transforms the perceptions of conservative members, aiding psychological empowerment, and a move toward a more equitable household environment.

Impact of Women's Chama Experiences on Household Food Security

The study found that women's participation in Chamas has enhanced food availability by providing financial access and fostering partnerships with organizations that support them. Through Chama, women are empowered to invest in agriculture resulting in higher crop yields and a more stable food supply. However, investment levels vary based on women's perception of gender roles. Progressive members tend to diversify their investments, recording higher agricultural productivity than conservatives who only invested in farm inputs. Although the investment levels are varied, progressive and conservative members benefit from increased production, because of their access to resources through Chama membership. This finding indicates that, given resources, with a progressive view of gender roles, women have the potential to increase food availability.

The findings indicate that income-generating activities initiated by women Chama members have improved household food accessibility. With increased purchasing power, women Chama members can buy a wider variety of foods that they don't produce on their farms. However, how these women use their income is influenced by their perceptions of gender roles. Women with progressive views strategically use Chama resources for food purchases and invest in their children's education. Through bulk buying, they ensure consistent food access for all household members, while investing in children's education promises an increase in future household income, thereby reducing the number of dependents. As a previous study by Muche et al. (2014) suggested households with fewer dependents are more likely to be food secure, this study provides that children's education is one way of enhancing future food security, through an increased number of income earners in a household.

The study outlines that Chama membership has led to improved food choices, more meals, and better health in households. Progressive members have experienced more noticeable dietary improvements due to their greater purchasing and decision-making power. Research by Zouh et al. (2019) supports the idea that women's decision-making power is vital for household food security, aligning with the findings on progressive women in this study. Progressive women view food financial support as a shared duty, thereby spending more on food. This aligns with previous studies Galie et al., (2019) and Kalansooriya & Chandrakumara, (2016) that link women's income and financial autonomy to better food security. The study shows that both conservative and progressive women are open to adopting healthier cooking methods and water storage investments. Conservative women's adoption of new cooking technologies is influenced by their healthy progressive members and their caregiving role perception. Chama also helps in preserving and sharing Indigenous food knowledge, with both groups embracing the inclusion of indigenous, particularly vegetable-based, foods in their diet. Chama can achieve this because of its diverse membership in terms of age.

6. Conclusion and Recommendations

This study examines how perceptions of gender roles affect household food security, focusing on rural women's involvement in the food value chain. It highlights that women's perception of gender roles influences their participation in the value chains. It identified that women with progressive views on gender roles challenge traditional norms by actively participating in lucrative value chains, while conservatives restrict themselves to roles defined by societal norms.

The study emphasizes the significance of Chama membership for rural women's contribution to food security. Chama membership empowers women by providing them with financial resources, support networks and educational opportunities. These empowerments along with progressive views on gender roles, lead to increased participation in household decision-making and better food security outcomes. Furthermore, Chama membership enhances women's financial autonomy and bargaining power resulting in improved dietary practices and health. In addition, experiences within Chamas help shift gender roles, promoting a more equitable distribution of responsibilities, particularly among women with progressive views.

The study recommends implementation of interventions for secure land tenure, credit access, digital literacy, and gender equality by the government and non-government organizations, to facilitate effective implementation of women Chamas' activities aimed at improving food security. In addition, the study recommends that the government initiate more civic education programs in rural communities focusing on educating men and women on the importance of gender equality for the development of communities. This will aid women in Chama's efforts to reduce the gender gaps in value chains.

Further research is suggested to explore factors influencing the shifts from conservative to progressive gender role views and assess the effectiveness of targeted interventions.

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Sempre Libera: Making Spaces for the Repositioning of Marginalized Individuals and Social Groups

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Abstract
The paper aims to show how architecture can both reflect and challenge societal perceptions of gender and class on the example of intricate interplay between spatial organisation and set design in the function of portrayal of marginalized social groups in opera. By analysing the architecture of spaces created by scenic design in contemporary opera productions, study investigates the position of women, particularly those depicted as sex workers, with a specific focus on contrasting performances of Verdi's *La Traviata*. Violetta Valéry's character, fluctuating to the modern times since the 19th century, serves as a poignant example for both a loving woman who has gone astray or someone who is not willing to let go of her courtesan past and accept the fragility of being in love. Analysing this interpretational duality through the modalities of architectural response in bringing visionary opera staging (*Regieoper*) concepts to reality, this study seeks to elucidate how the architecture itself reflects societal attitudes. By highlighting various aspects of Violetta's character, productions selected for this case study have the potential to cast a fresh perspective on familiar plots and amplify messages that were maybe previously left unnoticed. Ultimately, this research aims to emphasize the potency of architectural atmospheres in visual storytelling and shaping our perceptions of marginalized individuals, all while underscoring the potential for theatrical productions to serve as platforms for social critique and catalysts for change.

Keywords: Performing Art, Scenic Architecture & Design, Marginalized Social Groups, Gender Representation, "La Traviata"

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Introduction

The original unity of time, place, and happening is gradually abandoned in favour of complex and articulated directorial approaches. However, when it comes to opera as a musical-theatrical form of spectacle, this approach has to overcome certain limitations. Given that opera as a genre particularly upholds tradition, the audience generally expects that if one aims to move away from the traditional framework and the consistency of classical interpretation of the original libretto, it should be done by applying a multitude of additional nuances to the basic set of meanings or reinterpreting the work in a new context, addressing contemporary issues. For this study, three contemporary productions of Giuseppe Verdi's *La Traviata* will be analysed, in which this tendency towards shifting meanings was being used in order to offer new perspectives and views on the well-known plot. *La traviata* itself was chosen for this analysis due to its significant historical impact and provoking of strong public reactions for its secular content involving marginalized groups which was considered unsuitable for opera at the time when this piece aired its premiere. Not only were these topics included, but the main role of Violetta Valéry was portrayed as an ordinary courtesan with all its decadency, which was a previously unthinkable idea. Verdi's deliberate use of marginalized characters, such as Violetta, underscores the harsh realities of society. The productions here selected are primarily based on the diversity of interpretations of the main character, Violetta Valéry, in order to highlight specific messages of the libretto through her character and provide new readings of her as a representative of marginalized social strata.

The main focus of this paper will be on analysing different staging modalities in relation to the portrayal of marginalized social groups in opera. Firstly, it questions the position of women depicted as sex workers, through the portrayal of Violetta Valéry. Secondly, it examines how the staging modalities reflect the interpretation of the main character. By highlighting various aspects of Violetta's character and key events in the libretto, the productions selected for this case study have the potential to provide a new perspective on the well-known plot, enhance its message, and reveal nuances that might have previously gone unnoticed. Her character, relevant from the 19th century to today, exemplifies two distinct perspectives: one, where she is aware of her past constraints but continues to seek sincere love, and another, where she struggles to move on from her past and confront the inherent vulnerability of being in a committed romantic relationship.

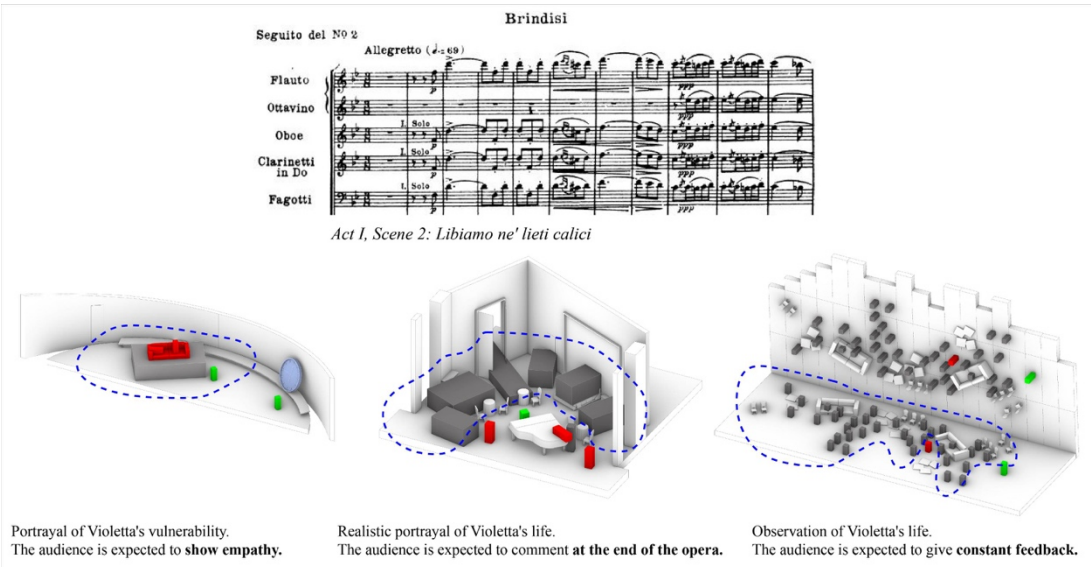


Figure 1: Productions selected for further analysis

Research Objectives

This research aims to deepen our understanding of how spatial organisation and architecture in theatrical set design emphasize the power of architectural atmosphere in visual storytelling and shape our character perception. Additionally, it highlights the potential of theatrical productions to serve as platforms for social critique and change.

Hypothesis

The hypothesis is that the audience, regardless of their prior knowledge, professional training or academic background, can clearly recognize directorial tendencies in the interpretation of female characters through the use of set design solutions. In other words, the idea can be effectively conveyed through stage design and atmosphere if the overall concept of the production and its spatial representation are sufficiently clear.

Methodology

The primary focus of this research is to analyse the portrayal of marginalized women through the character of Violetta Valéry using the triad of perception—comprising the director, set designer, and spectator. The methodology used was a multiple case study later supplemented by structured interview. The case study selection criteria explicitly excluded classical productions of La Traviata, as they rigidly adhere to the libretto without any deviations, thus lacking the variability of interpretation necessary for this study. Instead, the research concentrates on three contemporary productions, deliberately chosen for their potential to reveal diverse facets of Violetta's character. This selection of productions aims to provide fresh insights into a well-known narrative and challenge traditional interpretations.

Furthermore, the qualitative analysis involved spatial decomposition, decoding, and interpretation, along with the thematic analysis of the interview transcripts. The data collected in this combined methodological manner allowed for an in-depth examination of recurring themes and patterns. They ensured that the study not only captured the subjective experiences of the participants but also systematically evaluated the differences and similarities among the selected productions.

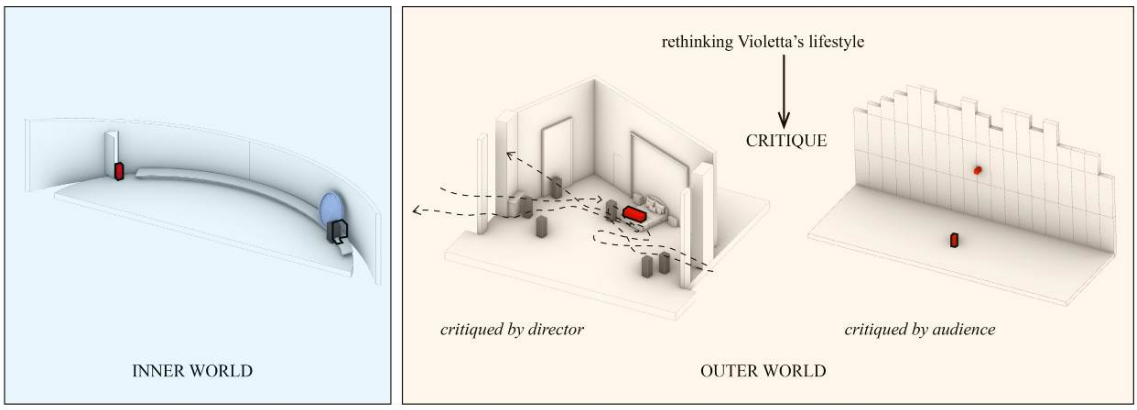


Figure 2: Different perspectives on Violetta's character development

Case Study

Thematic Framework

La Traviata is an opera in three acts composed by Giuseppe Verdi that premiered in 1853. It is a crucial work of verismo opera due to its emphasis on realistic portrayals of everyday life and social issues. Set in mid-19th century Paris, the libretto is based on Alexandre Dumas Fils' novel *La Dame aux Camélias* and explores themes of love, sacrifice, and societal judgment.

The plot of Traviata follows Violetta Valéry, a renowned French courtesan who, after meeting and falling in love with Alfredo Germont, attempts to escape her superficial lifestyle. Their happiness is disrupted when Alfredo's father, George Germont, persuades Violetta to leave Alfredo to protect the family's honour. She reluctantly agrees, falsely claiming to have returned to her former lover, Baron Douphol. Alfredo, misled by this deception, publicly humiliates Violetta, believing she has betrayed him. As Violetta's health deteriorates due to tuberculosis, Alfredo learns the truth and rushes to her side. They briefly reunite, but Violetta ultimately dies in Alfredo's arms, her sacrifice underscoring the depth of her love.

La Traviata was initially met with mixed reactions, as it challenged contemporary opera conventions by featuring a courtesan as the protagonist and addressing issues of morality, redemption, and social ostracism. The opera's realistic portrayal of a marginalized character's plight was seen as controversial, pushing the boundaries of what was deemed acceptable on the operatic stage. Despite this, *La Traviata* has since become one of the most beloved and frequently performed operas in the repertoire, celebrated for its emotional depth, memorable arias, and Verdi's masterful composition. In theatrical performances, two juxtaposed symbols frequently stand out: *the fleeting nature of life* and *the lightness of falling in love*.

Analysis

Director's Approach.
In the realm of contemporary opera production, diverse directorial interpretations offer a profound lens through which to analyse character dynamics and underlying societal themes. Exploring different productions of Verdi's *La Traviata* allows for a nuanced examination of Violetta Valéry's multifaceted character and the thematic elements surrounding her story. Each director brings a distinct vision that highlights various aspects of Violetta's persona, providing a richer understanding of her complexity. This comparative analysis delves into how Willy Decker, Robert Carsen, and Henning Brockhaus interpret Violetta's character, offering insights into her nobility, moral struggles, and capacity for transformation.

Production:	Willy Decker	Robert Carsen	Henning Brockhaus
Key aspects:	inner world portrayal	outer world portrayal	outer world portrayal
	willing to change	not willing to change	not willing to change
	searching for love	not accepting love	accepting love
	fair, noble woman	greedy, promiscious woman	both
	memento mori	/	/
	/	display of her reality	display of her reality
	/	critique of social class	critique of social class
	/	/	introspection
	/	moral corruption	/
	altering of psyche due to terminal illness	altering of psyche due to problematic lifestyle	/

Table 1: Comparison of different recognised aspects

Willy Decker's interpretation positions Violetta as a dignified and self-aware woman, transcending her troubled past. A dominant stage element, a large clock, serves as a visual metaphor for memento mori, symbolizing the relentless passage of time and the anticipation of Violetta's inevitable demise due to terminal illness. This is further accentuated by the continuous presence of a silent older figure, later revealed to be Dr. Grenvil in Act III, embodying the omnipresence of death.

On the contrary, Robert Carsen's production portrays Violetta through a lens of moral decay, depicting her as a greedy, promiscuous social climber. This version underscores a brutal critique of moral corruption, illustrating how a deviant lifestyle can fundamentally alter a woman's psyche, rendering her incapable of accepting genuine affection and ultimately reverting to prostitution which she cannot escape.

Henning Brockhaus offers a blend of these perspectives, portraying Violetta initially as a courtesan but evolving her character to embrace love and sacrifice. This production employs Brechtian techniques, promoting audience introspection, societal critique, and independent judgment. The immersive set design facilitates a reality-show-like scrutiny of Violetta's life, fostering a multiplicity of interpretations without prescriptive directorial influence.

Set Designer's Approach.

The analysis of the set design focuses on the sequence of locations—Paris, the countryside, and then Paris again—as well as the contrasting depiction of Violetta's salon before and after her illness. Each production will be evaluated through two key aspects: the geometry of the set design and the mise-en-scène. This approach aims to reveal how spatial configurations and visual composition contribute to the thematic and emotional impact of the production. The geometric analysis will consider the use of space, scale, and layout, while the mise-en-scène will explore how movement and the arrangement of props enhance the narrative and character development.

Geometry Analysis.

In the Willy Decker production, the stage design features a simple geometric structure with a rounded stage and a constant symbol of death, represented by a ticking clock. This symbol, a *memento mori*, underscores the theme of mortality throughout the performance. In the second act, the ticking clock is partially obscured by floral bedspreads and curtains, which symbolize

Violetta's inner state and the fullness of her love and happiness. However, as the romance fades and Violetta's reality begins to surface, the clock reemerges as a reminder of the approaching death. This symbol is also present at Flora's house and culminates in the final scene, where the clock ceases to tick as Violetta drops dead.

In the Robert Carsen production, the set design exhibits a strictly realistic geometry. The second act features a divided setting: the countryside estate, which evokes the protagonist's hedonistic past, is depicted with a forest constructed from piles of money. This design choice symbolically reflects the opulence and moral decay associated with the character's previous lifestyle.

In the Henning Brockhaus production, the set design features a mirrored plane that facilitates direct interaction with the audience. In the second act, the primary variation is the furniture on stage, transitioning from modest to luxurious, which corresponds to the different spatial settings within the narrative. By the third act, the setting remains the same, but the furniture depicted in the salon is now in a state of decay, mirroring Violetta's deteriorating emotional and physical condition.

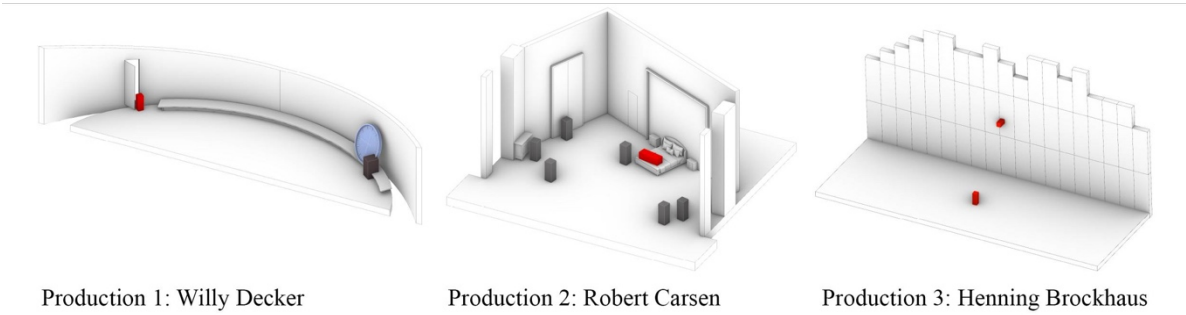


Figure 3: Geometry analysis

Mise-en-Scène Analysis: Willy Decker.

The mise-en-scène analysis reveals that the Preludio marks Violetta's initial confrontation with Death, setting up a juxtaposition between her reckless lifestyle and Alfredo's genuine affection. At Alfredo's declaration of love, Violetta, overwhelmed and unable to accept her terminal illness, experiences a profound emotional shift. Despite her desire to remain with Alfredo, Death continues to loom over them. The focal point of this analysis is Violetta's iconic aria, "È strano…ah forse lui… sempre libera." This aria highlights Violetta's yearning for true love, undeterred by her terminal condition. In this scene, she struggles against the passage of time by attempting to manipulate a clock, symbolizing her attempt to defy the inexorable advance of Death.

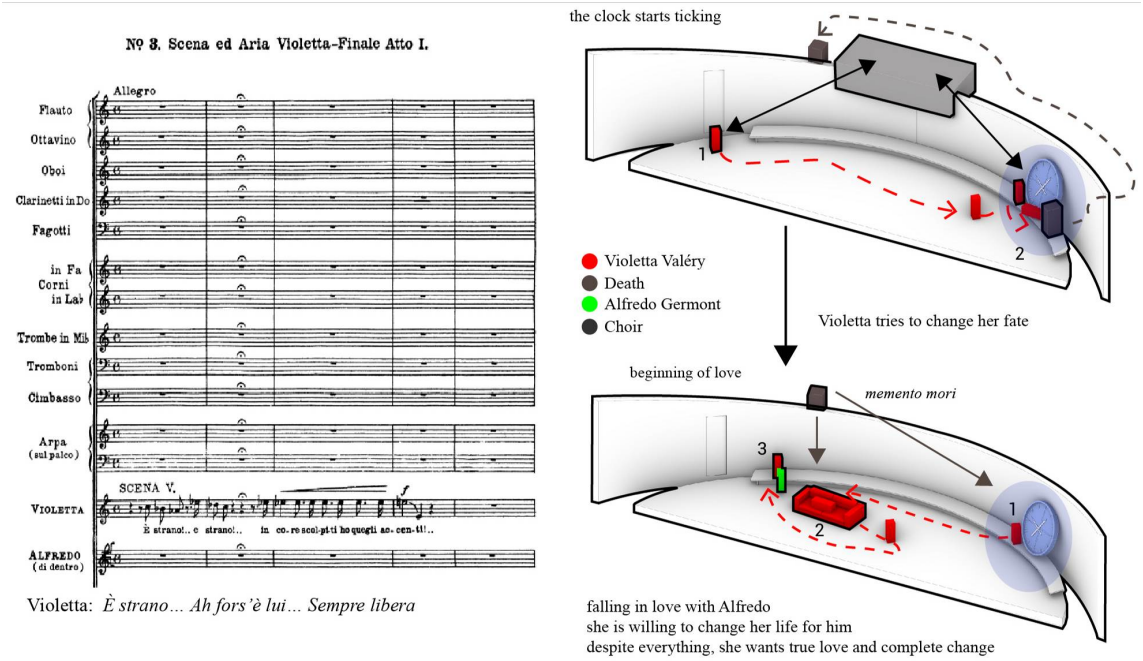


Figure 4: Violetta's aria "Sempre libera" scene

The second act introduces a significant shift in the colour palette, reflecting a transformation in emotional tone. Alfredo's aria *Lunge da lei per me non va diletto* is set against a backdrop of genuine romantic joy, characterized by floral wallpapers and bedspreads, depicting a period of happiness between Violetta and Alfredo. This idyllic scene is abruptly disrupted when Alfredo's father George Germont confronts Violetta and demands she ends her relationship with Alfredo to preserve his family's reputation. He argues that Violetta's relationship with Alfredo jeopardizes his sister's marital prospects and insists on their separation. Initially, Violetta resists but ultimately consents, demonstrating her willingness to sacrifice her personal happiness for the greater good of Alfredo's family. This moment reveals Violetta's capacity for nobility and selflessness.

The subsequent dialogues between Germont and Violetta are pivotal, as Germont expresses his gratitude for her sacrifice, comparing her to an angel and recognizing the magnitude of her contribution to his family's honour. The stage, which initially featured floral decor, now shifts to a more rigid white setting like the one from Act I, metaphorically representing Violetta's internal decline. Violetta's relinquishment of her cherished lifestyle and return to her past is visually reflected in the changing stage design by removing the floral patterns one by one. Her plea, "I will die but please don't let him curse my memory," underscores her noble sacrifice and the empathy she feels despite her own suffering.

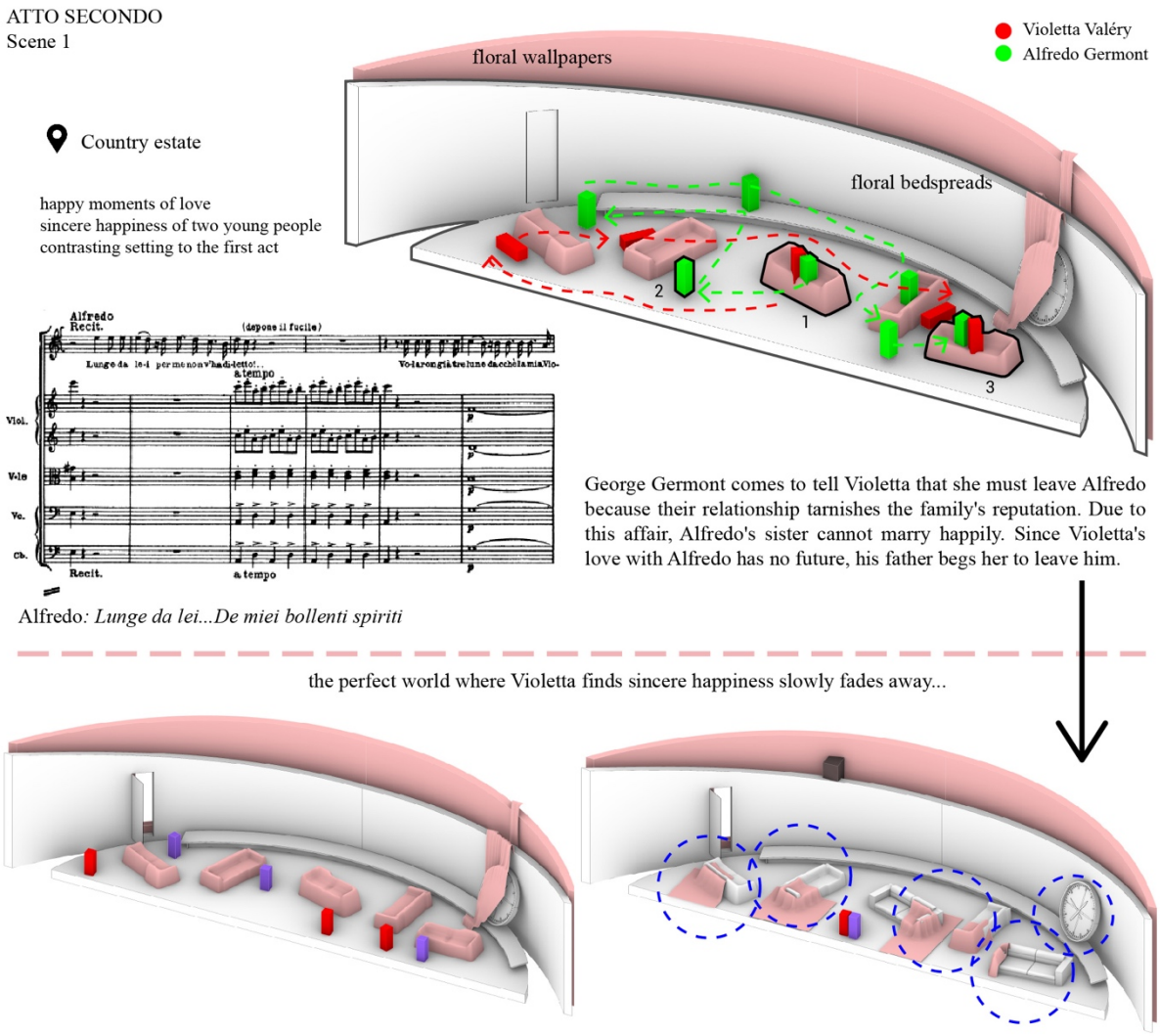


Figure 5: Spatial transformations during Act II

In Flora's ball sequence, Violetta's social circle engages in gossip and mockery, demonstrating their superficial and callous nature. Alfredo's discovery of Violetta with the Baron, and her subsequent pretence of affection, leads to his public humiliation of her through payment with gambling winnings. Even in this moment of degradation, Violetta's enduring love for Alfredo remains apparent, emphasizing her strength and resilience.

The final scenes of the second act present Violetta's deathbed with Dr. Grenvil symbolizing the finality of Death. As Violetta reflects on her life, she lies down on a clock, recalling past events. Her final aria, *Teneste la promessa… È tardi…Addio del passato* encapsulates her emotional state and despair that disappears the very moment Alfredo arrives. Their brief reunion includes expressions of love and plans to escape Paris for her recovery, but ultimately, Violetta collapses and dies. This ending encapsulates the tragic arc of their relationship, marked by both genuine love and inevitable loss.

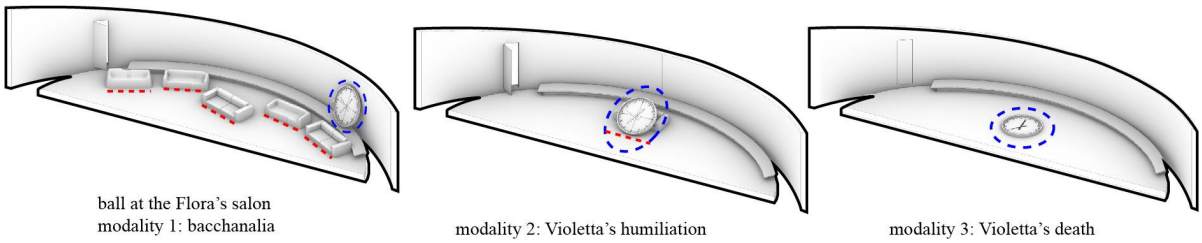


Figure 6: Scene sequence from Act II to Act III Finale

Mise-en-Scène Analysis: Robert Carsen.

The mise-en-scène of the entire production is a stark portrayal of Violetta's daily existence as a courtesan, characterized by a constant stream of men entering and exiting her salon. In the introduction, the only element illuminated on stage is solely the bed, highlighting the details in transactional moments of Violetta's services as men exchange money for her company. The second scene juxtaposes the recklessness of Violetta's life with Alfredo's genuine affection, while also depicting Alfredo's neverending sympathy towards Violetta who is flirting at the time with an unknown man. In the third scene, Alfredo continues to express his love to Violetta and she gives him an opportunity to impress her, but their moments of intimacy are disrupted by the abrupt entrance of Violetta's potential clients. The scene of *Sempre libera* is especially significant. Despite her growing affection for Alfredo, she perceives her emotions as madness and resolves to return to her former life, prioritizing financial security and pleasure over love.

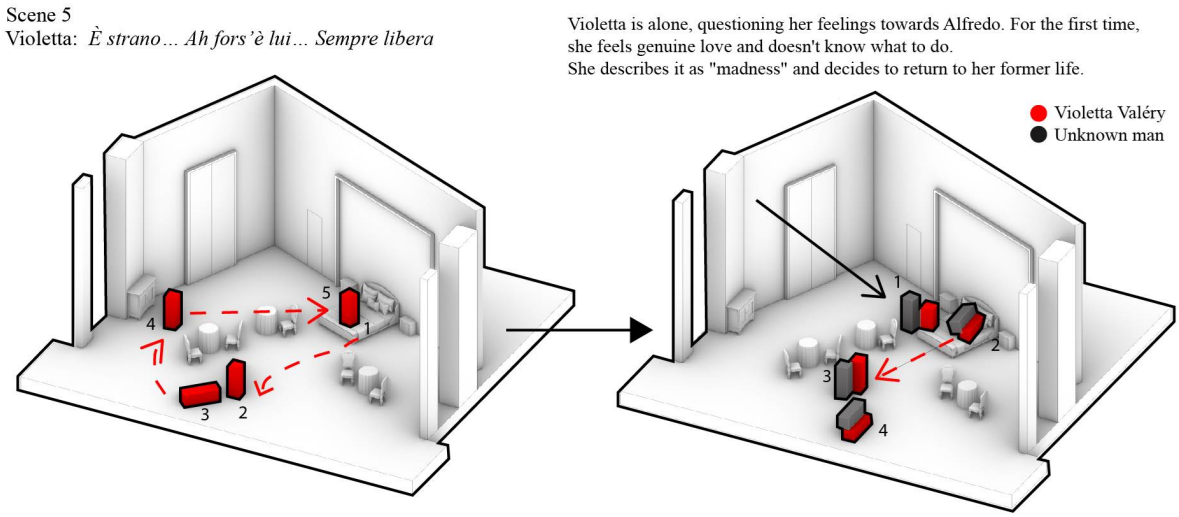


Figure 7: Violetta's aria „Sempre libera" scene

In the second act at the countryside, flowers in the forest are replaced with banknotes as a symbol of materialistic gratification of Violetta's existence in every given moment. In the Finale, as Violetta reads George Germont's letter, she is engulfed by vivid flashbacks that encapsulate her tumultuous past. These flashbacks contrast scenes of extravagant bacchanalia and the allure of wealth with stark imagery of poverty and social marginalization. This disparity highlights the shift from her former life of opulent parties to her current state of destitution. The dramatic climax unfolds as she collapses and dies, while opportunistic intruders invade the apartment to seize her possessions, underscoring the ephemeral and superficial nature of her social status and the relentless cycle of commodification she faced.

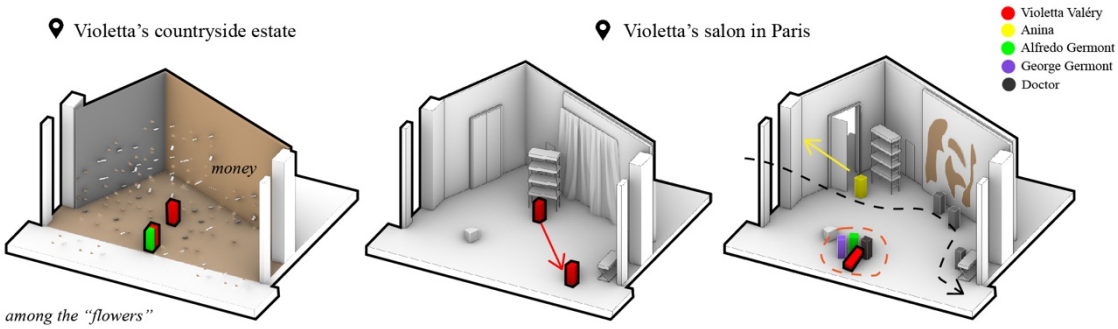


Figure 8: Scene sequence from Act II to Act III Finale

Mise-en-Scène Analysis: Henning Brockhaus.

The mise-en-scène analysis of this production is distinctive due to its use of Alfredo Germont's perspective. The story unfolds through his observations of Violetta Valéry, leading to his romantic attachment. This viewpoint shapes how the characters and their relationships are portrayed throughout the story. In the second scene, the emphasis shifts to the realistic portrayal of Violetta's life. This scene offers the audience a deeper understanding of her private existence and provides insight into her emotional response to Alfredo. The mise-en-scène here facilitates an examination of her feelings and personal turmoil.

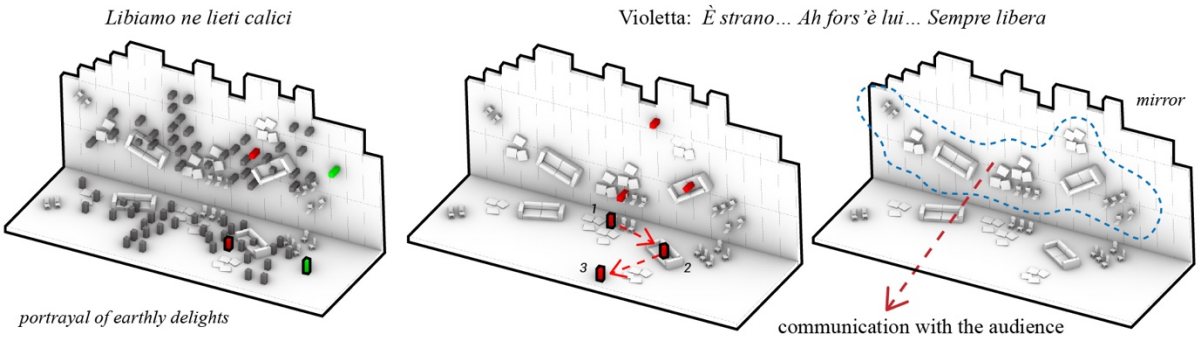


Figure 9: Brindisi and Violetta's aria „Sempre libera" scene

Further, the audience is presented with Alfredo's daydreams, which depict an idealized vision of their future life together at a countryside estate. This portrayal not only reflects Alfredo's aspirations but also serves as a contrast to the harsh realities faced by the characters. In the final scene, the mise-en-scène incorporates a tilted mirror positioned towards the audience, thereby allowing viewers to see their own reflections. This choice of staging emphasizes the audience's engagement with Violetta's demise, making them complicit in her life and death. The mirror serves as a symbolic device, reflecting both the characters' and the audience's reactions to the unfolding tragedy and underscoring the thematic exploration of voyeurism and empathy in the narrative.

Spectator's Approach.

To understand spectator perceptions, participants who were not professionally involved in architecture, stage design, or performing arts were interviewed. These participants spanned different age groups and were asked structured questions about interpreting stage characteristics and atmospheres in both contemporary and classical productions. The findings indicate that spatial elements can influence audience opinions in various ways. Even when stage architecture does not directly shape the perspective, a well-defined directorial intent allows audience members, regardless of their expertise or background, to clearly interpret the

artistic space. Thus, a clear concept results in a clear perception. Detailed analyses of the key elements identified will be presented through diagrams and qualitative evaluation.

Comparison and Results

The collected data from interviews revealed nuanced audience reactions to the portrayal of Violetta's character and the recognized thematic elements of fear and judgment. Through the constant presence of symbols or strong gestures on stage, the audience is invited to actively or passively participate in forming opinions on the female character. Depending on the message conveyed, the audience is prompted to think about Violetta through the prisms of empathy or judgment. Violetta's fear of death (*Willy Decker*) or public criticism (*Henning Brockhaus*) is a recurring symbol across the productions, serving as a focal point for the audience's engagement and critical thinking. The stage architecture (the angled mirror towards the audience in the Henning Brockhaus' production) or singular elements (the ticking clock in Willy Decker's production) are being used to underscore the mentioned crucial points for guiding the audience indirectly through theatrical directions. In the Willy Decker production, the clarity of observing all aspects of Violetta's life through the mirror leads the audience to become strict analysts and critics of her every move. The respondents stated how the brutality of Violetta's decadent lifestyle depicted in these performances, especially in Robert Carsen's production, sharpened the audience's observational skills and provoked a deeper reflection on societal norms being presented.

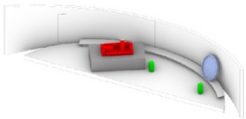
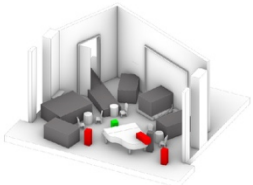
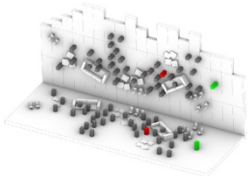
productions:	**Willy Decker**	**Robert Carsen**	**Henning Brockhaus**
			
aspects:			
Critique of Violetta's character			
rethinking Violetta's lifestyle		x	x
critique (audience)			x
critique (director)		x	
sympathy (audience)	x		x
sympathy (director)	x		
Audience participation			
empathy	x		
judgement		x	x
Audience interaction			
comments expected at the end	x	x	
comments expected constantly			x
reaction awaiting		x	x
empathy awaiting	x		
Audience compassion			
pity from the start	x		
pity from one moment		x	x
Comment anticipation *Sempre libera* scene			
she understands she loves Alfredo	x		x
she understands she loves herself and wealth more		x	

Table 2: Collected interview data analysis

The audience's need for constant feedback is driven by the reflective nature of the performance, with the mirror guiding them patiently through the narrative and shocking them at the end with the tilt, prompting a strong urge to comment. This expectation of interaction contrasts with the other productions, where the audience is awaited to give a firm opinion at the very end. In Willy Decker's production, empathy for Violetta dominates, with viewers deeply resonating with her tumultuous journey. As she is portrayed as a woman battling inevitable death due to terminal illness, constant empathy is visible in the audience. Nevertheless, in the other two productions where pity and empathy are not visible from the start, the scene where hurt Alfredo takes money to pay Violeta for her services is the moment where the audience adopts a defensive stance and supports Violeta, even if they did not approve of her lifestyle from the beginning. That shocking turnover is most visible in Robert Carsen's production where Violetta's character doesn't have almost any positive aspects so much it coquettes with being an antagonistic character. Yet, the audience in all cases feels discomfort, pity, surprise, fear, unease, and concern for her.

The pivotal aria *Sempre Libera* stands out as the decisive moment for audience members to form their opinions on Violetta, as it encapsulates the director's vision and the evolution course of her character. This aria, with its declaration of freedom and hedonism, marks the critical point where Violetta's internal conflict is laid bare. Many in the audience have noted that this is the crucial moment where their perceptions of Violetta begin to take shape. After this scene, her character evolves and sets the stage for the potential further courses of character development. Ultimately, the final scene integrates and completes Violetta's character. In the end, we learn about the true relationships between the characters, including Violetta's genuine relationship with Alfredo. The portrayal of her relationship with death in the final scene serves to complete and humanize Violetta's character, reinforcing the emotional impact on the audience. This allows the audience to reaffirm or reconsider their previously formed opinions.

Conclusion

This study has demonstrated that contemporary opera productions, particularly Verdi's *La Traviata*, can profoundly alter and expand audience perceptions through innovative directorial and set design approaches. By focusing on the portrayal of marginalized women, specifically through the character of Violetta Valéry, it becomes evident that these modern interpretations bring to light new dimensions and complexities within the opera's narrative. The case studies of Willy Decker, Robert Carsen, and Henning Brockhaus each highlight different aspects of Violetta's character, utilizing unique staging and set design to underscore themes of mortality, moral struggle, and societal critique.

The research confirms the hypothesis that clear and deliberate stage design solutions can effectively communicate directorial intentions to the audience, regardless of their background. Spatial organization and architectural elements play crucial roles in shaping the audience's understanding and emotional engagement with the performance. The varied responses from spectators, influenced by symbols illustrate how powerful visual storytelling can be in evoking empathy, judgment, and critical reflection. The integration of modern staging techniques and thematic exploration ensures that Violetta's character remains a poignant and relatable figure, bridging the gap between historical context and present-day societal norms. This study emphasizes opera's role as a medium for social critique and transformation, showcasing how inventive artistic interpretations profoundly affect and reshape audience perspectives.

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From Studio to Competition: A Qualitative Analysis of a Collaborative Learning Experience

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Abstract
Studios in architectural design education are adopting new pedagogies to address complex real-world challenges. This study proposes grouping learners of different grades into vertical teams and organizing studio syllabi around design competitions. It focuses on a single-semester post-disaster collaborative experience at StudioThinkImagine, Gazi University, Turkey, examining its lasting impact on learners. The qualitative inquiry consists of two main components: firstly, an exploration of the studio's pedagogical strategies, utilization of design competitions, and teamwork dynamics amidst post-disaster conditions, and secondly, in-depth interviews conducted with learners one year after the studio experience. These interviews centered on understanding how students lived through the studio, how they perceived it compared to other studio experiences, and what enduring effects it had on them. Data analysis was facilitated using NVivo14, enabling the extraction of key themes and insights from the interviews. The findings align with existing literature on peer-to-peer learning within studio environments and the beneficial role of competitions as educational tools. Participants described the teamwork and competitive aspects as challenging and demanding yet enriching, even when conducted online in a post-disaster context. The study emphasizes the potential of student competitions in architectural design education, underscoring peer learning as a critical element shaping future studio practices.

Keywords: Design Studio Education, Collaborative Learning, Design Competitions, Qualitative Analysis

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Introduction

Architectural design education is unique, rooted in the building craft, and knitted with science and arts. In time, curricular considerations of the era/milieu and the assessment problems upon student success have also been added as new topics to the discipline. Therefore, architectural education and how it is experienced gained complexity over time. Design studios always act like the backbones of architectural schools. Each informs learners about the latest developments in architecture, makes them aware of the newly emerging problems, and searches by design by operating inexperienced methods. Pedagogies emerge either from conventional approaches or from new experiments. Learning has been assessed either via objective tools or via the subjective judgments of tutors. Learners keep their position as stakeholders whose voices are not yet sufficiently heard.

This study proposes post-experience interviews to gain insights into the learner's perspective and improve architectural education by incorporating student feedback.

Literature Review

Design Studio Education

From the times of *Ecole des Beaux-Arts* to the trans-critical milieu (Salama, 2015), and now in the era of Artificial Intelligence, the knowledge, skills, and understanding that learners should acquire in education vary according to temporal, geographical, and global concerns. After a long learner-teacher distinction, the design studio became a social-collaborative context in which learners and tutors develop design solutions together (Bashier, 2014). In this collaboration, *negotiation and trust* are reported to increase student-tutor communication, having a measurable impact on the learning experience (Yorgancıoğlu & Tunalı, 2019). Mainly, disagreements were found to be ruling the judgments of learners and tutors when the subject was creativity in the architectural context (Doheim & Yosuf, 2020). Another recent study claims that most tutors teach design in the way they learned it from their tutors; therefore, there is no pedagogy in real (Brown, 2020). A recent study proposes that the collaborative content of the studio should not be limited to the institutional set-up, as the qualities of the same context can be structured anywhere (Hettithanthri et al., 2022.a). As the recent pandemic enforced new modes of the studio, *collaborative online international learning* tested the adaptability of the physical and local studio to the international and online one (Amaral et al., 2023) as the *global design studio* displayed a cross-disciplinary approach to the matter (Desai et al., 2021). Conflicting and varying approaches for handling the studio curriculum naturally raise the question, "What is the studio?" Cennamo, 2016). The blurred and evolving definitions of the studio create a fertile environment where any experiment seeking to achieve good architecture can thrive.

Collaborative Learning in the Studio

Inter/multidisciplinarity and peer-to-peer learning are also forms of collaboration. Research encourages multidisciplinary collaboration for its direct contribution to the formation of individuals as professionals (McAra & Ross, 2020), and these approaches were found to raise design quality, project value, stewardship, positive attitudes, high productivity, vision, and advocacy of learners (Park, 2020). On the other hand, peer learning in the studio was declining as the virtual studio was rising (Iranmanesh & Onur, 2021), and a social space where students could develop peer learning was still possible and highly required (Fleischmann, 2020).

Learners were found to be creating their style of communication in a peer jury (Tafahomi, 2021), as compassionate criticism that eliminates determinant judgment about the ideas, design, and process has been encouraged for peer critique in design studios (Yılmaz & Gelmez, 2023). Compared to traditional teaching methods, peer tutoring increased the knowledge, motivation, and commitment of learners who focused on a sustainability mindset (Nunez-Andres et al., 2021). Similarly, without peer-to-peer support in the studio, learners were reported to lose interest and ambition in learning, as forming a group had a positive effect on developing a sense of belonging (Wang, 2023). Collaborative team learners were diagnosed to show better performance compared to the conventional master-and-apprentice in a first-year design studio (Liow, 2021. a), as peer-to-peer formative reviews were found to enhance the passion and perseverance for long-term goals of students (Liow, 2021. b). A comparison between horizontal and vertical teams in a multi-grade/vertical design studio revealed that learners were showing better performance in design skills in peer-to-peer learning (İsmail & Soliaman, 2010). As long as effective collaboration and fair assessment were provided, the group learning experience in architectural education was claimed to affect professional practice positively (Richard & Catherine, 2006). There is a tendency to replace the master-to-learner approach with peer learning as it is a growing society in design education.

Participating in Competitions in Frame of the Studio

Experiences have been reported regarding transposing the conventional design studio into one that simulates the profession via participation in design competitions. Differences between studio curriculum and competition conditions were discussed in one study, as matching contents and timetables were found challenging (Illes & Kristianova, 2023). Competitions were proposed as alternative design studio projects and were found to affect informal learning positively as they were also found to enhance collaboration and motivation of learners (Saquib, 2020). Compared to studio assignments, learners found competition projects more enjoyable, motivating, and demanding. They appreciated the teamwork, peer support, and increased tutor interest. However, stress was the only reported obstacle (Smatanova et al., 2021). Developing teamwork skills and competitiveness were addressed as the two characteristics of using competitions as design studio assignments (Haupt et al., 2019). Studios appear to have a positive approach to competition, but further insight is needed.

Methodology and Material

Problem Statement

The main problem of the paper is to develop an insight into a teamwork experience within a competition setting in post-trauma conditions while also identifying strengths and weaknesses. The objective of the qualitative inquiry was to understand the essence of the lived experience of teams, uncover their motives, and develop future strategies.

Process

The study, led by the studio coordinator, describes the lived experience through the studio syllabus and learner interviews. It examines how participants recall, define, and emotionally connect with the process and identifies aspects they believe are applicable to their future professional development.

Study and Interview Questions

The study's questions were as follows:

Q: What does teamwork experience mean when competing in the post-disaster context?

- Q1: How was the collaborative competition experience during the post-earthquake period lived?
- Q2: What was individuals' perception of the collaborative competition process?
- Q3: What lasting impressions might have remained with learners?

Q1 was addressed through three questions in in-depth interviews: (i) Why did you choose to compete? What does competing mean to you? (ii) What was your team's working style, and what was your role? Did you find your role satisfying? (iii) Can you describe your project on post-earthquake issues? Please discuss both its strengths and weaknesses.

Q2 and Q3 were formulated as:

- Please compare the experience of competing as a team with your previous or subsequent studio experiences and outline the pros and cons of this lived experience.
- As a professional, how would you feel, and what actions would you take if faced with a similar disaster scenario again?

The Studio, Pedagogical Approach, Syllabus

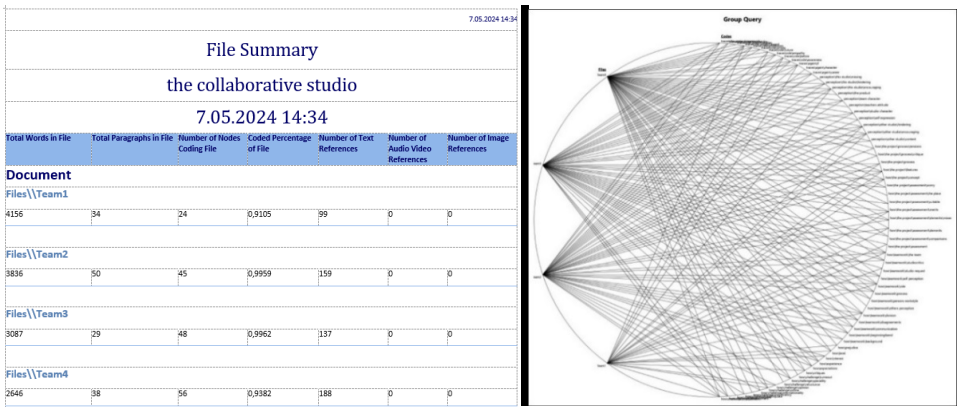
StudioThinkImagine (STI) was established in 2016 and is one of the ten vertical design studios of the Department of Architecture at Gazi University, Turkey. Requiring students to participate in design competitions and organizing them into vertical teams for studio work are considered valuable experiences that can enhance the skills and motivation of architecture students. Up to mid-2024, studio students received success in nearly 50 competitions; therefore, the repeated experiences became a characteristic of the studio. The author structured the qualitative inquiry to gain insight into the pedagogy's reflection on individuals.

The inquiry focuses on the 2022-23 spring semester of STI. On February 6, the earthquake hit 11 cities in Turkey. Many people were living through trauma; some participated in on-site rescue teams, some helped charities, and some collected material for rescuers, as many lost homes and relatives. The state declared online education. Under these circumstances, 6th of the STI's *choose&compete* series was devoted to the earthquake. Students were asked to focus on competitions related to earthquakes or the ones that leave the choice of place to the competitor so they could choose a place in Turkey, in earthquake zones. During the first two weeks, students reviewed structural and construction developments regarding earthquakes, built their teams, and chose competitions. STI encouraged vertical teams; the less experienced could learn from seniors. Teams focused on the places that could best fit the competition brief and the needs of the actual people. Learners started to form their design ideas in 4th week. Between the 4th and 11th weeks, teams developed their designs, presented them to the class, answered tutors' questions, corrected errors, and spent eight hours per week refining their designs to meet competition requirements. Teams were left free in their in-team communication. Nine teams developed their projects as the 11th week, the *critic(al) week* arrived. Tutors from other universities and practicing professionals from the state and private sector were invited to an online meeting; teams and the invited were given private time to discuss the designs. Teams upgraded their designs accordingly, and tutors reviewed all changes. Up to the 14th/final week, teams focused on presentation as they completed the semester with a pecha kucha. Figure 1 displays the products of the related semester.

Figure 1: STI 2022-23-Spring visuals

The Interviews

The author interviewed seven individuals, each representing one team. Interviews were performed online, completed in 3 days, and recorded, each lasting 45 minutes on average. The author took on-paper notes during each interview and asked extra questions to motivate further explanation. At the beginning of each interview, the interviewee was informed about the research process and content and was asked to revisit their memories of the experience. As the interviewer was also the former tutor of the individuals, they were kindly invited to set aside status concerns and participate as stakeholders. Interviews were transcribed via the Translate AI; the author checked texts against the video recordings. Each text was separated into four sections, as the first three sections were devoted to the three sub-questions, and the fourth section was devoted to overall chat on the experience. All texts were translated to English via the DeepL AI; the author checked the meanings and corrected the unsound sentences. Three texts were eliminated since they were repeating the main discourses. The remaining four texts were analyzed via NVivo14. Each text was coded in detail as codes were organized according to the sub-questions. Figure 2 presents the qualitative analysis summary of the four texts.



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File Summary

the collaborative studio

7.05.2024 14:34

Total Words in File	Total Paragraphs in File	Number of Nodes Coding File	Coded Percentage of File	Number of Text References	Number of Audio Video References	Number of Image References
Document						
Files\\Team1						
4156	34	24	0,9105	99	0	0
Files\\Team2						
3836	50	45	0,9959	159	0	0
Files\\Team3						
3087	29	48	0,9962	137	0	0
Files\\Team4						
2646	38	56	0,9382	188	0	0

Figure 2: Qualitative analysis summary.
Interviews, codes, coding percentages, the total number of references for codes, and interview-code relationships

Figure 3 displays the codebook. For the three sub-issues (how, perception, and traces), 70 codes were defined. The author interpreted the analyzed data under three sub-topics and tried to reach conclusions.

COLLABORATIVE STUDIO CODEBOOK

Name	*Description*
HOW	the experience – how one experienced the competition teamwork in post-earthquake period
Challenges & Discouragements	The reasons for competing
competition	being in a competition process and team
development	developing professional productivity
discipline	studio discipline
earthquake	earthquake period, online education
insufficiency	feeling it is too early for one to take this Studio
internationality	gaining international experience
online	online project production independent from post-earthquake time
opinion	A pre-opinion that one already has
reluctance	did not want to choose the Studio
speciality	producing a special project
turns out	was negative and turned out to be a positive thing to take the Studio
Critiques	the features/quality of critiques given by studio tutors or invited professionals
Expectations	personal expectations
Experience	students previous experiences
Interest	interest to a famous studio specialized on competition projects
Level	one's level in AE
Prejudice	before choosing the studio
Teamwork	organization and production process of the group
background	the grouping, the background story, establishing the group, the beginnings
beginning & end	how it started and how it was ended, major differences between the two time-periods
communication	In-group communicated during online education
disagreements	how in-group disagreements were solved
division	division of labour within the group
others perception	friends (in-group/out-group) perception for the one
person's work style	how the student worked in order to fulfil the necessities of his/her role in the group
process	how the teamwork was experienced
role	person's specific role(s) in division of labour
self-perception	how the student perceives ones level, skills, capability independent from team features
studio request	what the studio expected from teams in terms of project production
Studio critics	teams response to studio critics
the team	team composition, characteristics and features of each individual and their relationship with the team
The project	what the team produced in terms of a competition project, the features and assessment
assessment	assessment of the project, how one judges the project now (post-production)
comparisons	comparisons with other entries
demerits	negative features of the team's project
missed	what were missed in the design, sth. that could have been done
merits	noteworthy qualities
suitability	to the topic and the place
the place	features of the place and project's relationship with the place
worry	being not sure about if the design is really suitable for the post-earthquake feelings of people
concept	what the concept is and how it was raised, the content and the story
features	the features/description of the project
process	the production process and its assessment
critique	if we did this it would much better ...
tensions	tensions that occur during finding solution to the competition problem
PERCEPTION	how perceived – how one perceives the lived experience in comparison
The other studio	the after/before studio compared to the focused studio
content	what is done in the other studio
encouraging	advantages of the other studio compared to this one
hindering	disadvantages of the other studio compared to this one
Self-expression (this/that)	students being able to express himself/herself and grasp what the teacher expresses
Studio character (this/that)	the general mood of the studio
Teachers attitude(this/that)	teachers attitude for positive and negative issues in the process
Team character (this/that)	how team acted within itself
The product (this/that)	the final product quality - for display
This studio	features of the focused studio
encouraging	Advantages of this studio
hindering	Disadvantages of this studio
missing	what was missing in that period of time in this studio
TRACES	what the lived experience remained-residuals
Again	If one is willing to compete again, one's willingness for another competition
career	contribution to carrier
character	one's character
if	conditions that stop/encourage competing again
Role	future roles-after graduation plans in terms of possible earthquake-related roles
awareness	awareness of dangers and solutions
before	preventing collapse and deaths
empathy	understanding the situation and what people need and feel at the time of disaster
future	possible future role scenarios
onsite	rescuing people
profession	what the profession does in general in terms of preventing and dealing with disasters
The project	the project's relationship with the possible future scenarios
award	being awarded with a prize or being in the shortlist
display	how the project found new places of displaying
suitability	how the project suits to earthquake conditions
teamwork	opinions about a possible future teamwork for participating competitions

Figure 3: The codebook.
Codes and their meanings

Findings

The Lived Experience

The design development process, how the team worked during the semester, the division of labor, team composition, and communication within the team received the highest number of references (see Figure 4). For the reasons for choosing to compete in teams, the key code was the *challenge*. International conditions, unconventional topics, and gaining related skills online in post-disaster conditions were addressed.

> *"… competition can become a place where we can address that abstract part of architecture, and both stand on our feet and synthesize very different thoughts. Different, very different topics emerge. They want us to address different things."*

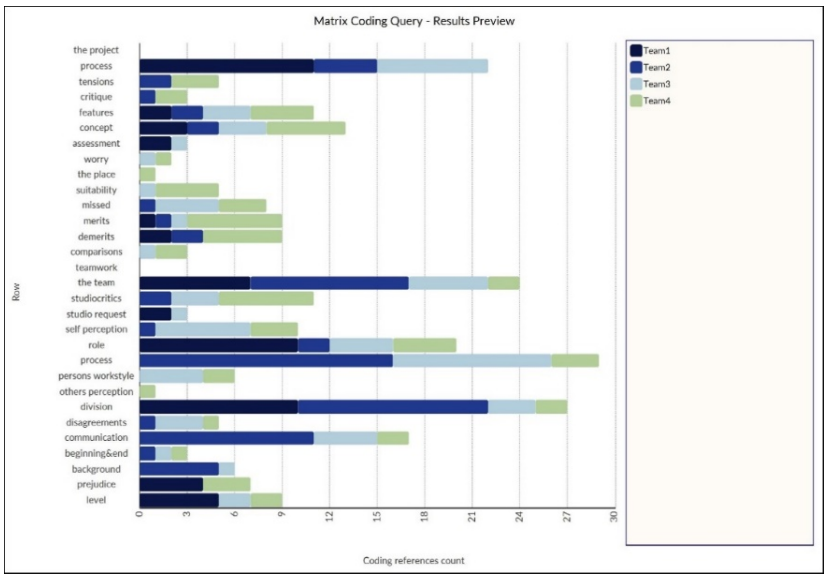

Figure 4: Codes and the number of code references for the lived experiences.

Learners had prejudices. Though STI experience was about self-progress, advancing in education, and getting ready for professional life for three teams, *teamwork* was found to be discouraging by one team due to online education. As they got used to the studio, teamwork became manageable. Learning teamwork was assessed as self-development. Since STI's workload was considered heavy, learners said they would prefer to compete in face-to-face conditions. Physical studio settings and table critiques were more closely associated with competition and teamwork, whereas online critiques often induced additional anxiety.

> "*But it wasn't as much as I feared … I could understand what you said or convey what I wanted to do, and it progressed somehow. Of course, nothing progresses better than face-to-face communication, but it was still good in the online period."*

Learners were aware of the practical aspects of the experience; its uses for early development in the career, the advantages of being experienced as a competitor for the following studios, and its contribution to one's portfolio were mentioned.

> *"I thought it would be useful for other studios. I thought it would be useful in my life, in my professional life. I wanted to get myself used to constantly being in front of teachers and professors with ready-made, finished plans and to be constantly prepared."*

> *"I wasn't aware of these competitions at first, but after I started filling out the portfolio, I thought that submitting to competitions was a different dimension."*

Discipline was the reason for Team 3 to choose STI. Since online learning was complex, they needed someone else -the studio- to manage this complexity on their behalf. Teamwork and competition were associated with discipline. STI was known for providing learners with a ready-made schedule for effective time management and adequate intellectual/technical support at turning points of design development.

> *"The STI experience is a studio that requires discipline. We also wanted to be a bit disciplined. That period was the earthquake period. I wanted to see and show that difficult things can be done, even from a distance. I wanted to prove it to myself, and as I said with my friends, I wanted to come up with a nice project."*

The formation of teams was a critical issue. In Team 2 and Team 3, the ones who already knew each other were satisfied with transposing their friendship towards professionalism in STI. Prior shared experiences positively impacted the development of quick design responses, effective work habits, and productive communication. In contrast, a newcomer in the group was assessed as a person for whom extra effort was needed. Individual's level/grade played a role in in-team communication.

> *"The project reached a different point when we got to know each other. Of course, we also had some difficult times, but I think that added something different to us. I mean, each group member adds something different to others, and trying to get along with that person there added a lot to us. I mean, I think grouping can improve people, but it can also cause difficulties in some places. You don't get what you expect from everyone. But when you catch the synergy, I think it brings you to the top."*

In all teams, members were happy with the division of labor. Roles were aligned with their skills/level as they added positive value to the team and the project.

> *"My part was the modelling and rendering after the idea phase. It was challenging; it was a bit too much of a task in a certain way because it was my part. But well, when I looked at the end of the year, I said to myself that I was glad I took this task and had the opportunity to improve myself. So I was happy."*

Team 1 had a very positive teamwork experience; each member was very polite and tolerant of the thoughts of others; this improved the quality of the design and eased personal development. Teams 2, 3, and 4 followed patient and respectful processes in solving temporary conflicts.

> *"Because everyone was very receptive to everyone's ideas. Even if we went with a bad idea, we would say to each other, should we do it like this, and we would give ourselves a critique there. Or we would say let's try it and do it. This may have advanced it more than us."*

> *"This is what happened in disagreements. It was like democracy; that is, the idea that was most favoured was implemented."*

The design process was painful for Teams 2 and 4; they lived through panic, tension, and anxiety whenever they were introducing their thoughts in the studio. They were trying to develop solutions rapidly and seeking approval from the tutors, but their efforts did not

succeed. Instead, tutors listed the disadvantages of proposals each time; designs needed continuous correction in terms of their suitability to the requirements of the competition.

> *"It's not like you have to work hard, but there is a tension ... about how to find a solution to the problem. That's why there is a nervous feeling. I mean, after producing something, for example, research has been done, produced, an idea has been put forward, but it takes a while for the teacher to like it. So it's a bit tense in this situation. I mean, I want it to be established. Yes, this is actually not a nice thing for the student. It's not a good thing to want it to be liked right away at first, but it's like impatience. The feeling of being liked immediately."*

All teams think their projects were very suitable for the competition requirements, though each project has demerits that could have been solved better. Interview notes and codes indicate that projects have been well kept in individuals' minds as concepts and features of the projects were explained and judged in detail and without hesitation. Objectivity in judgment was observed.

STI and Others: Experience in Comparison

Encouraging features of studios and the studio character were the most mentioned issues for STI-after/prior comparisons (see Figure5). Learners compared their STI experience with the prior/after (other) studios regarding processes and product qualities. Compared to STI, other studios were more encouraging for all teams; STI was strict, whereas the other studios were more flexible. However, the time spent analyzing sample projects, the unscheduled nature of communications with tutors, and the superficially defined studio requirements were not found helpful in developing a design that would satisfy tutors and learners in other studios. The quality of the final product was addressed as the main difference. Learners thought the final poster developed in STI was qualified; it displayed a well-completed architectural proposal rather than reflecting intellectual speculation.

> *"... We were free there. Actually, there may be a lack of production that this freedom has given us, to be honest. So we were very free. In the idea part, it is said that we can do this and that, but when this is put into practice when it goes into modelling and visualization, I can say that, at least for me, not being able to reflect it on the mass as much as I produced in my mind limited me a lot."*

> *"The project we did this semester is a bit more ... Something shareable for the Instagram page ... More precisely, it is not yet a project that can be shared as a layout ... in STI we were preparing a poster that could be sent everywhere, but in StudioAAA we are preparing a poster that can only stay in StudioAAA."*

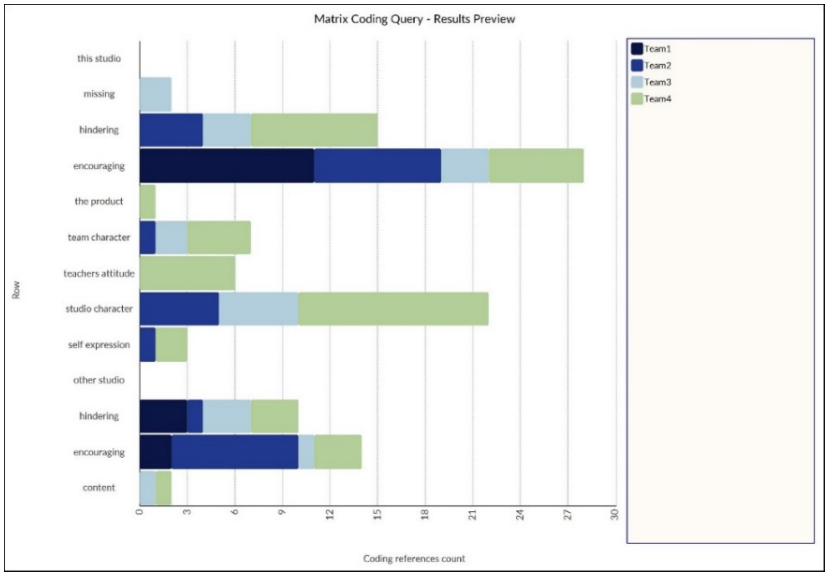

Figure 5: Codes and the number of code references for how the lived experience is perceived in comparison.

Similar to the STI experience, in the studios that used teamwork as a pedagogy, having novices in teams was received negatively, hindering development. Learners preferred working with classmates whose competencies are closer to theirs or with someone from a higher level who can take critical roles and decisions. Individuals who contributed least to their team were not tolerated in STI or other studios. It can be claimed that in conditions of competition in an online process, the less-skilled person becomes the most unwanted. Being able to share opinions and the total workload is considered critical.

> *"In STI, someone had to take a little more of a load. But in Studio BBB, it was progressing in the form of a little more equal sharing, but there, too, differences of opinion were very dominant."*

Harsh and soft criticism of tutors in studios were also compared. Learners found STI very disciplined as they felt their time in STI was like living every motion of their daily lives in a race, competing against time and studio requests. The studio was not tolerant of the repetition of mistakes. Since other studios were more relaxed in mood, critics were considered to be softer.

> *"There, we were still doing everything, we were showing everything, and we were still asked for everything, but the teachers, for example, had softer reactions to the mistakes we made."*

> *"But I just find your language a bit harsh. But if this is going to contribute to my development, I'll take it for granted."*

Participating in competition with a team and online post-disaster conditions created a high level of satisfaction despite difficulties. The main difficulty was the online process, needing help to come together with tutors and teammates. In addition, being unable to create models in a real studio was also found to be hindering. Leaners did not compare the differences in satisfaction levels; rather, they preferred referring processes and end-product qualities.

> *"The knowledge I gained here, if I really look back, it was really an experience that I seriously thought about architecture every day … I also think it added a responsibility to me. Because I think there was a discipline here that I would not follow in other studios. Achieving this discipline also makes me feel positive."*

> *"The thing I had difficulty with was that we had long working hours, sometimes we were on the computer for 8 hours, 10 hours. So, it was a bit slower because it was remote. I don't want to say it was unnecessary, but I thought that if we were closer if we could communicate quickly and do it together, we would be much more efficient. I thought we could do it much faster. I enjoyed what I did, but I think it just took a little longer."*

The comparisons revealed adverse effects of heavy workloads, strict schedules, long online meetings, lack of face-to-face conditions, and inability to make models with team members. In contrast, all teams in STI favored the end product. Compared to the looser conditions of the other studios, STI was perceived as a highly stressful but also teaching experience; the teamwork and qualifications of the team members were the main shields against this tension. The more team members were equipped with necessary and diverse skills that complemented each other, such as drawing plans, developing ideas, and creating 3D models, the better the team could manage the pressure. Group composition was critical for flawless teamwork in online, post-disaster, and competition conditions.

Traces: What the Experience Left for the Future

If scenarios characterized traces (see Figure 6), the lived experience left positive, useful residuals. Individuals tried to reason for their success or failure after the results of the competition were declared. As Team 1 received an award, they instantly understood what made them win. They reviewed what other participants had done, compared their design against theirs, and diagnosed the feature of their project that made them distinct and win.

> *"But when the competition results were announced, we saw that we were third, and for a moment, we couldn't believe that we were third. When we looked at the projects after us or the shortlisted projects, I mean, people have done so much; how did we come third here? We actually questioned this result a lot … I think, as I said, the fact that we tried to attribute the concept of retreat to a very crowded place, to that problem, contrary to what everyone thinks, I think was the issue that made us stand out. And in fact, we can also look at it as an innovation. In other words, I can say that the fact that we created spaces that slide within themselves instead of making normal buildings also had an effect. I think we were able to do it right."*

The award-winning team questioned how they reached a noteworthy design. All teams were invited for a jump, a bounce, to use their prior skills and present knowledge, not to repeat the classical canons of existing architectural discourse but to add their emotions, approaches, and touches to the subject matter. Despite being harsh and stressful for some teams, the strict and disciplined criticism focused learners on the competition requirements and the possibility of an innovative solution rather than turning around a conventional design.

> *"And actually, it was a period when we tried a lot of projects. I think this may be one of our sources of success, that we tried so many things. Of course, these were in line with the criticisms you gave; that is, every week when we were doing our project from*

the beginning, we were trying to understand the criticisms you gave, and then we talked a lot about how we could go over them, and at this point, the real key point was the criticisms you gave us, the criticisms given by our professors."

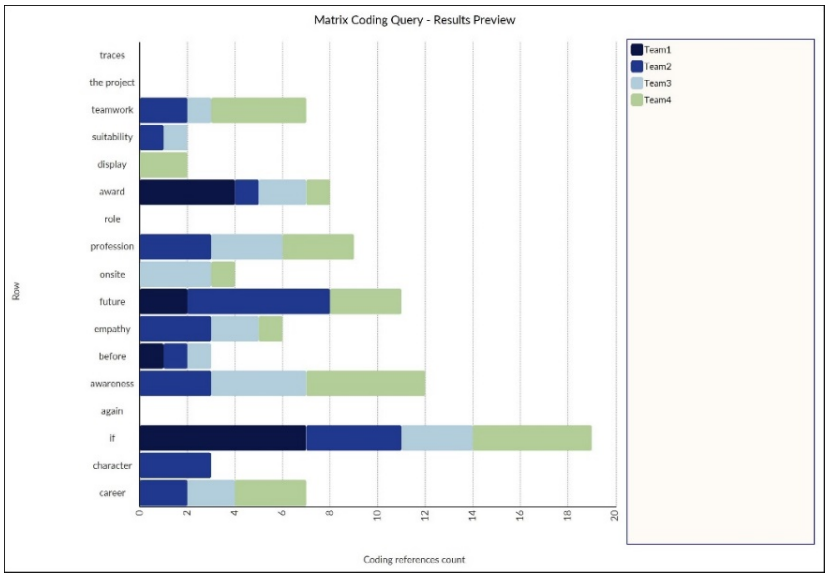

Figure 6: Codes and the number of codes for traces of the lived experience.

Though the semester was spent on a specific competition, individuals had confidence in sending their projects to different competitive environments and exhibitions. Moreover, they were selected. The project was completed through teamwork, and additional successes were invited. The design was a convenient product for individuals wanting to make a difference in their portfolio.

"That's why I wanted to send it there, also to CCCC. It will be good or bad, but at least the one I sent to the competition ... will enter my portfolio there and at least I made it to the finals. This is actually a good success for me."

A general awareness that occurred right after the disaster was provided via notable rearrangements like internships, on-the-topic lessons, and design workshops by the Chamber of Architects. What STI experience left was difficult to distinguish from all these events. Learners addressed what they observed from the different approaches developed by teams in STI in the related semester. The features of projects made them think professionally and in detail. The self-sufficient boxes, for instance, were the one solution that an individual remembered and assessed to be very effective during and after the earthquake.

"... I saw with you how valuable and precious those box houses, the small houses can be in an earthquake and to what point they can be taken ... During an earthquake, suddenly, everyone is left outside, on the streets. We need to gather in an area, and we need a roof. Structures that can provide this flexibility, that we can implement immediately, that are suitable for. I would make minimal and flexible structures."

Teamwork and the value of teamwork left noteworthy traces as well. All teams concluded that they would like to compete again only on condition that they would be able to work in teams and team members would be selected carefully. Individuals have linked teamwork with idea generation, heavy workloads, and competition in their minds.

> *"I think I'll compete again. But I'll probably choose my teammates very well …. Because it needs to be part of a team. You know, there is a saying that hand is better than hand. I agree with this saying. Sometimes, someone can think what I can't think. Even if it creates a glimmer in my mind, it would be very valuable to me. I can really learn it permanently. It is very valuable for me when people add something to each other in a process."*

It would not be unfair to claim that the teamwork-competition experience during post-disaster conditions elevated individuals' reasoning about what was accomplished, how it was achieved, and how it can be improved. Interviews revealed that individuals provided precise answers to each question. Besides the design solutions, the lived teamwork experience constituted a significant aspect of this reasoning.

Overall

Considering the lived experience, it is possible to claim that the competition considerations and running against time gave meaning to teamwork. Learners defined the process as stressful; tension ruled the semester. Though they had disbelief in teamwork, they got used to it. The teams that already knew each other were more effective and enjoyed the process, whereas newcomers of teams altered the quality of productions. Division of labor was based on individual skills, a method favored by learners. In all these assessments, online learning conditions had adverse effects; learners thought it would have been better if they could have worked in the actual classroom and could make models altogether. The studio was demanding since the syllabus was strict, continuously asking for the renewal of works and checking each work against competition briefs. The competition-teamwork experience was described as challenging and intensive. Learners expressed gratitude for the teachers and the invited jury members' critiques. Competing in earthquake-related competitions during post-disaster contexts was seen as instructive, emphasizing the value of precautionary measures and effective design solutions under extraordinary conditions. The studio experience left significant traces, particularly in addressing post-disaster issues.

Conclusion

Teamwork in the studio and competitions as studio assignments are two (in)dependent fields in design studio pedagogy that require further questioning. The case presented here supported previous research. Though the experience was characterized by online education and post-disaster conditions, the essence of competing in teams did not change; it was challenging, demanding, and rewarding. The three-titled qualitative inquiry indicated that such experiences leave positive traces in memories and, thus, are teaching. Experiences are the unmeasurable sides of individuals that can be collected through personal stories. Post-experience interviews are powerful tools for developing an insight into what happened in the studio and how stakeholders perceive it. Since the studio is a process-oriented entity, more stories are needed.

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Verbal Communication Strategies for Recording Eurogenetic (Western Classical) Music

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Abstract
This research explores verbal communication strategies in classical music recording sessions, with a focus on the interaction between the recording team (producer and/or recording engineer) and performers. The paper outlines how challenges encountered on a self-produced record led to the development of a notation system by the researcher to address performance issues during recording classical music. The study evolved into investigating communication dynamics within recording sessions, emphasising the importance of effective feedback exchange. The paper outlines classical music production processes, highlighting the collaboration between performers and the recording team. It identifies gaps in existing literature concerning marking performance issues, translating them into constructive feedback, and how these interactions impact the recorded sound and production processes. Research questions centre on understanding and enhancing communication in recording sessions, aiming to observe and improve verbal interactions between recording teams and performers. Methodologically, a practice-based approach is adopted, integrating elements of ethnography, descriptive analysis, and case studies to capture the complexity of communication dynamics in studio work. Emerging themes include the performer's understanding of studio recording experiences and building trust between producers and performers. Importance is placed on setting mutual expectations, accommodating different communication styles and personalities, and involving performers in pre-production discussions. Further research directions involve exploring communication in diverse contexts and integrating recording studio practices into educational curricula. By continuing to investigate communication dynamics from both performer and recording team perspectives, efforts aim to refine communication strategies in classical music recording scenarios.

Keywords: Verbal Communication in Recording Studio, Classical Music Production, Producer-Performer Interaction, Communication Dynamics, Trust Building

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Introduction

I initially started with the idea of developing a notation system to mark performance issues on the score as I struggled while recording my master's final project (Ekici, 2022). I was recording Hungarian Dances by Brahms, and I could not give sufficient constructive feedback to the performers as I felt overwhelmed by the power I had as a producer. I knew what I wanted to say but did not know how to say it. I considered making a notation system to mark performance issues while recording classical music so that I could explain these verbally as feedback to the performers. However, during the build-up of current research, the topic gradually expanded from the development of a notation system to a consideration of all aspects of communication in the studio, as the notation part is simply one aspect of a complex system of communication. The notation system is still in development, and this paper focusses on the verbal communication in recording classical music.

What happens in a standard classical music recording session regarding involved parties and related activities? In contrast to a concert where music is performed only once, the music is usually performed multiple times in the recording studio, sometimes in tiny sections. Based on these recordings, the recording team compile the best version of these takes. The performer reads the score and interprets it during their performance. The producer listens to this performance in the control room. The producer reads the score simultaneously with the performer and marks the score to keep track of performance issues. When the performer finishes their take, these markings are translated into verbal feedback by the producer, becoming a dialogue between the performer and producer. This process of studio recording of a classical piece is demonstrated in Figure 1.

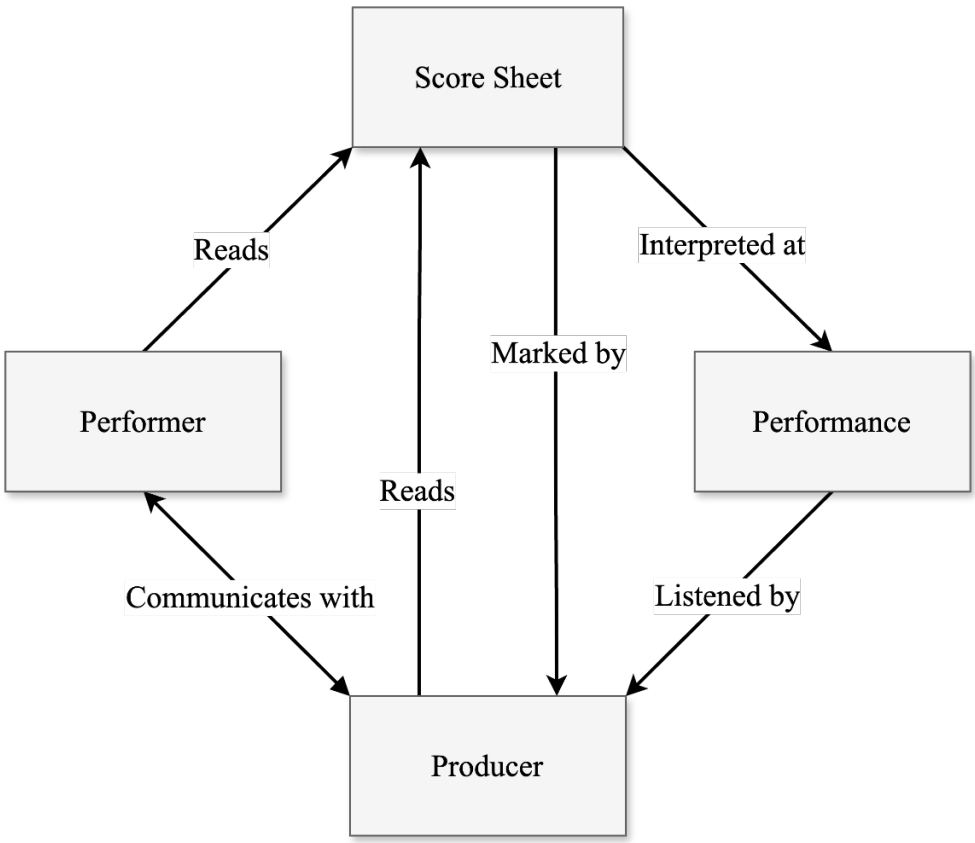

Figure 1: High-level process map of classical music recording in a studio setting.

The activities mentioned above are researched in detail in the previous literature. There are sources on how to read a score (Dickreiter, 2000), interpret a score based on a specific style (Dart, 1963; Kramer, 2010; Matthay, 2013), listen to music critically (Corey & Benson, 2017; Everest, 2006), or record classical music (Dickreiter, 1989; Haigh et al., 2020; King, 2016; Toft, 2019). However, there is almost no literature on marking the score for performance issues and converting these markings into constructive feedback. Due to the practice-based nature of sound recording and music production, these skills are gained over years of experience, but it is worth exploring this gap as a practitioner and researcher. This research combines practice-based research supported by qualitative interviews with professionals (performers, producers, engineers, and conductors).

Justification

To facilitate the development of performance-based mediation forms, it is necessary to move away from viewing recording as a straightforward, transparent capture process (Hepworth-Sawyer & Golding, 2011; Zagorski-Thomas, 2007). Instead, the music producer's role is integral to the recording process and contains a range of responsibilities (Hennion, 1989; Jarrett, 2012). A key responsibility is offering constructive feedback to performers during recording sessions (de Francisco, 2019) and this feedback significantly shapes the recordings. Music is inherently social, and the actions surrounding it are heavily influenced by the context in which they occur (North & Hargreaves, 2013). Like many other fields, communication in music production is often assumed to be straightforward. However, many experienced professionals have enhanced their production skills through verbal communication over time, raising the question of how this is achieved. Existing literature on communication in recording studios predominantly focuses on the technical aspects of popular music production and its theoretical implications (Greene & Porcello, 2004; Horning, 2004, 2015; Porcello, 2004).

Performers often experience stress related to their performances (Pecen et al., 2018), and many hold negative perceptions about the recording process (Blier-Carruthers, 2013a, 2013b; Fabian, 2008). Therefore, it is crucial to create a comfortable environment with the right vibe (Watson & Ward, 2013) and carefully choose words when providing feedback. But what exactly should these words be? We also recognise a wide variety of personalities, experience levels, and production styles. For example, a highly experienced performer might prefer to rely on a producer to complete the recording. In contrast, a less experienced performer might opt to self-produce with assistance from a recording engineer. All these possibilities highlight the need for sustainable communication strategies to address the diverse situations encountered in recording classical music. Brackett et al. (2023, 2024) have explored these strategies within an educational context for popular and jazz music productions. What distinguishes this research from Brackett et al.'s work is that it combines insights from qualitative interviews with experienced practitioners and tests these insights across multiple recording scenarios using a practice-based research methodology.

A better understanding of this topic also has potential to facilitate the more rapid development of novice engineers and producers into experts, as the interpersonal and communication aspects are often overlooked in the relevant literature (Haigh et al., 2020; King, 2016; Toft, 2019) and in the technical training of recording engineers. One of the aims is to make the knowledge held by experienced practitioners more accessible to a broader audience, which is a significant step towards democratising classical music production.

Research Questions

RQ1. "How does communication take place in a classical music recording session?"

RQ2. "How can we observe and improve the verbal communication between the recording team and the performers in classical music productions?"

Methodology

The topic under investigation is a vast domain that requires a multifaceted approach, necessitating the employment of practice-based research methodologies (Barrett & Bolt, 2007; Candy, 2006; Scrivener & Chapman, 2004). In essence, the practice itself generates questions that enables further exploration. By integrating these questions with a conceptual framework, researchers can effectively incorporate their creative practice, methodologies, and outcomes into the research design. Given the centrality of practice to this project, the research is designed to initiate the cycle of practice and reflection at an early stage. Consequently, despite the research being in its pilot phase, I have already completed several production projects. This proceeding is based on my initial reflections and insights from these projects.

Throughout the research, I will employ additional tools to address the complexity of the topic. Specifically, I will integrate elements of ethnography (by observing other production sessions), descriptive analysis (through interviews with experienced performers and practitioners, followed by analysis of the data), and case studies (by synthesising these diverse perspectives in practice). The methodology will be adapted to the research context and requirements as needed.

I employ the Tonmeister approach in my practice, wherein the same individual fulfils the producer and recording engineer roles. However, there are other methods of producing classical recordings. Therefore, a critical component of this research is the observation of alternative work configurations. By comparing my practice with that of others, particularly those who operate within larger production teams, I aim to represent multiple approaches. Observing other practitioners in action is crucial, as it allows me to incorporate insights from these interviews into my practice, enriching the research with diverse perspectives.

Figure 2 illustrates the research design and project cycle. During the recording sessions, I will tailor my communication style to align with the repertoire, personalities, and experience levels of the participants. This approach will enable me to identify various methods of classical music production. Upon concluding the sessions, I will compose self-reflections on these experiences, which will serve as a basis for consultations with experienced performers and practitioners. In the pre-production phase of subsequent projects, I will integrate or explore new concepts derived from these consultations. The notation system referenced within the project cycle will be detailed in a later publication.

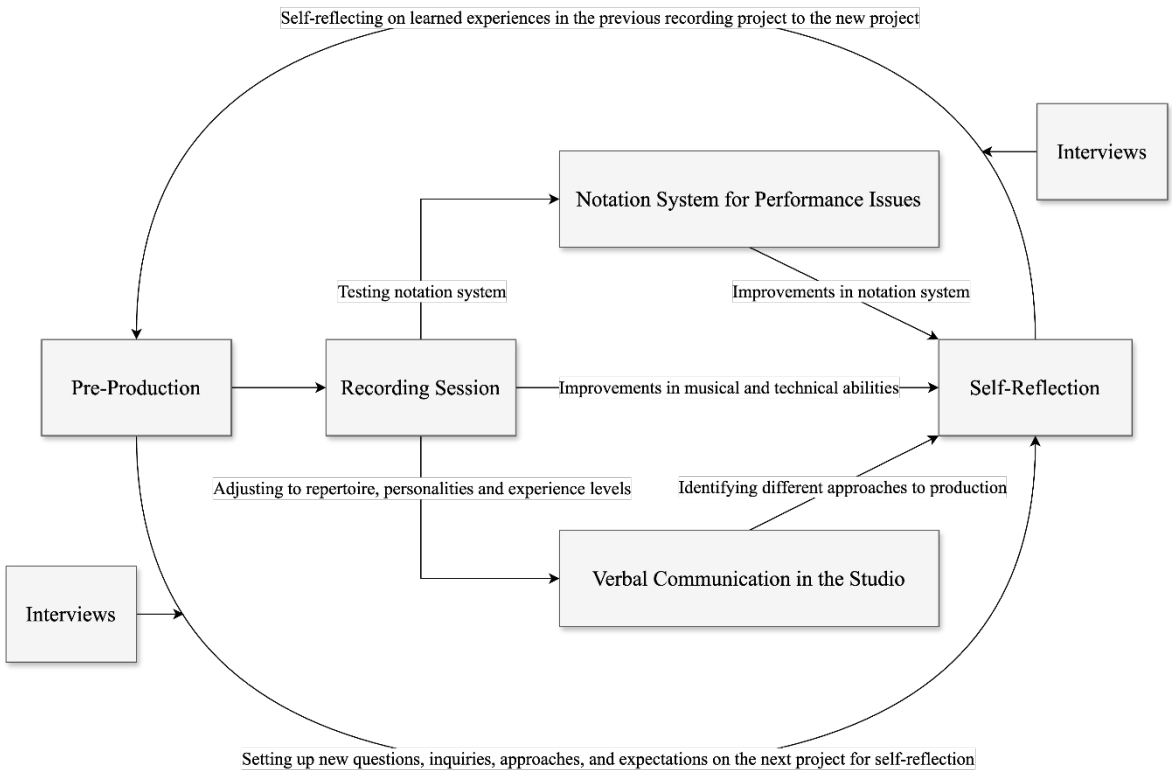

Figure 2: Project cycle.

Results

Theme - Performer's Understanding of Studio Recording Experience

The performer's previous experiences in the recording studio greatly shape the recording experience for the recording team. The more experienced the performers, the better understanding they develop regarding recording music in the studio, which means less psychological and technical work for the recording team. The producer performs two types of psychological work: emotional neutrality and empathetic emotional labour (Watson & Ward, 2013). Technical work involves recording and editing or overseeing both processes. The recording team can edit less if the performance is captured in longer sections.

Setting up expectations for the performance is essential, especially if the performer is not so used to the recording situations. At the beginning of the session, the performers should know that at least one to three complete takes need to be recorded to give an overall feeling for the music. Three full takes give a good variety of options and are manageable from the producer's perspective (in terms of time) and the performer's perspective (in terms of stamina). After or during these full takes, we can decide on the further steps, whether to start editing, record another complete take, or record small sections for patching. However, these mutual expectations should be set at the start of the recording session or pre-production stage, regardless of the performer's studio experience.

Another important moment for me was when an experienced performer nailed a technically challenging section, and we were cheerful. Before that moment, I was so focused on this section that I was unprepared for what should be recorded next. It was a suspenseful moment for me, and I was unsure what to say. Then, the performer finished celebrating and said, "OK, so what

is next?”. That question was the essence of all I was doing; my role as a producer was to provide forward movement within a positive atmosphere. The experienced performer reminded me of my role to keep emotional neutrality and empathetic emotional labour in balance. Then, I quickly returned to the score and pointed out which sections needed to be covered next.

Experienced performers who are used to recording situations may function without a producer, and as a producer and recording engineer, recording team should be able to adapt to this workflow. In one case, we created an editing plan when the experienced performer started to hear himself after take 3. The listening session right after the recording brought us into a situation where we simultaneously criticised the recorded performance and created an editing strategy. It helped the artist's intention to maximise the expressivity as he thought some sections could have been performed differently. I realised that although my input is valuable, I should take a step back and help the performer create his ideal version in his head. I was there to record it and only tell what I think when asked. I also kept the session going and made sure every section was recorded at least once. There was no need for artistic direction.

Theme – Producer-Led Trust Building

The producer’s role as communicator goes in hand with their role as facilitator. The producer should be able to gain the trust of the performer to yield the best results from the performer.

Different and adaptable ways of dealing with feedback are essential in building trust with the performer. During a patch recording session, the performer asked me, "Should I try once more?" I may not know exactly why the performer asks me this question, but I always want them to perform one more time if they are hesitant about any single aspect of it. If the request to record a section one more time comes from the performer, I will always accept it to ensure we do not skip anything from the performer's perspective.

One of the experienced performers I work with is recording unrecorded works of a 20th-century composer. Since the performer has worked on these compositions as part of his doctoral studies, he has spent significant time on how to proceed toward the project artistically, musically, and philosophically. It has been a fruitful conversation for me, especially as I learned about the details of his doctoral studies. I also asked him, "How do you treat the composition when you feel some sections are underdeveloped?" He replied that there were not enough descriptions on the score. As a classically trained pianist, he had to take a step back from his usual approach of sticking to the piece's directions and instead, interpret the piece based on the aesthetics of the late-romantic and modernist periods and specifically 1920s as the piece we worked on was written in 1929. In this conversation, I realised we had the opportunity to be freer than usual in a recording session for a classical piece. We had more room to explore and try out new expressions as the piece had almost no written directions for the performer. Overall, it was helpful that we had these conversations so that the performer was comfortable with his vision being understood by the producer. Such musical conversations also help build the project's vision and prove the recording team’s ability to interpret music.

Discussion

Most of the insights I have discussed so far have been from my practice in an educational context: working with students without a budget to hire performers, assistants, engineers, etc. As the study progresses, I plan to explore these ideas in different contexts by attending sessions

with other practitioners/professionals and seeing them in action to enhance my understanding of the practice.

Nonetheless, this early work in an educational setting has raised some interesting issues particular to that context. For instance, before commencing my studies, I anticipated many performers would be eager to participate in recording sessions. Unfortunately, this was not the case. Encouraging performers to enter the studio proved to be challenging, perhaps due to their lack of prior experience of familiarity with this context. Ideally, the students would have opportunities to practice being in recording studios during their studies, so there is no fear about it, and they have reasonable expectations about recording studios.

The institutional attitude toward recording studio resources is an upcoming topic in this research. Interestingly, despite offering these experiences at no cost, the demand remains relatively low. Educators worldwide have reported similar findings, indicating that the practice of recording is often only exercised if it is fully integrated into teaching and curricula.

An additional 15 to 20 interviews are planned to be conducted and subsequently coded as part of this research. This process is expected to yield new themes and insights that will contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of communication in classical music production. By expanding the dataset through these interviews, the study aims to capture a broader range of perspectives, which will enhance the robustness and depth of the analysis. Identifying emerging themes will provide valuable directions for further research and refine the existing theoretical framework.

I need to conduct additional recording sessions to enhance my adaptability in various production environments. By engaging in more recording sessions, I aim to refine my ability to respond effectively to diverse musical contexts and challenges, ultimately improving my technical skills and creative decision-making processes.

While theoretical strategies often serve as a foundation, the realities of actual practice may differ significantly. Participating in recording sessions can reveal practical insights and tips that deviate from established strategies, highlighting the dynamic nature of the recording process. Therefore, another study is recommended to observe the practical realities of such strategies.

The study also aims to further explore the concept of self-producing performers in classical music productions, as experienced performers increasingly tend to adopt this approach. This investigation aims to understand the motivations and outcomes associated with artists taking on the dual role of performer and producer.

Conclusion

The exploration of verbal communication strategies in Eurogenetic (Western Classical) music recording sessions has revealed critical insights into the dynamics between recording teams and performers. This research underscores the significance of effective verbal communication in achieving successful classical music recordings, highlighting the roles of both producers and performers in fostering a collaborative and supportive studio environment. Through practice-based research, including qualitative interviews and case studies, this study emphasises the importance of adaptability, trust-building, and mutual understanding in communication during recording sessions.

Key themes emerging from this study include the performer's understanding of studio recording experiences and producer-led trust-building. Performers' familiarity with studio settings can significantly impact the recording process, while producers must navigate emotional and technical challenges to maintain a positive atmosphere. The producer's role as both communicator and facilitator is pivotal, ensuring performers feel respected and understood, ultimately enhancing the artistic quality of the recordings. Moreover, the study highlights the necessity of clear and constructive feedback, recognising that each recording session presents unique challenges that require tailored communication strategies.

The implications of this research extend beyond traditional classical music production, suggesting that the integration of recording studio practices into educational curricula can better prepare emerging musicians and producers for the complexities of the recording process. The findings also call for further investigation into institutional attitudes toward recording studio resources and the growing trend of self-producing performers, offering potential for future research.

By examining the factors related to communication in classical music recording sessions, this research contributes to a broader understanding of the producer-performer dynamic and its impact on musical outcomes. Given that performers and producers often have differing values and perspectives, I will continue to investigate both angles to delineate the impact of communication during the production stage. When a session begins, both parties typically adjust their communication styles swiftly to achieve optimal results and ensure a collaborative and effective working environment. This study helps to explore how these adjustments facilitate mutual understanding and contribute to the overall success of the production process.

Although the evolution of classical music production processes is rather slow, refining verbal communication strategies will remain essential for enhancing collaboration, creativity, and the overall recording experience. Ultimately, this study aims to inspire practitioners to embrace constructive and inclusive communication approaches, enriching the artistry and success of classical music productions.

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Learning Motivation, Class Engagement, and Academic Performance in Mixed-Grade Classes at Wenzhou-Kean University

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Abstract
Many foreign elementary schools or universities apply the mixed-grade class model while having a lecture, which means students from different grades are taught in one section. This teaching model is rare in China but common at Wenzhou-Kean University. Learning motivation and class engagement are two significant factors that influence students' academic performance. This study aims to investigate the correlation between learning motivation, class engagement, and students' academic performance in mixed-grade classes and determine whether students' high learning motivation and class engagement could predict good academic performance. This quantitative study collected 169 students' responses from Wenzhou-Kean University, using a validated questionnaire to evaluate students' learning motivation, class engagement, and academic performance. This study uses convenience sampling to collect data and analyze it by SPSS. Pearson correlation reveals that learning motivation and class engagement positively correlate with students' academic performance in general and among students of different grades. The Linear regression found that learning motivation and class engagement could predict academic performance of different ages. One-way ANOVA finds no significant differences among different year grades regarding the three main variables, but this hypothesis should be retained due to the limitation of lack of sample. With these results, students can have a clearer insight and a comprehensive understanding of improving their academic performance in a mixed-grade class. This study also has significance for educators in China, as it can provide some practical teaching concerns and try different educational models while teaching mixed- grade classes.

Keywords: Learning Motivation, Class Engagement, Academic Performance, Mixed-Grade Class, Education Mode

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1. Introduction

Nowadays some universities apply the mixed-grade class model, which means there are students from different grades in a single section and taught by one professor. That is an obvious and general phenomenon in Wenzhou-Kean University when there are lots of courses that apply this model. But will the performance students from different grades be the same? Bekiryazıcı (2015) pointed out that it might be difficult for teachers to teach as students from different levels have different abilities, backgrounds, and interests. Also, as they are students from different grades, they might have some difference in learning experience, learning ability and self- awareness etc. They can have different level of learning ability at the same time. Also, will the learning motivation and academic performance of students be different when the grades of students are different? Within class engagement, academic performance, and learning motivation, do those variables have any connections and relationships? Quail and Smyth (2014) had mentioned that the impact of mixed-grade class on different student' outcome in academic and social aspects were ignored. It is important to figure out these questions.

As Cornish (2018) claimed 'Mixed-grade' and 'mixed-age' are broad terms for referring to classes with students who are not all the same or a very similar age. It is similar but different from what is referred to here. Students don't have to be of different ages, but they should be in different grades. For example, in Wenzhou-Kean University there will be classes have sophomore, junior, and senior students all together. The learning motivation and academic performance are not sure. Also, the kind of class may affect those variables.

In order to fill the knowledge gap, our research group investigated students who currently take or have taken a mixed-grade class at Wenzhou-Kean University. When most students here have this experience, it is convenient to collect data. After analyzing data those unknown questions can be figured out.

Relevant Items

Learning Motivation. Some studies have found there are some relationships between learning motivation and academic performance. Kusurkar et al. (2012) collected data from 383 medical students of VU University Medical Center Amsterdam, found that learning motivation would affect academic performance positively when related to average grade points. Pascoe et al. (2018) also thought "Intrinsic motivation is associated with better academic performance". Salili et al. (2001) mentioned that culture and context both have influence on student motivation and learning.

Class Engagement. Konold et al. (2018) tested through multilevel multi-informant structural model on a sample of 60441 students and 11442 teachers in 298 high schools, found that student academic achievement is directly related to student engagement, and it can be an intervening factor. Finn & Zimmer (2012) also emphasized the importance of student engagement in academic achievement, while engagement is composed by many factors in behaviour and psychology.

Academic Performance. From previous literature it can be found that academic performance would have relationships with learning motivation and class engagement. They will be more factors than that. Li & Qiu (2018) mentioned that family's educational background affect students academic achievement. Blazar & Kraft (2016) also found that teacher and teacher's teaching effort have impact on student learning outcomes.

1.1 Statement of the Problems

This study aims to investigate how students from various grades perform academically, their learning motivation and class engagement in mixed-grade courses at Wenzhou-Kean University. Specifically, this study will based on the following research questions:

1.1.1 What is the profile of students in mixed-grade classes?
1.1.2 What's the relationship between student's academic performance and class engagement in mixed-grade classes?
1.1.3 What's the relationship between student's motivation level and academic performance in mixed-grade classes?
1.1.4 What's the relationship between student's motivation level and class engagement in mixed-grade classes?
1.1.5 Does students' motivation level predict academic performance in mixed-grade classes?
1.1.6 Does students' class engagement predict academic performance in mixed-grade classes?
1.1.7 Is there a difference in class engagement, academic performance, and motivational level among students of different grades?

1.2 Research Objectives

This study aims:

1.2.1 To explore the profile of students in mixed-grade classes.
1.2.2 To find out the correlation between students' academic performance and class engagement in mixed-grade classes.
1.2.3 To explore the correlation between student's motivation level and academic performance in mixed-grade classes.
1.2.4 To identify the correlation between students' motivation level and class engagement in mixed-grade classes.
1.2.5 To search students' motivation levels to predict academic performance in mixed-grade classes.
1.2.6 To verify if students' class engagement predicts academic performance in mixed-grade classes.
1.2.7 To determine the difference in class engagement, academic performance, and motivational level among students of different grades.

1.3 Hypothesis

H01: There will be no significant correlation between the student's class engagement and academic performance in the mixed-grade class.
H02: There will be no significant correlation between students' academic performance and motivation level.
H03: There will be no significant correlation between the student's class engagement and motivation level.

H04: Students' learning motivation can't predict their academic performance in the mixed-grade class.
H05: Students' class engagement can't predict academic performance in mixed-grade classes.

H06: There is no significant difference in class engagement, academic performance, and learning motivation level among students of different grade in mixed-grade class.

1.4 Significance of the Study

This study is meaningful to a large group of people, like students, professors, and educational institutions. This study explores the underlying correlations between class engagement, motivational levels, and academic performance. Students, especially students who are already in a mixed-grade class, can refer to these correlations to optimize their learning preferences. This study provides new methods to improve students' academic performance, like increasing class engagement and promoting learning motivation. Professors, especially professors who are already teaching a mixed-grade class, can refer to this study to change their teaching methods to improve the overall teaching quality and generate the most suitable methods for students of all grades. For educational institutions, like universities, they can choose whether to apply the mixed-grade classes method according to the result of our study. If mixed-grade classes have a positive influence on students' academic performance, it means it can be generalized to be more widely used.

1.5 Definition of Terms

Mixed-Grade Classes. The same as multi-age classroom or composite classes. Students of different ages from different grades are gathered into one classroom and taught by one teacher.

Learning Motivation. "is often defined as being intrinsic, where learners are interested in the course content, or extrinsic, where learners are interested in earning a course grade or credit" (Styer, 2009). In this study, we use Diversity of Strategies for Motivation in Learning (DSML) to measure students' learning motivation.

Class Engagement. "refers to the degree of attention, curiosity, interest, optimism, and passion that students show when they are learning or being taught, which extends to the level of motivation they have to learn and progress in their education" (Great Schools Partnership, 2016).

Academic Performance. "is the measurement of student achievement across various academic subjects. Teachers and education officials typically measure achievement using classroom performance, graduation rates, and results from standardized tests" (Ballotpedia, 2022).

2. Research Methodology

2.1 Research Design

According to the research problem, this study aims to investigate how students from various grades perform academically, their learning motivation and class engagement in mixed-grade courses at Wenzhou-Kean University. This study will explore students' profiles in mixed-grade classes, the correlation between students' academic performance and class engagement, the correlation between students' motivation levels and academic performance in mixed-grade courses, and the correlation between students' motivation levels and class engagement. This study inserts 5 Null Hypothesis:

H01: There will be no significant correlation between the student's class engagement and

academic performance in the mixed-grade class; H02: There will be no significant correlation between students' academic performance and motivation level; H03: There will be no significant correlation between the student's class engagement and motivation level; H04: Students' learning motivation can't predict their academic performance in the mixed-grade class; H05: Students' class engagement can't predict academic performance in mixed-grade classes. To test the Null Hypothesis, this study will utilize a quantitative research method to examine the correlations and regressions among variables. To explain the correlations and regression of these variables, the nature of this study is explanatory research.

2.2 Respondent and Sampling

To collect data quickly and comprehensively from Wenzhou-Kean University students, this study allocates an online standardized questionnaire to collect data. This questionnaire lasted a month to collect data from students from different year levels, course levels, and colleges. This study has collected 170 respondents' answers. The target population of this study is students at Wenzhou-Kean University. The sample in this study is randomly selected from Wenzhou-Kean University, and the sampling method is randomly distributed online.

2.3 Research Instruments

This study utilized a standardized and validated online questionnaire involving four parts: respondents' profiles, academic performance assessment, class engagement assessment, and students' learning motivation assessment. The questionnaire consists of closed-end questions, including multiple-choice questions and scale-choice questions. The first part of the questionnaire collects respondents' basic information regarding their major, year grade, and course level. The second part of the questionnaire examines students' academic performance levels using the Likert scale. The third part is class engagement level measurement, and the fourth is learning motivation level measurement.

2.4 Data Analysis

This study aims to reach six research objectives by adopting descriptive statistics to analyze respondents' profiles in mixed-grade classes (objective 1) and utilizing inferential statistics to find out the correlation between students' academic performance and class engagement in mixed- grade courses to determine the relationship between students' motivation level and academic performance in mixed-grade courses, to identify the relationship between students' motivation level and class engagement in mixed-grade classes (objectives 2-4). Besides, this study will also utilize regression to search whether students' motivation levels predict academic performance in mixed-grade classes and to verify if students' class engagement predicts academic performance in mixed-grade classes (objectives 5 and 6). The online questionnaire was randomly allocated among different WeChat groups, and researchers also applied collective administration to collect data. The researcher obtains captive students from GE, Business Law, and Management Science courses.

2.5 Establishing Quality

The degree to which data functions for its intended purpose is known as data quality. This implies that the information should produce the desired result (Sagacity, 2023). Meanwhile, high-quality data serves as the basis for study and the secret to its eventual production. This

study utilized simple random sampling to reduce sample error as much as feasible. This study's research instruments include a standardized, validated questionnaire to ensure validity. The survey questions guarantee that respondents won't learn about the outcome. In terms of the questionnaire's substance, it is easily comprehensible, and the questions' profundity gradually increases. The content of this questionnaire is straightforward and provides both Chinese and English interpretations.

2.6 Limitations of the Study

The main limitation of this study is the low response rate of students since it only collected 170 respondents' answers. The results' outcome lacks accuracy in generalizing the target population. Since this study applies a quantitative research method and uses closed-ended questions, it lacks the opportunity for spontaneous responses. Moreover, this study used collective administration to collect data, so the respondents would fill in the answers quickly, which may impact the results' accuracy.

3. Results and Discussion

This chapter will present data analysis and results based on 169 respondents' answers; SPSS analyzes these data, making the data valid and accurate.

3.1 The Basic Information of the Respondents

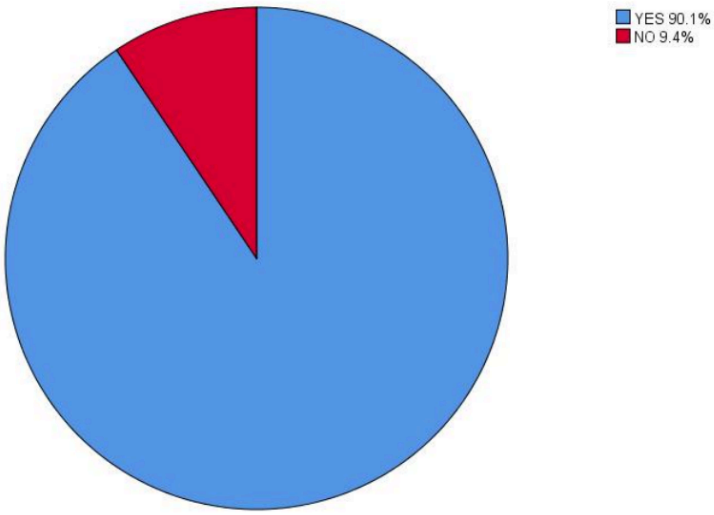
Table 1: Descriptive of Respondents' Profile

Variables	Category	Frequency	Percentage
school	College of Business & Public Management	121	71.2%
	College of Liberal Arts	32	18.8%
	Michael Graves College	11	6.5%
	College of Science, Mathematics and Technology	2	1.2%
	Others	3	1.8%
Year-level	Freshman	34	20.0%
	Sophomore	70	41.2%
	Junior	36	21.2%
	Senior	29	17.1%
Gender	Male	61	35.9%
	Female	103	60.6%
	Others	5	2.9%
Cumulative GPA	2.0-2.5	11	6.5%
	2.6-3.0	15	8.8%
	3.1-3.5	38	22.4%
	3.6-4.0	105	61.8%

This study has collected 169 students' responses; among these respondents, as can be seen in Table 1 71.2% of the students are business majors, which could represent most students regarding the major category. This study emphasized different year-grade students' learning motivation, academic performance, and class engagement level, so the data or year level is essential. Among the 169 respondents, 20.0% are freshmen, 41.2% are sophomores, 21.2% are juniors, 17.1% are seniors. Sophomore students dominate the sample, and sophomore students could take courses with higher and lower-year grades. This study involves 35.9% male respondents and 60.6% female respondents. GPA (Grade Point Average) is one of the

indicators for evaluating students' academic performance in this study. The majority of respondents, 61.8%, have a GPA between 3.6 and 4.0 (one decimal place), 22.4% have a GPA between 3.1 and 3.5, and 15.3% have a GPA lower than 3.0.

Figure 1: Percentage of Respondents' Teaching Mode



The mixed-grade class teaching form can be found at Wenzhou-Kean University, and Figure 1 shows that among 169 respondents, 90.1% have taken mixed-grade classes during their previous year in WKU. 9.4% of respondents have not taken the mixed-grade course currently. This could prove that mixed-grade class teaching mode is common and general in WKU, ranging from general education to specialized courses.

3.2 Descriptive of Respondents' Class Engagement, Academic Performance, and Learning Motivation

Table 2: Descriptive of Respondents' Class Engagement, Academic Performance, and Learning Motivation

	N	Mean	Std. deviation	Interpretation
Academic performance	169	3.69	.64	Average
Learning motivation	169	3.53	.54	Average
Class engagement	169	3.83	.63	Average
Valid N	169			

As shown in Table 2, N=169 respondents' academic performance, class engagement, and learning motivation levels are interpreted as average with the mean=3.69 and standard deviation=.64 regarding academic performance, mean=3.83 and standard deviation=.63 regarding class engagement level, and mean=3.53 and standard deviation =.54 regarding learning motivation. These three indicators show respondents' average level in these three dimensions.

3.3 Correlation Between Class Engagement and Academic Performance

Table 3: Correlation of Respondents' Class Engagement and Academic Performance

		Academic performance	Class engagement
Academic performance	Pearson Correlation	1	.776**
	Sig.(2-tailed)		.000
	N	169	169

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 3 indicates that the two-tailed Pearson correlation results suggested that the two variables, respondents' academic performance and class engagement, have a strong positive relationship, r (168) = .776, p < .01. Therefore, the null hypothesis one can be rejected. A strong positive correlation exists between students' academic performance and class engagement in the mixed-grade class.

Table 4: Correlation of Academic Performance and Class Engagement among Different Grades

Categorical variables		The Pearson correlation between academic performance and class engagement	Sig. (2-tailed)	N
The year-grades of respondents	Freshman	.771**	.000	34
	Sophomore	.793**	.000	70
	Junior	.784**	.000	36
	Senior	.754**	.000	29

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 4 demonstrates that the relationship among students of different grades is different, though generally, there is a strong relationship in the mixed-grade class. The two-tailed Pearson Correlation indicates that the correlation among sophomore students is the strongest with r (69)=.793, p<.05, and senior students have the weakest correlation with r (28) =.754, p<.05. Selime (2014) has pointed out that the students and their feeling of belonging, behavioral involvement, and cognitive engagement are related to academic performance. The study also argued that higher quality learning outcomes were correlated with a sense of belonging which could affect the outcome of class engagement (Selime, 2014). Sophomore and junior students are usually more active in class since they have a strong intrinsic motivation to get a better grade and have a relatively strong sense of belonging to the university compared to the freshman and senior students.

3.4 Correlation Between Learning Motivation and Academic Performance

Table 5: Correlation of Respondents' Learning Motivation and Academic Performance

		Learning motivation	Academic performance
Learning motivation	Pearson Correlation	1	.455**
	Sig.(2-tailed)		.000
	N	169	169

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 5 demonstrated that the two-tailed Pearson correlation results suggested that the two variables, respondents' academic performance and learning motivation, have a moderate positive relationship, $r(168) = .455$, $p < .01$. Therefore, the null hypothesis two can be rejected. A moderate positive correlation exists between students' academic performance and learning motivation in the mixed-grade class.

Table 6: Correlation of Academic Performance and Learning Motivation Among Different Grades

Categorical variables		The Pearson correlation between performance and academic motivation learning	Sig. (2-tailed)	N
The year-grades of respondents	Freshman	.352*	.041	34
	Sophomore	.378**	.001	70
	Junior	.595**	.000	36
	Senior	.534**	.000	29

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 6 shows that the correlation among grade students gradually increased from freshmen to seniors. The one-tailed Pearson correlation shows that freshmen have a relatively weak correlation at $r(33) = .352$, but juniors have a relatively significant strong correlation at $r(35) = .595$. The different degrees of correlation could result in several factors, including the different usage of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, students' learning target, and difficulty of course level since most juniors would take higher-level courses. At the same time, freshmen mainly emphasized language learning in their first year.

3.5 Differences Among Different Year Grade Students

Table 7: Difference of Academic Performance Among Respondents ANOVA

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Academic performance					
Between Groups	.926	3	.309	.742	.529
Within Groups	68.694	165	.416		
Total	69.621	168			
Learning motivation					
Between Groups	2.038	3	.679	2.373	.072
Within Groups	47.241	165	.286		
Total	49.280	168			
Class engagement					
Between Groups	1.891	3	.630	1.555	.202
Within Groups	66.870	165	.405		
Total	68.761	168			

Table 7 reveals that the results of one-way ANOVA did not show a significant omnibus difference in the academic performance, learning motivation, and class engagement of the different year- grades at $F(3,165) = .742$, $p>.05$ regarding academic performance, $F(3,165)= 2.373$, $p >.05$ regarding learning motivation and $F(3,165)=1.555$, $p>.05$ regarding class engagement, which could reflect that students from freshmen to seniors have similar academic performance, learning motivation, and class engagement.

3.6 The Correlation Between Students' Learning Motivation Level and Class Engagement

Table 8: The Correlation Between Students' Motivation Level and Class Engagement

		Learning motivation	Class engagement
Learning motivation	Pearson Correlation	1	.587**
	Sig.(2-tailed)		.000
	N	169	169

As shown in Table 8, it demonstrated that the two-tailed Pearson correlation results suggested that the two variables, respondents' class engagement and learning motivation, have a significant positive relationship, $r(168) = .587$, $p < .01$. Therefore, the null hypothesis three can be rejected. A significant positive correlation exists between students' class engagement and learning motivation in the mixed-grade class.

Table 9: Correlation of Class Engagement and Learning Motivation among Different Grades

Categorical variables		The Pearson correlation between class engagement and learning motivation	Sig. (2-tailed)	N
The year-grades of respondents	Freshman	.623**	.000	34
	Sophomore	.403**	.001	70
	Junior	.713**	.000	36
	Senior	.694**	.000	29

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 9 shows that juniors have the highest significance level in the correlation between learning motivation and class engagement, with a value of r (35)=.713. Also, it can be found that sophomores have the lowest significant level in the correlation between learning motivation and class engagement, which is r (69) =.403. It can be inferred that juniors have the most relevant relationship between learning motivation and class engagement among the four grades of students. In contrast, the sophomore has the least relevant relationship between learning motivation and class engagement. And as Lei et al. (2024) found, "Learning motivation had a significant positive effect on learning engagement." They also mention that learning motivation had a partial mediation effect on learning engagement, while different personality traits might play a role in affecting the relationship between learning motivation and learning effectiveness (Lei et al., 2024). They have similar findings while deeply digging into the reasons behind them. When talking about students in WKU, junior and senior students might have relatively higher expectations and futures, so they have the tightest relationship in learning motivation and class engagement.

3.7 Whether Student's Learning Motivation Predicts Academic Performance in Mixed-Grade Classes

Table 10: Regression Model of Learning Motivation and Academic Performance

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.455[a]	.207	.203	.57487

a. Predictors: (Constant), Learning Motivation

ANOVA[a]

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	14.432	1	14.432	43.670	.000[b]
	Residual	55.189	167	.330		
	Total	69.621	168			

a. Dependent Variable: Academic performance
b. Predictors: (Constant), Learning motivation

Coefficients[a]

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients B	Unstandardized Coefficients Std. Error	Standardized Coefficients Beta	t	Sig.
1	(Constant)	1.780	.293		6.073	.000
	LM	.541	.082	.455	6.608	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Academic performance

From these tables, it can be found that a linear regression was calculated to see if learning motivation (IV) predicts academic performance (DV) (β=.541). A significant regression equation was found: F (1,167) =43.670, p<.05 with an R^2=.26. Learning motivation can predict academic performance in mixed-grade classes.

3.8 Whether Student's Class Engagement Predicts Academic Performance in Mixed-Grade Classes

Table 11: Regression Model of Class Engagement and Academic Performance

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.776[a]	.603	.600	.40704

a. Predictors: (Constant), Learning Motivation

ANOVA[a]

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	41.952	1	41.952	253.210	.000[b]
	Residual	27.669	167	.166		
	Total	69.621	168			

a. Dependent Variable: Academic Performance
b. Predictors: (Constant), Class Engagement

Coefficients[a]

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients B	Unstandardized Coefficients Std. Error	Standardized Coefficients Beta	t	Sig.
1	(Constant)	.702	.191		3.685	.000
	CE	.781	.049	.776	15.913	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Academic performance

From these tables, it can be found that a linear regression was calculated to see if class engagement (IV) predicts academic performance (DV) (β=.776). A significant regression equation was found F(1,167)=253.210, p<.05 with an R^2=.603. Therefore, class engagement can predict academic performance. Lei et al. (2018) argued that a strong and positive relationship was found between student engagement and academic achievement. By meta-analysis, the relationship is affected by the method of reporting engagement, cultural value, and gender (Lei et al., 2018).

3.9 Is There a Difference in Class Engagement, Academic Performance, and Motivational Level Among Students of Different Grades

Table 12: The Mean Difference in Class Engagement, Academic Performance, and Motivational Level Among Students of Different Grads

ANOVA

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
AP	Between groups	.926	3	.309	.742	.529
	Within groups	68.694	165	.416		
	Total	69.621	168			
CE	Between groups	1.891	3	.63	1.555	.202
	Within groups	66.87	165	.405		
	Total	68.761	168			
LM	Between groups	2.038	3	.679	2.373	.072
	Within groups	47.241	165	.286		
	Total	49.28	168			

Results of one-way ANOVA show that there was no significant overall difference in academic performance of different grades' students at $F(3,165)= .742$, $p>.05$. There was not difference in class engagement of different grades' students at $F(3,165)= 1.55$, $p>.05$. Last but not least, there was not difference in learning motivation of different grades' students at $F(3,165)= 2.373$, $p>.05$. The result indicated that mix-grade classes won't influence students' academic performance, class engagement and learning motivation, whatever grades they are.

4. Summary, Conclusion, and Recommendation

4.1 Summary

For research question 1, as for the profile of students in mixed-grade classes, we've got 169 respondents and most of them have taken mixed-grade courses. About half of our participants are sophomores and more than half of them have a relatively high GPA (between 3.6 and 4.0).

For research question 2, there is a relationship between student's academic performance and class engagement in mixed-grade classes.

For research question 3, students' motivation levels positively correlate with their academic performance in mixed-grade classes.

For research question 4, students' motivation level and class engagement are also interacting directly. Students who have higher motivation are more willing to engage in a mixed-grade class, no matter what grades the students are.

For research question 5, students' motivation level can predict academic performance in mixed-grade classes. If students have a higher learning motivation, in return they will receive a better GPA. If students do not have much learning motivation, they are more likely to get lower grades.

For research question 6, students' class engagement can predict academic performance in mixed-grade classes. If students are more engaged in class, they tend to have a better GPA and more outstanding performance. it applies to all grade students.

For research question 7, there is no difference in class engagement, academic performance, and motivational level among students of different grades, which means mix-grade classes won't influence students learning state.

4.2 Conclusion

The hypothesis of this research is there are no relationships between students' class engagement, academic performance, and motivational level in mixed-grade classes.

According to the result of the Pearson correlation analysis, we found that there is a relationship between these three factors, and they are positively correlated. Both a high level of learning motivation and more class engagement can contribute to better academic performance.

Meanwhile, high learning motivation results in more class engagement. Furthermore, academic performance has a mutual effect with learning motivation and class engagement which means the higher academic performance, the higher learning motivation, and the more class engagement.

Last but not least, there is no difference in class engagement, academic performance, and motivational level among students of different grades, which means mixed-grade classes will not bring some educational difference to students.

4.3 Recommendation

Firstly, the result as mentioned above indicated that there are positive relationships between students' class engagement, academic performance, and motivational level in mixed-grade classes. Consequently, on condition that some students want to improve their GPA, they can improve their learning motivation, by setting up some goals and giving themselves some rewards. they can also do better by participating more in mixed-grades classes, like answering professors' questions positively and concentrating more in the classes.

Secondly, this study can dispel the misgivings of some students who want to join mixed- grade classes. Some low-grade students may feel pressure to take classes with higher-grade students with more experience and better English levels. With the result of our study, the lower grade students can choose mixed-grade classes relievedly as the class will not influence students' class engagement, academic performance, and motivational level.

It can also provide some advice for professors who teach mixed-grade classes. Sometimes the professor may be concerned that there are different grades of students in a classroom which means they have different English and knowledge levels. With the result of our study, they no longer need to worry as we found out that although students are from different grades, it doesn't influence their learning outcomes.

However, there is a remaining question. While we were analyzing the data, we discovered that the juniors' learning motivation was slightly higher than the sophomores. We are not sure if the difference in learning motivation of sophomores and juniors in mix-grade class is caused by

the mix-grade class, or rooted by their grades. It is common for juniors to have a higher learning motivation than sophomores, as they are closer to graduation and have more pressure than sophomores. Maybe in the future, we can do some interviews and determine the reason for the higher learning motivation of juniors.

Appendix：Questionnaire About Learning Motivation in Mixed-Grade Classes

I voluntarily agree to participate in this research study. I understand that even if I agree to participate now, I can withdraw at any time or refuse to answer any question without any consequences of any kind.

我自愿同意参加这项研究。我知道，即使我现在同意参加，我也可以随时退出或拒绝回答任何问题，而不会产生任何后果。

A: Profile

1. What is your major?
   A. Finance, Economics, Marketing, Accounting etc from CBPM
   B. Psychology, English, Communication from CLA
   C. Biology, Chemistry, Physics etc from CSMT
   D. Architecture, Design, etc from MGC

2. What is your year grade?
   A. Freshman
   B. Sophomore
   C. Junior
   D. Senior

3. What is the professional course level you have taken this semester?

   A. Lower level (1000-2000)
   B. Higher-level (3000-4000)

4. Do you have mixed-grade courses this semester? If YES, answer the following questions.

   A. YES
   B. NO

B: Academic performance:(1-5:SA-DA)

1. I made myself ready in all my subjects this semester in the class.
2. I pay attention and listen during every discussion in class.
3. I want to get good grades in professional courses.
4. I actively participate in every discussion.
5. I start papers and projects as soon as they are assigned.
6. I enjoy homework and activities because they help me improve my skills in the course.
7. I exert more effort when I do difficult assignments.
8. Solving problems is a useful hobby for me.

C: Class engagement: (1-5:SA-DA)

9. I feel I can take the responsibility of my own learning.
10. I have become more confident of my ability to pursue further learning.
11. I have improved my ability to use knowledge to solve problems in my field of study.

12. In my time at university I have improved my ability to convey ideas.
13. I have learned to be an effective team or group member.
14. I manage to complete the requirements of the program without feeling unduly stressed.
15. I find teaching staff helpful when asked questions.
16. I feel a strong sense of belonging to my class group.

D: Learning motivation:

1- Please indicate to which extent the following statement is true of you: 2-1-not very true of me to 5-very true of me

17. I like material that really challenges me, even if it is difficult to learn.
18. I sometimes procrastinate to the extent that it negatively impacts my work
19. I think I will be able to use what I learn in courses elsewhere in life.
20. I put less effort into studying for classes that I don't enjoy.
21. My goal is to do just enough to pass my courses.
22. I am confident that I can understand the basic concepts in courses.
23. I take course material at face value and don't question it further.
24. I am personally interested in the content of my courses.
25. I go back to previously made notes and readings to refresh my understanding of them.
26. If I get confused when studying, I take steps to clarify any misunderstandings
27. I treat the course material as a starting point and try to develop my own ideas about it

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"*Too Much Mushkilla": Sociolinguistic and Cultural Challenges of Ghanaian Migrant Workers in Qatar's Education City*

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Abstract
This study examines the sociolinguistic and cultural challenges faced by Ghanaian migrant workers in Qatar's Education City. Despite the growing number of studies on migrants and migration in Qatar and the GCC, previous studies have primarily focused on the physical abuse and treatment of these workers, neglecting to recognize migration as a sociocultural phenomenon. This research aims to address this gap by employing Bourdieu's theory of practice as its analytical framework. The study adopts an ethnographic case study approach and utilizes qualitative methodology, including in-depth semi-structured interviews with 9 Ghanaian workers in Education City. Through this methodology, the study identifies three main sets of challenges the workers face: social, linguistic, and economic. These challenges encompass various aspects such as dietary practices, experiences of discrimination, and the homogenization of cultural diversity. While these challenges hinder the social integration of Ghanaian migrants in Education City and Qatar as a whole, the study reveals that the workers employ various coping mechanisms to address them. These individuals exhibit agency through the establishment of kinship ties, adaptation to the dominant linguistic structures, etc. This research contributes to the academic discourse by emphasizing the necessity for enhanced intercultural communication strategies and the development of more inclusive policies within Education City. Such initiatives are critical for fostering the well-being and social integration of migrant workers in increasingly multicultural work environments. The study also contributes theoretically by framing sociolinguistic and cultural challenges within a Bourdieusian framework, revealing habitus adjustments and the accumulation of capitals within migratory fields.

Keywords: Migrant Workers, Habitus, Field, Capital, Sociolinguistic and Sociocultural Challenges

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Introduction

The outpouring of low-skilled migration to Qatar has gained significant media attention and criticism, notably since Qatar secured the hosting rights for the 2022 FIFA World Cup. The nation has faced intense global scrutiny regarding the well-being of workers tasked with constructing and maintaining the country's infrastructure (Ewers et al., 2020). Numerous news outlets have reported on the mistreatment of migrants in Qatar. In addition, a substantial body of academic literature, including much of the qualitative and ethnographic work on labor migration in the Gulf States, "has focused on the challenges, problems, and rights-based issues confronting migrants in the region" (Gardner et al., 2013, p. 2). The predominant focus of recent migration literature on Qatar revolves around the well-being of migrant workers (Ewers et al., 2020; Simkhada et al., 2022), citizens' attitudes toward migrants (Diop et al., 2017; Diop et al., 2020), working conditions of the laborers (Bener, 2017; Diop et al., 2016) discrimination against minority groups (Imerion, 2017; Offia, 2023; Syed, 2017), and to some extent, the psychological implications of migration on low-skilled migrants in Qatar (Khaled & Gray, 2019; AlAbdulla et al., 2022; Gardner et al., 2013; Nagy, 2006).

The Gap in the Sociolinguistic and Cultural Challenges Faced by Migrants

Despite the considerable attention given to these aspects, there is a notable gap in our understanding of the sociolinguistic and cultural challenges faced by migrants within their multicultural working environments. In this study, I ask the following questions: (1) What are the primary communication barriers that Ghanaian migrant workers encounter when engaging with colleagues, supervisors, and the broader population within Education City (EC)? (2) To what extent does Bourdieu's concept of habitus and the values held by Ghanaian migrant workers align or diverge from those prevalent within the migrant community in EC? (3) What sociocultural adaptation mechanisms do Ghanaian migrant workers utilize to navigate challenges related to language, communication, and cultural differences within the social fields available to them? This study aims to address this gap by examining the sociocultural integration challenges encountered by Ghanaian migrant workers in diverse working environments within EC. The guiding objective is to shed light on these challenges and potentially offer practical solutions to the existing issues.

Conclusions

This qualitative study represents the first exploration of the sociolinguistic and cultural challenges migrant workers face, utilizing a Bourdieusian framework. Previous studies have often overlooked migration as a sociocultural process (Diop et al., 2012; Ewers et al., 2020). This study delved into the sociolinguistic and cultural obstacles encountered by low-skilled Ghanaian migrant workers in EC. Specifically, it examined the social and linguistic integration of low-skilled migrants within the multicultural context of EC. Drawing upon data collected from semi-structured interviews and observations, I identified three primary categories of sociocultural challenges confronting Ghanaian migrants within EC: social, economic, and linguistic challenges. My analysis revealed that factors such as the prevalence of broken/pidgin English, discrimination from superiors and colleagues, and dissatisfaction with the provided food contribute to the impediments preventing these migrants from achieving sociocultural integration within their operating fields. While these challenges exert multifaceted impacts on migrant workers, they have devised strategies to acquire specific forms of capital to mitigate some of these obstacles. For instance, in response to linguistic challenges, migrants have

cultivated linguistic capital through non-verbal communication or adapted pidgin-style communication to enhance their intercultural competence.

The role of Qatar Foundation (QF) and the contracting companies in facilitating the migration of workers to EC is of paramount importance in empowering these migrants. Given the significance of cultural awareness in navigating their roles within this context, it is imperative for all entities overseeing migrant labor to provide comprehensive intercultural awareness programs prior to their deployment in EC. Such initiatives would enhance their understanding of the diverse cultural dynamics at play within EC. Furthermore, implementing intensive language training programs can equip migrant workers with the linguistic skills necessary to navigate the challenges present in EC effectively. By enhancing the linguistic capabilities of both Ghanaian migrants and their Asian counterparts, the burden of adaptation would not rest solely on the Ghanaian workers. For instance, food constitutes a fundamental aspect of every culture. Therefore, QF may reconsider its policies regarding dietary practices within EC to better cater to the health and well-being of workers, which are significantly influenced by their dietary intake, making it essential to accommodate diverse culinary preferences and dietary requirements. Lastly, addressing the issue of open discrimination is paramount for fostering cultural and social integration among workers. Existing structures for lodging complaints, such as the 'camp boss' and managers, must be revamped to ensure effective resolution of discrimination-related grievances. It is crucial to establish robust mechanisms that take such complaints seriously and actively work towards resolving them rather than perpetuating or exacerbating the issues, as reported by respondents. This entails instituting a more robust and impartial framework to address the discrimination faced by migrant workers.

In conclusion, the present study offers three significant contributions. Firstly, it provides an empirical contribution by addressing the gap in the exploration of sociolinguistic and cultural challenges faced by migrant workers within the Qatari context, particularly within the multicultural setting of EC. Secondly, the study contributes theoretically by framing sociolinguistic and cultural challenges within a Bourdieusian framework, revealing habitus adjustments and the accumulation of capitals within migratory fields. Lastly, the study offers practical insights into the challenges encountered by these workers, thereby raising awareness and providing concrete contributions to the enhancement of policies in EC.

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A Systematic Literature Review on Issues of Hospitality, Tourism and Catering Curriculum Development in Ghana Institutions

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Abstract
This study systematically reviewed the literature related to hospitality, tourism, and catering (HTC) institutions' curricula in Ghana to identify quality issues, the research approach that has been least adopted, and the contribution of improvement of the curricula. The study utilized the PRISMA guideline to conduct a systematic literature review. The findings are that HTC policies and developments were the issues that had received little attention from researchers. Also, the mixed-method approach appeared to be the least preferred research approach adopted for HTC studies. As noted in the findings, the HTC curricula in tertiary institutions in Ghana have received little attention towards their development. The insights gained from this analysis could be helpful to both academia and professionals in the HTC industry, especially in Ghana, as the study identifies critical areas for consideration in HTC curriculum development. Among other suggestions, this study recommends that more research be carried out to identify factors that can contribute to improving the quality and usefulness of HTC curricula in Ghana.

Keywords: Hospitality, Curriculum, Systematic Literature Review (SLR)

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Introduction

The economic and societal relevance of the hospitality, tourism, and catering (HTC) sectors has led to a recent surge in interest in these sectors. As a result, a large number of pertinent articles and data about the HTC sector have been published and are frequently kept in libraries and internet databases. The volume and complexity of this data, however, makes it difficult for academics and industry experts in HTC to use it methodically to enhance performance. To meet customer expectations and stay competitive in a market that is always changing, hotel and tourism management need to use this information. A systematic literature review (SLR) process, which entails finding, analyzing, and synthesizing scientifically established literature, can be used by stakeholders to get better results. This technique aids in assessing, condensing, and communicating the findings and implications of large and complex data sets, making it an effective tool for improving the HTC sector. This paper aims to explore the research questions related to HTC issues, research methodologies used by HTC researchers, and contributions made by researchers to enhance the HTC curriculum in Ghana over the past five years.

Methods and Results

Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis (PRISMA) is a collection of standards for evidence-based systematic reviews and meta-analyses. It aids writers in choosing what to cover and creating comprehensive literature techniques (Mulrow,1994). Relating to the key words 123 papers were identified relating to the key words and the study searched for 60 publications pertaining to graduate performance, skills acquisition in tourism, and curriculum development for hospitality and catering using Google Scholar, EBSCO, and Elsevier. Sixty papers related to HTC were selected. Thirty-three out of the sixty papers were filtered out for not meeting the inclusion criteria which was based on the year of publication and the journal being Scopus. The exclusion criterion which includes duplications of papers and connection between the purpose of the research and the database used led to the removal of the other three papers leading to 24 papers. The study examined 24 articles on HTC that were published in 14 publications between 2017 and 2021, considering the most recent research in the HTC sector. The study classified 24 papers into four main foci: enhancing HTC-related policies, influencing the HTC sector, employment in the HTC industry, and HTC-related curricula. The classifications were based on research questions, methodology, and contribution to the HTC curricula.

Table 1: Systematic Literature Table

Description	Information
Keywords: Hospitality and catering curriculum, attributes, skills acquisition, and graduate performance. Scopus-indexed papers – 123	
60 papers reviewed between 2017 – 2022	
The 2017 Year Papers from 60 papers	10 Papers
The 2018 Year Papers from 60 papers	9 Papers
The 2019 Year Papers from 60 papers	9 Papers
The 2020 Year Papers from 60 papers	14 Papers
The 2021 Year Papers from 60 papers	17 Papers
The 2022 Year Papers from 60 papers	1 Paper
Research Gap (24papers)	3 Papers (2017) 3 Papers (2018) 4 Papers (2019) 6 Papers (2020) 8 Papers (2021)

Classification of Papers

These papers were divided into three categories based on the research questions: (1) the research focus; (2) the research methodology (for example, qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods); and (3) the contribution to the HTC curricula in Ghana. This study classified 24 papers into four main foci: enhancing HTC-related policies, industry influences on the HTC sector, employment in the HTC industry, and HTC-related curricula. Table 2 and 3 below shows the results of the classifications.

Table 2: Hospitality, Tourism, and Catering Issues - published in 14 leading journals in the Scopus database

Focus of paper	Number of papers	% Count
Policies	2	8.3
Industry Influences	2	8.3
Employment	7	29.2
Curriculum (*those related to Ghana*)	2	8.3
Curriculum (*those related to other countries*)	11	45.9
Total	**24**	**100**

Table 3: Research approaches adopted for Hospitality, Tourism, and Catering studies published in 14 leading journals in the Scopus database

Research approach	Type	Number of papers	% Count
Qualitative	Interviews	8	33.3
	Content Analysis	4	16.7
	Focus group	1	4.2
	Total	**13**	**54.2**
Quantitative	Survey	5	20.8
	Content Analysis	5	20.8
	Total	**10**	**41.6**
Mixed-methods	Interviews/survey	1	4.2
	Total	**1**	**4.2**
	Grand Total	**24**	**100**

Discussion

Immerging Issues in the Hospitality, Tourism, and Catering Industry

Researchers in the hospitality, tourism, and catering industry have studied various issues, including government policies, industry influences, employment, and curriculum as highlighted by Buthelezi, Ali, Murphy, Nadkarni, and Anselmi. Scholars such as Buthelezi (2018) and Preko (2020) have examined how governments have regulated the hotel and tourism (HTC) industry. However, Buthelezi (2018) discovered that modifications to South African educational policies created difficulties for both educators and learners, which might have affected their dedication and training standards. According to Preko's (2020) assessment, the government of Ghana is strongly committed to reforming tourism to reach international standards, which will facilitate the expansion of the HTC industry in Ghana. From the viewpoint of graduate employers, Ali, Murphy, and Nadkarni (2018) investigated the contribution of information technology and sustainable development on the employability of individuals in the HTC sector.

According to the study, the notion of sustainability is poorly represented in the course descriptions and program profiles of sustainable tourism that are provided by colleges across the globe. A stronger awareness of sustainability should be imparted to students through the hospitality and tourism curriculum. Although the US hospitality management curriculum places a strong emphasis on specialized knowledge across a range of hospitality sectors, its usefulness is limited by its inability to evaluate individual courses. The curricula include support programs, which serve as a standard for further study, Szende, Catalfamo & Upneja (2019).

Sanga (2019) study revealed that Tanzanian educational institutions and the tourism industry work together to offer an effective tourism curriculum, however the industry lacks good leadership, customer service, marketing, sales, and communication skills. Griffin (2020) discovered that the coursework ought to cover just six of the thirty-three distinct hospitality-related curriculum areas. Iran's technical vocational colleges and universities raise the standard of education by designing their courses to meet the demands of the professional and labor markets Mohammed, Neyestani, Jafari & Taghvaei (2021). The impact of employability and digital literacy skills in a burgeoning digital economy, as well as the potential disruptions to

the hospitality and tourism industries, are examined by Adeyinka-Ojo, Lee, Abdullah, and Teo (2020). Through content analysis the study revealed that digital transportation, meal sharing, and trip planning are the skills that lead to substantial changes in the operational and strategic management of the hospitality and tourism firms.

In their evaluation of Latin American hospitality and tourism programs, Gonzale & Villegas (2021) discover that a bachelor's degree can be obtained in four to five years in five different nations, with 21% of programs having national ministry of education accreditation and 11% having international accreditation. A study on sustainability sub-education programs among the top 50 international programs in tourism and hospitality management was carried out by Zizka (2021). The results demonstrated that well-known and bigger universities have an edge when it comes to educating students about sustainability. However, comparing hospitality and leisure management programs across several institutions has an impact on the findings' dependability.

Given Ghana's problems with environmental deterioration, more research is advised before integrating sustainability into the hospitality and tourism curricula. According to Karali, Das, and Roy (2021), more research is required to elucidate the influence and policy challenges. Karali et al. (2021) conducted a review of 404 publications published between 1980 and 2019 to ascertain the direction of rural tourism research. They discovered that important topics including resource control, stakeholder power struggles, and community politics have been disregarded.

Research Approaches in the Hospitality, Tourism, and Catering (HTC) Industry

Studies That Adopted Qualitative Research Approaches

Qualitative research approaches have been used by HTC researchers to investigate the challenges faced by educators in modern hotel management education. However, some studies have limitations, such as small sample sizes and purposive sampling techniques. For example, Lugosi and Jameson (2017) found that the sample size was too small to produce representative views due to the variability among educators in modern hotel management institutions.

Ali, Murphy, and Nadkarni (2018) investigated the role of sustainable development and information technology on employability in the hospitality industry from the perspective of graduate employers. However, the study's generalizability was limited due to the use of only graduate employees as participants. Cotterell, Hales, Arcodia, and Ferreira (2019) also analyzed diverse ideas students and lecturers have about sustainability in course outlines and profiles of sustainable tourism programs offered at universities around the world.

Mohammad et. al. (2021) sought to develop indicators to improve education standards provided by technical and vocational colleges and universities using unstructured interviews. One limitation identified was that the study was conducted only in Iran with 18 participants, hence affecting generalization. Castiglioni, Lozza, Anselmi, & Rossi (2020) found that local people in Mozambique face employment challenges in the tourism industry. Ochieng and Ngware (2021) conducted a study to answer the research questions about TVET students' definition of "soft skills" and their impact on their employment prospects using structured interview. Perceptions of thirty -four locals collected and analyzed give a limitation to the study.

Szende, Catalfamo, and Upneja (2019) used content analysis to determine the quality of key components of the HTC Curriculum in tertiary institutions in the United States by analyzing 15 management programs. Content analysis is more appropriate than interviews as deeper thoughts are given by participants. Adeyinka-Ojo, Lee, Abdullah, and Teo (2020) investigated the role of skills related to employability in the HTC industries. Sanga (2019) used focus group discussions among 356 professionals to investigate how the tourism sector and educational institutions in Tanzania work together to provide effective education.

Studies That Adopted Quantitative Research Approaches

Quantitative research approaches have gained attention among hospitality training (HTC) researchers, like qualitative methods. Studies have shown disparities between curriculum content and practitioners' expectations. For example, Cathy, Honggen, and Nan (2018) evaluated Ghana's hospitality training programs, while Alexakis & Jiang (2019) evaluated the US hospitality management curriculum. However, the study's small sample size and inability to evaluate individual courses limited its applicability. Griffin (2020) investigated if hospitality industry professionals' perceptions of courses were comparable to those of teachers, but the lack of balance between professionals and teachers may affect the findings. The use of a single methodology also limited the depth of the study. Further empirical studies are needed to understand the level of industry and academic collaboration in Ghana. Boo and Kim (2020) found a positive correlation between HTC professional certification and academic performance, which could be useful for improving the HTC curriculum in Ghana. Gonzalez & Villegas (2021) evaluated hospitality and tourist programs in Latin America but found the evaluation insufficient. Zizka (2021) analyzed sustainability education programs among the top 50 international tourism, leisure, and hospitality management programs, recommending further research on incorporating sustainability into curricula. These findings highlight the need for further research to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the value of hospitality and tourism curricula in Ghana. Karali, Das, and Roy (2021) conducted a quantitative review of 404 articles from 1980 to 2019, focusing on tourism-biased journals. Adu-Ampong and Mensah (2021) evaluated the research output and trends in Ghana's hospitality and tourism (HTC) industry but found that the data excludes local and regional publications not indexed in Scopus. Frye, Kang, Huh, and Lee (2020) examined the relationship between marketing strategies and employee retention, suggesting future studies should consider issues beyond pay and benefits. Hyasat (2022) examined the approval of Jordanian tourism and hospitality colleges' diploma programs, finding low levels of approval. Dlamini, Migiro, and Tefera (2020) examined the balanced scorecard as a development and performance measuring instrument for small and medium-sized hotels in Eswatini, finding it to be primarily focused on non-financial performance criteria.

Studies That Adopted Mixed-Methods Research Approaches

Fraser (2020) utilized a mixed methods approach to study strategies for incorporating operational managerial competencies into the hospitality management curriculum. The study involved 96 human resource managers from various hotels in Australia, analyzing 48 competencies from 43 job postings. The methodology may have bias due to the participants being hotel managers. Future studies should include clients and other industry workers. The mixed-method approach was the least preferred research approach for hospitality management (HTM) studies, accounting for only 4.2% of the total. The study highlights the need for a mixed methods approach in most HTC studies to study complex industry issues.

Research Contribution Towards the Improvement of HTC Curricula in Ghana

The tourism industry in Ghana experienced a 3.5% growth in 2019, surpassing the global economy's 2.5% rate. To achieve this, there is a need to develop skills for current and future professions in the hospitality and tourism (HTC) industry through an official curriculum in tertiary institutions. However, studies on the HTC curriculum in Ghana are limited, with less than 10% of reviewed papers focusing on the curriculum. A study by Commey, Kokt & Hattingh (2020) found that employers expect graduates to possess applied and business-like competencies. A study by Yirbekyaa, Kuuder, and Mohammed (2021) at the University of Cape Coast (UCC), the University of Energy and Natural Resources (UENR), and the University of Development Studies (UDS) found that 45% of respondents did not intend to work in the industry after graduation. The study recommends a mixed-methods study to examine the alignment between the intended and enacted hospitality and catering curricula in tertiary institutions in Ghana.

Conclusions

The study analyzed 24 HTC-related papers published in 14 journals from 2017 to 2021. It found that influences and policy issues have received the least attention among researchers in the past five years. The mixed-methods approach was also the least preferred research approach. Researchers have contributed little to improving the HTC curriculum in Ghana. The study recommends replicating these studies in Ghana to fill 22 setting-related gaps in the literature. Additionally, three research questions were identified: research issues, approaches, and relevance to HTC curricula in Ghana. The study reveals that HTC-related issues, influences, and policy issues have received less attention from researchers in the past five years. Future research should investigate the influence of educational and economic policies in Ghana on the HTC industry. Community politics, stakeholder power struggles, and resource control issues should also be addressed. The mixed-methods approach is the least preferred research approach for HTC studies. Future studies should adopt a systematic review of literature and interviews with key stakeholders. The relevance of research to HTC curricula in Ghana is also highlighted, with limited attention to tertiary institutions. Further systematic reviews should be conducted on the HTC curriculum in Ghana, extracting papers from other databases. The study has one limitation, as the papers used were articles published in only the Scopus database. Future research should include HTC-related articles in other databases like Taylor and Francis.

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Emotionalism: Deriving a Movement From a Film, a Lecture and an Interview

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Abstract
The study displays a performative, post-qualitative inquiry on and around the architect/director Tszwai So's short film E-Motion-AI City, 2021, artistically questioning the technology-driven lives of individuals in metropolitan cities. Following past discourses, the paper brings *emotionalism* up again as an architectural, artistic, and urban movement. Three sources were analyzed qualitatively: (i) The film itself as a representative/symbolic source, (ii) H. Wright's lecture as the theoretical/historical framework crystalizes the basics of the emotional discourse, and (iii) The interview with the architect/director Tszwai So, as the main discussion that relates the film with the discourse. The findings highlight the negative impact of technology on emotional health and wellbeing, emphasizing the exclusion of emotions from people's lives. Key insights include:

- Integrating emotions and memories into urban life enhances individuals' resilience and attachment to their environments, thereby improving emotional health and wellbeing.
- Art and architecture are pivotal in addressing and incorporating emotions within urban planning and life.
- The practice of flânerie (strolling or walking in the city) is a powerful method for evoking and constructing emotions and should be reintegrated into urban and architectural design.

The study advocates for Emotionalism as a movement that prioritizes individuals' senses, feelings, memories, and identities in contemporary urban planning and architecture.

Keywords: Emotionalism, Art and Space, Health and Wellbeing, Post-qualitative Inquiry

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Introduction

Wellbeing and health have definitions and implementations that vary according to the discipline addressing them (Petermans & Cain, 2019). Both terms support the resilience of physical conditions, such as buildings, cities, and society, from the individual level to all of humanity. New developments in science and technology raise the question of how these terms can be renewed to provide better lives and environments. Recent literature indicates a rise in human-centered approaches to the subject, and this paper aims to add the reemerging movement of emotionalism to the discussion.

Literature Review

Resilience, Wellbeing, Health, Smartness, and Emotions

Responding to systemic threats, recovering from disruption, the capacity of individuals to withstand trauma, a network's coping capacity against a power failure, bouncing back from a perturbation, ability to be restored, ability to absorb changes, persistence, and stability are among the definitions of resilience (Lawrence, 2014). Reaching equilibrium and returning to pre-defined normality have been identified as the two main goals of resilience, whereas equilibrium and normality are normative conceptions that highly depend on who defines them. Regarding cities, it was suggested that the definition of resilience needs an expansion, preferably towards a more dynamic point of view, since cities are unstable socio-ecological systems that evolve (Lawrence, 2014). So, the resilience of cities is an issue that is qualified as an unfinished project, still in progress, developing, improving, and therefore requiring redefinition. For instance, walkable spaces, community spaces, and greenspace were insufficient for urban residents' wellbeing, as biodiversity and ecosystem were proposed for a new possible definition (Taylor & Hochuli, 2015). The sustainability framework for cities was recommended to be enlarged to the extent that it covers features like healthy and equitable urban living/working and social, environmental, and intergenerational justice as the future cities were expected to be more resilient, regenerative, self-sufficient, inclusive, and equitable (Cash-Gibson et al., 2023).

Smartness and resilience, on the other hand, have been considered to complement each other in developing evidence-based urban design and planning decisions. Depending on its quantitative and qualitative abilities, big data is expected to translate systemic resilience targets into principles of spatial transformation (Forgaci, 2020) as it operationalizes general urban resilience properties. Big-data-driven urban resilience was proposed, and depending on that, the toolset of designers and planners has been expected to change in that direction as well. Connected sensors, data management, and analytics platforms have been the basis of the Smart City as these serve cooperatively to improve the quality and functioning of the built environment; cities evolve toward being more intelligent and, thus, more sustainable (Strielkowski et al., 2022). Though it is recommended that technology not be the sole focus of smart cities as we may lose human dimensions (Allam & Dhunny, 2019), numerous sample studies exemplify the transformation of cities towards a more automated future. Computers and smartphones are the primary gadgets all citizens can use to participate in these pre-developed resistance/comfort scenarios.

On the architectural scale, the situation has remained somewhat conventional. Planning, order, harmony, nature, color, and arts have been considered for developing the resilience of educational facilities. Strategies of resilience were claimed to interact with human emotions,

so the architectural composition of schools was said to be influencing students emotionally (Campos, 2020). Similarly, light and light treatment were studied in relation to the health and wellbeing of individuals in a neuroscience study (Leão & Neiva, 2022). In contrast, the light, colors, and material patterns in a corridor were found to affect people's atmospheric perceptions (Canepa et al., 2019). Research recommends that future public space design consider enhancing positive emotions and wellbeing from the early stages of design (Rassia & Zervou, 2019). Emotional experience in the built environment, such as fascination, coherence, and hominess, was claimed to foster human-centeredness in design (Coburn & Weinberger, 2022). Apart from physical qualities, user-influencing design, as a design methodology, was also introduced to improve wellbeing (Dorrestijn & Verbeek, 2013). In another research, temperature, air quality, materials, lighting, noise, views, size, crowding, privacy, aesthetics, layout, security technology, age of the building, and connections with nature were addressed in defining the evaluation criteria for testing wellbeing conditions in prisons (Engsrom & Van Ginneken, 2022). Principles of biophilic design in architecture have also been addressed in relation to health and wellbeing issues, and further research and implementation for the sensory, metaphorical, morphological, material, and spiritual dimensions of biophilia were encouraged (Zhong et al., 2022).

The direct link between the qualities of the physical environment and people's emotions is high on the agenda. AI-driven smart technologies provide numerous artifacts that ease people's lives, but these developments have implications (and limitations) for citizens' daily lives. There is a solid and intensive tendency to use AI-driven smart technologies in urban resilience scenarios. However, the human emotions affected by these technologies should be addressed.

Research Objectives

Making cities more resilient by transforming them into competent entities and smarter forms is the technical challenge of the first quartile of the 21st century. This transformation exposes individuals intensively to AI-driven technologies in daily life. In this context, one might claim that the challenge of the second quartile of the 21st century will be more human-centered. Keeping the technology-humanity paradox in mind, resilience and sustainability discourses need to progress towards improving human health and wellbeing rather than consolidating the dominance of technology. The objectives of this paper are to introduce an original path leading to emotions, present discourses developed on the topic, clarify the features of an emotionalist approach, and propose practical and pragmatic steps towards an emotionalist approach to the urban environment.

Material and Method

This study conducts three successive qualitative analyses: first, examining the short film "E-Motion-AI City" (2020), curated by Chinachem Group and British architect Tszwai So, premiered at the 17th Venice Biennale of Architecture. This film is the initial focal point of the present qualitative inquiry, leading to subsequent analyses of a lecture and an interview. The second part of the paper explores central themes derived from a comprehensive review, laying the groundwork for a new theoretical and practical approach toward resilient urban and architectural considerations that prioritize human health and wellbeing. The concluding section of the study proposes the initial five tenets of a potential Emotionalist manifesto. Integrating these principles into future guides, briefs, scenarios, datasets, calculations, and AI

tools can foster a human-centered approach rooted in emotions, thereby initiating a transformative process that emphasizes emotional wellbeing.

This sequence of research/inquiry was run within the limits and freedom of the performative paradigm of the post-qualitative inquiry. According to post-qualitative, performativity-based research, a movement should be created at the end of the inquiry as knowledge is not a stable entity but a fluid and complex one. A performative research paradigm moves from something pre-existing to something enacted as the research objects become the research phenomena, the data becomes alive, the methodology becomes prescription-less, and the analyses become experimental. It is a continuous boundary-making practice in which the researcher is the person who decides about the inclusion/exclusion of specific data. As a result, the researcher is no longer a stable and static zero-point throughout the research process; on the contrary, one is expected to be active in becoming and acting according to the emerging research process. Newness, innovation, and experimentation are the characteristics of the performative paradigm (Østern et al., 2023).

The Inquiry

The Film

The film E-Motion-AI City (2020) begins with two views associated with each other: The fish hardly swimming in small pots and the social housing units in a cosmopolitan city. Then, we hear the presenter on T.V. asking a question as we watch a mother and a child in a living room sitting by the table; *"The unprecedented COVID-19 has brought us closer to immersion in a digital matrix. Our relationships with the city have been sucked into the screen. What does that mean for humanity?"*

The answer comes from the interviewee, architectural critic, and author Herbert Wright:

> *"I see the digital and the real becoming more and more indistinguishable. I see the virtual city merging gradually into the physically built urban environment in which we live our lives. We are on a bridge between the real and the digital. May not be long before we can question whether or not we are in a big simulation. I think that humanity needs to ask itself where we are going with this algorithm-driven future."*

The film continues with a little girl's walks in urban and architectural spaces, establishing emotions and memories, and a young lady's flânerie in similar/the same spaces, trying to (probably) recall childhood memories. This duality is repeated in the film a few times more. Herbert Wright continues his speech;

> *"We would no longer be top dogs; we might be a nuisance like small children; create a lot of noise, disruption, can break things. The AI would have to deal with that… to get a bit of peace and quiet… you have to … sit the child in front of an animated cartoon."*

Moreover, the city is defined as an animated cartoon on a massive scale that never ends. Several city views, some very poetic, display the varieties of the city. Various activities are done in very different parts of the city, all with the potential for establishing emotions and memories. We see construction sites as we hear Herbert Wright again explaining the relationship between the city and emotions from a cinematographic point of view, how the

city can be conceived as a character in the script, and how each new construction adds a new set for the drama of our daily lives that opens the possibilities of creating an emotional city in which people can drift through. We hear the presenter say, *"So it is emotional to drift through the city because our emotions are linked to our memories. And this is the archive of our collective and private memories."*

Considering the AI discussion, we cannot be sure about the realness of the flâneries of the little girl and the young lady. Which one is real, and which one involves AI? Though both look real, the device on the young lady's ear implies she is the real (still futuristic) one strolling in the city following the AI-created memories. And there comes the danger;

> *"...you could have an AI city and still have an emotional city… you can remember a past that never was… memories can be created and destroyed, they can be uploaded and downloaded, and they can be replaced…. When we start to play with memories, we lose our grip on who we are."*

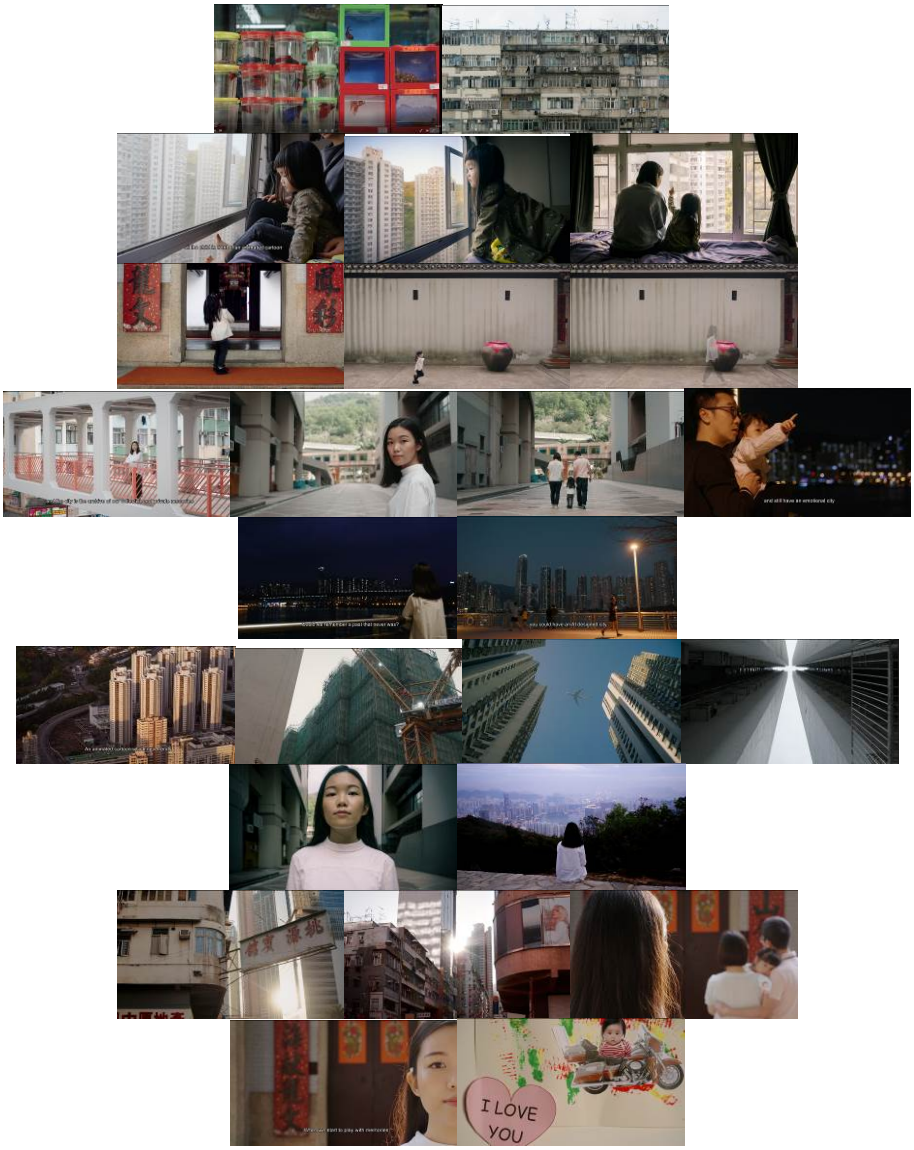

Fig. 1. Shots from the film E-Motion-AI City (2021) courtesy of architect/director Tszwai So

The film reveals a fragile resilience, a fabricated emotionality, highlighting the risks posed by AI technologies and their impact on humanity. It portrays our increasing detachment from authentic pasts, the loss of genuine memories, and thereby the erosion of real connections with our surroundings. This recreation undermines the resilience of individuals and societies. Furthermore, this process transforms existing environments into entities akin to film sets, devoid of inherent value without a specific narrative. Resilience is compromised or even absent, as our experiences unfold within an AI-driven matrix of places and memories. The film critiques modernist urban and architectural approaches criticized for their static and repetitive patterns, which hindered the formation of personal memories and often left individuals feeling disoriented. Figure 1 showcases scenes from the film.

The Lecture

The film presents a visual narration of Herbert Wright's critical considerations on urban life and individuals' position in the future. H. Wright makes his thoughts explicit in a lecture in Cracow (H. Wright, 2018). He addresses the pivotal developments that consider emotions and memories as the core of life. Among them, the 50-year-old Psychogeography, based on drifting/flânerie, takes the most significant role. *"Psychogeography is all about reading the environment by walking through it without a plan. It is psychological geography that's based on observation, emotional reaction, observing people and the built environment and making spontaneous decisions about where to walk."*

Other references of him are, briefly as follows: Charles Baudelaire (1821-1867) and his flânerie theory; Ivan Chtcheglov (1933-1998) who said *we are bored with the city* and dwelled on diverse feelings that an urban environment could raise; the Dadaists movement; 1839 Paris photograph and G.E. Haussmann's 1853-1870 operations in Paris; the quintessential flaneur C. Baudelaire; L'Internationale Lettriste (1952-57), Guy Debord (1931-1994), his book *The Society of the Spectacle* and the introduction of the term *psyhogeographical contours* of the city raising certain emotions; the Situationists (1957-1972) who asked the question *what is the situation*? and proposed the constructed situation theory; the concept of territory; walking experience in High Line in New York; the big glass architecture and the visibility of the interior; gentrification; The Matrix (the Wachowskis, 1999), Der Himmel über Berlin (W. Wenders, 1987), Blade Runner (R. Scott, 1982) and the cinematography revealing the relationship between the city and emotions; Augmented Reality (AR) tools that enrich/damage life by adding layers of overlay on to the real world; Keiichi Matsuda and the hyperreality ends up with the loss of individual's real identity; digital's becoming ubiquitous; new city life that is organized around digital media; children who get used to live at home (Hikikikomori); self-replicating machines developed by John von Neumann (1903-1957); developments in brain – computer connections; the guiding algorithm like the Google Street View and the other apps; China and its mega cities and mega projects; on the other hand China and its urban villages that are organic, self-sponsored, self-motivated, diverse and alive, good examples of positive Psychogeography in which the urban life exist on a human scale, places thrive where planners have not planned, the urban village is cherished and thousand small plots bloom. At the end of the lesson, Herbert Wright asks, *"The Situationists moved on from to dèrive (drifting along) to disruption, against the spectacle, against the system... Should we follow in their footsteps?"*

The lecture addresses our relationship with AI-driven technologies and the need to reorganize our interactions with smart technology. Figure 2 showcases the word cloud of the lecture under consideration.

Fig 2. Wordcloud of H. Wright's lecture (by wordcloudplus)

The Interview

Tszwai So's designs explore emotional life, collective memory, and human relationships (Stathaki, 2020).

> "We believe that fundamental architectural drivers, function, and sustainability must be joined by emotion. This is not just an appeal to aesthetics, which has been hijacked in the past by utilitarianism and commercial expediency. We, therefore, avoid a signature style of recurring visual attributes, instead approaching the task of design with a view to instilling buildings with meaning, with human resonance."

The author interviewed Architect/Director Tszwai So via Zoom on September 22, 2022. The interview was recorded and transcribed by the interviewer/researcher. T. So's own words in the one-hour interview underlined the human-technology paradox. The following text displays the re-arranged discourses organized around specific themes that the film and the related discourse raised.

- The city, the individual, and AI: Since the city was the main character in the film, the reality of the cosmopolitan city and its features were questioned. Being characterized by density and diversity, the cosmopolitan city was said to be facing a new threat: intensive use of technology (So, 2022*);*

> *"Cosmopolitan city is a byproduct of, so-called, liberal capitalist system…. When you are talking about cities, it is talking about density… high density could encourage more efficient use of resources and energy… It is the social, political, and economic system that creates environmental degradation, prosperity, peace, and justice aspects, that is not the city itself… cosmopolitan city has to have an international dimension… diversity is very important to qualify a city as cosmopolitan… It was Hong Kong city (in the film); it was deliberately made ambiguous…Cosmopolitan cities have always been around since civilization began… it is a good thing for cultural fusion and exchange of ideas, and so on. But the intensive use of technology, particularly AI technology, is rather concerning because it creates a new kind of reality. It is still a reality, but it is a kind of reality that is driven by an algorithm. … many people nowadays, when they navigate a city, rely on navigators, on Google, the views on Google, and they go to places that they can take photographs."*

- The problem of reality: The film focuses on overlapping realities;

> *"…the film does not distinguish reality from virtual reality … the film starts with a mother and a child in their room, and you have the commentators from the television. It does not say which part is real and which part is not. The conversation on the*

television can be real, but then the scene can be unreal…. Even the actors are primarily the voices coming from a very, very British person; they are talking to each other in very, very British English in the background. In the foreground, it's this cultural environment that is totally alien to the environment in which the commentators are sitting. So that creates some kind of juxtaposition, overlapping, and deliberate cultural clash."

- Technology and (lacking) emotions: T. So, discussed the position of technology in the post-digital age regarding its effects on humanity, especially on feelings. Lacking emotions has also been reflected in the production of spaces and our dwelling in them;

  "We think we have freedom, but we are controlled at the same time. And I think this is a danger of the post-digital age. The algorithm influences our tastes and choices. So, on the one hand, we think we have choices; on the other hand, we are completely dictated to and controlled by the algorithm… Nowadays, (considering young people) emotion is so much linked to algorithms. It is not too late to start a movement and make a call for returning to feelings…Nowadays, buildings and public spaces are built to be consumed rather than to be enjoyed, to be felt…."

- The Arts and being an artist: Being an artist or acting as an artist is proposed as a methodology for creating spaces that can evoke emotions;

  "The whole architectural discourse in our age is becoming more and more technocratic as well as intellectual and is lacking romance. People do not believe we (architects) are artists; we do not even believe in ourselves. Architects happen to build buildings… we have too many politicians nowadays in the realm of architecture but not enough romantics and poets… architecture is also what artists do; to do architecture, you need to become an artist, not to become an intellectual or technocrat… artists are the people who really understand the feelings, it is very simple …The architecture I really want to do is slow cook and is really out of touch with this very noisy cooperative commercial culture, so the kind of architecture I am doing is uncommercial. There is a strong element of dissatisfaction here in the sense that it is very difficult to get commissions that will allow me to explore this notion of human emotions; even if I win these commissions, I have a lot of time it takes to finish. There are lots of discussions, talks, on and on, politicians and bureaucrats, etc…. architecture is a very slow game, and obviously, I want to keep myself artistically active in between projects while I am waiting for the projects to happen. And also, I do not really see why architects only do buildings…"

- Emotions as an old and enduring concept: The field of emotions dates back to specific cornerstone movements and figures in history;

  "They (feelings, memories, identity) are the antidotes against the intense and uncontrollable use of technology… In the Romantic period, for example, the 18th century, during the age of Enlightenment, this idea of appealing to feelings … we have somehow lost this romantic Romanticism and also the supremacy of feelings of the early 20th century. K. Malevich advocated for the supremacy of feelings. For him, the most supreme quality in this entire world was feelings. We need to call for a revival of that. This would save us from sleepwalking and becoming robots …"

- Memory, emotions, and reverse engineering: The memory gives meaning to emotions. If our old memories of/with old buildings have the potential to raise emotions, then the new buildings can also be linked to new memories;

  "Everything stems from memory. Without memory, we cannot have an identity; we can have facts but not have a deep sense of feelings… deep sense of connection … memory is the single, most important intangible quality in life …I want to introduce this process of approaching designing buildings or cities almost like journalists. A journalist is good at listening, collecting data, and understanding narratives… we have a natural attachment to old buildings because of the memories; what I am trying to do is reverse engineering this process; if I am going to create new spaces for clients I want to reverse-engineer that… if we have intense emotional feelings towards old buildings associated with important life events, what about when we create new spaces, is it possible to make the new spaces equally emotionally powerful?"

- Architecture's role in advancing resilience: Activated emotions on personal, social, and urban scales create a solid basis for the resilience, health, and wellbeing of societies and physical environments;

  "...the impact is very minimal at the moment, there is a strong possibility that this type of architecture makes the cities as well as ourselves more resilient, it is absolutely possible… but as an experiment, in its infancy, we are still yet to see, whether on a bigger scale, it works… we have nothing to lose because the way we have been designing for the last 100 years is really sending us in a car crash in the context of climate change, so we have nothing to lose anyway…"

- From objects to subjects in the cityscape: Though the film starts in a house during the COVID-19 lockdown, T. So encourages citizens to go out, discover the city by walking, and contemplate its beauty. According to T. So, the lockdowns during the pandemic revealed how cities and technology have become fused to the extent that human beings risk becoming overwhelmed by the places and technology they have created (So, 2022b). Only by walking around can a human get rid of being treated as predictable mechanical objects and start acting as subjects ruled by emotions and spontaneity;

  "… modernist/functionalist approach treated people as they were components (objects) rather than spirits (subjects), rather than someone that has a soul. And the Situationist activists are really advocating a different way of understanding the city. Rather than designing the city from the top down… they encourage people to go out in the city and use the feeling to guide them to experience the city. This is also the basic message behind the film as well… It is only through movement that we activate the city … and this sense of movement in the film is important…how we capture the beauty of the city… if you feel the city and if you look at the city like an artist, you really would discover so many things that you previously missed… the spontaneous moments in the city…The film begins with the fish, and they (each of them) are trapped in a little cube. The camera zooms out, and you see boxes on top of each other, and the fishes occupy a very small space, and then it switches to the city, which is high density. We are just like the fish, each of us really occupying a very small space in the city. And that is a metaphor that draws a parallel between … we think we

are putting these poor fish in these cubes, but we put ourselves as a human being like fish inside that cubes within the city…"

In essence, the emphasis is on re-establishing genuine connections with environments, relying on personal feelings and senses, fostering attachments, cherishing memories, creating new ones, cultivating a more emotional bond with urban settings, and integrating into the city fabric rather than being mere observers. The focus shifts from data to prioritizing individual experiences.

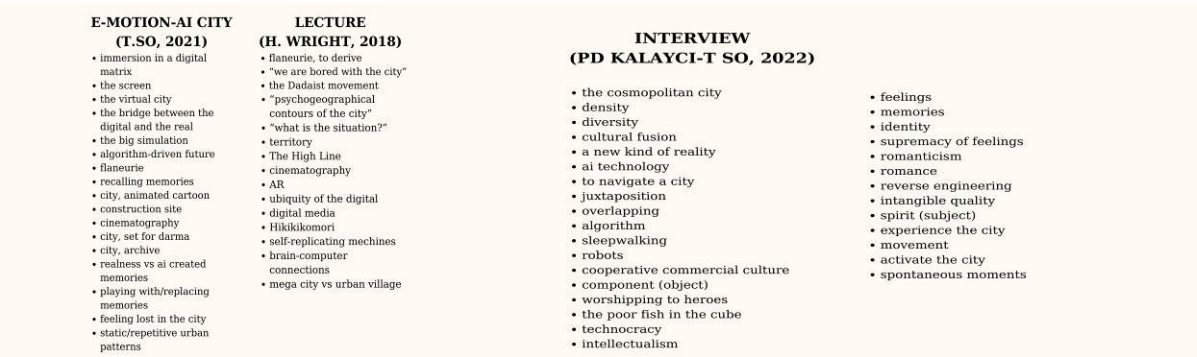

Fig. 3. Keypoints defining the Emotionalist movement

The Movement (1): Three Principles

The qualitative study highlighted emotions. (See Fig. 3) The present study suggests the following pragmatic principles to prioritize emotions at the forefront of our considerations:

1. Emotions for Developing Resilience: Throughout history, humanity thought about emotions and developed several theories/approaches in philosophy, art, and science. Therefore, any urban or environmental policy awaiting development should consider emotions as a basis and/or consequence. As in the case of smart metropolitan cities, technology eases citizens' lives -and raises technical resilience- as it also limits how people feel, think, and behave. This situation is valid for any environment evolving towards smartness. Likely that a policy non-conforming with memories, emotions, and identities will be a waste in progress. Developed resilience should also mean better health and wellbeing conditions.

2. Art(s) as a Source/Search of Emotions: Emotions become the best explicit in/via art. The artist dwells on emotions, embroiders them, and makes emotions visible. As a form of art, architecture offers intangible possibilities for activating emotions. Therefore, arts should not be excluded from life. The metropolitan cities that suppress arts and the artistic touch might not preserve peace and serenity, though they are technically perfect in maintaining their resilience to climate change and energy consumption actions. That is how the term resilience cracks in the middle, and two resiliencies fall apart; one runs with/towards technology, and the other just crawls/cries behind. Architecture and the urban environment that architects knit is a long process of producing an art object. Though top-to-down approaches ease the management of high populations, emotions-based bottom-to-up approaches might heal the damages of the prior. Public places, urban niches, interiors, and facades are the first places that come to mind when encountering art.

3. Flânerie as a Way of Raising/Provoking Emotions: One of the oldest ways of developing sincere relationships, building memories, and discovering the city has been flânerie. Walking in the city without a plan, choosing the path to follow, changing paths according to the feelings that the urban environment raises, taking a break in a corner, sitting at the side of a square, or getting into a park all define the free and spontaneous behavior of individuals. When an individual has a smartphone, it is evident that GPS works; Googling for places starts, at least the phone rings, and the individual starts to give his/her attention to the speech. What one misses in such a situation is the city. The city is a character; it is cinematographic; it is an entity in which we dwell. Future resilience development policies should consider these characteristics of the city so they can offer new experiences and endurance of already existing memories. Places and attachment to places are possible only via experiences; experience is lived and remembered via emotions. Encouraging people to leave their homes and start flânering in the city should be central for any resilience, health and wellbeing policy stemming from the human being.

The Movement (2): A Short Manifesto

Being a performative study, the present inquiry in discourses proposes the first five items of a possible Emotionalist manifesto:

- Focus on the emotions evoked by the urban environment—those you and others already experience, and the potential emotions you might develop.
- Walk in the city as the old-time flâneur did, discover the city every day and day by day, and get ready to be surprised by its cinematography.
- Engage in the arts; every object, including the city itself, has the potential to be a work of art and thus deserves an artistic touch. Be someone who creatively engages with the city, or volunteer to be someone who is moved by the art that the city offers.
- Disconnect from technology to rediscover your city beyond its digital comforts. Embrace the diversity and spontaneity that enrich urban life.
- Seek personal resilience through your emotions and memories, and collaborate with others who share this journey through the city and its architecture.

Conclusion

As a researcher, the author of this paper did not exclude any data due to the limited amount available. Emotionalism emerged as a term highlighted in the original data by the architect/director and the lecturer. The researcher gathered discourses around this theory and movement, assessing its movement implications.

Emotionalists' new contributions in architecture, visual arts, media, philosophy, and theory could gradually enrich the ongoing qualitative discourse. This study was conducted with limited original material gathered and produced in 2023. Future developments and productions stemming from the emotionalist approach have the potential to expand and deepen the principles introduced in this study. The current paper is an initial step toward defining an enhanced role for emotions in reimagining resilience and urban environments.

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Resident Perspectives on the Transformation of Tangible and Intangible Heritage in the Development of Traditional Villages

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Abstract
The tourism development within China's traditional villages marks a significant cultural shift, impacting both tangible and intangible cultural aspects of heritage. This research focuses on the multifaceted effects of this development from residents' perspective, a topic that remains relatively under-explored. Using Langtou Village in Guangzhou, China, as a case study, the aim is to explore the views of various resident groups regarding the effects of traditional village development. The results show that native residents generally perceive this development as positively influencing their material life, while non-native residents express more neutral or negative views. Regarding commercial development, the elderly residents tend to evaluate changes in tangible culture more favorably, while the younger generation exhibits more critical attitudes. Moreover, non-native residents show a lower willingness to participate in cultural activities, highlighting a significant disconnect between these activities and the elderly community. The study further indicates that while the development has increased the diversity and frequency of cultural events, the willingness of native villagers to participate in intangible cultural activities has decreased due to the influx of outsiders. These results aim to inform strategies for balancing development with cultural preservation in traditional villages, promoting a more inclusive and sustainable revitalization process through enhanced communication among different resident groups.

Keywords: Traditional Village, Tangible, Intangible, Sustainable Tourism, Development, Stakeholder Perspective, China

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Introduction

In contemporary society, the pace of urbanization has accelerated significantly, while research focusing on rural development remains comparatively limited. Since the launch of the *China Traditional Villages Initiatives* in 2012, China has successfully protected and officially designated 8,155 traditional villages. Additionally, 539,000 historical buildings and 4,789 items of intangible cultural heritage have been preserved (Wang, 2023). These efforts have resulted in significant global achievements in the conservation of China's agricultural heritage. Concurrently, there is a growing scholarly focus on the tourism development of traditional villages. Since 2011, there has been a significant increase in research references on traditional village tourism, particularly in well-known traditional villages such as Xidi Village and others (Ma, 2017). This trend highlights the growing importance and popularity of tourism development in academic research. Residents, as the primary participants, users, and stakeholders in the tourism development of traditional villages, offer significant research value. Subsequent studies have gradually shifted from analyzing residents' behaviors to examining their attitudes and perceptions, expanding from quantitative to qualitative research (Zhu, 2016).

However, these studies continue to encounter numerous challenges and unresolved issues. Existing research focuses on single aspects of analysis (Xie, Nie, & Jin, 2024). While residents can perceive comprehensive environmental changes resulting from development, most studies concentrate on specific aspects, such as perceptions of traditional architecture, infrastructure modifications, and demand shifts, often lacking a holistic and integrated analysis of multiple factors. Additionally, research on residents frequently treats them as a homogeneous group, lacking segmentation and categorization within this population (Ma, 2017). As traditional village tourism has developed over the past decade, increasingly homogenized commercial characteristics have led many villages to gradually lose visitors after experiencing an initial peak in tourism benefits. The remaining resident population primarily comprises locals, non-locals, elderly individuals, and younger adults. In light of the significant transformations that villages undergo post-development, several critical questions arise: How do residents adapt once the initial excitement of development fades? Have the costly village facilities and cultural activities adequately addressed the diverse needs of the residents? As traditional villages face potential future redevelopment, how can the balance between preservation and innovation be maintained? These issues have not yet received extensive scholarly attention. This study focuses on Langtou Village, employing in-depth interviews to examine residents' lives, as well as tangible and intangible cultural aspects. By exploring the perspectives of different resident groups, the study seeks to understand the consistencies and differences in their perceptions following tourism development and to analyze the underlying causes. The findings aim to offer valuable insights and future directions for the development of traditional villages, contributing to their sustainable revitalization, cultural preservation, and the display of intangible cultural heritage.

Background

In recent years, research on traditional village tourism development has increasingly focused on micro-level aspects such as human-environment interactions, cultural heritage preservation, and ecological protection, with an emphasis on the experiences and needs of primary users. These studies mainly concentrate on tourism enhancement strategies for the sustainable development of traditional villages, analysis of current issues, development evolution, and the impacts of tourism. However, most of them focus on overall tourism development strategies and the tourist perspective, rather than residents. Furthermore, there is a relative paucity of

qualitative analyses on residents. For example, Wang (2010) studied the impact of urbanization on village morphology in urban fringe areas under tourism development; Chen (2023) proposed renovation strategies to enhance the spatial resilience of villages. These studies predominantly focus on material phenomenon analysis, neglecting the sensory experiences of the residents themselves.

From the perspective of residents' perceptions, Tang (2015) used an equation model to study the socio-cultural impacts of tourism in ancient villages, focusing on the relationships between residents' perceptions, attitudes, and behaviors; and Xing (2023) investigated the factors influencing the livability of new rural communities from the perspective of villagers' needs, summarizing key demand elements in life, ecology, production, and culture. Most of these studies analyze the current situation and satisfaction of residents using empirical data from a third-party perspective, rather than the residents' spontaneous sensory experiences. Furthermore, the starting points for analyzing residents' perceptions vary, lacking a research foundation based on tangible life, tangible culture, and intangible culture.

Research on the material aspects of traditional villages primarily focuses on morphology, with tangible culture at its core. The specific classification of tangible culture varies widely in academic circles. Most studies concentrate on the current state, changes, construction, and strategic issues related to architecture, environment, and functional facilities. For instance, Wang (2013) identified four key aspects for assessing the value of traditional villages: the integrity of tangible cultural entities, cultural ecosystems, intangible cultural heritage and its "cultural space", and folk cultural diversity. Nonetheless, Wang's evaluation framework does not fully integrate a perspective that is centered on the inhabitants. In the realm of intangible cultural aspects, research is predominantly linked to the preservation of cultural heritage. Ma (2017), for instance, conducted a comprehensive study of three prominent traditional villages, providing an overview of the status quo and the challenges pertaining to the safeguarding of cultural heritage and the progression of tourism. This study also proposed strategies aimed at enhancing the experience of tourists, yet it fell short of addressing the tangible dimensions of daily life within these communities.

When it comes to the synthesis of tangible and intangible cultural elements, some research has put forth strategies for the holistic conservation of both material and non-material cultural legacies. Other studies have employed quantitative methods to scrutinize the morphological progression of villages during various phases of tourism development. For example, Liu (2014) conducted interviews with residents of Jiaju Tibetan Village and Zhonglu Tibetan Village to study the current state of local residential preservation. The findings indicated that while tourism has fostered the preservation of traditional dwellings, its overall impact has been somewhat constrained. Similarly, Huang (2021) utilized spatial data analysis and hierarchical methods to investigate the nexus between the stages of tourism development and the morphological transformation of traditional villages, with a focus on the evolution of both tangible and intangible cultural forms. However, these studies have not delved into the nuanced analysis of the internal stratification within the diverse groups of residents.

Despite existing research acknowledging the importance of both tangible and intangible cultural heritage preservation, there remains a significant gap in the study of tangible life aspects. Current literature lacks detailed differentiation regarding the perspectives of diverse resident groups, including variations in type, age, and origin, on village development. Moreover, qualitative research exploring residents' authentic perceptions of the interplay between tangible and intangible aspects throughout the tourism development process is

insufficient.

This study addresses these research gaps by focusing on Langtou Village in Huadu District, Guangzhou, China, a settlement with over 600 years of history, renowned for its well-preserved Lingnan architecture and rich intangible cultural heritage. Initially attracting individual investors for its unique charm, Langtou Village became a popular tourist destination. However, the COVID-19 pandemic precipitated a significant decline in visitor numbers. This study uses semi-structured interviews to examine residents' perspectives on tangible life, tangible culture, and intangible heritage, providing insights into the development challenges and cultural preservation of traditional villages.

Methodology

This study employs qualitative research methods, combining exploratory and descriptive approaches to elucidate the complex personal experiences of residents and analyze the consistencies and differences in perspectives among various resident types regarding tangible life, tangible culture, and intangible culture.

Throughout the research, the terms "native residents" and "non-native residents" are utilized. The former refers to the original residents with long-term historical and cultural connections to the village, who have resided there for generations, while the latter typically denotes individuals who have relocated to the village from elsewhere. This terminology aims to facilitate a more nuanced exploration of diverse resident perspectives and achieve a more detailed classification of resident groups.

From March to May 2024, over seven semi-structured qualitative interviews were conducted with middle-aged individuals aged 36 to 55 and elderly individuals over 60. The age of 60 is considered the statutory retirement age in China. Notably, the current resident age distribution in the village is predominantly middle-aged and older, with a notable absence of younger inhabitants.

Initially, most interviewees were recruited in front of the open spaces of ancestral halls and academies in the village. However, due to the limited number of informants confirmed, some subsequent participants were recommended by one of the interviewees, a committee member of village's women federation. Many residents had relocated to newly planned residential areas developed by the government, leaving only a small population residing and active in the village, primarily engaged in small-scale agricultural product sales. However, efforts were made to ensure sample comprehensiveness, considering factors such as gender, age, and resident categories to maximize the representativeness and diversity of the data.

Given the qualitative nature of this study, the sample size is not extensive. The researcher believes data saturation has been reached. And However, a brief description of the research participants' characteristics is provided to contextualize the respondents' environmental backgrounds and reflect potential data biases. The sample includes 57% male and 43% female respondents, closely matching China's gender ratio. The study also incorporated an investigation of the duration and origin of the respondents' residence in the village for a detailed classification.

For current village residents, their category identities (tenants, villagers, merchants, etc.) were

queried, ensuring gender diversity within each identity group to maintain representation across all categories. Particularly among the elderly, the male-to-female ratio of respondents is approximately 1:1, consistent with data from the "China Population Report", which indicates that among individuals aged 60 and above, 50.5% are male and 49.5% are female.

The semi-structured interview questions focused on several key topics, including: As a (villager, merchant, tenant, manager), how do you feel about your life and environment during different periods of village development? What are your behaviors and views regarding the tangible culture heritage left in the village during different periods of development? What are your interactions and views on the intangible culture of the village during different tourism development periods? How do you compare the development and changes in the village?

The interview structure mainly focused on three points: material life, tangible culture, and intangible culture. Interviewees were encouraged to describe their perceptions of these aspects, with temporal guidance prompting them to discuss their experiences and sentiments before and after the implementation of traditional village tourism development. The flexibility of these questions allowed respondents to engage in self-reflection and phenomenon evaluation, often leading to the emergence of novel and exploratory topics. For instance, as the interviews progressed, some respondents mentioned their complex relationships with varying durations of village residence, prompting the interviewers to incorporate questions about length of residence and origin in subsequent interviews.

All interviews were recorded and manually transcribed. The qualitative research data were analyzed and coded thematically using manual methods, with coding conducted in Chinese to preserve the nuances of the respondents' language.

The initial coding process was concept-driven, drawing upon relevant literature. As Gibbs (2007) pointed out, concept-driven coding is appropriate when pertinent concepts exist in the extant literature and when researchers possess some foreknowledge of the phenomenon under investigation. As the analysis deepened and new themes emerged, researchers introduced additional analytical and theoretical codes (Lau, 2023). In this study, researchers identified relevant concepts from existing literature, such as qualitative research on the sensory impact of traditional village tourism development on residents. Throughout the coding process, researchers consistently made comparisons to ensure the uniformity of code definitions and interpretations.

Interviewee	Age	Gender	Length of Residence (Years)	Native Resident	Non-Native Resident
Villager (R1)	67	Female	Over 50	✓	
Villager (R2)	73	Male	Over 70	✓	
Villager (R3)	52	Female	35	✓	
Tenant (T1)	Over 60	Male	1		✓
Merchant (M1)	43	Male	2		✓
Merchant (M2)	47	Male	Over 18		✓
Merchant (M3)	41	Female	3		✓

Table 1: List of Interviewee

Residents' Perspectives

Following a comprehensive analysis of the tourism development in traditional villages, four main findings emerged. These encompass: (1) the divergent perceptions of tangible life between native and non-native residents, (2) the attitudes of middle-aged and elderly residents towards changes in tangible culture, (3) the willingness to participate in and accessibility of intangible cultural activities, and (4) the evolution of intangible cultural activities and the impact of population mobility on participation. These four conclusions correspond to the three primary aspects of the study: tangible life, tangible culture, and intangible culture.

Perceptions of Tangible Life Between Native and Non-native Residents

The tangible life module in this study encompasses buildings, environment, street layout, natural landscapes, spatial forms, and neighborhood relationships, as described by the interviewees in their daily lives. Comparisons among middle-aged and elderly individuals, as well as between genders revealed mixed attitudes (positive, neutral, or negative) toward the tangible life module, with no particularly distinct features. Interestingly, when disregarding distinctions of age and gender and instead comparing by length of residence and local versus non-local status, it was found that native residents consistently held relatively positive attitudes toward tangible life. In contrast, non-native residents exhibited neutral to relatively negative attitudes. This indicates a connection between residents' attitudes and their local or non-local status.

Native residents, as described in the interviews, mostly still live in the village or in the newly established neighboring village. Some of them sell their homegrown agricultural products daily in the village's main square. When asked about their perceptions regarding changes in tangible life, one respondent stated:

> Of course, it wasn't as convenient as it is now. Back then, my husband and I had to do farm work. The living conditions were, of course, not as good as now. The roads are much more convenient now, and there have been many changes in recent years. (R1)

This suggests that the relatively positive attitude of local residents towards tourism development may stem from their firsthand experience of the village's previous dilapidated and uninhabitable state, offering a stark contrast. Moreover, the modern buildings and business entities introduced during systematic development have generated a certain amount of visitor traffic, allowing them to continue selling agricultural products. Additionally, development companies have renovated many of their old houses at no cost and leased them, providing a supplementary source of income.

Conversely, non-native residents, who have moved to the village in recent years, tend to hold more conservative and relatively negative attitudes. One non-native resident expressed:

> At that time, every house here was beautiful and different in style. I loved the beauty, which attracted me here. But in recent years, many businesses have been introduced, and different industries have moved in, destroying the beauty of the old houses. It's all ruined. (M3)

Another non-native resident commented:

> It doesn't feel convenient to walk around. There's still a lot of traffic, and the roads are narrow. Buying things is far away; you have to walk two kilometers, taking half an hour. (M1)

Non-native residents often feel that their needs for improved basic infrastructure are neglected. During interviews, many cited better examples of tourism development in other villages, showing a tendency to make comparisons influenced by their shorter residence time. This leads them to overlook emotional attachments to the village, instead adopting a more critical perspective. For instance, some repeatedly mentioned the convenience of the greenway built behind the village for walking their dogs.

In other words, native residents tend to prioritize personal income, convenience, and emotional ties to the village, resulting in a more positive view of tourism development. These differing attitudes between native and non-native residents reflect varying priorities, indirectly validating scholarly perspectives on place attachment and community integration.

Attitudes of Middle-Aged and Elderly Residents Towards Changes in Tangible Culture

Langtou Village boasts a rich tangible cultural foundation, including ancestral halls, academies, watchtowers, the Shengping Renrui Arch, Qingyun Bridge, and some newly constructed modern cultural structures. These entities, which hold historical and cultural value, are frequently mentioned by interviewees. Conventional wisdom might suggest that elderly residents would be more protective of items with tangible cultural value from past eras and more resistant to changes brought about by tourism development. However, the interview results show that elderly residents highly recognize these cultural modifications made by development companies and generally hold a relatively positive attitude. One elderly resident stated:

> Our great-grandfather was wealthy, so he built many ancestral halls and study rooms for his children to study in, called private schools in the old society... The government has repaired the houses, and overall, they are pretty good now. (R2)

These positive elderly residents frequently emphasize how development companies have renovated material structures and the overall spatial layout at no cost to the villagers, a task that would have otherwise been difficult for them to undertake independently. Consequently, they perceive that these historic buildings, such as academies, are now better preserved than if they had been left to deteriorate. This perspective reflects that, in comparison to the strict preservation of tangible culture, elderly residents place higher value on the inheritance and continuation of cultural practices; it also shows that elderly residents seem more attracted by direct benefits. Notably, their language shows a high degree of acceptance of modern cultural elements, likely influenced by their exposure to contemporary media platforms such as Douyin (TikTok). This suggests that although the tourism development may not perfectly align with their historical memories, they are progressively adapting to and embracing aspects of modern life. They generally regard the integration of modern facilities within their familiar environment as a positive development.

In contrast, middle-aged residents tend to describe more negative phenomena, especially those who experienced the peak visitor period before the village's systematic development and witnessed the village's original state during their formative years. One elderly resident (R3) stated:

> Now after the renovations, it certainly doesn't have the same antique feel as before, but there's nothing to be done. People in the new era think this style shows off their character; different eras have different architectural styles.

Interestingly, although it was previously noted that most local residents support the development due to their firsthand experience of the village's dilapidated state, middle-aged residents hold a relatively negative attitude towards material culture development, regardless of their local or non-local status. When probed about this discrepancy, elderly residents often emphasize the "present", while middle-aged residents focus on the "past". This suggests that middle-aged residents seem to prefer preserving and reminiscing about the old artifacts that carry their memories rather than integrating modern elements into tangible culture, while elderly residents show compromise after their material needs are met. Moreover, middle-aged residents generally hold negative views towards newly constructed cultural structures implemented as part of the development. Some residents said:

> Look at that new exhibition hall they built. They think it's cultural, but we find it dull. When adults bring kids here, there's nothing for them to engage with. (M1)

> There used to be a famous scholar's academy here for many years, but it's not open anymore... They've set up a knowledge park here, but it's hard to scale up; the infrastructure is insufficient. (M3)

Almost all middle-aged residents do not recognize the new cultural buildings like exhibition halls and cinemas developed for tourism. They mostly perceive these exhibitions and structures as tourist-oriented and report never having visited them personally. Therefore, they consider the cost and significance of such developments to be negligible. This partly reflects the residents' demand for tangible culture.

Overall, these findings highlight the phenomenon of generational differences, demonstrating the varying perspectives and needs of middle-aged and elderly residents towards tangible culture in the context of traditional village tourism development. Elderly residents are increasingly accepting and adapting to modern changes, valuing the continuation of tangible culture but also showing a degree of compromise. In contrast, middle-aged residents emphasize preserving the original appearance and cultural heritage of the traditional village.

Willingness to Participate in and Accessibility of Intangible Cultural Activities

Langtou Village, with over 700 years of history, is rich in intangible cultural resources, encompassing farming and reading traditions, filial piety culture, folklore, integrity culture, grey sculpture artistry, 18 ceremonial alleys, taro festival, and lantern festival lion dance. These cultural elements collectively form the unique historical and cultural atmosphere of Langtou Village. However, an analysis of interview content and subjects reveals that non-local residents generally exhibit a low level of understanding and participation in these intangible cultural activities.

Interview results indicate a significant disconnect in the awareness of intangible cultural heritage among non-native residents. Phrases like "not specifically clear" and "not well understood" frequently appeared, reflecting this phenomenon. For example, a non-native merchant stated:

> Although we live here, overall, we rarely get to understand these things. Why? Because nowadays, people seldom delve into these matters. We've only toured around a few times. I'm not too clear about it, but it should exist. (M1)

This highlights the low participation of non-native residents in local cultural activities, mainly due to a lack of willingness and opportunities to understand. They typically engage in superficial tours and do not deeply experience or comprehend these intangible cultural elements. It also underscores a clear sense of boundary within non-native residents. Unlike native residents, non-natives mostly stay in the village for livelihood purposes, expressing a more passive acceptance rather than an active understanding and integration into the local culture and community.

Moreover, an inn owner expressed a similar view:

> Over six hundred years ago, many people across China studied here because many top scholars emerged from this place. It's not well presented, and there's no explanation. The cultural construction hasn't been fully explored. You can't see or feel anything tangible. It's better to read a book about history than to come all this way. (M3)

This reflects non-native residents' criticism of how culture is presented and transmitted. They perceive that although the village possesses a rich historical and cultural background, the lack of tangible displays and in-depth interpretations makes it challenging for them to truly experience and understand the culture.

Further analysis reveals that intangible cultural activities are rarely organized with elderly residents in mind, with most events primarily targeting tourists. This has resulted in low participation and awareness of intangible cultural activities among both native and non-native elderly residents. Many elderly residents reported being unaware of the specific timing and content of activities, and their unfamiliarity with smartphones hindered their access to relevant information through modern communication channels. Consequently, they often only became aware of activities by chance, upon passing event venues.

For example, an elderly male resident said:

> I'm not well-informed about these matters. Usually, no one notifies me, and even if they did, I might struggle to comprehend. There's no effective means of communication. (T1)

Elderly residents encounter significant challenges in accessing and comprehending information about intangible cultural activities, often missing timely updates. Even when informed, their participation is hindered by language barriers and difficulties with modern Standard Mandarin. Although they retain detailed knowledge of traditional cultural events, such as the lantern festival, they are less familiar with contemporary activities like the "Yunyouth Festival", introduced during tourism development. This discrepancy underscores the inefficacy of current dissemination methods, such as social media, which are ill-suited to elderly residents unfamiliar with digital platforms. Consequently, their engagement and sense of inclusion in these cultural activities have declined.

Non-native residents similarly exhibit limited awareness and low willingness to engage in Langtou Village's intangible cultural activities, indicative of a detachment from the local

cultural fabric. These findings highlight the necessity for more effective cultural heritage preservation strategies and targeted communication approaches to enhance participation and foster a stronger sense of community among both elderly and non-native residents.

Changes in Intangible Cultural Activities and the Impact of Population Mobility on Participation

This study conducted comprehensive surveys and in-depth interviews in Langtou Village, revealing that most residents hold a relatively positive attitude towards the impact of tourism development. Residents acknowledge that tourism development has significantly increased the diversity and frequency of intangible cultural activities, thereby attracting a larger tourist population.

Residents mentioned in interviews that before tourism development, the village's intangible cultural activities were relatively limited. However, post-development, the variety and frequency of activities increased substantially. For example, a native resident and member of the Women's Federation described:

> We have many programs here. On August 15th, we have the harvest celebration, and on the 13th and 14th of the first lunar month, we have lantern festivals. This year we even had street dance performances and many other activities. Recently, we organized a 'Yunyouth Festival' and camping activities in the grasslands. (R3)

Residents' descriptions indicate that intangible cultural activities have not only increased in frequency but also diversified, with performances such as Cantonese opera becoming more prevalent to cater to tourist interests. These changes have extended tourists' length of stay and boosted the local economy, allowing residents to benefit from increased sales of local specialties and accommodations. The village's reputation has also improved, with tourist numbers serving as a key metric for assessing tourism success.

Moreover, modern expressions introduced by tourism development have greatly enriched the village's cultural offerings. New activities, such as street dance and the "Yunyouth Festival", have provided tourists with more opportunities for engagement and enjoyment, enhancing the appeal of these cultural experiences.

However, the study observed a noticeable decline in local villagers' willingness to participate in intangible cultural activities as the non-native population increased. Many villagers witnessed changes in participant demographics and the atmosphere of activities following tourism development.

The interviews reveal that some previously engaging and traditional activities, such as the "Burning of the Grain Tower" and lantern parades, have lost their original charm and participation rates:

> The burning of the grain tower used to be a big event on August 15th. We used to burn materials at the watchtower. I haven't attended for many years now. The lantern parade, where we throw lanterns to celebrate children, I haven't participated in that either. They've only recently attempted to revive these activities. (R1)

Another male agricultural product vendor expressed a similar sentiment:

> Back then, we carried statues of deities and ran around excitedly. Now, even with financial incentives, no one participates. It hasn't occurred for many years; the excitement has dissipated. (R2)

These descriptions reveal the main reasons for the decline in native residents' participation in traditional activities. On one hand, while tourism development has increased the frequency and scale of activities by introducing diverse populations and cultures, it has also altered the original cultural atmosphere of these activities. The new cultural milieu and some activity content differ from the familiar and intimate ambiance that native residents associate with their traditional activities. Additionally, the influx of new tourists, who do not include many of the local residents' relatives and friends, engenders feelings of alienation and distance among locals.

On the other hand, the tendency towards excessive commercialization often observed in modern tourism development, as noted by numerous scholars, has led to cultural activities increasingly serving external tourists rather than native residents. This shift makes native residents feel marginalized in their own cultural traditions, reducing their willingness to participate.

Conclusion

This study focuses on residents' perspectives during the tourism development of traditional villages, analyzing tangible life, tangible culture, and intangible culture to highlight both consistencies and differences in viewpoints. The research identifies four key findings:

First, native and non-native residents exhibit distinct attitudes toward tangible life. Native residents generally view tourism development positively, appreciating the economic benefits, convenience, and emotional ties to the village. In contrast, non-native residents adopt a more critical stance, focusing on modern amenities and expressing concerns about alterations to the village's traditional character. Second, intergenerational differences in attitudes toward tangible culture are evident. Elderly residents tend to adapt to modern changes, prioritizing the continuity of tangible culture, albeit with some compromise. Middle-aged residents, however, emphasize preserving the traditional village's original appearance and cultural heritage. Third, non-native residents demonstrate limited awareness of and participation in intangible cultural activities, attributable to a sense of detachment from the local culture. Elderly residents also exhibit reduced participation, primarily due to the dissemination of activity information not aligning with their needs and habitual information-seeking behaviors. Fourth, while tourism development has increased the frequency and scale of intangible cultural activities, it has concurrently altered their original cultural atmosphere. This commercialization has engendered a sense of alienation among local residents, consequently reducing their willingness to participate.

This study fills gaps in the literature by providing a comprehensive analysis of tangible and intangible culture in traditional villages and offers insights into balancing cultural preservation with tourism development. It underscores the importance of mitigating excessive commercialization and enhancing native residents' participation in cultural activities to foster a more inclusive and sustainable village revitalization.

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Sovereignty, Scientific Racism, and Larissa FastHorse's "The Thanksgiving Play"

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Abstract
The cultural/social text ultimately reflects the political/economic ecology of the moment. Accordingly, this study recontextualizes a small series of singular, easily circumscribed historical events, to elucidate a broader critical understanding of the current moment. Mediated representations foster certain perspectives that cannot be refused, even by those who are abjectly opposed. The relationship between cultural celebration, disruption, and social change has a long, continuous, complex trajectory. Accordingly, direct appeals to a historical record can yield much insight, both into the cultural object and the social text in which it is embedded. Within this context, this piece concludes with a pointed discussion of Larissa FastHorse's The Thanksgiving Play (2019) in light of recent geo-political developments and the global history of suppression.

Keywords: Racism, Indigenous Sovereignty, Genocide, Thanksgiving

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Introduction - Indigenous Sovereignty Denied

This essay is a small opening gesture to a larger interrogation of notions of Sovereignty, Racism, Indigenization, Response, and Representation on a comparative global scale. This study offers a close interrogation of a small series of singular, easily circumscribed events, to elucidate a deeper critical understanding of the trajectory leading to the current geopolitical moment.

Following centuries of bloody wars in Iberia and Crusades, with the fall of Constantinople imminent, papal displeasure with moors or Saracens was well established by 1452. On a global level, Indigenous sovereignty/rights ended in 1452 when the Eurocentric civilizing mission of Christian privilege emerged on 18 June through Pope Nicholas V's *Dum Diversas*, a Papal Bull authorizing King Alfonso *V* of Portugal powers:

> "To invade, search out, capture, vanquish, and subdue all Saracens and pagans whatsoever, and other enemies of Christ wheresoever placed, and the kingdoms, dukedoms, principalities, dominions, possessions, and all movable and immovable goods whatsoever held and possessed by them and to reduce their persons to perpetual slavery, and to apply and appropriate to himself and his successors the kingdoms, dukedoms, counties, principalities, dominions, possessions, and goods, and to convert them to his and their use and profit – by having secured the said faculty, the said King Alfonso, or, by his authority, the aforesaid infante, justly and lawfully has acquired and possessed, and doth possess, these islands, lands, harbors, and seas, and they do of right belong and pertain to the said King Alfonso and his successors." (Pope Nicholas V. 1452)

Pope Nicholas V's subsequent Papal Bull of 8 January 1455**,** "*Romanus pontifex*," granted Portugal "the right of conquest" to enslave any and all people they encountered south of Cape Bajor, on the coast of Western Africa, the Sahel. About midway through this Papal Bull, the Pope, again, re-asserts the notion that all Sub-Saharan Africans should henceforth be held in "perpetual slavery" (Pope Nicholas V, 1455).

In 1493, within one year of Columbus's encounter with the indigenous peoples of the Bahamas and Hispaniola, Pope Alexander VI issued three Papal Bulls, *Inter Caetera (4 May)*, *Piis Fidelium (26 June)*, and *Dudum siquidem (26 September)*. These three encyclicals divided the Atlantic Ocean between Portugal and Spain, giving Spain the authority to colonize the Americas and its Indigenous peoples as subjects. Further, the decree asserts the rights of Spain and Portugal to colonize, convert, and enslave. It also re-asserts the right of enslavement of Africans.

In 1537, Pope Paul III's *Sublimis Deus* (29 May) declared, "Indians and all other people who may later be discovered by Christians, are by no means to be deprived of their liberty or the possession of their property, even though they be outside the faith of Jesus Christ; and that they may and should, freely and legitimately, enjoy their liberty and the possession of their property; nor should they be in any way enslaved" (Pope Paul III, *Sublimis Deus*).

The Papal Bulls from Popes Alexander IV and Paul III began a pattern of alternative racialization between East and West of the Atlantic. The "perpetual slavery" assigned to those people East of the Atlantic resulted in a different racial status assigned to conquered people on the two sides and thus different treatments of the various nations on either side.

These decrees launched the trajectory of the Doctrine of Discovery, the alleged civilizing Catholic Colonial mission, and the emergence of the commercial Sub-Saharan slave trade. The racialization of peoples of color emerged out of the Christian Colonial understanding that natives of the colonial Spanish West were subjects for conversion, whilst Pagan (Moorish) Sub-Saharan Africans continued as a source for perpetual slavery.

In the United States of America, the trajectory of this Doctrine of Discovery achieved perfection in the 1823 U.S. Supreme Court case of Johnson v. M'Intosh, when Chief Justice John Marshall used the doctrine to assert that the United States, as the successor of Great Britain, had inherited authority over all lands within our claimed boundaries. This decision allowed the U.S. government to ignore or invalidate any indigenous claims to property rights legally. This new legal position was grandly implemented seven years later by the Indian Removal Act of 1830 (Library of Congress). The earlier Louisiana Purchase (Papers of Alexander Hamilton 1803) provided land in Oklahoma to which the dispossessed Indigenous peoples of the American South could be forced to relocate. To this day, courts continue to cite this doctrine of discovery as a legal precedent for courts to decide property rights cases brought by Indigenous/Native Americans against the U.S. and non-Natives.

In 1794, the Oneida Indian Nation ceded 5,000,000 acres to New York state, retaining only 300,000. By the 20th century, they controlled fewer than 50 acres. Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg, in 2005, cited the "Doctrine of Discovery" in the denial of the Oneida Indian Nation's claim of sovereignty over land they repurchased on the open market: "fee title to the lands occupied by Indians when the colonists arrived became vested in the sovereign—first the discovering European nation and later the original States and the United States" (City of Sherrill v. Oneida Indian Nation of New York, 544 U.S. 1974 – 2005).

The 1830 Indian Removal Act provided large tracts of land for the propagation of cotton, which further required continued importation of African slave labor (Library of Congress 1830). White privilege and imperial arrogance facilitated the kind of racist social engineering that served to maintain power, control, and profit. The emerging predatory corporate tendencies for the growing industrial capitalism required access and control of inexpensive mineral resources, cheap labor, overt restraint of competitive development, and securing substantial markets for its goods.

Whilst the earlier Christian colonial project had the pretense of religious conversion of indigenous peoples (Pope Paul III, 1537), the new goals of the 19th century's Imperialist trajectories pursued unrestrained profit. The impact of this new emphasis was immediate and far-ranging. The European and American empires, having agreed that all non-Europeans were less than human, spread out across Africa, Latin America, and Asia to colonize, control, and plunder raw materials to feed new national industrial capitalist engines. In addition, programmed under-development of labor in colonized nations provided convenient free or low-cost workers. Furthermore, in 1823, the USA asserted its authority over all Central and South America through President James Monroe's declaration of his Monroe Doctrine (Monroe 1823).

Social Darwinism, with its scientific notions of natural selection and the survival of the fittest, constructed all non-Europeans as inferior and, therefore, free to be exploited (Nickerson, 2022). In 1877, industrial capitalist Cecil Rhodes said: "I contend that we are the finest race in the world and that the more of the world we inhabit, the better it is for the human race …. It is our duty to seize every opportunity of acquiring more territory and we

should keep this one idea steadily before our eyes that more territory simply means more of the Anglo-Saxon race more of the best the most human, most honorable race the world possesses" (Rhodes, 1877).

Herbert Spencer, a British philosopher and sociologist, not Darwin, gave us the phrase "survival of the fittest," though Darwin would later also use it in his writing (Spencer, 1864). Now armed with scientific justification, Spencer believed that the strong will flourish as societies evolve, and the weak will eventually die out. He felt that the government should not aid the poor because that would get in the way of this natural evolutionary process. In the late 1800s, Spencer traveled to the U.S. and argued that those in poverty were poor because they were unfit. Moreover, to feed and help people experiencing poverty was wrong because to do so was to oppose the natural order.

Cecil Rhodes continued to exhort the West to act: "We know the size of the world we know the total extent. Africa is still lying ready for us … it is our duty to take it. It is our duty to seize every opportunity of acquiring more territory" (Cecil Rhodes, 1877). Within this context of what in The United States of America came to be called the Gilded Age, the notion of Indigenous sovereignty/rights did not exist. Indeed, in 1884-85, this Euro-American racist mindset was clearly in place as the Berlin Conference convened to determine how the continent of Africa was to be divided and plundered in the service of industrial capitalism. African peoples were not present at this Berlin meeting. Unwritten agreements notwithstanding, British, Germans, Belgian, French, Portuguese, Spanish, Americans, etc., continued to fight wars over who would own and dominate certain disputed colonial pieces of geography, mineral resources, human resources, labor, etc. (Gathara, 2019).

Between Spencer and Rhodes, the intent behind the Berlin Conference becomes clear. The West must take and plunder the resources of Africa, enslave, or otherwise maltreat the unfit indigenous peoples and let nature take its course on their way to extinction. Through the trajectory of political, military, labor-related, and economic exploitation, the imperialist Euro-American mindset justified the absolute plunder and cultural domination of the colonized. Africa was identified as a source of slave labor. Following the Berlin conference, Africa's natural resources were exploited to fuel the industrial capitalist enterprise of the West. Western nations still plundered its rich mineral resources, land, oil, gold, diamonds, iron ore, timber, and, in more modern times, platinum, aluminum, uranium, and cobalt (Gross, 2023).

Whilst their lands were colonized and plundered, all to support the Western industrial genius in power, Indigenous and non-western populations who resisted colonial orders were persecuted, attacked, plundered, murdered, and manipulated into states of perpetual impoverishment and under-development: all on the path to expected extinction. This fraught imperialist process contributed to the destruction and deaths exceeding hundreds of millions through various genocidal practices: "British colonialism killed 100 million Indians in 40 years. Between 1880 and 1920, British colonial policies in India claimed more lives than all famines in the Soviet Union, Maoist China, and North Korea combined" (Sullivan & Hickel, 2022). It is estimated that today, the indigenous population of the United States of America would number more than 100 million, if not for the success of that country's genocidal practices. Belgium King Leopold killed over 10 million Africans in his control of the Congo Free State (1885-1908). "Whippings, torture, rape, and casual murder were also widely documented" (Alyson, 2021). Kept politically corrupt, divided, confused, and disorganized, exquisite mechanisms are implemented to maintain Africa as an economically impoverished continent forever while its workers are stripped of cultural and social identity.

Through time, the extreme measures taken to guarantee the subservient relationship between victims and their colonizers established a powerful culture of fear in which the oppressed learned to acquiesce and be thankful for what they were allowed to have: anything to avoid further torture, punishment, sanction, or death. Those survivors that did not suffer these punishments worked doubly hard to avoid them.

The atrocities of what in the USA came to be called the Gilded Age produced immense wealth and abundance for those leaders of industrial capitalism (Maryville University, 2019). However, sharing that abundance was never considered. Again, the upper classes argued that the poor were poor because they were … unfit (Nickolson, 2022). Furthermore, to feed or help the poor was wrong because to do so was to oppose the natural order. Industry leaders of the era, then, treated human labor as just another commodity for exploitation to be used and discarded once they were no longer usable. In this manner, Chinese workers imported into the USA were used to construct the transcontinental railroad and discarded. Some subsequently emerged as objects of derision or curiosity in public displays (Moy, 1993).

Indigenous Sovereignty Denied, Again

On 30 March 2023, the 15th and 16th century Papal Bulls were renounced by Pope Francis: "The Vatican on Thursday responded to Indigenous demands and formally repudiated the "Doctrine of Discovery," the theories backed by 15th-century "Papal Bulls" that legitimized the colonial-era seizure of Native lands and form the basis of some property laws today. A Vatican statement said the Papal Bulls, or decrees, "did not adequately reflect the equal dignity and rights of Indigenous peoples" and have never been considered expressions of the Catholic faith" (Winfield, 2023). The Vatican further noted that: "the documents had been "manipulated" for political purposes by colonial powers "to justify immoral acts against Indigenous peoples that were carried out, at times, without opposition from ecclesial authorities" (Winfield, 2023). In 2007, the UN issued the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. Also, in response to a 2007 settlement regarding the Indian Residential Schools, the Canadian government launched a Truth and Reconciliation Commission, which in 2015 released a six -volume report containing ninety-four "calls to action" for further reconciliation between Canadians and Indigenous Nations. Unfortunately, these acknowledgements came far too late, the damage was already done.

In 1937, Winston Churchill said of the Palestinians: "I do not agree that the dog in a manger has the final right to the manger even though he may have lain there for a very long time. I do not admit that right. I do not admit for instance, that a great wrong has been done to the Red Indians of America or the black people of Australia. I do not admit that a wrong has been done to these people by the fact that a stronger race, a higher-grade race, a more worldly wise race to put it that way, has come in and taken their place" (Arundhati Roy, 2002). And, Churchill, speaking of his Indian Famine of 1943, which killed 3 million, was quoted as blaming the famine on the fact that Indians were "breeding like rabbits" and asking how, if the shortages were so dire, Mahatma Gandhi was still alive (Safi). Indeed, in 2018, Benjamin Netanyahu, Prime Minister of occupied Palestine, clarified Churchill's observation: "The weak crumble, are slaughtered and are erased from history while the strong … survive. The strong are respected, and alliances are made with the strong, and in the end peace is made with the strong (Netanyahu 2018). In that same year, during a White House discussion of Immigration policy regarding Haiti, El Salvador, and African countries, "President Trump asked why America would want immigrants from "all these 'shithole' countries" and that the U.S. should have more people coming in from places like Norway (Kirby 2018). Such

statements from powerful political figures suggest a desire to reinscribe the nineteenth century notion that poverty ridden “unfit” peoples of colour should be hurried on their path to extinction so the west can continue its plunder of their resources. This was certainly the intent behind the US genocide of the indigenous peoples of America, and the current genocide of Palestinians in Gaza. Clearly, racism arising out of the predatory pursuit of profit remains to this day a prominent feature of life for all those under the thumb of Western Europe and the USA.

By the 1970s, forty African colonial countries had finally achieved free “liberated” status through rebellion, war, diplomacy, protest, and negotiation. However, Western capitalism was moving on, and had already devised subtle means to maintain neo-colonial coercion and control. That said, the centuries-old western racist mindset remained in place to inform emerging debt-based economic decisions. The collective west transitioned from industrial capitalism into a predatory rentier economy driven by the US Petro-Dollar with its SWIFT (Society for Worldwide Interbank Financial Telecommunications, 1973) system in place, This made the USA the world's banker with the ability to print money at will. Moreover, the USA's ability to surveil the details of all international financial transactions inspired much abusive behavior, both locally in the USA and internationally.

Rentier sanctions have become the preferred mode of dominance and control. “If you control the food, you control a nation. If you control the energy, you control a region. If you control the money, you control the world.” Indeed, Henry Kissinger may have never uttered this often-used quotation attributed to him (Reuters, 2023). Still, it articulates the desired trajectory of thought that goes back one hundred years. Whilst significantly transformed, it is still in play today. Indeed, the three control statements provide a roadmap of how the West set about controlling the non-western countries of the world. Colonies were always forced to give up their subsistence crops to produce export crops at the behest of their masters, Central American banana republics, Africa’s forced shift to cash crops for export, and King Leopold’s gruesome punishment for substandard performance of rubber tree harvest duties for automobile tires (Alyson, 2021).

The United States witnessed the enforced migration of all indigenous peoples thousands of miles into the vacant interior of the country leaving behind rich farmlands along the eastern seaboard for white America to cultivate cotton which necessitated the further importation of slaves to do the work. Once relocated into the interior of the country, indigenous peoples were kept dependent upon the government for food to guarantee perpetual impoverishment. Natural food sources were destroyed as vast American buffalo herds were slaughtered.

The American Century

David Rockefeller, in an address to the Trilateral Commission, noted, "It would have been impossible for us to develop our plan for the world if we had been subject to the bright lights of public scrutiny during those years.” But "the world is now more sophisticated and fully prepared to march towards our one-world-government. The supranational sovereignty of our intellectual elites and world bankers is surely preferable to the globe as a whole." (Rockefeller, 2002) Indeed, as early as 1950, James Paul Warburg inveighed against those who disagreed, before the U.S. Senate: "We shall have World Government, whether or not we like it. The only question is whether World Government will be achieved by conquest or consent" (Warburg, 1950).

The US rentier economy achieved the full force of a singular or unipolar global government with the collapse of the Soviet Union on 25 December 1991 (Sanghera and Satybaldieva, 2020). The Russian state that survived, its flag now shorn of its Communist hammer and sickle, was deemed too weak to be a competitor to the USA and Western Europe. The Western European states came to view themselves as the de facto rulers of their now mono-polar world: world hegemony achieved with the USA as a leader. The West believed that a global government had been launched and that the USA and its Western allies would set the rules for its global governance. To this end whole nations could be financially punished for daring to disagree with the desires of the collective west. US now had the ability to deploy crippling economic sanctions against nations and individuals who disobeyed the American rules-based aims. Thus, was established their American Century.

The Play and Place of Thanksgiving

To begin, the notion of the *cornucopia,* a traditional horn of plenty which disgorges an impossibly plentiful quantity of food, fruit, consumables, and even gold coin, is a dominant visual feature of the Thanksgiving feast holiday. Usually graphically co-presented together with a stuffed turkey, these have become the iconic central images of the American Thanksgiving holiday. This festive feast launches the “Black Friday” shopping frenzy which marks the run up to the Xmas holiday celebrating the birth of Jesus in the Christian calendar. The festive event allegedly recalls a feast by the Pilgrims in 1621 to celebrate a year of survival in their "new world." The original event supposedly included 90 members of the local Wampanoag native tribe and some 53 survivors of the Mayflower. It is not clear how much of that plentitude was truly shared in 1621, especially considering the subsequent genocide of the native peoples. Still, the Wampanoag welcomed the English settlers to their “new world” much as the Palestinians welcomed the persecuted Jews to their beloved Palestine in 1948.

MacArthur Genius Awardee Larissa FastHorse, a citizen of the Sicangu Lakota nation, is celebrated as the first Native American woman to have a play on Broadway. Unable to secure production for her plays featuring indigenous content and characters because producers complained about the lack of native talent available to perform in such plays, FastHorse decided to write a play about Indigenous America, but featuring white actors. Her satirical play *The Thanksgiving Play* (FastHorse, 2018) is described by Chicago’s Steppenwolf Theatre Company: “Four (very) well-intentioned theatre people walk into an elementary school. The work at hand: a Thanksgiving pageant that won’t ruffle any feathers. What could possibly go wrong? In MacArthur Genius Larissa FastHorse’s skewering and satirical comedy, well, just about everything. Rambunctious, thorny and not altogether politically correct, *The Thanksgiving Play* serves up the hypocrisies of woke America on a big, family-style, platter. Come get ya some” (Steppenwolf Theatre, 2024).

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As the play begins, Logan, the teacher who leads and directs the devised theatre project notes that several grants have been secured for the production, including one to hire an authentic representative Native American performer. The evolution of this devised piece features several issues that can arise despite the play’s innocuous good intention. Before it is discovered that she is not a native American actress, Alicia talks about a campy family tradition in Iowa in which frozen butterball turkeys are rolled around in a sort of driveway bowling game (FastHorse, 25). Her fellow actors take this as an authentic expression of indigenous appropriation, a refiguring of a mid-western Anglo-American feast activity Shortly thereafter her fellow actors come to understand that her only indigenous experience is

in racial impersonations of the type she has portrayed for Disney amusement park entertainments. The actors then conclude that their performance can no longer speak for people of color, of indigenous America:

> LOGAN: Right, So, we just speak for white people?
>
> JAXTON: I think so. We see color but we don't speak for it.
>
> LOGAN: Which means Alicia can't play Native American, for sure?
>
> JAXTON: Definitely not." (FastHorse, 31)

Caden, the high school history teacher, authenticates and devises a scene recalling a 17th century British attack on a Pequot village that "… killed four hundred Native men, women, and children. Major Mason and his men came home to give thanks and celebrate their victory" (FastHorse, 49). For this re-enactment, Caden and Jaxton devised a celebration where the decapitated heads of natives are thrown about and kicked around as in a soccer match. This prompted the following exchange:

> LOGAN: STOP!! (*They stop*). Have you lost your minds? How is killing off hundreds of Indigenous people, then kicking their heads, a proper celebration of Native American Heritage Month?
>
> CADEN: It's true, and gets a Native American presence into our play." (FastHorse, 49-50)

Throughout the awkward story-line of the play, four cute, musical interludes or animated video clips provide pauses. These interruptions to the overall narrative of the piece provide space for laughter at the silliness of the activities on stage. Eventually, the four white actors confront the notion that they are in fact devising a bogus play about Native American participation in a celebration that today's Indigenous community prefers to disown. Ultimately, then, they choose to portray nothing: "This piece, the nothing. It's taught me that we need to do more of that …. Not the play. We need to be less. Do less. That's the lesson. By doing nothing, we become part of the solution. But it has to start here, with us" (FastHorse, 68).

Despite the initial good intentions, the displacing comic structure of the play provides an almost Brechtian alienation scheme that creates a space where, as one reviewer put it, "white guilt gives way to wild comedy" (Merrill, 2023). Merrill continues: "…. It's a little disconcerting to hear so much laughter from the very theatregoers FastHorse caricatures — people who are not just the punchline, but also the problem — but FastHorse takes that laughter all the way to the bank. *The Thanksgiving Play* has had a vibrant regional theatre life, becoming one of the most produced plays in the country in the 2019-20 season, and returns with a script revised to reference the murder of George Floyd" (Merrill, 2023).

Adam Feldman of *TimeOut* says the play "delivers solid laughs at the expense of targets that are admittedly, at this point, not unfamiliar: clueless liberals so busy holding space that they don't get around to filling it with anything. What the play doesn't do is provide much sense of a better solution to the questions that its hapless theater folks are stultified by. This absence leaves you with a question, at the end, that is double-edged: Where the representation

of identity and history are concerned, is nothing good enough?" (Feldman, 2023). Merrill concludes: "… The damage is real, both on stages across the nation and off, but FastHorse's exploration of it is for everyone's benefit, striking the balance between educational and entertaining without hammering home the reminder" (Merrill, 2023). Chris Jones's *Broadway Review* reminds us that "America's annual November feast, with all of its attendant pageants and pro-Pilgrim culture, is in essence a celebration of a genocide. And, therefore, whatever attempts are made to fiddle with the edges of the experience, to make things less offensive or more politically correct … are problematic at best" (Chris Jones, 2023).

Whilst *The Thanksgiving Play* is successful in presenting that entertaining "balance between educational and entertaining without hammering home the reminder," it stands as a striking acquiescence to western privilege, of Euro-American Hegemony and Racism. Within this balanced space of aporia, then, American trauma porn is rendered laughable as it is displaced into situations, where we can "see color, but we don't speak for it" (Merrill, 2023; Feng, 2020).

Joshua Arce, president and CEO of Partnership With Native Americans (PWNA), still participates in Thanksgiving, but views the holiday to gather with family and celebrate Indigenous culture. He is a member of the Prairie Band Potawatomi Nation, a federally-recognized tribe in Kansas. Acre calls "Thanksgiving 'a day of mourning' that creates multigenerational and intergenerational trauma. He associates it with Eurocentric terms that came to dominate Native Peoples, like 'colonization,' 'discovery' and 'manifest destiny'" (Feng, April 24, 2020).

Conclusion

Around the Thanksgiving Feast table, guests are invited to testify, to say what they must be thankful for from the past year. Here, the displacing structure of the festival's falsified, forgotten histories mirror, and reinforce broader mechanisms of social control, repeated to us, endlessly. These, then, are the subtle mediated mechanism of control that have replaced the torture, murder, and military control. And, to whom should thanks be given? Should people of colour simply acquiesce, learn, to forget their shorn limbs, and declare earlier suppressions a sunk cost, and be thankful for merely surviving? Thus, King Léopold's severed hand atrocities have been replaced by the commercialization of the Belgium chocolate industry's successful marketing of Chocolate Hands.

Despite the current geopolitical moment in which change in the global status of indigenous peoples seems imminent, especially in Palestine and the African Sahel sovereignties, the narrative of change remains distributed through the mainstream media, both government-controlled propaganda and social media platforms. Within this context state run media and America's rentier economy insists that thanksgiving be a non-offensive holiday, a positive reinforcement of American values. Through decades of manipulation and propagandizing, this feast holiday serves as little more than the launch point for the forthcoming coming xmas holiday shopping season. Absent discussions of the torture and horrors of the genocide of native peoples, this holiday feast is rendered harmless, and serves as little more than an afternoon for watching the Macy's Thanksgiving Day parade on television, an evening of football also on television, and hearty consumption with laughs throughout. Given the intense history of racism, plunder, and death, one might ask: is laughter appropriate?

The popularity of the play suggests the author has successfully redirected audience attention around the dark moments into the light and laughter. Put another way, given the expectations of the rentier theatre market, the author has elected to not cross the red-line of audience expectation. Be happy. Still, this reminds all that a great deal needs to be done if one wishes to learn the truth and achieve real understanding to correct the historical record and agree pathways for the future social text.

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The Rebirth of Christian Theatre in Nigeria: The Zion Royal Theatre in Perspective

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Abstract
Sequel to the outlaw of theatre from the church in the Medieval era, Christian theatre moved from the church to the trade guilds and even beyond but never ended. In Nigeria, the same cycle had been repeated following the introduction of Christian theatre into the church through the window of the Church Missionary Society, followed by early dramatists such as Hubert Ogunde, who temporarily succeeded to infuse theatre into Cantatas but soon deviated from the church centred themes and secularised Christian theatre. Hence, the emergence of Mike Bamiloye and his others in the later parts of the 20th century with Christian theatrical productions which toured around the country under the umbrella of the Mount Zion Faith Ministries (MZFM) which would soon become the household name for Christian theatre and film productions in Nigeria. Although the MZFM diverted into film a few years later, the 21st century saw the inauguration of her Christian theatre arm named Zion Royal Theatre (ZRT) targeted at churning out phenomenal Christian theatrical productions on the contemporary stage. This is a descriptive study which chronicles the events leading to the emergence and progressive practice of Christian theatre in Nigeria by the ZRT. It identifies the point of departure from the old and the styles of practice for the new. In-depth interviews were conducted with stakeholders in Christian theatre practice in Nigeria coupled with other secondary sources to enhance the literature review. ZRT proves to draw a viable connection to the rebirth of regular Christian theatre in Nigeria with regards to Christian themes, techniques and method of dramatising biblical stories to contemporary audiences.

Keywords: Christian Theatre, MZFM, Rebirth, ZRT

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Introduction

In recent years, the landscape of theatrical performance in Nigeria has witnessed a profound resurgence, particularly within the world of Christian theatre. This rebirth marks a significant cultural and artistic phenomenon, shaping narratives, values, and expressions within Nigerian society. At the forefront of this revival stands the Zion Royal Theatre, an esteemed institution within the Mount Zion Institute of Christian Drama. As we delve into the exploration of the rebirth of Christian Theatre in Nigeria, it is imperative to understand the context, significance, and impact of Zion Royal Theatre.

Christian theatre holds a unique position within Nigerian cultural heritage, intertwining indigenous performance traditions with religious narratives and contemporary artistic expressions. The evolution of Christian theatre in Nigeria reflects a complex interplay of historical, socio-cultural, and religious influences. From its nascent stages influenced by early Christian missionaries to its current prominence as a vibrant artistic medium, Christian theatre has traversed a diverse and dynamic trajectory, mirroring the complexities of Nigeria's societal fabric.

This research seeks to explore the rebirth of Christian Theatre in Nigeria through the lens of the Zion Royal Theatre. By examining its historical context, artistic innovations, theological underpinnings, and societal impact, we aim to elucidate the broader significance of Christian theatre within Nigerian cultural discourse. Through a comprehensive analysis of Zion Royal Theatre, this study endeavors to shed light on the intricate intersections of religion, art, and society, thereby contributing to a deeper understanding of Nigeria's rich theatrical heritage.

This study is a descriptive study which seeks to document the events leading to the emergence, decline and then reemergence of Christian theatre in Nigeria. This study conducts a careful examination of the factors that led to the emergence of Christian theatre in Nigeria, its progressive development, the factors that led to its unfortunate relegation to the background, and the specific factors leading to its reintroduction into the mainstream Nigerian theatre. It displays an apt record of the practice of Christian theatre at its early beginnings in polarity with the practice of Christian theatre in Contemporary Nigeria.

It is a qualitative study that engages primary and secondary sources of data collection. In-depth interviews were conducted with key stakeholders in the practice of Christian theatre in Nigeria to provide accurate experiential accounts on the practice of Christian theatre in Nigeria, as well as consultations with historical documents, books, articles in journals, online sources amongst others to provide a robust literature review.

Emergence of Christian Theatre: Drama Within and Beyond the Church

Christian theatre is an ancient phenomenon that has enjoyed a high popularity from the church and the society. Olatunji and Oki defines Christian theatre as “the practice of theatre by genuine Christians for the proliferation of the gospel message and the (re)connection of human souls to God.” (70). Historically, the entrance of theatre into the church is credited to the efforts of the Roman Catholic Church that sought to use drama as a means of communicating bible messages to indigenous audiences through pictures, gestures, movements, and dialogue in the language of the indigenes. Despite the proscription of drama towards the end of the Roman Era by the Roman Catholic Church, the same Roman Catholic church in the Middle Ages soon found drama to be very useful years later to the propagation of the gospel. Isijola records further thus:

> In spite of the huge opposition to drama that was being posed by the church, the religious rites of the Christian church invariably gave rise to a unique drama performance of the age. Ironically, the church became a key player in the evolution and development of drama that she once repudiated. Tropes, which serves as musical embellishment, were introduced into the mass services… One of such Easter tropes, which is titled *Quem Queritis*, is believed to be the earliest liturgical drama in 1000AD. (28-29)

Hence, the Roman Catholic Church served as the vehicle that led to the resuscitation of theatre that has been previously banned to existence and not merely to reemerge but to be used within the confines of the church as a tool for communication and outreach. They introduced the Tropes which were pieces of drama sketches performed at religious festivals. Following the introduction of the tropes, the Corpus Christi was established and this warranted an extended series of longer plays which communicated the essence of the gospel as well as the season pf celebration. Hence, drama was properly developed into scripts, leading to the beginning of what began to be called the liturgical dramas a synonym for the Mystery plays, the Miracle plays, and the Morality plays. The Mystery plays were plays that told stories from the Bible, the Miracle plays were plays that told the stories of the saints and the various miracles of Jesus and that of his disciples while the Morality plays were aimed at teaching morals and reconciling men to God.

However, drama soon broke away from the church when the church dramas were reduced to mere entertainment by the congregation, leading to the gradual fading away of its essence as an evangelistic tool. Hence, drama was outlawed from the church and was embraced by trade guilds, who secularised the art and toured the liturgical dramas on wheels to nobles and laymen to make monetary gains (Olatunji 28). Hence, resulting into the departure of drama from the perimeters of the church as a sacred evangelical tool under the regulation of the church and gradually returned to its secular origin.

Evolution of Christian Theatre in Nigeria: From Beginnings to Mike Bamiloye

Christian theatre in Nigeria evolved in the similitude of the Medieval theatre courtesy of the Roman Catholic Church. The entrance of the Christian Missionary Society into Nigeria led into the proliferation of the Christian belief. However, the English-speaking team experienced difficulties in communicating the gospel message to the Yoruba dominated society. Hence, in close connections with the Middle Ages, drama became the tool for escape. Ogunbiyi records thus:

> However, there existed in Lagos at this time, other types of entertainment in which drama was fully presented, productions in which music was not the main emphasis. The Roman Catholic Church was the pioneer of this tradition. Faced with the complex challenge of having to conduct church business in Yoruba to a predominantly Yoruba-speaking community and a Portuguese-speaking Brazilian emigrant group, in an English-speaking community… Not surprisingly, from 1881, when St. Gregory's School was founded by the French priests, to the end of the century, annual end-of-year performances were held. (21)

With the Roman Catholic Church spearheading the move, these dramas which were largely religious were engaged as stratagems in making the work of evangelism more graphic,

understandable and appealing to the indigenes from the 19th to the 20th century. In an interview with Evangelist Bayo Abraham, he chronicles thus:

> It got to a time when the church began to engage drama especially during Easter, Christmas, and little events with the productions of *Adam and Eve, Mary and the baby Jesus, The Three Wise Men*, and things like that. These were done innocently, carved from the scripture but with the little knowledge they had, it was not so elaborate. They were not so mindful of costumes and elements of adaptation but at least, people could identify with what they were presenting. (Interview with Bayo Abraham, 8 February 2024)

In trying to explain the causality, he revealed that at the time, "majority of the members and converts could not read nor write so to say have passed the age of schooling but so as to communicate effectively with them, dramas were used most of which were majorly parables of the Lord Jesus Christ" (Interview with Bayo Abraham, 8 February 2024). These early Christian drama pieces had strong connections with the bible, communicated bible themes and were very effective tools in the hands of the church. Ogunbiyi reveals one of the early scenarios that featured drama in the Church to be "in 1902, under the joint sponsorship of the Bethel African Church and St. Jude's Church, Ebute Metta, a play written by D.A Oloyede, *King Elejigbo and Princess Abeje of Kotangora* was performed by the Egbe Ife at the Bethel African Church School room" (22). However, since drama in the church broke out with strong touches of Yoruba, they became the prototype for the dramas written and performed for nearly two decades. This kind of drama had the introduction of "mild satires, the dialogues mingled with songs, the hymn tunes immersed with Biblical themes, the opening and closing glees, the insertions of sometimes unrelated sketches, etc." (Ogunbiyi 23).

The tradition of having the gospel preached through indigenous performances blossomed and gradually began to enjoy modifications even while in the perimeters of the church. Ogunbiyi records that "by the mid-thirties, a new kind of drama, Native Air Opera as it was called, had become popular, due largely to the efforts of the church movement; but more specifically, due largely to the efforts of A.K Ajisafe, who started 'to relate church hymns to 'native airs' at the United African Methodist Church'" (26). Following the example of the Native Air Operas, other artists like E.A Dawodu, Ajibola Layeni, A.B David, G.I Onimole, A.A Olufoye among others joined in the creation of drama pieces that had such operatic elements in common and set the template for Hubert Ogunde, Duro Ladipo and Kola Ogunmola, who would later expand the practice and extend the performances beyond the sacred borders of the church.

The emergence of Ogunde into the scene in the early 1940s when he joined The Church of The Lord, Ebute Metta, Lagos was not to introduce an entirely new practice. Instead, he leveraged the developments that have been made and attempted to modify the art; some of which he succeeded and some of which he failed as far as the Church was concerned. The summary of Ogunde's emergence in the church scene is tied to the success of his early plays in the church between 1944-1946 -*The Garden of Eden* and *The Throne of God,* after which he decided to launch into professionalism, secularising the art and taking theatre on wheels.

In the 1960s, Duro Ladipo also had close interactions with the church with his involvement in the Easter Cantatas in Osogbo. The success of his first drama encouraged him to add local drums which the church frowned at. The belief was that at the time, "Bata was specifically identified with the Sango people. So, there was no way the church could embrace the idea of bringing bata into performance within the church, hence, Duro Ladipo had to leave." (Interview

with Bayo Abraham, 8 February 2024). This refusal led to his departure from the church to seek for platforms that could accommodate his creative invention. Ogunde's breakaway from the church due to desire to go professional and Duro Ladipo's thirst to find a comfort zone for his art left the church with an epileptic performance of total theatre. Suffice to say that full-blown theatrical presentations continue but they were no longer in the church. The performances that filled the streets and halls were majorly societal, political and less Christian. In the words of Abraham, drama in the church soon became irregular like before, and even though some attempted to carry on with the zeal, for many reasons, they were proscribed. He speaks thus:

> Since the principal people left, drama was only coming to the church and fizzling out…it didn't mean that drama became non-existent after Ogunde and his others broke away from the church into secularised, political and occultic dramas. Drama existed in fragments until about the 1970s before it became elaborate in the church…Another reason was the issue of negative bouncebacks because they do not know the principle to follow. When a powerful drama is acted and there are negative bouncebacks, as a response, the church would ban the operations of drama as a way to curb the problem. So drama in the church was inconsistent until the 70s when some groups like ECU drama, Obafemi Awolowo University; IVCU drama, University of Ibadan; Quintessence Drama ABU, which were campus-based apart from the church-based. (Interview with Bayo Abraham, 8 February 2024)

This cycle continued and Christian theatre became more prominent with campuses especially in the 1970s. Several campus fellowships across the nation were divinely inspired to set the ball of Christian theatre productions rolling through campuses and this became a big deal prior the emergence of Evangelist Mike Bamiloye onto the scene with the phenomenal Mount Zion Faith Ministries (MZFM). According to history, "there is also the record of Kunle Ogunde, who toured powerful drama pieces on campus until he was quenched with his desire to do movie and did not succeed. Daddy Mike started with people on campus…Upon graduation, he established the ministry with some of the members" (Interview with Bayo Abraham, 8 February 2024). He captures it further:

> Mount Zion started in 1985 but between 1985 and 1986, they were having fellowships fasting and prayers, and weekend retreats until November, 1986 when they had the first drama at St. Margaret, Ilesa. Later the same drama was adapted into *God bless Nigeria*. At the beginning, Mount Zion attempted to begin with film but God instructed that the entry point should be stage. These productions were taken to between 15 to 20 states in this country. (Interview with Bayo Abraham, 8 February 2024)

Alademoni categorises the existence of Christian theatre in Nigeria to be in fragments until the emergence of Mike Bamiloye when he says that "prior to the mid-eighties, there was nothing officially referred to as the drama ministry. The highest drama available then was either drama unit or campus drama unit (52). Akoh and Olayiwola unveils another perspective to the reemergence of Christian theatre through the MZFM to expose the place of Christian theatre at the time as they reveal that "when Mount Zion started in the 80s, the Yoruba theatrical arts of Hubert Ogunde and others were already rounding off from stage performances, the focus then was on film production... This succeeded in creating a unique cultural space for Mount Zion" (360). The foregoing states that as at the time Mount Zion was entering the scene with Christian theatre productions, Hubert Ogunde and his contemporaries, who had always had the control of the art and the crowd on the Nigerian scene were diverting into filmmaking and this

allowed MZFM to have a fast grip and dominion over the space as those who previously dominated it have been distracted into making movies being the latest invention at the time. Although MZFM also desired to kick-off with filmmaking but "God instructed that the entry point should be stage. These productions were taken to between 15 to 20 states in this country" (Interview with Bayo Abraham, 8 February 2024). Mike Bamiloye, the President of the Mount Zion Faith Ministries reminisces on the first attempt to produce films and the sequence of events leading to the entrance into stage productions. He recalls thus:

> Our first attempt of film production was a flop in 1984…determination to gather together to make a movie brought forth a colossal failure and waste after about six weeks of shooting SECRETS OF THE DEVIL in 1984. A large number of drama ministers from campuses, churches and ministries gathered at Orita-Mefa Baptist church for more than fives weekends for rehearsals and preparations to shoot the first major christian movie in 1987…So, we entered into discouragement mode and the Lord told us to shelve the idea of movie production and go and minister on stage ministrations from churches to churches. Therefore, we forgot about film productions and began massive stage ministrations in cities like Kano, Kaduna, Warri, Jos, Ilorin, Lagos, Zaria, etc. ("Bamiloye")

With this sense of direction, MZFM under the direction of Evangelist Mike Bamiloye fully launched out with Christian theatre and became a major rival and alternative for the previously existing secular theatre productions, while also serving as a major force in the process of restoring strength to the practice of Christian theatre on all levels. The entry point for MZFM at the time were Christian theatre productions which were performed on large stages such as the Oduduwa hall of the Obafemi Awolowo University. These Christian theatre projects the example of *God bless Nigeria*, *I will Heal the Land* and *Hell in Conference* before the likes of *Unprofitable Servant*, *The Beginning of the End* and so on which were done as portfolio dramas (collapsible dramas) which like Ogunde (but with Christian themed messages) toured several parts of Nigeria hence, resulting into its popularity.

From Stage to Film and Back: MZFM and the Rebirth of Christian Theatre in Nigeria

Indeed, MZFM became invested in these Christian theatre tours until the need arose to take a foray into filmmaking and forgo theatre. This came as a result of a sponsorship received from 'a General Overseer of a church who had seen the stage version of *The Unprofitable Servant'* and would like it to be recorded so as to broadcast it (Akoh and Olayiwola 360). In alignment to Akoh and Olayiwola's account, Mike Bamiloye further exposes the sequence of events leading to the emergence of MZFM on the filmmaking scene. He chronicles thus:

> We didn't actually know how to make movies. the earlier attempts were full of technical blunders. But Mr. Kayode Oyebode has been into movie productions far ahead of us, shooting secular movies. So we trusted him, and began planning. He helped us to shoot the movie… In the Easter festive period of 1990, THE UNPROFITABLE SERVANT was broadcast on NTA 10, Lagos, and we were in Lagos sitting on the floor of the living room of a host of ours as we watched the Movie on television! Then it occurred to us! We have made a Movie! We have made the first Mount Zion Movie! What we had suffered to do, and the Lord told us to leave it and go on stage, had finally been done without stress. With that encouragement, I wrote another script: BEGINNING OF THE END and we went on location again, in October 1990. ("Bamiloye")

The successful recording, editing and broadcast of the production led to MZFM's first step into regular filmmaking such as *The Beginning of The End* (1990), *Lost Forever* (1991), *Last Generation* (1991), *Perilous Times* (1992), *Ibere Opin Aye* (1992) - the Yoruba version of *The Beginning of The End, Agbara Nla* (1993) among others. This breakthrough into filmmaking created a presence for Christian drama in the Nigerian home video scene however on the other hand, it also led to an unintentional silence of Christian theatre productions on the Nigerian scene for a long time.

The Zion Royal Theatre: An Overview

Though, at the foray into film production towards the tail end of the 20th century by the Mount Zion Faith Ministries, Christian theatre production almost went into extinction. Many years later, the rebirth of Christian theatre is a recent phenomenon accorded to the Zion Royal Theatre. The Zion Royal Theatre (ZRT) is a subsidiary of the Mount Zion Institute of Christian Drama which has conducted successful attempts to resuscitate Christian theatre in Nigeria with the creation of robust Christian theatre productions. The Zion Royal Theatre (ZRT) emerges as a beacon of innovation and excellence within Christian theatre. Founded and inaugurated on the 26th of May 2022, under the auspices of Evangelist Mike Bamiloye, the Executive Director of Mount Zion Institute of Christian Drama, Zion Royal Theatre embodies a commitment to artistic integrity, spiritual enlightenment, and cultural enrichment. Through its compelling productions, Zion Royal Theatre has captivated audiences with its exploration of Christian themes, and spiritual journeys. With the examples of *The Gods are Dead* (2021), *Covenant Child* (2021), *Final Trump* (2021), *Ogbologbo* (2022), *Arewa* (2022), *Night of Ijalo* (2023), *Abe Sonso* (2023), *Papa Egan - Journey to Jungle* (2023), *Aiku* (2024), *Alapandede* (2024), *Arakunrin* (2024), and *Proverbial Dodo* (2024) among others, the reintroduction of Christian theatre through the ZRT was provoked by the need to preserve the art of Christian theatre through education under proper supervision. Bayo Abraham affirms that "over the years, God has given us the mountain of the family through productions and movies. But there is another mountain that must be conquered... Therefore, the reemergence of Christian theatre through the Zion Royal Theatre is due to the need to conquer the mountain of education" (Interview with Bayo Abraham, 8 February 2024).

Also, this establishment of the ZRT was inspired by the discovery of the theatrical productions of the Sight and Sound Theatres, USA which is renowned for their sophisticated theatre productions. Gradually, the Sight and Sound theatre became a model for the practice of contemporary Christian Theatre in Nigeria. Though the indigenous Christian Theatre in Nigeria cannot boast of sophisticated media technologies yet, the yearning to understudy the modus operandi of the Sight and Sound Theatres fueled the passion to recreate Christian Theatre in Nigeria by the Zion Royal Theatre.

Creating the Contemporary Christian Theatre: ZRT's Technique and Innovations

Zion Royal Theatre, renowned for its innovative approach to Christian drama, employs a diverse range of artistic techniques and innovations to captivate audiences and convey profound spiritual truths. From compelling storytelling to imaginative staging, ZRT continually pushes the boundaries of theatrical expression, creating immersive experiences that resonate with audiences on both emotional and intellectual levels. Akoh and Olayiwola reveals

that the Mount Zion Institute of Christian Drama which inaugurated the Zion Royal Theatre as its theatre production arm has afforded it the ability to create its own techniques and unique style -'Zion's Style of production' (362). The following are some of the technique and innovations peculiar to the Zion Royal Theatre:

i. Script Writing and Narrative Structure

At the heart of Zion Royal Theatre's artistic process is the craft of scriptwriting and narrative construction. The Theatre's productions are characterized by intricately woven storylines, rich character development, and compelling dialogue that engage audiences from start to finish. Through meticulous attention to detail and a keen understanding of dramatic tension and pacing, Zion Royal Theatre creates narratives that are both entertaining and thought-provoking, drawing audiences into the world of the play and inviting them on a journey of discovery and transformation.

ii. Symbolism and Allegory

Zion Royal Theatre employs symbolism and allegory as powerful artistic tools to convey deeper spiritual truths. Through evocative imagery, metaphorical language, and symbolic motifs, it communicates complex theological concepts in accessible and engaging ways. Whether through the use of visual symbols, such as light and darkness, or through allegorical storytelling, Zion Royal Theatre invites audiences to reflect on the deeper meanings embedded within the narrative and to discern the presence of divine truths beneath the surface of the drama.

iii. Theatrical Production Design

A hallmark of Zion Royal Theatre's productions is its commitment to excellence in theatrical production design. From elaborate set designs to innovative lighting and sound effects, the Theatre creates immersive environments that transport audiences to different time periods, locations, and emotional states. Through meticulous attention to detail and a focus on creating a multi-sensory experience, Zion Royal Theatre enhances the impact of its performances, eliciting emotional responses and fostering deeper engagement with the themes and messages of the play.

iv. Performance Techniques and Acting Styles

Zion Royal Theatre cultivates a distinctive performance style characterized by authenticity, emotional depth, and spiritual resonance. The Theatre's actors undergo rigorous training in dramatic techniques, character development, and vocal expression, enabling them to inhabit their roles with conviction and empathy. Through nuanced performances and expressive storytelling, Zion Royal Theatre's actors breathe life into their characters, compelling audiences to empathize with their struggles, triumphs, and spiritual journeys.

v. Musical Composition and Choreography

Music and choreography play integral roles in Zion Royal Theatre's productions, heightening emotional impact and reinforcing thematic resonance. Original musical compositions, ranging from stirring cultural songs to haunting melodies, are carefully crafted to complement the narrative arc and evoke mood and atmosphere. Similarly, choreographed movement sequences

and dance routines add visual interest and symbolic depth to the performance, enhancing storytelling and eliciting visceral responses from audiences.

vi. Prerecorded Audio

Prerecorded audio serves as an integral component of Zion Royal Theatre's theatrical productions, enriching the auditory landscape and enhancing the storytelling experience. The Theatre utilizes prerecorded dialogues, sound effects, and music to create a multi-dimensional soundscape that complements the action on stage and reinforces thematic resonance. Whether evoking the ambiance of a bustling marketplace, heightening tension during a dramatic confrontation, or underscoring moments of emotional significance, prerecorded audio adds depth and texture to the performance, immersing audiences in the world of the play and enhancing their engagement with the narrative.

The Impact of Zion Royal Theatre on the Nigerian Theatre Scene

Zion Royal Theatre has exerted a profound and far-reaching impact on the development and evolution of Nigerian theatre. Through its innovative approach to Christian drama and commitment to artistic excellence, the Theatre has not only inspired audiences but also transformed the cultural and artistic landscape of Nigeria. Bamiloye reveals that “Nigerian Christian Drama is, no doubt, wielding much positive impacts on the society today. It has proved a quintessential tool in defining values for its audience, as well as serves as panacea for diverse ills, correcting vices and misbehaviour in the society” (25). Therefore, the emergence of ZRT in the Nigerian theatre scene, has achieved the following:

i. Promotion of Christian Theatre

Zion Royal Theatre has played a pivotal role in promoting Christian theatre in Nigeria, providing a platform for the expression of Christian narratives and themes. By producing compelling productions rooted in Christian spirituality, the Theatre has helped to legitimize Christian theatre as a vibrant and respected genre within the broader theatrical community. Through its engaging storytelling and high production values, Zion Royal Theatre has attracted diverse audiences, both within and outside the Christian community, fostering greater appreciation for Christian-themed theatre in Nigeria.

ii. Artistic Innovation and Excellence

Zion Royal Theatre's commitment to artistic innovation and excellence has raised the bar for theatrical production standards in Nigeria. Through its use of innovative staging techniques, compelling storytelling, and immersive production design, the Theatre has set a new standard of excellence for theatrical craftsmanship. By pushing the boundaries of theatrical expression and embracing new technologies and artistic trends, Zion Royal Theatre has inspired a new generation of Nigerian Christian theatre practitioners to strive for excellence in their craft, thereby elevating the overall quality and sophistication of Nigerian theatre productions.

iii. Cultural Enrichment and Preservation

Through its culturally rich adaptations of biblical stories and indigenous narratives, Zion Royal Theatre has contributed to the preservation and celebration of Nigerian cultural heritage. By drawing inspiration from Nigerian cultural diversity, the Theatre has helped to foster a deeper appreciation for the cultural richness and diversity of Nigeria's artistic heritage. Through its

performances, Zion Royal Theatre has provided a platform for the expression of Nigerian identity and values, celebrating the unique cultural heritage of the nation and promoting cultural understanding and dialogue.

iv. Community Engagement and Outreach

Zion Royal Theatre's commitment to community engagement and outreach has endeared it to audiences across Nigerian Universities - public and private universities. Through its touring productions, workshops, and outreach programs, the Theatre has brought the power of theatre to diverse educational communities. By fostering dialogue, collaboration, and social cohesion through the arts, Zion Royal Theatre has empowered individuals to engage with issues of faith and spirituality, thereby contributing to positive social change and community development.

Conclusion

The practice of Christian theatre in Nigeria has weathered many storms especially in its early beginnings where the modus operandi were developed through the hands of Christian dramatists, who practiced Christian theatre merely on the basis of religion but soon secularised the means. The cycle continued in search of a true saviour until the emergence of Mike Bamiloye and his others, who gave Christian theatre in Nigeria a sense of meaning and purpose through the early portfolio stage dramas and subsequently the inauguration of the Zion Royal Theatre which was equipped to present Christian theatre in a contemporary fashion. Thus, these performances which range from the not-for-profit Christian theatre productions in public halls, to public performances in Nigerian campuses proselytising Christian themes for the obvious motive of soul winning have become the archetype for standard contemporary Christian theatre productions in Nigeria.

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Two-Level of Creation

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Abstract
This research explores the search for generation and appearance, focusing on the ontological and epistemological aspects derived from the interaction between contemporary Neo-Confucianism and phenomenology. Manifestation here signifies creation on two levels: one at the flowing, holistic world level and the other at the level of objects and the self. In the first section, we distinguish between Heidegger's early and late philosophical ideas by using the concepts of scene involving the self *(yǒu wǒ zhī jìng)* and scene not involving the self *(wú wǒ zhī jìng)*, which are from traditional Chinese aesthetics. Specifically, a scene involving the self refers to Dasein's being in the world, while scene not involving the self refers to later Heidegger's clearing (*Lichtung*) and Heinrich Rombach's ecstasy (*Ekstase*). Furthermore, the first level of cosmic-level creation is made up of Rombach's focus on *co-creation* and *spirit* in structural phenomenology, which is linked to modern Neo-Confucian moral metaphysics and the cosmic life sentiment. The second section explores the relationship between objects and the subject, examining the boundary between Kant's phenomena and noumena, as well as the conceptual analysis of contemporary Neo-Confucianists. Using *image (xiàng)*, a basic Chinese philosophical theory, to connect the concept with appearance, it transforms Kantian epistemological objectification into the existential appearance of Xiong Shili and Mou Zongsan, representing the creation of the relationship between the object and subject as the second layer.

Keywords: Contemporary Neo-Confucianism, Chinese Aesthetics, Martin Heidegger, Heinrich Rombach

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Introduction

In Chinese aesthetics, the concept of artistic conception (*yì jìng*) is a traditional notion. According to the Chinese scholar Yuan Xingqi, "Yi Jing refers to the artistic realm formed by the interplay between the author's subjective emotions and the objective objects" (Yuan, 1987, p. 26). One of its main characteristics is the "merging of feeling with scenery," which is an interwoven game between subject and object.

When the Chinese scholar Peng Feng (2014) modernized this aesthetic conception and translated it into English, he attempted to emulate Gernot Böhme's term *atmosphere* (Böhme, 1993) by translating it as "sensuous atmosphere". Böhme's *atmosphere* is defined as "an uncertain, diffuse, but closely related thing to objects" (Feng, 2014). In this context, *atmosphere* emphasizes an ontological relationship between subject and object. Peng Feng added "sensuous" because the aesthetic conception places more emphasis on the subject's role.

Aesthetic conception are rooted in Chinese philosophy, particularly in the ontological aspects described earlier. The ontological of aesthetic conception can be tied to the concept of 'image' (*xiàng*), which is an important theory support Chinese pholiosphy and aesthetic theory. *Xiang* can be described as the smallest unit of the fusion of subject and object but extends beyond that. In Peng Feng's (2014) aesthetic research, image can be described as 'appearing,'a concept derived from Martin Seel's book *Aesthetics of Appearing* (Seel, 2005). This concept is based on an "interplay between various representations" extended from Kant's idea of disinterestedness (Kant,1781/1997).

Our research consistently believes that the appearance based on Chinese ontology needs to be discussed within the context of a holistic, dynamic, and generative cosmic relationship. To achieve this, we initiated a dialogue between contemporary Neo-Confucianism and phenomenology with 'becoming' and 'appearing' as keywords, and unified the entire theory with the concept of two layers of creation.

Scene Involving the Self

By drawing upon Eastern thought, Heidegger has also become known among Eastern scholars and is regarded by China as significant material for interaction with Chinese thoughts. Chinese scholar Zhang Xianglong (1949–2022) translates 'Da' as fate (*yuán*) and renders 'Dasein' as fate exists (*yuán zài*), because fate 'eliminates the substantiality of phenomena, resembling the ontological sense of constituting' (Zhang, 1996). Fate is a highly sinicized abstract term, often appearing in the philosophies of Buddhism and Daoism. It represents a serendipitous necessity, an intangible connection between individuals, individuals and events, and individuals and objects. This connection embodies a relational realm of constructive thinking, providing the foundation for discussing the aesthetic conception. In Being and Time, the relationship between being in the world (*In-der-Welt-Sein*) and Dasein emphasizes a particular subjectivity of Dasein, specifically, how being-there exists as to be (*Zu-sein*). Thus, being in the world is fundamentally a realm-oriented construction centred around the existentialism of Dasein. What Dasein encounters is not things, but rather the disclosed significance (*Bedeutsamkeit*) that opens up along its path of existence. Both the world and Dasein exist in a state of read-to-hand (*Zuhandenheit*), as noted by Rombach and Wang in 2009. This is a sensory atmosphere opened up by human beings' subjective emotions that can be analyzed by artistic conception theory.
Zhang Xianglong (2001) believes that artistic conception implies, on the one hand, being unobjectifiable and unconceptualizable, blending all beings vividly together into presence. On

the other hand, it highlights the situational aspect of Dasein, representing an individual's complete immersion and thorough involvement in the entire world of significance. (Zhang, 2001, p.393) What Wang Kuo-wei[1] (1889-1927) referred to as *Boundary* (*jìng jiè*)[2] is what later Zong Baihua (1897-1986)[3] referred to as the *Aesthetic conception* (*yì jìng*), encompassing the fusion of subjective emotions, the realm of being, and meaningful images. Dasein always exists in a mood (*Gestimmt*) and with emotions. The fundamental openness of Dasein allows this realm to manifest as mood (Zhang, 2001, p.395).

Within the overall flowing realm, Dasein opens up its own sensory atmosphere and emotional space, manifesting itself in an ambient manner while interpenetrating with other entities in the whole realm, thereby fostering a mood of life. A clarifying atmosphere emerges, a manifestation of vitality brought forth by the sensory aspect of Dasein. The expansion of this space of vitality originates from the tension of individual life and the crystallization of spirituality. Artists and poets, in various ways, present the images obtained through contemplating the soul and all things.

Wang Kuo-wei's scene, which involves the self and the viewing of objects from the self, exemplifies this emphasis on the vitality of the subject. It establishes a subjective emotional atmosphere around Dasein as the center, akin to the ripples formed by a stone thrown into a clear spring. Our discussion will delve deeper into the scene's state without involving oneself. The scene not involving the self refers to a state where the self lacks inherent nature and completely dissolves into the relationships between things, unaware of its own identity. In this state, Dasein is a spontaneous or, more fundamentally, a return to the pre-separation of subject and object; in the Ereignis, where the Dasein is fully integrated into being, it is a more fundamental being in the world, where the world does not construct the realm for me. Instead, I am an integral part of the world's constituents.

Scene Not Involving the Self

In his later years, Heidegger believed that the discussion concerning the acquisition of the horizon (*Horizont*) framework between representation and concept, as well as the sensory rationality of cognitive ability and the analysis and synthesis of research methods, cannot reach the contemplation of ultimate questions. Therefore, in his later years, he turned to the discussion of concepts such as an event (*Ereignis*) and clearing (*Lichtung*). This individual, representing finite existents, through enlightenment, incorporates nothingness into themselves, revealing being and making the truth (Rombach & Wang. 2009, p. 288). According to Rombach, the early discussions about Heidegger's existence in the world emphasize the importance of Dasein; things have yet to attain that pure and unrelated status in themselves. To some extent, questioning Dasien obscures the significance of 'being in'. This restriction of existence could potentially result in a focus on Dasien. Although there is a later turn towards the discourse on emergence at the clearing, there is also the risk of falling into a de-subjectification and subject-object division. This discussion needs to delve into the origin of the interaction and co-creation

[1] Wang Kuo-wei (1889–1927) was a notable Chinese scholar and critic, whose work significantly impacted the understanding of Chinese aesthetics.

[2] *Boundary (jìng jiè): Wang Kuo-wei's concept of Boundary describes the fusion of subjective emotions and objective reality into a unified experience. It highlights a metaphorical space where personal feelings and the external world merge, impacting later interpretations like Zong Baihua's aesthetic conception (yì jìng).*

[3] Zong Baihua (1897–1986): A key 20th-century Chinese philosopher, Zong Baihua expanded on Wang Kuo-wei's concept of aesthetic conception (yì jìng), highlighting the fusion of emotions and reality and bridging traditional aesthetics with modern philosophy.

between humans and nature.

"In his later philosophical works, Heidegger's concept of Lichtung should be understood as the initial grasp of the megastructure (*Megastruktur*), but this is not primarily about its overall concretization or the grasping of its origin." The activity, rather than being regarded as some sort of passive inclusion of people, appears more like being'sent' from above to here. The decision-makers involved in this activity have lost their previously unbroken unity and authenticity regarding the origins of the human person, as well as the vividness of the search (Rombach & Wang, 2009/2024, p. 105).

Rombach's thought on *structural phenomenology* innovates upon Heidegger's work and is also closely aligned with Eastern thought. He divides Western thought into three stages from ancient Greece to the present century: substance (*Substanz*), system (*System*), and structure (*Struktur*). Substance roughly covers the period from ancient Greece to the Middle Ages, focusing on material, essence, and God. The system commences with Descartes, a philosopher who aimed to integrate the world into a dualistic system of matter and consciousness, incorporating individuals into a single, functional system. This led to the exclusivity of this cultural system, Eurocentrism, and the advent of scientific thought. From the year 2000 onward, we entered the era of structure thought, where the whole is no longer superior to the individual in existence; there is no fixed system, only adaptable structures (Rombach & Wang, 2009, p. 15).

As a spirit (*Geist*), the structure pervades all individuals. It seeks answers in the early Christian notion of spirit, where Christ is seen as the spirit of the entirety (*Geist des Ganzen*) continuing to exist within each individual. Meanwhile, through their differential existence, individuals manifest the highest unity. Therefore, this structure manifests itself not above the individual but within each individual, where the whole is revealed and manifested. The system represents a rigid, mechanized understanding of structure. The actual structure is a primordial mechanism of constitution—a mechanism through which a world emerges, occurs, and is maintained. It exists in the sense that both humans and all things contain a vast structure, and this structure lacks an absolute center, representing an absolutely open domain of freedom. Its fundamental elements are the concrete generative processes of interwoven things, and both humans and all things are involved in the co-creative (*Konkreativitat*) state of this structure's typical game (Jun Wang,2011, p. 102) This kind of play, compared to Heidegger's Fourfold (*Das Geviert*), is not limited to humans alone having the right to commune with all things; rather, all beings in the world have the right to commune with nature.

In this co-creative structure, the'I (*Ich*) is not related to consciousness or any specific conscious subject. I am not an entity but rather a dynamic form of ontological construction. 'I' refers to the practice process. Within this structure, the 'I' is not a fixed 'I-thing' (*Ich-Ding*) entity but rather the ontological constructor of 'I-doing' (*Ich-tun*). (Rombach & Wang, 2015, p. 84) Individuals achieve their existence through practical labor. The structure's ego is a continuously evolving process oriented toward the entire world domain. The ego's first step within the structure is to enter ecstasy (*Ekstase*), returning to the origin where subject and object are undifferentiated and maintaining communication with the entire world structure. This means entering the scene without involving oneself and genuinely embarking on forgetting oneself, where the radiant significance of a comprehensive revision process can emerge. Individuals become the voice of the world as they immerse themselves in ecstasy.

This ecstasy is akin to the enlightenment in Buddhism, which entails the pursuit of a direct unity representing the cosmic spirit, a process of mystical and exhilarating artistic life. Only

through Ekstase can one transcend from the small structures of existence to the larger structures of the world. It is a co-creation process with all beings, allowing Dasein to become the world itself. Alternatively, one can transition from the finite to the infinite through self-forgetfulness, representing a relationship between the macrocosm and microcosm, between greater and lesser life forms. The disappearance of 'I' refers to a scene in which the self is not involved, where one observes things in terms of things, ultimately achieving a unity in which the self and things become indistinguishable. This state forgets the self, ultimately leading to the *unity of heaven and man (tiān rén hé yī)*.

The Creation of the Cosmological

Rombach has achieved a genuine structural unity of heaven and humanity, and, more importantly, life and spirit are also incorporated into it. This not only provides an explanation for the origin and 'nothingness' in Chinese thought, but it also bears a striking resemblance to the ideas of contemporary Neo-Confucianism regarding life. Xiong Shili (1885–1968) constructed a cosmology filled with vitality with his concept of *contraction and expansion becoming transformation* (*xī pì chéng biàn*). A strong inherent life force generates not only individual life forms, but also the grand cosmic life. The potentiality for materialization is termed *contraction transformation* (*xī shì*). Rombach has achieved a genuine unity of heaven and humanity structurally, and what's more important, life and spirit are also incorporated into it. This not only provides an explanation for the origin and 'nothingness' in Chinese thought, but it also bears a striking resemblance to the ideas of contemporary Neo-Confucianism regarding life.

Xiong Shili (1885–1968) created a cosmology filled with vitality, with his concepts of *contraction and expansion becoming transformation*. A strong inherent life force generates not only individual life forms, but also the grand cosmic life. The essence of the universe is *expansion transformation* (*pì shì*), which exists as an absolute spirit independent of human consciousness, characterized by incessant change, where each movement converges and coalesces, condensing into a *little one* (*xiǎo yī*) devoid of self-nature. The potentiality for materialization is termed *contraction transformation* (*xī shì*), indicating a tendency towards stability and convergence. However, when this tendency first emerges, another force, termed expansion transformation, arises, resisting materialization. All things are constituted by the combination of the transformations of *contraction* (*xī*) and *expansion* (*pì*), gradually forming tangible matter, organic plants, organisms, animals, and humans. Humanity is a product of the natural universe reaching a certain stage of development. Within the interplay of contraction and expansion, existence undergoes continuous flux, with moments of birth and extinction. As a result, the lives of individual human beings are interconnected with the grand life force of the universe (Xiong,1958).

His philosophy approaches a form of panpsychism, where the universe is imbued with consciousness. The *expansion* functions as the omnipresent heart of the universe, with everything embodying this essence of the universe. This notion shares similarities with what Rombach referred to as the spirit of the entirety (*Geist des Ganzen*), or the spirit of the whole. Contemporary Neo-Confucianism, based on traditional Confucianism, proposes a clear ontology and generative relationship. Chinese philosophy demonstrates a continuous creativity in the universe, where humans and all life are part of the cosmos, flowing within the ceaseless operation of the universe's vitality. The universe also exhibits a vibrant creative vitality.

The ‘Notorious’ Thing in Itself

In Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason*, the boundaries of truth are delineated in the third chapter. The 'land of truth' that we humans can comprehend is but an isolated island; the realms beyond our knowledge are infinitely vast. Philosophers aspire to acquire knowledge beyond our experiential realm through reasoning and transcendent abilities such as innate categories, causality, substantiality, etc. However, such attempts often fail, as our presumptuous endeavors to comprehend God, the soul, and the world as a whole are futile adventures devoid of hope. The noumenon of the priori of the immortality of the soul and the existence of God serves as a boundary for our cognitive faculties. According to Hume, this island does not belong to us; it consists only of our subjective impressions, perceptions, and conceptual materials, which constitute the objects to which knowledge must conform. However, Kant argues that precisely because we construct this territory with these materials, we have complete access to it, and objects must conform to the subject's innate forms of knowledge. This represents Kant's 'Copernican' reversal: man legislates for nature, I am the legislator of this island, and human being asserts ownership of it.

Two main clues to our discussion of the problem are implied by Kant's reference to the island example. First, there is the division between noumena and phenomena. Second is the human capacity for intuitive knowledge and the manifestation of things. We understand this restricted boundary through the concepts of appearance (*Erscheinungen*), thing-in-itself (*Dinge a sich*), noumena, and phenomenon. According to Kant's perspective, the process of knowing a thing involves the stimulation of the senses by the thing-in-itself, which manifests as the intuition of the outer senses (*space*) and the intuition of the inner senses (*time*), as well as the acquisition of the appearance of the thing-in-itself. Knowledge is produced through the mediation of the transcendental imagination, followed by the categories of understanding, transcendental intuition, thinking, and consciousness. Noumenon and Thing-in-itself (*Dinge an sich*) are not the same concept; Thing-in-itself or Themselves (*Dinge an sich*) are the selves of things that cannot be experienced by human intuition as opposed to the not-defined empirical intuitions of appearance (*Erscheinungen*). It is also what Heidegger referred to as the Ding, which our innermost being points to but cannot transcend. Noumenon, also known as Noumena, is a concept that underlies phenomena about a thing in itself, which can only be comprehended through pure intellectuality. In its negative sense, it denotes the thing-in-itself as a non-sensory, intuitively accessible entity and object, accompanied by forms of intellectual intuition not possessed by humans. Its positive value lies in being accessible to intellectual intuition. For humans, the noumenon is a negative concept that limits sensory intuition.

Xiang and Appearing, Mou Zongsan's Misinterpretation of Kant

In *Aesthetics of Appearing*, Martin Seel describes the dynamic state of affairs that precedes the experience of being excessively constrained by conceptual or empirical constraints. Returning to the topic of appearance, it can be observed that Martin Seel's usage of the term 'appearing' deviates somewhat from Kant's definitions. In Seel's view, the term 'appearing' can be interpreted as signifying the 'play of various appearances'. Furthermore, he posits that appearances are sensible characteristics that can be distinguished through concepts. The concept of 'appearing' can be understood as analogous to the process of organizing a multitude of appearances within a spatial and temporal framework, structured by a priori frameworks and consciousness. This process occurs within the present field, where the subject and the object, encountered momentarily through sensible intuition, blend in a fusion of subjectivity and objectivity (Seel, 2005).

Peng Feng, a Chinese scholar, observed this field and identified it as the image (*xiàng*) in Chinese artistic ontology. He used the term 'appearing' to describe this active field. The concept of image (*xiàng*) is derived from the fusion of the subject and ontology. It is referred to as the realm of the 'unity of heaven and humanity' and is achieved through the subject's encounter with the tao (*tào*). In his analysis, Peng Feng draws upon the concept of "clear flower," as put forth by Wang Yangming, to describe this state of fusion between subject and object. Prior to observation, the flowers and the observer are in a state of silent vacancy. When you observe the flowers with intent, their colors are immediately discernible. "From this, we may infer that these flowers are not external to the mind." (Wang & Chan, 1963). Upon initial observation, this seems to illustrate the gradual manifestation of the entity within itself, displaying a multitude of appearances as it intersects with the subject, with all elements remaining undefined, dynamic, and malleable.

However, any discourse on this topic must take into account the significant differences in philosophical approaches between the East and West. It seems prudent, therefore, not to locate this appearance within Kant's discussion but rather to situate it within the broader framework of the fluid cosmos that has been previously alluded to. It would be beneficial to return to the foundations of Chinese thought. The concept of image, or xiang, serves as a foundational principle in Chinese visual arts, with roots tracing back to ancient Yi thought, which is closely associated with divination techniques. In this context, "xiàng," which is translated as "image," additionally represents the emergence of universal truths. The etymology of the term 'xiàng' reveals its original connotation, which was a large elephant. This animal symbolized communication between heaven and earth during the ancient era. Subsequently, it underwent a process of extension, encompassing specific meanings such as divination, communication, and imitation. Lexical items pertaining to 'xiàng' include the following terms: abstract, quadrant, symbol, and image. In this study, xiàng, situated as the third position between the traditional Chinese theories of tao (*tào*) and tool (*qì*), is emphasized by contemporary scholar Pang Pu (1928–2015). The categories of tao and tool are of significant importance within the context of ancient Chinese thought, with the former denoting abstract principles and the latter representing concrete objects. Additionally, the relationship between spirit and matter, as outlined in the Zhouyì Xici Shang, is also a key aspect within this theoretical framework. In his 1950 publication, Wilhelm (p. 247) posited that the term "tao" can be understood as "that which transcends form," whereas "tool" can be seen as "that which manifests within form." However, Pang Pu (1995, p. 213) proposed an alternative interpretation: that the complete expression of "tao" (*tào*) and "tool" (*qì*) should be "tào, xiàng, qì." The term 'xiàng', translated as 'image', is positioned between 'tào' (the Tao) and 'qì' (the tool), serving as an intermediary form for the active relationship between the two (Pu Pang, 1995, p. 213). The preceding cosmogony was constructed with the objective of demonstrating that the emergence of Xiàng cannot be reduced to a form of objectified representation, as would typically be expected within Western traditions.

Conclusion

Here, we temporarily conclude our investigation into the concept of the thing in itself, ontology, and intellectual intuition. We shift from Kant's epistemology to Mou Zongsan's perspective on moral metaphysics. It is not merely two objects encountering each other in the phenomenal world, but rather the conscience (*liáng zhī*), a moral metaphysical ontology, that arises from the existence of the object and subject through intellectual intuition (*zhī jué*), gradually revealing their appearances. Subjects no longer perceive objects through sensory intuition, as

Kant proposed; instead, they permeate the moral ontology that integrates with the tao (*tào*) and co-creates with the objects. This integration is not the same as Heidegger's "Being in the World," but rather a coexistence with the metaphysical Tao that pervades everything. Regardless of intent, Mou Zongsan's translation of ‘intellectual intuition’ as ‘直觉’ (*zhī jué*) is noteworthy. In Chinese, ‘直觉’ (*zhī jué*) encompasses both ‘direct perception (gaining sensory knowledge through direct contact with objective things) and ‘intuition (sudden insight or enlightenment). By substituting the cognitive significance of the ‘thing’ with a value connotation and pursuing the essence of the universe through morality, Mou effectively replaced epistemological intuition with traditional Chinese insight. This highlights the divergence between Eastern and Western philosophy in Mou Zongsan's approach. Mou Zongsan's intellectual intuition primarily entails discussing the possibility of enlightenment as a metaphysical mode of thought. The Kantian sense of intuition and the Mou Zongsan sense of intuition are two distinct forms of intuitive understanding. The concept of 'intellectual intuition' is not about the essential attributes of external things, but about another intrinsic form of the world. The image (*xiàng*) depicted in Chinese poetry and painting—such as ‘achievement and forgetting of the image’ and the ‘image beyond the image’—leads to an inquiry into the metaphysical world, a comprehensive world rather than a mere collection of separate images.

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From Victim to Voice: A Study of Rania Al-Baz's "Disfigured"

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Abstract
This paper examines Rania Al-Baz's memoir, *Disfigured: A Saudi Woman's Story of Triumph Over Violence* (2007). Al-Baz, a pioneering Saudi television journalist, recounts her life before and after a brutal attack by her husband that left her physically disfigured. The analysis explores how the memoir transcends a simple narrative of victimhood. Al-Baz's unflinching portrayal of domestic violence is considered a cornerstone in the Saudi feminist movement, serving as a powerful testament to the courage and perseverance of women fighting for their rights. The memoir highlights Al-Baz's resilience in navigating the Saudi medical system, the challenges of public scrutiny, and the social stigma surrounding domestic violence. The paper argues that writing and publishing *Disfigured* functions as a form of activism, raising awareness about domestic abuse within a conservative social context. While not identifying as a feminist herself, Rania Al-Baz's story has become a rallying point for the Saudi feminist movement. Al-Baz spoke out on behalf of abused women and represented their plight exposing the harsh realities faced by women in Saudi society. This, in turn, empowered Saudi feminists to push for legal reforms and a more responsive judiciary. By examining Al-Baz's personal story, the paper sheds light on the complex realities of domestic violence and women's empowerment in contemporary Saudi Arabia.

Keywords: Saudi Feminism, Saudi Feminist Movement, Memoir, Activism, Domestic Violence, Women's Empowerment

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Introduction

Saudi feminism is a multifaceted movement that defies conventional Western paradigms. Rooted in a society steeped in tradition and patriarchal norms, Saudi women navigate a delicate balance between practicing Islam as they see fit and advocating for their rights within their country. Rania Al-Baz, a courageous Saudi TV news anchor, exemplifies this struggle. Her memoir, *Disfigured: A Saudi Woman's Story of Triumph over Violence* (2007), chronicles her harrowing journey from being a celebrated news anchor to a victim of domestic abuse. After her abusive husband left her extremely injured, Al-Baz underwent thirteen reconstructive surgeries. By sharing horrifying images of her ravaged face, she sparked societal dialogue and embarked research into domestic violence. She eventually decides to write her memoir in English to continue her feminist strife. Al-Baz's memoir resonates with Saudi feminism, emphasizing the need for systemic transformation while honoring cultural identity.

The Memoir and Saudi Feminist Activism

The memoir, *Disfigured*, holds immense relevance in shedding light on the complex interplay between women's advocacy and cultural traditions in the Middle East. As a celebrated news anchor in Saudi Arabia, Rania Al-Baz was a trailblazer—the first woman in her country to hold such a position (Al-Baz, 2007, p. 7; AbiRafeh and Keeffe, 2023, p. 15). However, her life took a harrowing turn when she became a victim of domestic abuse. The brutal attack left her disfigured, but her courage and resilience transformed her into a global advocate for women facing similar challenges (Al-Baz, 2007, p. 8; AbiRafeh and Keeffe, 2023, p. 17). Through her account, Al-Baz navigates the delicate balance between honoring her cultural and religious identity while advocating for women's rights. She emphasizes that the struggle is not against her country or religion, but against those who misuse these institutions to wield power (Butera, 2021, p. 9). Al-Baz's story resonates with countless women in the Middle East, illustrating their fight for justice, progress, and the reconciliation of tradition with personal freedom (Nejem, 2018, p. 27).

Saudi feminism is a complex movement working for gender equality despite social restrictions and government crackdowns. It is both an ideological movement promoting women's rights and a social movement working for gender equality in a patriarchal society (Sidani, 2019, p. 17; Krane, 2019, p. 23). Women's activism in Saudi Arabia is intertwined with the kingdom's modern history (Langlois and Johnston, 2013, p. 1001). Over the years, activists have used petitions, traveled to state capitals, and utilized the media to push for more rights (Khan and Jalabi, 2024, p. 30). Usual areas of concern are driving, voting, the guardianship system, and dress code (Al-Sharif, 2018, p. 11). Saudi feminism endeavors try to empower women to carve out independent identities and public voices (Aldosari, 2016, p. 9, p. 111; Al Obeidli, 2020, p. 28-47). However, the methods and ideas for achieving change are often met with caution and criticism, even though the ultimate goal of empowering women is widely supported (Aldosari, 2016, p. 18; Al Fassi, 2018, p. 24).

Understanding contemporary Saudi feminism requires examining its historical roots and international influences. Increased access to education and media in recent decades has empowered women, making them more aware of gender inequalities and the potential for change. This growing awareness has fueled a movement demanding greater rights and social reforms (Cerioli, 2019, p. 40-64). The Saudi feminist movement gained ground starting from 1960s onwards. During the 1960s and 1970s significant progress was made through royal

initiatives promoting women's education, the right to work, and participation in public health. These advancements laid the groundwork for future struggles (Doaiji, 2018, p. 117–147). The 1980s and 1990s witnessed a shift in tactics. The 1990s mark a period of increased activism. Women's rights groups, both within the government and independent organizations, began advocating more openly for their needs. This period saw the development of a clearer vision for women's empowerment, drawing on increased education in social sciences among activists. The movement's commitment to institutional change is evident in the 2000 ratification of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW). This marked a move towards a more open and formal strategy for achieving women's equality within Saudi Arabia (Alhussein, 2019, p. 1–19; Doaiji, 2018, p. 117–147, Cofman Wittes, 2018, p. 67).

Saudi feminism is a social and political movement advocating for women's rights based on interpretations of the Quran. It pushes for social, economic, and political equality between genders (Sidani, 2019, p. 112; Alkhaled, 2021, p. 950-972). This approach has sparked debate among Islamic scholars, with some arguing for "difference" within Islamic principles for women's rights, while others advocate for full "equality" with men (Kidwai, 2020, p. 67). This debate is known as the "difference versus equality" discussion (Shah, 2024, p. 80; Alrasheed, 2017, p. 88). Proponents of Saudi feminism often see it as a progressive and liberal movement within the broader context of Islamic feminism and the global plight for women's rights (Koelbl and House, 2020, p. 60; Syed and Metcalfe, 2017, p. 408).

Contemporary Saudi feminism is characterized by its multifaceted approach. While some activists work within the existing social and legal framework to push for gradual reforms, others utilize social media and international pressure to advocate for more sweeping changes. Landmark achievements include the right to drive (attained in 2018 after a long strife) and increased opportunities for women in business and education (Koelbl and House, 2020, p. 88; Al-Rasheed, 2013, p. 35). Reform encompasses personal status law and human rights (Alsudairy, 2020, p. 34). However, challenges remain, such as the guardianship system and restrictions on political participation. Despite these obstacles, Saudi feminism continues to be a vibrant movement with the potential to significantly reshape the lives of women in the kingdom.

Continuously the Saudi government implements further reforms, though their impact remains contested. In 2023**,** Saudi Arabia implemented its first codified personal status law, but it came with criticisms for maintaining the male guardianship system and containing provisions seen as enabling domestic violence (Al-Sudairy, 2017, p. 43). In 2024, despite concerns about its human rights record, Saudi Arabia was chosen to chair the UN Commission on the Status of Women, as the country try to boost women's rights via passing laws and enhancing public awareness. This choice sparked controversy among rights groups (Khan and Afra, 2024, p. 11). It is important to note that while there have been some legal changes, there are still concerns about the enforcement of these rights and the overall treatment of women in Saudi Arabia. Key figures in Saudi feminism include Saffar al Hawali, Jamal Al-Subiani and Mai Yamani. The plight for women's rights in Saudi Arabia is ongoing. Fear of disapproval make it difficult to track contemporary activists working within the country (Yildirim, 2020, p. 12).

It has been widely argued by Saudi feminists that the state is failing to address women's problems and that public policy has largely ignored issues of particular concern to women. Whilst there have been improvements in the status of women due to economic and

educational changes, the use of policy to direct social change in the area of women's rights has been minimal (Yildirim, 2020, p. 90; Al Fassi, 2018, p. 24–26; Krane, 2019, p. 77). Often women's problems are oversimplified and it is assumed that the application of general policy will automatically benefit women, without addressing specific areas of concern. Efforts to include women in policy making are apparent and King Salman and Prince Mohamed bin Salman passed laws and encouraged women work and participation in all walks of life (Hubbard, 2020, p. 45; Rundel, 2021, p. 77, 90; Shah, 2024, p. 88).

Cultural and religious interpretations play a significant role in shaping Saudi Arabia's laws regarding women's rights. For example, the ban on women's participation in elections is justified by some using interpretations of Islamic teachings (Al-Rasheed, 2017, p. 100, 127; Kidwai, 2020, p. 88). However, others within Saudi society argue that these texts are open to interpretation and should not bar female participation. This highlights a crucial distinction: the official interpretations used to create policy may differ from how ordinary citizens understand their religion and culture (Al-Sudairy, 2020, p. 101; Tripp, 2019, p. 68, 84). This gap between official interpretations and everyday practices creates a barrier for women's rights advancements (Yildirim, 2020, p. 66; Guta and Karolak, 2015, p. 115-127). As such, Saudi feminism faces challenges. Traditionalists see it as a Western import conflicting with Islamic values. Many are simply unfamiliar with the concept of women's rights advocacy. Feminists struggle to prove their compatibility with Islam and Saudi culture (Syed and Metcalfe, 2017, p. 403, 408, 414). Despite this resistance, there are signs of change. Growing numbers of educated women support feminist causes, especially with evidence highlighting the negative impact of gender discrimination in Saudi Arabia (Ahmed, 2017, p. 70). Feminist debate resulting from the coverage of Rania Al-Baz's incident demonstrates the potential for social change.

Shattering Silence and Sparking Feminist Dialogue

The brutal attack on Rania Al-Baz shattered the usual silence surrounding domestic violence in Saudi Arabia and brought the discussion on women's right to the forefront. Publicizing on the ruthless assault led to public shock. Such events of women abuse were typically kept hidden, shrouded in shame (Shah, 2024, p. 65). Al-Baz's case exploded into the open, sparking a national and international conversation. Within Saudi Arabia, reactions were diverse (Al-Baz, 2007, p. 45). Many were horrified by the violence, regardless of social standing. However, some conservatives criticized Al-Baz for going public, believing it tarnished Saudi Arabia's image and exposed private matters (Al-Baz, 2007, p. 55). They saw it as a negative influence, potentially undermining traditions and the veil's significance. Nonetheless, there was widespread agreement that the abuse was wrong and such brutality should have no place in society.

Disfigured has affected perceptions of domestic violence and gender roles in the Arab world. The nature of the subject matter and Al-Baz's status as a popular icon has gained significant attention from men and women alike. Public opinion in Saudi Arabia is generally misinformed on the nature of domestic violence, often excusing it under the pretense of social permissibility or religious doctrine. The idea of the confidentiality of matrimonial affairs is often used to deflect attention or intervention into such matters. Al-Baz's memoir has dispelled such myths. In relation to the feminist movement in the Arab world, Al-Baz's memoir has made a substantial contribution towards it. Her memoir has become a symbol for Arab women who see Rania as a figure of strength and resilience against the prevalent issues of domestic violence and oppression. Rania's case is not a one-off situation. Her case is a

reflection of what many women in the Arab world face on a daily basis, which is partly why this memoir has attained such recognition. It has empowered women to stand up against the once taboo subject of domestic violence (Shah, 2024, p. 68).

Rania Al-Baz's memoir *Disfigured* created much controversy within the Arab world due to its candid nature and subject matter. While it received criticism from conservatives and traditionalists, it also received praise and acknowledgment from liberals for its effect. The translation of the memoir into Arabic was the cause of much of the controversy as it brought to light a subject matter that many felt would have been better left unspoken (Rehman, 2022, p. 46). Rania received an outpouring of support from her native Saudi Arabia as well as surrounding countries such as Egypt. News channels such as Al-Jazeera and MBC have interviewed Al-Baz regarding her experiences and have expressed interest in her work as a journalist and her potential work as an advocate for domestic violence against women.

Al-Baz's public disclosure of domestic violence has significantly shifted public perception of the issue in Saudi Arabia. Her bravery in sharing her ordeal has transformed domestic violence from a private family matter into a topic of open discussion and criticism. Al-Baz's memoir graphically depicts her abusive relationship and the culminating assault. By bringing this issue into the public eye, she has effectively debunked the myth that domestic violence is solely attributable to wives' disobedience or un-Islamic behavior (Khan, and Jalabi, 2024, p. 34). The incident has sparked a wider conversation about women's roles in Saudi society, suggesting that increased public visibility for women could potentially mitigate domestic violence. While this connection is largely symbolic, it could catalyze broader strides towards gender equality. Al-Baz exemplifies this new role for Saudi women. Despite the ordeal, she resumed her career as a newscaster and is now a vocal advocate for domestic violence victims (Al-Baz, 2007, p. 89).

Cultural factors significantly influence how domestic violence survivors navigate their experiences. These factors can both perpetuate abuse and drive social transformation. As Rania Al-Baz poignantly describes in her memoir, "People do not recognize me anymore. It is as though I've become a different Rania, or as though I've disappeared altogether" (2007, p. 132). The loss of identity she endured mirrors the broader devaluation of Saudi women, often experienced by abuse survivors. Escaping abuse often leads to further challenges, as Al-Baz's experience demonstrates. Her journey to rebuild her life was marked by financial hardship and a struggle to maintain cultural identity. She suffers psychologically, trying to create a new reality while grappling with the trauma and cultural stigma associated with domestic violence. Her memoir reveals the profound impact of abuse on women's lives and the complex interplay between personal and cultural factors. Al-Baz's memoir resonates deeply with readers. Its powerful prose not only evokes a strong emotional response but also provides a window into the often-hidden realities of Saudi Arabian culture.

Al-Baz's story is a powerful narrative of resilience in the face of immense adversity. By publishing her memoir, *Disfigured* she has become a courageous advocate against the deeply ingrained misogyny of her homeland. Her deeply personal account transcends cultural barriers, offering a universal message about domestic violence that resonates with readers around the world. *Disfigured* tackles a complex web of issues, including cultural norms, the influence of religion, and the ongoing fight for women's rights. Al-Baz's story highlights the unfortunate reality that domestic violence affects women everywhere, and her experience underscores that no one should have to go through such horrific abuse. *Disfigured* sheds light on the ongoing struggle for women's rights in some Muslim-majority countries. For the first

25 years of her life, Rania Al-Baz seemed to live a charmed life. Raised in a loving family, she earned multiple degrees and achieved success as a prominent television news anchor in Saudi Arabia. However, her memoir reveals the subtle constraints placed on women in her society and the challenges she faced in her professional life. It is with her marriage that her world irrevocably changes, exposing the stark contrast between the public persona she cultivated and the brutal reality of her private life. The joy of marriage quickly dissolves into a nightmare of oppression, with the abuse beginning just two months in.

Physical and psychological abuse, graphic depictions of brutal beatings, such as a vicious kick to the face that left permanent damage, serve as a stark introduction to the depths of Al-Baz suffering. Initially clinging to the hope that restoring her physical beauty would alter her husband's behavior, Al-Baz ultimately found the strength to defy her abuser after a near-fatal attack. This personal journey of survival aligns with the broader motivations of many women who write about their experiences with domestic violence. As evidenced by the countless memoirs of battered women, the decision to share one's story is often driven by a complex interplay of personal and societal factors. These narratives serve as both cathartic outlets and platforms for social change. In Al-Baz's case, writing her memoir was likely a means to process trauma, reclaim agency, challenge the cultural silence surrounding domestic violence, inspire hope in other survivors and advocate societal and judicial changes.

Rania Al-Baz's memoir sparked a firestorm across the Arab world, bringing domestic violence to the forefront of public consciousness. Her story unleashed a wave of debates and discussions fueled by television interviews, newspaper and magazine articles. This relentless public scrutiny effectively compelled Saudi Arabia to confront the uncomfortable issue of domestic violence, a topic that would otherwise remain shrouded in silence (Ahmed, 2017, p. 88). By bravely sharing her ordeal, Al-Baz ripped away the veil of secrecy surrounding domestic violence in a country where it is often a hidden reality, ignored by both the public and legal system. The shocking details and images of her abuse served as undeniable proof that domestic violence is a serious problem plaguing Saudi Arabia.

The memoir exhibited women limited rights, unequal status and restrictions enforced via judicial system. Saudi Arabia's legal system enforces several restrictions that hinder women's rights (Shah, 2024, p. 88). Saudi women have limited access to the justice system. Women cannot represent themselves in court, requiring a male guardian, creating an unwelcome burden and hindering their ability to seek legal recourse (Sidani, 2019, p. 70). Both Al-Baz in *Disfigured* and Manal Al-Sharif in *Daring to Drive: A Saudi Woman's Awakening* (2018) highlight the pervasive guardianship system. Women are essentially legal minors, forever dependent on male relatives for basic decisions like work, education, and healthcare. This system has delayed or denied women crucial services (Al-Baz, 2007, p. 33; Shah, 2024, p. 87). These restrictions reveal deep gender inequality (Al-Baz, 2007, p. 34). Legislation often discriminates against women, as seen in the guardianship system and limited access to justice (Al-Baz, 2007, p. 55, 200; Ahmed, 2017, p. 88). While Saudi Arabia lacks a codified criminal code, interpretations of Islamic law heavily influenced by conservative traditions often restrict women's rights. This can lead to arbitrary enforcement and discrimination, particularly regarding guardianship (Al-Baz, 2007, p. 98; Ahmed, 2017, p. 110).

The legal framework that systematically disadvantaged Al-Baz and countless other Saudi women became glaringly apparent in the aftermath of her ordeal. The Rania Al-Baz case was a catalyst for change. The light sentence given to her abuser sparked public outrage and

international attention. Al-Baz's vocal advocacy for women's rights earned her significant public support. She became a symbol of resilience and an advocate for feminist reform (Al-Baz, 2007, p. 78; Ahmed, 2017, p. 119). The sentence given to her husband—a few months in jail and 300 lashes—caused public uproar in Saudi Arabia and drew international attention (Al-Baz, 2007, p. 76). As such, Al-Baz decided to launch a foundation to support battered women in the Kingdom (Al-Baz, 2007, p. 79).

As such, Al-Baz memoir explains how Saudi feminists face immense challenges. Strict interpretations of Islamic law, tribal traditions, the judicial system, and a human rights record that undermines women's autonomy create a difficult environment (Shah, 2024, p. 114; Ahmed, 2017, p. 45). Advocating for gender equality is seen as radical, with activists labeled as un-Islamic or agents of Western influence. This not only marginalizes them, but also hinders efforts to build broad-based support, crucial for lasting change. Despite the repression and dangers, the fight for women's rights in Saudi Arabia persists (Al-Baz, 2007, p. 99; Rundel, 2021, p. 34). The silenced voices of feminist activists deserve recognition, and their struggle for a more equitable future must be brought to light (Al-Baz, 2007, p. 88).

Rania Al-Baz's memoir exposes how religion and tradition are deeply intertwined in Saudi Arabia. While Islam provides the foundation, Bedouin customs also influence cultural practices (Aldosari, 2016, p. 25; Al-Baz, 2007, p. 56). Al-Baz's family, though considered more liberal, still adhered to the conservative Wahhabi interpretation of Islam (Al-Baz, 2007, p. 80). This emphasis on strict adherence and gender segregation significantly impacts women's lives. Al-Baz explains how in conservative societies like Saudi Arabia, women carry the burden of family honor. Any deviation from strict norms is seen as jeopardizing a family's reputation and future. This severely restricts women's freedoms. Activities deemed frivolous, like sports or the arts, are discouraged to maintain modesty (Abi-Rafeh and Keeffe, 2023, p. 25). Rania Al-Baz, a prominent advocate for women's rights, exemplifies these challenges. Known for her work with voiceless women, she dared to promote a marathon in Mecca, a highly conservative city. Her efforts to increase women's participation in sports and normalize physical activity for them met fierce resistance (Al-Baz, 2007, p. 44). Religious authorities issued a fatwa (religious ruling) disapproving of women's involvement, and the marathon was ultimately cancelled due to pressure from religious police (Al-Baz, 2007, p. 45). This incident highlights how even seemingly innocuous activities can be seen as transgressive for women. Al-Baz's own career path also reflects these limitations. The economic pressure impacted her directly. Despite her talent and experience, her contract as a TV presenter was not renewed at the age of 36. Her story reflects the demoralizing reality for many Saudi women – a system not yet ready to fully accommodate their aspirations (Alsahi, 2023, p. 2, 5, 76).

At its core, *Disfigured* is a tale about a dramatic shift in identity. This memoir is Al-Baz's defiant act of reclaiming her narrative, proving her strength transcends her suffering. While the journey to self-discovery is central, Al-Baz delves deeper, exploring the gender imbalance in her culture and the challenges Middle Eastern women face in breaking free from domestic expectations to forge their own paths. For many survivors of domestic violence, writing a memoir is a powerful act of healing and empowerment. The experience of abuse can be isolating and shrouded in shame. By sharing their stories, battered women can reclaim their voices and challenge the stigma often associated with victims. Memoirs can also serve as a source of strength and inspiration for other women experiencing abuse, letting them know they are not alone and that there is hope for a future free from violence. Al-Baz's

story is likely just one of many that will inspire courage and self-discovery in the face of adversity.

Feminist Narrative and Writing Techniques

Rania Al-Baz's *Disfigured* is a powerful feminist narrative of identity reshaped by trauma. The once vibrant and celebrated TV personality grapples with a new reality namely fighting for her humanity. Writing *Disfigured* helps her reclaim her narrative, gain agency and support other women. The book delves deeper than just the physical and emotional aftermath of the attack. Al-Baz explores the struggles of women striving to carve out identities beyond their domestic roles. Al-Baz decided to write in English to reach a wider audience and create a wider effect.

Disfigured is a remarkably complex work in which two narratives intertwine: the harrowing account of the attack and her arduous recovery, and a poignant portrayal of her life before. Flashbacks reveal her childhood, her rise to fame, and her experiences as a devoted wife and mother. By weaving flashbacks of her accomplished life before the attack with the harrowing journey of recovery, Al-Baz reclaims her narrative. Al-Baz using various techniques to jump back and forth between the two phases of her life to exhibit bettered women psychological dilemma. Sometimes she uses physical segues, such as when a conversation with concerned doctors about her agitation suddenly triggers a memory involving her now deceased brother. Other times the switch is quite sudden, and the reader is often left for a moment wondering which story Al-Baz is currently telling. Some transitions are triggered by sensory details, such as a conversation with doctors triggering a memory of her deceased brother. Other transitions are abrupt, leaving the reader momentarily disoriented. While this method might cause minor confusion, it serves a purpose. It portrays Al-Baz as a multifaceted individual, not just a victim. The sudden shift to her pre-attack life amplifies the tragedy – a violent rupture of a happy and fulfilling life.

Al-Baz narrative style is feminist as she challenges societal norms and giving voice to hidden experiences. She seeks to subvert patriarchal structures and promote gender equality. Al-Baz focuses on the personal and collective trauma of domestic violence. She employs detailed descriptions, and emotional authenticity to expose injustice and inspire change. Via speaking up and then writing, Al-Baz shatters the stigma surrounding battered women, helps readers gain a deeper understanding of the psychological and emotional impact of domestic violence, and fosters empathy and compassion. Al-Baz inspires other abused women to break their silence, contributing to a broader societal shift in attitudes towards battered women.

Al-Baz utilizes a straightforward linear structure in *Disfigured*. The narrative opens with the horrific 2004 incident that becomes the book's catalyst: her husband's attempt to murder her. This event sparks the central question that haunts her – "Why did you stay with him for so long?" Her response unfolds in a linear fashion. She establishes a peaceful baseline by recounting the early, happy years of their marriage. The narrative then takes a sharp turn, detailing a gradual escalation of abuse that shatters this equilibrium. Al-Baz utilizes the metaphor of "stations" to depict the increasing violence and violations of her safety, each incident intensifying the situation. This structure mirrors Aristotle's concept of tragedy, building steadily towards a climactic event. As she approaches a breaking point, the pace quickens, culminating in the near-death experience that becomes the turning point. Her husband's arrest marks the beginning of her hard-won ascent from this horrific situation. The final pages offer a glimmer of hope for a brighter future, a restored sense of balance.

Disfigured weaves together a rich tapestry of themes namely gender violence, women's segregation, the power of the media, cultural identity, and women's empowerment. Gender violence takes center stage, as Al-Baz recounts the years of brutal physical abuse she endured. The devastating impact on her body and spirit, coupled with the chilling societal silence surrounding domestic violence, reflects a harsh reality for many victims. The memoir further exposes the deep roots of patriarchy, a societal structure that condones male dominance and control over women, ultimately enabling the abuse. Al-Baz's fight for justice transforms into a rebellion against this entrenched system. The power of media also emerges as a key theme. Al-Baz leverages her platform as a television personality to shatter the silence around domestic violence. Her story acts as a catalyst for change, pushing Saudi Arabia to confront and address this critical issue. Finally, themes of national identity and women's empowerment surface. Al-Baz's narrative illuminates the challenges faced by Saudi women and ignites a conversation about their rights. Her transformation from victim to advocate becomes a beacon of hope, inspiring others to break the cycle of violence and claim their agency.

Adept storyteller that she is, Al-Baz weaves symbolism and metaphors throughout the memoir. These figures of speech transcend mere description, allowing readers to viscerally experience the internal struggles she grapples with. By creating layers of meaning, Al-Baz invites readers on a deeper journey, fostering a greater understanding of her experience and the complexities of healing. Al-Baz's transcends the physical scars, delving into the emotional dilemma embarked by the attack. Symbolism becomes her paintbrush, vividly portraying her adversity. Recurring dreams in the final chapter, where she confronts her attacker, symbolize her unresolved anger and a yearning for revenge. However, the realization that he is already imprisoned by his own rage offers a bittersweet closure. The timing of the attack itself is symbolic. Al-Baz describes embracing a healthier lifestyle and newfound self-confidence just before the incident. The disfigurement inflicted becomes a metaphor for the internal pain and shattered sense of self. She feels like a stranger in her own body, beautiful on the inside but forever marked by the violence. The irony is that attempting to hide these scars with scarves and sunglasses only draws unwanted attention.

Conclusion

Rania Al-Baz's memoir, *Disfigured* holds profound relevance in shedding light on the pervasive issue of domestic violence, particularly within the context of Saudi Arabia. By courageously sharing her personal ordeal, Al-Baz shattered the silence surrounding domestic abuse, challenging cultural taboos and stereotypes. Her narrative served as a catalyst for public discourse, prompting a much-needed conversation about the treatment of women in Saudi society and enhancing feminist discourse. Al-Baz's memoir, *Disfigured*, transcends a mere chronicle of abuse. It is a defiant roar for identity. Al-Baz writes to reclaim herself, not just from the scars but from the status of being a victim. Her memoir exposes the cultural constraints on Middle Eastern women, the struggle to defy expectations and forge their own paths. By sharing her story, she shatters the stigma of domestic violence, reclaims her voices, breaks free from the shackles of societal shame, and inspires battered women. Language and techniques, like the strategic choice of writing in English and the use of figures of speech become weapons in Al-Baz's arsenal, empowering her to enforce her message on a global level.

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Art Intervention's Role in Emotional Resilience Among Myanmar's Adolescents

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Abstract
This study focuses on the relationship between the impact of art interventions on the emotional wellbeing of Grade 9 and 10 students living in conflicted-affected areas of Myanmar. The study employs a quantitative experimental methodology to examine emotions visually through students' drawings following the 2021 military coup that has affected every aspect of everyday life, including interruption to education leading to alienation for adolescents and a dramatic increase in youth mental health issues. The research investigates the impact of structured art sessions, including both free and guided drawing, on the emotional well-being of students who have experienced a prolonged period of conflict. According to the results, structured art sessions showed a clear pattern of art's therapeutic effects on students in conflict settings, including increased happiness and decreased sadness and worry.

Keywords: Drawing Intervention, Emotional Well-being, Adolescents, Military Coup, Conflict Area

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Introduction

This study is based in conflict-affected areas of Myanmar after the 2021 military coup to explore the short-term therapeutic benefits of drawing interventions on emotional expression of adolescents, i.e., Grade 9 and 10 students studying in conflict zones. Art interventions are becoming common strategies for addressing the emotional challenges that adolescents encounter during periods of hardship and conflict (Buriel et al., 2019; Gatta et al., 2014; Feen-Calligan et al., 2020). Given the existing literature on the therapeutic benefits of art intervention for adolescents in the midst of difficulty and conflict, the study's primary goal is to expand our understanding of the benefits of engaging in art interventions for this student population, largely affected by the conflict and psychological implications brought on by educational disruption. The research shows how conflict and educational disruption affect students' mental health. The study aims to contribute to the current understanding of the therapeutic impact of art interventions for students' psychological growth and well-being by focusing on this specific critical time in the crucial phase of adolescent development (Boulton, 2000; Eisenberg et al., 1993) as this is an especially vulnerable period in their lives. The personal involvement of the researcher with existing educational outreach efforts in the region further personalises this study and enhances understanding of the urgency and significance of the research in contributing to student well-being and resilience.

Literature Review

Art interventions are gaining popularity as useful therapeutic tools in the treatment of emotional well-being among adolescents affected by different forms of conflicts and adversities (Whitenburg, 2020; Gatta et al., 2014; Feen-Calligan et al., 2020; Buriel et al., 2019; Buser et al., 2023; Quinlan et al., 2016; Spier, 2010; Nicolas, 2023; Ramirez et al., 2020; Harpazi et al., 2020; Easwaran et al., 2021). This literature review aims to synthesize evidence from various studies and help to answer the main question: what therapeutic benefits does art intervention have on emotional expression, from adolescents in areas of conflict?

According to Buriel et al. (2019), there is a critical impact that armed conflict has on education, and over 125 million children and adolescents in conflict-affected countries need urgent support for their education. They highlight potential therapeutic benefits that this artistic intervention might have had in camps in their study, which focuses on the Middle East. In a rehabilitation setting, Gatta et al. (2014) investigated the efficacy of art intervention for adolescents with personality disorders. According to their findings, it was revealed the positive effects of art intervention on emotional well-being through non-verbal, sensual, and kinesthetic ways of engaging. According a study on 12-week art therapy program conducted by Feen-Calligan et al. (2020) with Syrian refugee youth living in the United States. Their findings prove that participation in art therapy programs significantly reduced the level of stress and trauma-related psychopathology. This indicates that art therapy can be used to enhance coping strategies and overall well-being. Buser et al. (2023) state that engaging in art activities can have a significant positive impact on mental health and general well-being of children impacted by the conflict in Kashmir. Their work demonstrates art-based school interventions as an effective method of promoting emotional expression and empowerment.

As eighth-grade students transferred to high school, Spier (2010) assessed the efficacy of group art therapy in a classroom setting. The results showed that this program was effective in increasing self-care and reducing disruptive behaviors.

Ramirez et al. (2020) conducted a study to evaluate the effects of group art therapy on adolescent boys of color who were exposed to poverty. The research's findings showed a considerable improvement in social and emotional challenges, with the "At-Risk" category of students showing the most notable improvement.

Harpazi et al. (2020) investigated the perceptions of school-based art interventions among adolescent clients and emphasized the advantages of establishing a secure environment. Nicolas (2023) conducted a review of the impact of school-based art interventions on the development of depressed adolescents. According to his study, this intervention has the potential to substantially improve overall well-being as well as it reduces depression.

According to a participatory insight analysis, conducted by Easwaran et al. (2021), on the engagement of youth with depression and anxiety in the arts. Their study revealed the importance of youth-led methods in recognizing the direct impact of the arts on mental health.

The literature review reveals a substantial number of studies that illustrate the effects of art therapeutic interventions on adolescents who have experienced conflict. Although many studies have demostrated the advantages of art interventions, there is a gap on the study of immediate, short-term effects on emotional expressions students in the age of adolescent in conflict situations. Moreover, the existing literature does not properly examine how art interventions could be tailored in conflict settings like in Myanmar. This stud, by evaluating the immediate impact of drawing interventions on the emotional well-being of adolescents, i.e., grade 9 and 10 students from conflict-affected Myanmar, aims to fill these gaps in the literature. It aims to gain not only insight into the practical application of drawing interventions in conflict-affected educational environments but also its potential to enhance emotional resilience and expression.

Research Objectives

The primary objective of this study is to examine the therapeutic effects of drawing interventions on the expression of emotions among Grade 9 and 10 students in both conflict-affected regions of Myanmar. In this quantitative experimental research design, the emotional well-being of students who are experiencing adversity due to conflicts in post-coup Myanmar is examined in relation to the efficacy of drawing interventions. The objective is to provide valuable insights into the potential benefits of art interventions for adolescents in such environments.

Research Design

This study employs a quantitative research design to assess the therapeutic effect of drawing interventions on the emotional well-being of Grade 9 and 10 students in the conflict areas of Myanmar. Surveys are the primary data collection method, measuring changes in emotional states before and after drawing sessions. The study compares two groups: one engaging in free drawing and the other in guided drawing.

Method

- **Participants:** The participants are students from two schools in the conflict-affected areas of Pekon Township, Myanmar, consisting of both IDP and local village residents.

Purposive sampling ensures that the sample consists of diversity in both demographics and extent of the impact of conflicts.

- **Ethical Considerations:** The protocol was approved by the University of Massachusetts Lowell's Institutional Review Board with IRB number: 24-040. Consent was obtained for participants from all age groups, and in the case of those below the age of majority, assent was secured with an additional requirement of consent from their guardian(s). The process of consent outlined the purpose, procedures, the voluntary nature, and ways in which data would be protected.

- **Interventions:** The first experimental group of students in one school engaged in free drawing sessions without specific guidance, whereas the group of students from the other school engaged in guided drawing sessions included prompts to illustrate specific emotions or messages. Pre- and post-surveys captured participants' emotional states.

- **Survey Measures:** The pre-survey recorded demographic information and baseline measures of emotional well-being; the post-survey measured happiness, sadness, anxiety, and overall emotional well-being.

- **Data Collection and Analysis:** Surveys of emotional states, including reports of happiness, sadness, worry, and overall emotional feelings, were used for data collection and analysis both before and after the intervention. To determine the efficacy of the art intervention in changing emotional expressions, an analysis was conducted to compare the changes in these emotions before and after the art sessions.

Findings

Enhanced Student Happiness Through Art Intervention

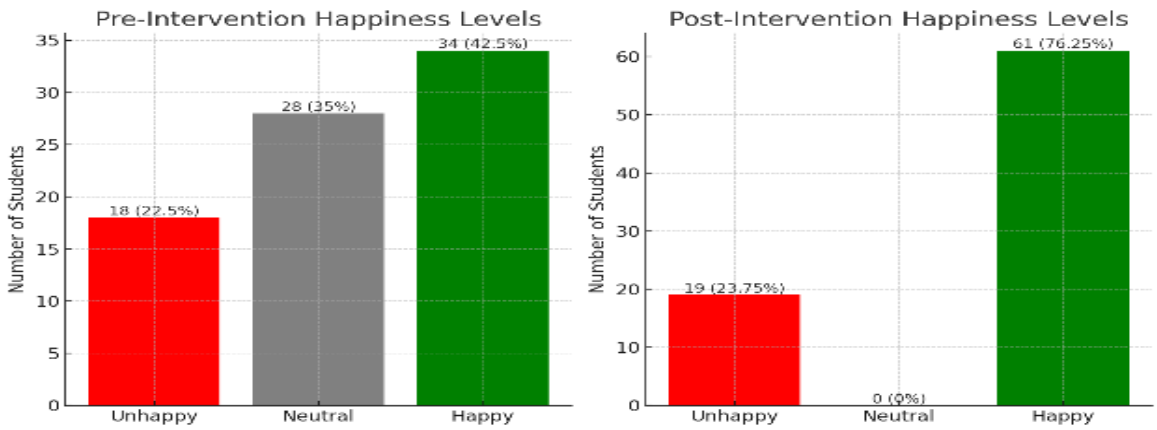

Figure 1: Improvement in Student Happiness Levels Post-Intervention

Student happiness levels were significantly improved from 42.5 % to 76.25 % by the drawing intervention, with a decline in neutral students from 35 %to zero. Although unhappiness increased slightly from 22.5 %to 23.75 %, generally data recorded a positive effect of the intervention on student happiness.

Reduction in Student Sadness After Art Intervention

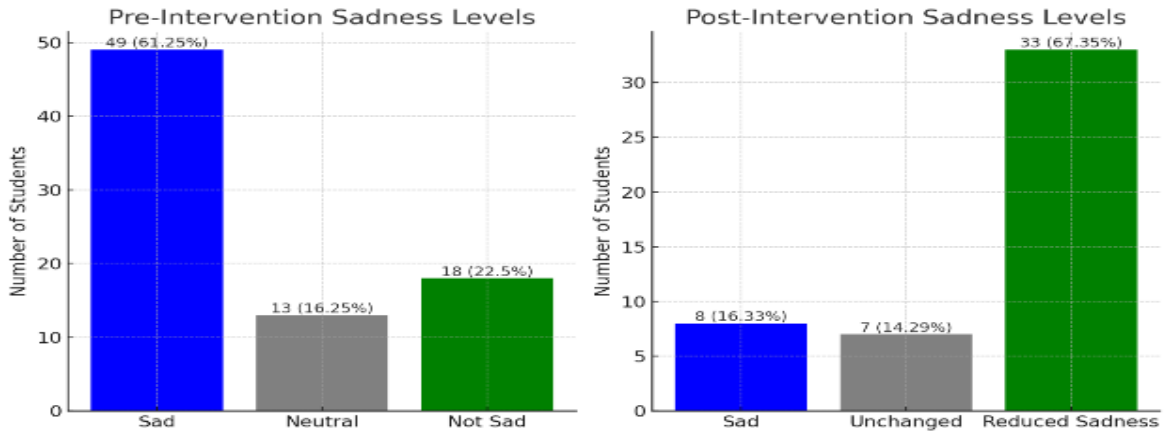

Figure 2: Reduction in Student Sadness Levels After Art Intervention

Prior to the intervention, 61.25% of the students reported experiencing feelings of sadness, while 16.25% were neutral and 22.5% did not have any feelings of sadness. Following the drawing intervention, only 16.33% of the students continued to experience sadness, while 67.35% reported feeling less sad. The emotions remained unchanged in 14.29% of the participants. The data suggests that the drawing intervention appeared to reduce the feelings of sadness for the majority of the students, although this was not applicable for all.

Decrease in Student Worries Post-intervention

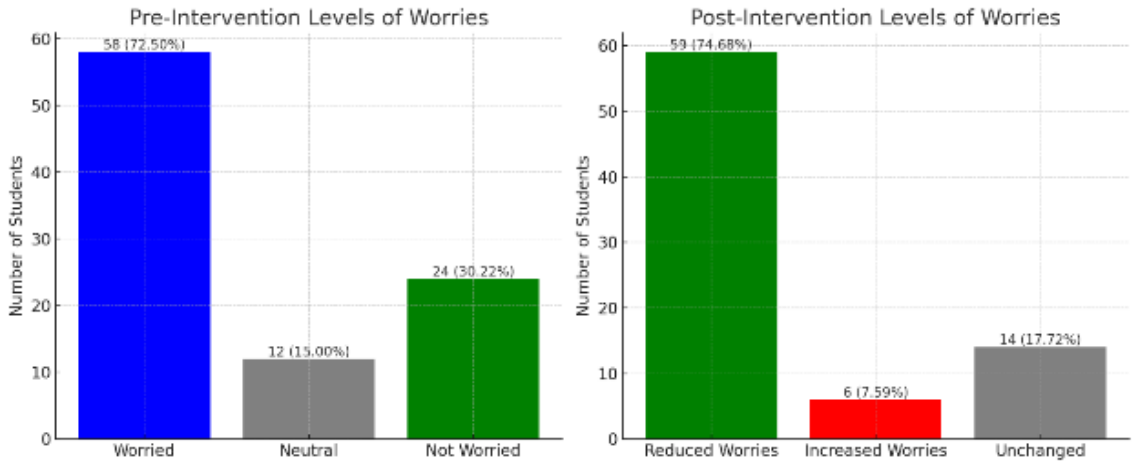

Figure 3: Decrease in Student Worries Post-Intervention

In the baseline data before intervention, 72.5% of students expressed worries, 15% expressed neutrality, and 30.22% expressed a lack of worry. After engaging in drawing intervention, 74.68% of students reported feeling less worried, 7.59% reported feeling more worried, and 17.72% said there had been no change. This indicates that the drawing intervention was highly effective in relieving the worries of the majority of the students, thereby enhancing their mental health.

Improved Mental Peace Among Students Following Art Sessions

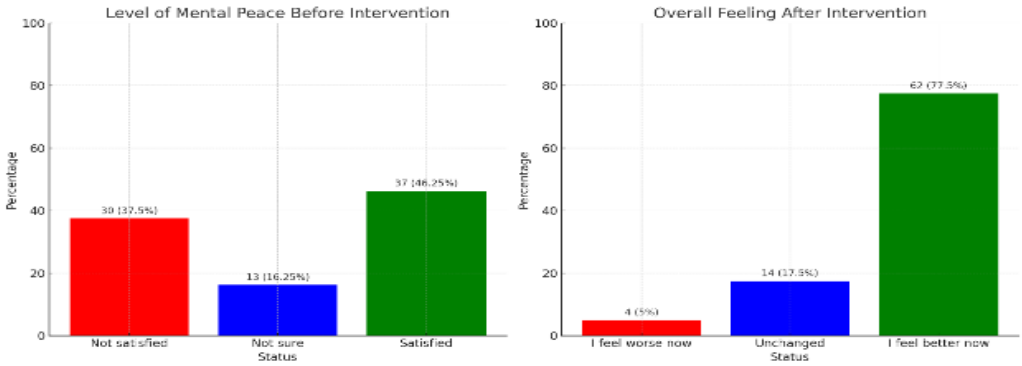

Figure 4: Improved Mental Well-being Among Students After Drawing Sessions

Prior to the intervention, 37.5% of students expressed dissatisfaction with their mental well-being, 16.25% were uncertain, and 46.25% were content. After the intervention, only 5% of individuals reported feeling worse, 17.5% remained unchanged, and 77.5% reported feeling better. Based on the data, it is evident that the drawing intervention had a substantial positive effect on the students' overall emotions and resulted in a substantial increase in their mental well-being.

Comparative Insights Into Artistic Expressions

Figure 5: Example Drawing by a Free Drawing Group Student Showing a Tranquil Landscape

Figure 6: Example Drawing by a Guided Drawing Student, Showing a Village Under Attack With Helicopters, Burning Houses, and Fleeing Residents, With a Note Saying, 'If We Cannot Go Back and Harvest, What Are We Going to Eat'

Drawings from the two groups differ noticeably. Free Drawing Group drawings frequently feature serene mountain and plant landscapes that convey serenity. Others convey feelings of solitude or introspection using a single figure or minimal color. In contrast, the Guided Drawing Group's artwork was conflict-centered and the use of strong words within their drawings to express a desire for peace and the challenges of conflict. Phrases like *"I am not happy these days, missing home and wanna stay with all the family members, where is peace,"* and *"Now I learn that life is such a hard thing,"* explain the depth of the yearning and the chaos of reality. Their worries about the future are portrayed in other sentences, like *"What are we to eat if we can't go back to the village and harvest?"* and *"Way back to home wishing a pleasant morning,"* which express the wish for things to return to normal. Hope is expressed in a situation of adversity through positive statements such as *"I desire peace and freedom from fear"* and *"Let us remain resilient until the end."* These variations imply that the guided drawing approach may encourage students to confront and communicate their experiences more openly, highlighting the effectiveness of drawing intervention as a medium for young people to communicate difficult feelings in conflict-settings.

Discussion on Art Intervention Outcomes

This study confirms that the happiness level of students significantly increased following the interventions, which is consistent with the research conducted by Buriel et al. (2019) and Feen-Calligan et al. (2020). This increase in happiness thereby provides additional evidence to the broader literature on the positive emotions that art causes in conflict-affected youth and more solidifies drawing intervention for emotional well-being within educational settings.

Art interventions have been shown to reduce negative emotions in adolescents, as demonstrated by Gatta et al. (2014), and this study's findings on reduced sadness align with their results. Nicolas (2023) reviewed school-based art interventions and found that they improve well-being and reduce depression. This study builds on that by showing how effective these interventions are in conflict areas, reducing sadness and improving emotional resilience.

The significant improvements in total mental peace and emotional stability found among students after post-intervention are consistent with findings from other studies, including Buser et al. (2023), and Harpazi et al. (2020). These findings underline the realization that art interventions tend toward rendering a sense of inner peace and emotional equilibrium crucial for adolescents navigating challenges of conflict and displacement.

Conclusion

In summary, this study contributes important empirical support for the integration of art-based interventions in educational programs processed for emotional experiences of students to work toward mental well-being. Contributing specific evidence to concrete literature on the therapeutic and healing effects of art in a particular context, this study also contributes more generally to educational and psychological frameworks attuned to fulfill key dimensions in the emotional development of adolescents in a very critical period of their lives.

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I would like to thank Dr. Jill Hendrickson Lohmeier, a professor of Research and Evaluation in Education at the University of Massachusetts, who supervised and supported every aspect of this experimental research. Additionally, my gratitude extends to the teachers and local researchers who facilitated the data collection process and supervised the drawing interventions. Special thanks to the students who participated in the research, sharing their drawings and insights.

Declaration of Generative AI and AI-Assisted Technologies in the Writing Process

I declare the use of Grammarly and Quillbot, AI tools, for paraphrasing, grammar and writing assistance, which helped improve the clarity and readability of this manuscript.

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Cosmogony – A Philosophical Odyssey: Juxtaposition of the Cultural Legend of the Shukla and Krishna Yajur Veda With Their Upanishadic Literary Genre

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Abstract
Despite the abundance of investigations on Upanishads, there is a need for more research on their cosmogonical ideas in the framework of a causal relationship between the creator and creation. This study is significant because of its purpose and method of inquiry: it compares the primary Upanishads associated with the Shukla and Krishna Yajur Vedas within the premise of their cultural legend. The authors assert that such an approach can help determine whether the cosmogonical considerations in the Upanishads reflect the known cultural (geographical and historical) differences between the two branches of the Yajur Veda. Based on its findings, this paper concludes that: (i) not only are notions of creator-causality-creation embedded in the Upanishads, but they are also interconnected; (ii) the discussion of causality has an element of association with anthropocentric considerations; and (iii) a discernible pattern of cosmogonical conceptions emerges, consistent with the cultural legend of Shukla and Krishna Yajur Veda. Furthermore, the Upanishads demonstrated similarities in their perspectives of the omnipresent creator, the creator's causal role, and the creation process. In comparison, the Krishna Yajur Veda Upanishads predominantly focus on the creator's description, whereas the Shukla Yajur Veda Upanishads mainly focus on the transformation of the creator into the creation.

Keywords: Cosmogony, Creator, Causality, Creation, Yajur Veda, Upanishads, Cultural Legend

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1. Introduction

One of ancient India's most remarkable contributions is the Vedic genre of literature[1], which has not only engaged the religious and philosophical mind space for millennia but also enticed literary scholars and enthusiasts. The beauty of the Sanskrit language in the Vedic texts reveals itself in refreshing greatness whenever anyone engages, underscoring their perpetuity. The Vedic corpus comprises the Rig, Sama, Yajur, and Atharva Vedas arranged in four different sub-genres: the Samhitas, Brahmanas, Aranyakas, and Upanishads, depending on their purpose. The following infographic (Figure 1) provides an overview of the textual arrangement of the Vedic corpus. Intriguingly, only the Yajur Veda has two versions: the Shukla (SYV) and Krishna (KYV).

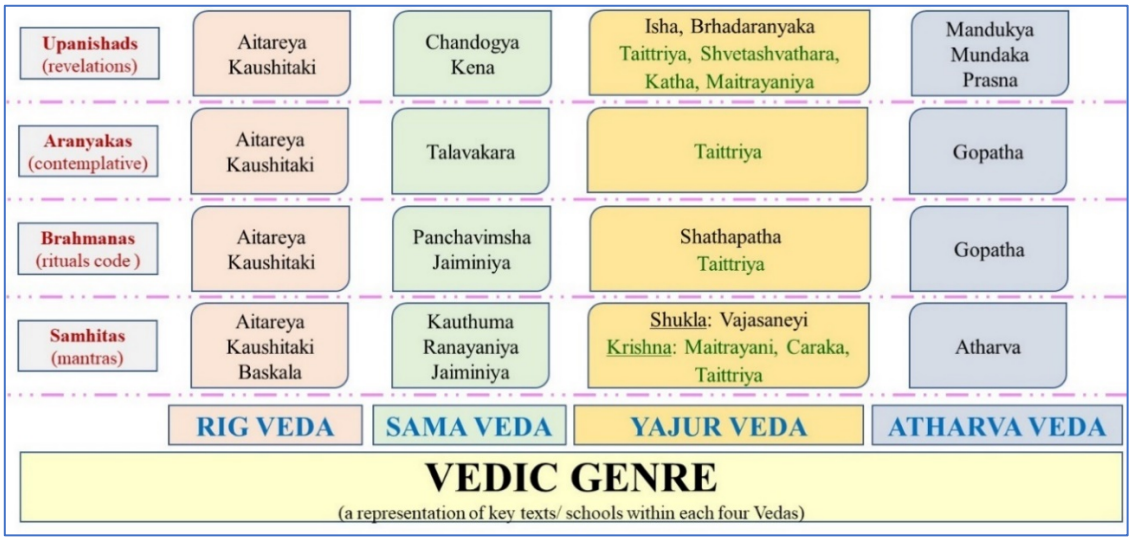

Figure 1: Overview of Vedic Genre of Literature[2]

Although the cultural legend associated with the SYV and KYV has a vital connection to the Puranic genre of literature, the predominant view among the extant literature[3] points to the differentiation in terms of (a) extensive geographical usage – Shukla in the north and Krishna in the south India; (b) arrangement of contents; and (c) the primary purpose of the application of the texts. The following infographic (Figure 2) summarizes the cultural legend of SYV and KYV using a concept map.

[1] A general introduction to the Vedic literature is available in many books, journals, and compendiums. Some useful references include (i) Dandekar, R. N. "VEDIC LITERATURE: A Quick Overview." Annals of the Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute 81, no. 1/4 (2000): 1–13. http://www.jstor.org/stable/41694604; (ii) Jamison, S. W., & Witzel, M. (2003). Vedic Hinduism. The study of Hinduism, 65-113. https://www.ms.uky.edu/~sohum/sanskrit/vedica.pdf; (iii) The Vedas. (2016). 12th edition. India: Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan.; (iv) Paliwal, B. B. (2005). Message of the Vedas. Diamond Pocket Books (P) Ltd.

[2] Figure 1 reproduced from my PhD thesis. Sivaram, S. (2023). Cosmological Aspects in Scriptures limited to Vedas Puranas and Yoga Vasishta. http://hdl.handle.net/10603/523872

[3] The following are valuable references involving discussions on cultural legend of SYV and KYV. (i) KARNAWAT, D. R. (2022). RELEVANCE OF VEDIC CONCEPTS IN THE PRESENT SCENARIO. corpus, 9(6).; (ii) Sharma, K. C. (2024). Vedic Literature and Its Universal Concepts: Rishi, Devata and Chanda. *The Harvest*, *3*(1), 39-48.; (iii) Dalal, R. (2017). Hinduism and its basic texts: The Vedas, Upanishads, Epics and Puranas. In Reading the Sacred Scriptures (pp. 157-170). Routledge.; (iv) The story of two Yajur Vedas – The Mythology Project. (n.d.). https://themythologyproject.com/the-story-of-two-yajur-vedas/; and (v) https://vedicheritage.gov.in/introduction/.

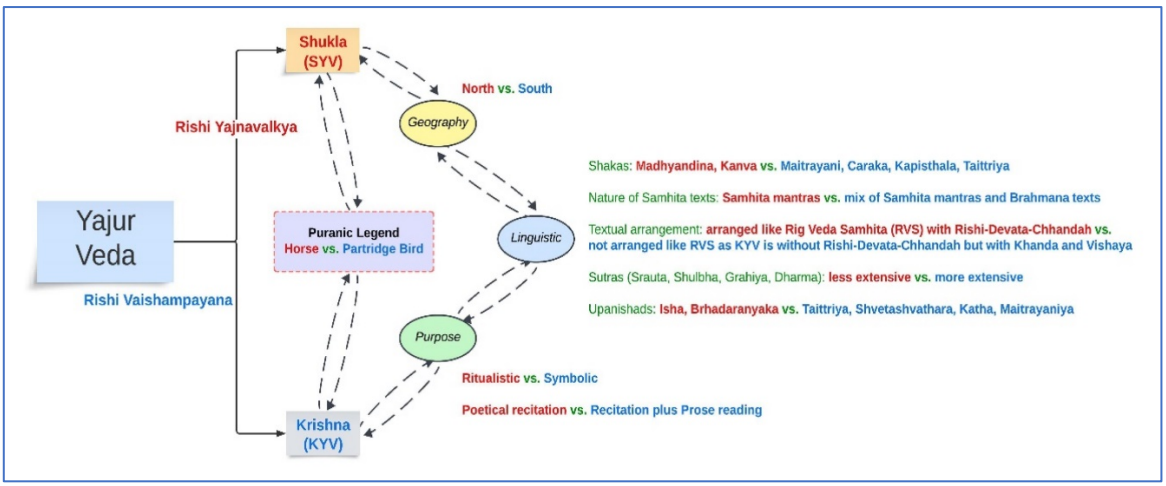

Figure 2: Concept Map of Cultural Legend of SYV and KYV

1.1 Purpose and Scope

This research paper aims to anchor on the cultural legend associated with the SYV and KYV and specifically explore select texts of the Upanishadic sub-genre of the two versions of Yajur Veda for cosmogonical notions. This topic can bring Science, Religion, Philosophy, and Literature on the same interaction platform, highlighting the study's potential interdisciplinary nature study. Given the nature of the contents conducive for analysis, the Upanishads present themselves as a promising sub-genre for such discussions.

Accordingly, this research paper aims to compare and analyse the similarities and differences of cosmogonical perspectives among the six principal Upanishads of Yajur Veda. This study is significant not just because of its purpose but also due to the method of comparative inquiry. Moreover, the authors assert that such an approach can help determine how the cultural legend associated with the two versions of the Yajur Veda represents cosmogonical considerations in the Upanishads. This work's objectives are:

a) To understand and compare how the six principal Upanishads of SYV and KYV have dealt with fundamental thoughts on theological (that focuses on the nature of the creator) and cosmological (that focuses on creation - origin, nature and fate) aspects.
b) To decipher the causal relationship (cosmogony) between the creator and creation of the six principal Upanishads.
c) To juxtapose the insights derived from the first and second objectives within the context of the cultural legend associated with the Shukla and Krishna Yajur Veda.

The current research work considers science to be concerned with the study of creation for better clarity, ease of comprehension, and differentiation. However, for the scope of this research paper, creation deals only with cosmogony. On the other hand, theology studies the creator as expressed in the select Upanishads. The authors consider such a simple distinction between creator and creation, which allows this research study to explore the causal relationship more clearly and easily. This understanding is crucial for a more precise comparison of how the chosen Upanishads deal with the creator-causality-creation relationship in the context of the cultural legends associated with the two branches of the Yajur Veda.

1.2 Scope and Purpose-Oriented Introduction to Principal Upanishads of Yajur Veda

Among the Vedic genre of literature, many consider Upanishads (Puligandla, 1996; Brereton, 2019; Singh, 2001) as either direct teachings or revelations or self-inquired wisdom. Perhaps this is why Upanishads are an essential philosophical foundation (Rao, 2008) required for 'Shada Darshanas (six orthodox schools of Indian philosophy) – Nyaya, vaiseshika, yoga, Samkhya, Vedanta, and Mimamsa' which play a critical role in communicating the Upanishadic wisdom to society. Of the thirteen principal Upanishads across the four Vedas, SYV has two, and KYV has four.

Brhadaranyaka Upanishad (BrhU) is associated with the SYV; its name translates to 'the great forest'. It occurs as part of Sathapatha Brahmana of the SYV. BrhU is known for many philosophical ideas, including the mahavakya (great sayings) "*aham brahmasmi*" – a key phrase of Advaita, a non-duality philosophical school (BrhU_1.4.10). BrhU also has the popular invocation prayers "*purnamadah purnamidam…*" (BrhU_5.1.1) and "*asato ma sadgamaya…*" (BrhU_1.3.28).

BrhU consists of three khandas (sections) – Madhu Khanda (understanding the individual Self-Atman and Universal Self-Brahman), Muni Khanda (philosophical justification of the teachings), and Khila Khanda (specific modes of worship and meditation). Furthermore, the second Brahmana of the first khanda deals with the Vedic approach to the creation of the Universe (cosmogony).

Ishopanishad (IsU) is also associated with SYV. It is the final (40th) chapter of the Shukla Yajur Veda Samhita and begins with the mahavakya "*īśāvāsyam idaṁ sarvam*" – asserting the omnipresent nature of *brahman*, another famous phrase of Advaita.

Kathopanishad (KaU) is associated with the KYV and is also known as *'kathaka*' Upanishad, which translates to the recitation of a story. KaU's structure is like narration, predominantly involving conversation between Yama and Nachiketa. The *'kathaka*' can also relate to the '*kathaka shakha*' (shakha means a traditional gurukul school for Vedic learning) of the KYV. KaU has the famous slogan, 'Arise, Awake!' (KaU_3.14).

Maitrayaniya or Maitri Upanishad (MaiU) is also associated with the KYV. It discusses the nature of the mortal elemental Self (matter), which has three gunas (*saguṇa* – innate nature – sattva, rajas, tamas) and the immortal true Self (Soul), which is *nirguṇa* (a state beyond gunas). This Upanishad talks about how the union of *saguṇa* and *nirguṇa* is achievable. Intriguingly, MaiU asserts that all three trinities, namely the Vedic Trinity (*agni*-Fire, *vāyu*-Air, *āditya*-Sun), the Hindu Trinity (Brahma, Vishnu, Rudra), and the Trinity of Beings (*kāla*-Time, Praana-Vital Breath, Annam-Food) are the manifestations of one supreme immortal and formless *brahman* (MaiU_4.5-6).

Shvetaashvatara Upanishad (SvetU), the third associated with the KYV, is attributed to Shvetaashvatara Maharishi, as his name appears in verse 6.21. 'Shvetaashvatara' can be a title given to a rishi – 'shveta' means 'bright/ white' and 'ashvatara' means 'better horse'. Here, the horse symbolizes the sacrificial temperament, renouncing sensory attraction/ repulsion. Thus, Shvetaashvatara can symbolically mean 'one who has attained the brightness (enlightenment) through control of senses and when compared with others is a better human'. Such a derivation aligns with the subject matter explained in this Upanishad. SvetU declares brahman (the supreme Soul) as the primal cause of all existence and discusses yoga.
Taittiriya Upanishad (TaittU), the fourth associated with the KYV, is part of Taittiriya Aranyaka and contains the famous mantra "*mātṛdevo bhava, pitṛdevo bhava, ācāryadevo*

bhava, atithidevo bhava" (TaittU_1.11.4). It consists of 3 Vallis (sections) – Siksha Valli (educational instructions), Brahma-Ananda Valli (focuses on the importance of realising the Self and discusses five Koshas), and Bhrgu Valli (discusses atman-brahman and what it means to be self-realised).

Beyond elaborate discussions of philosophical concepts, Upanishads are also known for narrations of intriguing metaphysical thoughts (Frazier, 2019), especially relating to cosmology narrated as similes, stories, and analogies. Surprisingly, despite the wealth of knowledge, cosmogonical conceptions in Upanishads still need to be examined, with only a few studies available. One such example (Humphrey, 2015) explores cosmogenesis in Chandogya Upanishad by analysing the teaching of Uddalaka Aruni to his son Svetaketu. Another example (Höchsmann, 2016) combines the study of Upanishadic cosmology with spirituality but not specifically on cosmogony.

Hence, deciphering cosmogonical conceptions in Upanishads calls for more research, especially analysing a possible causal relationship between the creator and creation. This research paper builds on this opportunity.

1.3 Methodology

The nature of this research work requires using a suitable methodology that is amenable to both the (a) versatile interpretation of Upanishadic texts in the context of creator-causality-creation and (b) comparative analysis. Accordingly, the methodology chosen for this work involves using *Pramāṇa Śāstra* (modes of knowledge and understanding – Indian epistemology[4]) to interpret Upanishadic texts.

The Vedic texts are the source of the conceptual basis for using *pramāṇas*. Taittiriya Aranyaka (TaittA_1.2.1) mentions *pratyaksha* (direct perception), *aitihya* (traditional instructions), and *anumana* (inference, consideration). KaU (2.8 and 2.9) discusses *tarka* (suppositional reasoning, inquiry, confutation). The authors contend that employing pramaanas as a methodological framework for comprehending Upanishadic wisdom facilitates a more effective investigation of the research question and helps synthesize insights on creator-causality-creation and deduce thematic patterns.

1.4 Textual Analysis

The analysis section follows the sequence below that establishes the thematic pattern reflecting the essence of the subject matter of the corresponding Upanishadic content. However, due to the texts' voluminous nature, only a few verses are highlighted here based on their significance for this research study:

- Exposition of Creator
- Process of Creation
- Creator-Causality-Creation
- Cyclical Creation and Dissolution

1.4.1 Exposition of Creator

[4] Phillips, Stephen and Anand Vaidya, "Epistemology in Classical Indian Philosophy", The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy (Spring 2024 Edition), Edward N. Zalta & Uri Nodelman (eds.), URL = <https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/spr2024/entries/epistemology-india/>.

Upanishads' core idea is the creator's omnipresent nature (*brahman* – the unmanifest Supreme Spirit). Ishopanishad (IsU) affirms that One (*ekaṃ*), *brahman*, is all-pervading, unmoving yet moves faster than the mind, is far and near, and is also within and outside everything. Such an explanation of *brahman* is possible through direct perception (*pratyaksha*) of how human minds work and observing the world around us.

Taittiriya Upanishad (TaittU) takes this further. It declares that after creating this Universe, the *brahman* entered it and enveloped everything as form and formless, finite and infinite, defined and undefined, sentient and insentient, real and unreal. Therefore, the following verses imply that the Upanishads view this creation as a manifestation of the unmanifest creator and do not distinguish between creator and creation.

> *īśāvāsyam idaṁ sarvam* (IsU_1)
>
> *anejad ekaṃ manaso javīyo nainaddevā āpnuvanpūrvamarṣat | taddhāvato 'nyānatyeti tiṣṭhat tasminn apo mātariśvā dadhāti || tad ejati tan naijati tad dūre tad v antike | tad antar asya sarvasya tad u sarvasyāsya bāhyataḥ* || (IsU_4 and 5)
>
> *idaṃ sarvamasṛjata / yadidaṃ kiñca / tatsṛṣṭvā / tadevānuprāviśat / tadanupraviśya / sacca tyaccābhavat /niruktaṃ cāniruktaṃ ca / nilayanaṃ cānilayanaṃ ca / vijñānaṃ cāvijñānaṃ ca / satyaṃ cānṛtaṃ ca satyamabhavat /* (TaittU_2.6.1)

Furthermore, Upanishads expand on the unmanifest nature of the creator with an epithet of incomprehensibility using expressions that clearly illustrate the use of pramaanas – describing that imperceivable by negating what can be perceived. For example, Kathopanishad (KaU) pronounces that the supreme spirit is primeval (*purāṇo*), neither born nor dies (*ajo*), is eternally present (*nityaḥ śāśvato*), and is beyond reasoning. Maitrayaniya Upanishad (MaiU) posits that the supreme spirit is ungraspable, invisible, and dwelling inside all and visualizes the supreme spirit as Virat Purusha, a concept familiar to the Rig Veda Samhita Purusha Sukta (RV_10.90).

> *na nareṇāvareṇa prokta eṣa suvijñeyo bahudhā cintyamānaḥ / ananyaprokte gatir atra nāsty aṇīyān hy atarkyam aṇupramāṇāt //* (KaU_2.8 and 2.9)
>
> *na jāyate mriyate vā vipaścin nāyaṃ kutaścin na babhūva kaścit / ajo nityaḥ śāśvato 'yaṃ purāṇo na hanyate hanyamāne śarīre //* (KaU_2.18)
>
> *sa vā eṣa sūkṣmo'grāhyo'dṛśyaḥ puruṣa* (MaiU_2.5)

In addition to envisioning the *brahman* as omnipresent, Upanishads also forward another unique premise by proclaiming that the supreme spirit is verily the *OM* (also represented as *AUM* phonetically), *akṣaraṃ param*, the absolute supreme sound.

> *etad dhy evākṣaraṃ brahma etad dhy evākṣaraṃ param / etad dhy evākṣaraṃ jñātvā yo yad icchati tasya tat //* (KaU_2.16)
> *omiti brahma / omitīdaṃ sarvam /* (TaittU_1.8.1)

1.4.2 Process of Creation

Yajur Veda Upanishads vividly describe the creation process, including the state before the Universe's origin. In this way, the texts indicate that the creator existed before the creation

began; there was something and not nothing. MaiU explains that there was darkness (implying imperceptibility) before creation began, and only the Supreme One (that *ekaṃ*) was present. Further, MaiU adds that the One, through self-power, commenced the process by differentiating and manifested itself in manifold creation.

> *tamo vā idamekamāsa tatpaścātpareṇeritaṃ viṣayatvaṃ prayātyetadvai rajaso rūpaṃ tadrajaḥ khalvīritaṃ viṣamatvaṃ prayātyetadvai tamaso rūpaṃ tattamaḥ khalvīritaṃ tamasaḥ* (MaiU_5.2)

The Brhadaranyaka and Taittiriya Upanishads explain how the *atman* (verily the *brahman*) manifests as creation, amounting to the process of transformation of the creator. BrhU explicates that the *atman* divides first into heat (*agni*), then to light (*āditya*), wind (*vāyu*), and finally as life force (Praana). Then *atman* sets forth the time (*kāla*) and expands in every direction in space (verses symbolize this in an anthropocentric manner with various body parts of Viraj – the embodied supreme *brahman*). TaittU elucidates that space was born first from the *atman*, then in the sequence air, fire, water, earth, plants, food, and humans were born. Undoubtedly, TaiitU's elucidation also entails an element of anthropocentric consideration while describing the creation process.

> *sa tredhātmānaṃ vyakurutādityaṃ tṛtīyaṃ vāyuṃ tṛtīyam | sa eṣa prāṇas tredhāvihitaḥ | tasya prācī dik śiro 'sau cāsau cermau | athāsya pratīcī dik puccham asau cāsau ca sakthyau | dakṣiṇā codīcī ca pārśve | dyauḥ pṛṣṭham antarikṣam udaram iyam uraḥ | sa eṣo 'psu pratiṣṭhitaḥ | yatra kva caiti tad eva pratitiṣṭhaty evaṃ vidvān ||* (BrhU_1.2.3)

> *tasmādvā etasmādātmana ākāśaḥ saṃbhūtaḥ / ākāśādvāyuḥ / vāyoragniḥ / agnerāpaḥ / adabhyaḥ pṛthivī / pṛthivyā oṣadhayaḥ / oṣadhībhyonnam / annātpuruṣaḥ /* (TaittU_2.1.1)

1.4.3 Creator-Causality-Creation

The chosen Upanishads consistently explain that the *brahman* (verily the *atman*) is the creator that causes the creation to begin and is the source of everything. BrhU clearly sets this idea and asserts that the *brahman* is the unmanifest (*avyakta*) that self-manifests as the creation. The IsU goes a step further and declares that the One (*ekaṁ*), while remaining unchanged and eternal, causes the constantly changing creation to come into existence, and yet it exists without any cause (*svayambhū*) as a self-existing entity.

> *ātmaivedam agra āsīt puruṣavidhaḥ | so 'nuvīkṣya nānyad ātmano 'paśyat | so 'ham asmīty agre vyāharat |* (BrhU_1.4.1)

> *tad dhedaṃ tarhy avyākṛtam āsīt | tan nāmarūpābhyām eva vyākriyatāsau nāmāyam idaṃrūpa iti |* (BrhU_1.4.7)

> *yasmin sarvāṇi bhūtāny ātmaivābhūd vijānataḥ | tatra ko mohaḥ kaḥ śoka ekatvam anupaśyataḥ || sa paryagāc chukram akāyam avraṇam asnāviraṃ śuddham apāpaviddham | kavir manīṣī paribhūḥ svayambhūr yāthātathyator 'thān vyadadhāc chāśvatībhyaḥ samābhyaḥ ||* (IsU_7 and 8)

Shvetaashvatara Upanishad (SvetU) has detailed narrations on the unmanifest (*avyakta*) and imperishable (*akṣaraṃ*) creator as the cause (*kāraṇaṃ*) of the manifest (*vyakta*) and perishable (*kṣaram*) creation. SevtU emphasizes how the creator, the one ultimate and primal source, results in this diverse creation (*eko vaśī niṣkriyāṇāṃ bahūṇām ekaṃ bījaṃ bahudhā yaḥ karoti* and *eko bahūnāṃ*).

> *saṃyuktam etat kṣaram akṣaraṃ ca vyaktāvyaktaṃ bharate viśvam īśaḥ anīśaś cātmā badhyate bhoktṛbhāvāj jñātvā devaṃ mucyate sarvapāśaiḥ //* (SvetU_1.8)
>
> *na tasya kaścit patir asti loke na ceśitā naiva ca tasya liṅgaṃ sa kāraṇaṃ karaṇādhipādhipo na cāsya kaścij janitā na cādhipaḥ //* (SvetU_6.9)
>
> *eko vaśī niṣkriyāṇāṃ bahūṇām ekaṃ bījaṃ bahudhā yaḥ karoti tam ātmasthaṃ ye 'nupaśyanti dhīrās teṣāṃ sukhaṃ śāśvataṃ netareṣāṃ // nityo nityānāṃ cetanaś cetanānām eko bahūnāṃ yo vidadhāti kāmān tat kāraṇaṃ sāṃkhyayogādhigamyaṃ jñātvā devaṃ mucyate sarvapāśaiḥ //* (SvetU_6.12 and 13)

Intriguingly, SvetU contemplates the causal role of the creator in the creation coming into existence and, in a scientific manner, eliminates possible choices one by one before finally declaring the creator's (*brahman*'s) self-sustaining energy (*devātmaśakti*) as the primal cause.

> *kiṃkāraṇaṃ brahma kutaḥ sma jātā jīvāmaḥ kena kva ca saṃpratiṣṭhāḥ adhiṣṭhitāḥ kena sukhetareṣu vartāmahe brahmavido vyavasthām // kālaḥ svabhāvo niyatir yadṛcchā bhūtāni yoniḥ puruṣeti cintyam saṃyoga eṣāṃ na tv ātmabhāvād ātmā hy anīśaḥ sukhaduḥkhahetoḥ // te dhyānayogānugatā apaśyan devātmaśaktiṃ svaguṇair nigūḍhām yaḥ kāraṇāni nikhilāni tāni kālātmayuktāny adhitiṣṭhaty ekaḥ //* (SvetU_1.1 to 3)

Furthermore, SvetU has many enigmatic descriptions of the causal role of the creator (the supreme imperishable unmanifest *brahman*) by proclaiming that, (i) *brahman* is beyond the three divisions of time (implying eternal nature) and still controls time (*kāla*) (ii) *brahman* manifests as the creation of various components of the Universe – space, fire, star, air, moon, water, earth; (iii) *brahman* causes the expansion of this creation; and (iv) *brahman* causes all radiating objects (sun, moon, stars, lightning, fire) in the Universe to shine.

> *ādiḥ sa saṃyoganimittahetuḥ paras trikālād akalo 'pi dṛṣṭaḥ taṃ viśvarūpaṃ bhavabhūtam īḍyaṃ devaṃ svacittastham upāsya pūrvam //* (SvetU_6.5)
>
> *tad evāgnis tad ādityas tad vāyus tad u candramāḥ tad eva śukraṃ tad brahma tad āpas tat prajāpatiḥ //* (SvetU_4.2)
>
> *yo yoniṃ-yonim adhitiṣṭhaty eko yasminn idaṃ saṃ ca vi caiti sarvam tam īśānaṃ varadaṃ devam īḍyaṃ nicāyyemāṃ śāntim atyantam eti //* (SvetU_4.11)
>
> *yenāvṛtaṃ nityam idaṃ hi sarvaṃ jñaḥ kālakālo guṇī sarvavidyaḥ teneśitaṃ karma vivartate ha pṛthivyāptejo'nilakhāni cintyam // na tatra sūryo bhāti na candratārakaṃ nemā vidyuto bhānti kuto 'yam agniḥ tam eva bhāntam anubhāti sarvaṃ tasya bhāsā sarvam idaṃ vibhāti //* (SvetU_6.2 and 14)

KaU offers an analogy on the causality by comparing the creator with the invisible roots of the holy fig tree above and the creation as the visible branches below (envisioning an inverted tree). With the branches forming and falling, the roots continue providing the same life-supporting energy from the roots to the branches.

> *ūrdhvamūlo avākśākha eṣo 'śvatthaḥ sanātanaḥ / tad eva śukraṃ tad brahma tad evāmṛtam ucyate / tasmiṃl lokāḥ śritāḥ sarve tad u nātyeti kaścana // etad vai tat //* (KaU_6.1)

Finally, on the creator-causality-creation relationship, MaiU considers how the time cycle (eons after eons) impacts creation when great oceans go dry, mountain peaks fall, fixed pole stars move away, and the earth gets submerged. Despite the altering nature of this creation, the creator who caused this dynamism remains unaltered.

> *atha kimetairvānyānāṃ śoṣaṇaṃ mahārṇavānāṃ śikhariṇāṃ prapatanaṃ dhruvasya pracalanaṃ sthānaṃ vā tarūṇāṃ nimajjanaṃ pṛthivyāḥ sthānādapasaraṇaṃ //* (MaiU_1.4)

1.4.4 Cyclical Creation and Dissolution

Yajur Veda Upanishads have some baffling details on the creation's cyclic nature; therefore, a need arises to describe the state before creation or between dissolution and re-creation. BrhU mentions there was nothing in the beginning, and darkness enveloped everything. Such a state of darkness implies the imperceivable nature of the unmanifest, and 'nothing' may not mean the non-existence of cause but simply an unfathomable state. In such a state, creation as the effect may be indistinguishable from the cause, the creator – when manifestation was yet to begin. TaittU envisions that the trigger for the beginning of creation came from heat (*tapas*) energy, inherent in the unmanifest state of the creator.

> *naiveha kiṃ canāgra āsīt | mṛtyunaivedam āvṛtam āsīd aśanāyayā | aśanāyā hi mṛtyuḥ |* (BrhU_1.2.1) *sa tapo 'tapyata / sa tapastaptvā / idaṃ sarvamasṛjata / yadidaṃ kiñca / tatsṛṣṭvā /* (TaittU_2.6.1)

While explaining the creation process, SvetU describes that the cosmic creation (manifestation process) begins from the state of darkness due to intrinsic heat, and *brahman* spreads in all directions through expansion. At the time of dissolution, *brahman* withdraws all the creation through a contraction into itself. This Upanishadic notion indicates the cosmic cycle of creation-dissolution-re-creation. Remarkably, SvetU uses an analogy to explain this idea by saying that *brahman*, as the supreme radiance, is without any colour and, with its inherent power, distributes manifold colours in the creation process.

> *ya eko 'varṇo bahudhā śaktiyogād varṇān anekān nihitārtho dadhāti vi caiti cānte viśvam ādau sa devaḥ sa no buddhyā śubhayā saṃyunaktu // yo yoniṃ-yonim adhitiṣṭhaty eko yasminn idaṃ saṃ ca vi caiti sarvam tam īśānaṃ varadaṃ devam īḍyaṃ nicāyyemāṃ śāntim atyantam eti //* (SvetU_4.1 and 11)

> *ekaikaṃ jālaṃ bahudhā vikurvann asmin kṣetre saṃharaty eṣa devaḥ bhūyaḥ sṛṣṭvā patayas tatheśaḥ sarvādhipatyaṃ kurute mahātmā //* (SvetU_5.3)

1.4.5 Key Inferences

Based on the analysis of select verses discussed in the previous section, the following infographic (Figure 3) summarizes the similarities and differences in the conception and expression of cosmogony notions between the Shukla (SYV) and Krishna (KYV) Yajur Veda Upanishads.

Subject	Similarities between KYV and SYV Upanishads	Differences between KYV and SYV Upanishads
Exposition of Creator	Omnipresence of the creator. Incomprehensibility of the unmanifest state of the creator.	KYV focuses more on describing the attributes of the creator.
Process of Creation	Anthropocentric considerations while describing the manifestation process.	While SYV highlights the larger dimensions of creation, KYV spotlights the creation of life.
Creator-Causality-Creation	Causal role of the creator.	KYV has more emphasis on the causality, especially using symbolisms.
Cyclical Creation and Dissolution		Predominant in KYV Upanishads and has an alignment with Puranic cosmogonical ideas.

Figure 3: Cosmogony Similarities and Differences between SYV and KYV Upanishads

2. Conclusion

The selected Upanishads epitomize the unmanifest creator as the primal cause and this manifest Universe, along with its constituents, as an effect. In addition, the scriptures proclaim that the creator is supreme, absolute, imperishable, identity-less, and form-less, and the creation owes its existence to the creator.

Remarkably, the Upanishads support the notion of *satkāryavāda* as the manifest effect (creation) preexists within the unmanifest cause (creator). Further strengthening this notion, Upanishads declare that causation does not change the primal unmanifest cause in any way, and the creation as an effect is constantly changing and perishable. Hence, it also supports the idea that the effect is *vivarta*, a transformation through the manifestation process. Thus, the Upanishadic notion of creator-creation is the same as cause-effect, where the effect is dynamic and ever-changing, whereas the cause remains incomprehensible and immutable.

Based on the findings and inferences, this paper concludes that (i) not only are notions of creator-causality-creation embedded in the Upanishads, but they are also interconnected; (ii) the discussion of causality has an element of association with anthropocentric considerations; and (iii) a discernible pattern of cosmogonical conceptions emerges.

Also, the Upanishads show both similarities and distinctions. The parallels between the Shukla and Krishna Yajur Veda Upanishads are invoking an omnipresent creator, a causal role of the creator, the creator's incomprehensibility, and the creation process. In comparison, the Krishna Yajur Veda Upanishads predominantly focus on the creator's description, although ironically, causality and cyclical creation with expressions relating to the direct perception of objects. Meanwhile, the Shukla Yajur Veda Upanishads mainly focus on the transformation of the

creator into creation through abstract comprehensions with emphasis on describing the unmanifest state of the creator.

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PsyAid: The Innovation of Psycho-Education Platform to Increase the Use of Psychological First Aid (PFA) As First Mental Health Response to COVID-19 Pandemic Survivors

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Abstract
This study aims to demonstrate how Psychological First Aid (PFA) can enhance mental health among COVID-19 survivors through psycho-educational tools such as video learning and social media content. Addressing the 25% increase in anxiety and depression among COVID-19 survivors (WHO, 2022), the PFA model provides immediate help and support to individuals in distress due to a recent crisis. It is simple and straightforward, focusing on methods to reduce distress during times of fear, anxiety, and uncertainty. While not a long-term solution, the PFA model is valuable and timely during emergencies, such as the COVID-19 pandemic (Minihan et al., 2020). Therefore, the PFA model could help address the shortage of mental health professionals in Indonesia, where only 3,970 mental health workers are available, constituting about 0.1125% of the 3.53 million COVID-19 survivors. PFA can be implemented by anyone with appropriate training (Fox et al., 2012). Using a sample size of 59 Indonesian COVID-19 survivors and employing a curriculum design research method by Akker et al. (2010), this study found notable improvements in knowledge and attitudes among participants exposed to PFA psycho-education (PsyAid). Participants received five learning modules through video and social media content. Data were analyzed using the Wilcoxon Signed Rank Test, revealing significant differences in the cognitive dimension with a p-value of .00 ($p < .05$). Additionally, the majority of participants expressed intent to recommend PsyAid to others, recognizing its benefits in providing immediate emotional and practical support and helping survivors manage stress and anxiety effectively right after a crisis.

Keywords: Psychological First Aid, COVID-19, Psycho-Education

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Introduction

Cases of COVID-19 in Indonesia are increasing each day. This can be shown from the increase of 191.891 new cases of COVID-19 from August 29 to September 1 (WHO, 2021). Until September 2, 4.100.138 cases have been confirmed in Indonesia. The addition of COVID-19 cases increase anxiety in society and also the lack of preparation in order to deal with the pandemic situation (Fitria & Ifdil, 2020). These kind of situations will have many impacts to COVID-19 survivors, their relatives, and even individuals who have never experienced COVID-19.

It is supported by the survey's result, which from 21 respondents who have relatives with COVID-19, 15 of them once diagnosed with COVID-19.

Problems that has been faced by the respondents or their relatives who are diagnosed with COVID-19 are feeling anxious, panic, difficulty to find medicine, and also difficulty to find a place to do self-isolation. Activities that can be used to cope with these problems are doing the health protocol, meditating, exercising, and trying to entertain themselves, but none of them tried to give some supports. Respondents also stated that they have difficulties in searching for some information about regulating emotions, overcoming negative feelings such as panic and anxiety, and information about self-isolate, medicine availability, and other medical information.

In order to enhance the feeling of readiness and knowledge that is needed to face COVID-19, information and knowledge about how to handle COVID-19 are needed. The lack of clinical psychologists in Indonesia has been an issue, where there are only 2500 of them and the number of psychiatrists in Indonesia are only 600-800. Meanwhile, the cases of COVID-19 in Indonesia are increasing up to 3,53 million cases until August 2021 (Pradilla, 2021). The gap between mental health workers and COVID-19's survivors or even individual who hasn't been diagnosed with COVID-19 can be overcome using the knowledge and application of Psychological First Aid (PFA) which can be used and done by everyone. According to WHO, PFA can be known as a humanistic and supportive response to others who suffer and need support (in Minihan et al., 2020).

According to WHO (2011), there are four principles to PFA: prepare, look, listen, and link. Psycho-education platforms, as an intervention, can improve knowledge among survivors or individuals who are not or are currently diagnosed with COVID-19 via internet-based platforms such as websites or Instagram (Harrer, et al., 2021).

Research Method

This study employed the Curriculum Design Research method as outlined by Akker et al. (2010). The research was conducted in four stages:

1. Preliminary Investigation

In the initial phase, data was gathered from 21 respondents who are relatives of COVID-19 survivors. The findings revealed that common challenges faced by these individuals upon learning of their relative's diagnosis include anxiety, panic, difficulty in obtaining medication, and challenges in securing a place for self-isolation. To manage these issues, respondents typically adhered to health protocols in their daily activities, engaged in meditation, and

exercised regularly. Notably, none of the respondents reported providing emotional support to their relatives diagnosed with COVID-19, despite research by Rahmatina et al. (2021) highlighting the importance of emotional, instrumental, and informational support for COVID19 survivors in navigating their daily lives.

2. Theoretical Embedding

The researchers conducted a review of relevant theories and empirical evidence to inform the development of psycho-educational content.

3. Empirical Testing

The researchers disseminated information about Psychological First Aid (PFA) via a dedicated website and an Instagram page, making these resources accessible to COVID-19 survivors and the broader community.

4. Documentation, Analysis, and Reflection on Process and Outcomes

The effectiveness of the website and Instagram page as psycho-educational platforms was assessed using a pre-test and post-test approach. These tests, administered to readers, were analyzed using the Wilcoxon Signed Rank Test in SPSS version 23. The evaluation focused on the learning outcomes, specifically changes in the respondents' knowledge, comprehension, and application of PFA.

Conclusion

PsyAid is a psycho-educational platform designed to provide accessible information and training on Psychological First Aid (PFA) through a website and Instagram. Developed in response to the global impact of COVID-19, this platform aims to support individuals in managing the psychological effects of crises like the pandemic.

The development of PsyAid followed a structured Curriculum Design Research method, which included stages such as preliminary investigation, theoretical embedding, empirical testing, and rigorous evaluation. During the preliminary investigation, it was found that many individuals associated with COVID-19 survivors experienced anxiety, panic, and challenges related to self-isolation, yet emotional support was often overlooked. The platform was then built with these findings in mind, incorporating evidence-based practices to address these gaps.

To evaluate PsyAid's effectiveness, content related to PFA was disseminated via the website and Instagram. Users' cognitive, skill, and attitude changes were measured through pretests and post-tests using the Wilcoxon Signed Rank Test. The results showed significant improvements across all dimensions ($p = .000$, sig. > 0.05), indicating that the platform successfully enhanced users' understanding and ability to apply PFA.

Overall, PsyAid is a compelling and valuable tool that significantly contributes to the public's ability to provide psychological support during crises. The platform's user-friendly design and evidence-based content make it a highly recommended resource, as reflected by the positive feedback from users.

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Should Arts Be Politically Committed? A Case Study on the Criticism of "People's Justice" Artwork in Documenta Fifteen

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Abstract
Documenta Fifteen in Kassel, Germany, curated by Ruangrupa, immediately became the world's attention after the boycott of an art installation accused of having anti-Semitic views. Schaap (2011) argues that strict social hierarchies continue to be practiced culturally to suppress and deny the intelligence of small groups who may not have the basic knowledge to understand their world. Meanwhile, Rancière argued that the essence of politics itself is through acts of resistance to the 'police' by providing opportunities for marginalized groups in the intellectual hierarchy to speak. Then, what kind of freedom is ideal to provide space for artists or writers to express their thoughts and ideas? What if their views contradict the values agreed upon by the majority group? In this paper, I will analyze Rancière's thoughts about political aesthetics and the distribution of sensible as a framework to deal with the criticism of the artwork entitled "People's Justice" by Taring Padi which was exhibited at Documenta Fifteen in Kassel, Germany in 2022. Should art have a political commitment? And if so, what is the relationship between politics and aesthetics? Through a qualitative descriptive method, I invite readers to reflect on Rancière's thoughts on understanding an art or artwork, despite the eventual need to reach a dissensus.

Keywords: Art Criticism, Documenta Fifteen, Distribution of the Sensible

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Introduction

Art and literature are often driven by political interests. May (2008) stated that relationships between art and politics have always existed. For Rancière, the link between politics and aesthetics lies in the very idea itself. Politics is a question of aesthetics, a matter of appearances. Politics and subject (citizens) are one entity in two separate terms. Politics can only be understood by presupposing an idea about the subject, thus the subject can only work within a political framework. Politics is seen as a vehicle for freedom, and freedom only arises in action, therefore the freedom of the state subject must be understood as 'freedom in action' not freedom in metaphysical presuppositions as understood in the view of liberalism.

Rancière (2010) views politics as something that must be defined separately, not predicted by others or by power. Art, in its essence, cannot predict or foresee the impact that its methods of undermining authority may or may not have on the shaping of political identification. Art has the ability to produce a fresh visual landscape and a new structure of understanding, yet these advancements serve to redefine the realm of ordinary encounters as a realm of collective and impersonal encounters. In this paper, I would like to analyze how Rancière's thoughts on the aesthetic of politics and the distribution of the sensible influence the criticism of "People's Justice" artwork by *Taring Padi* that was exhibited in the Documenta Fifteen in Kassel, Germany. This, so to speak, then prompts further questions: Should arts be politically committed? And if so, how are politics and aesthetics related? To begin answering those questions, let us re-interpreting Plato's thoughts on works of art. Plato distinguishes between planned art and inspired art based on the creative processand functional art and beautiful art based on its type (Beardsley, 1985).

Planned art carries beauty, order, proportion, and planning. Inspirational art carries the grip of emotions and forces beyond humans (artists and spectators). In Plato's view, poetry and song are types of inspiring art that carry emotion and are far from the rationality that is being offered to the Greek polis society at that time. Although Plato rejected poetry and song (rhapsode), he was ambiguous by allowing poetry and song in favor of the State (hymn). This kind of dualism of art can be seen in Nietzsche's view which reveals two faces of art, namely Apollonian art andDionysian art. Apollonian art is a type of art that reflects beauty, order, refinement, carries the dream world. While Dionysian art is a rebellious, dynamic, intoxicating art as Nietzsche stated:

> There are two conditions in which art appears in man like a force of nature and disposes of him whether he will or no: as the compulsion to have vision and as a compulsion to an orgiasticstate. Both conditions are rehearsed in ordinary life, too, but weaker: in dream and in intoxication. (Nietzsche, 1967, p.419-420)

Modernism has defined art and made a distinction between art and not art, betweenbeautiful and unbeautiful art, between high art and low art, and the like. This tendency of separation in the polar opposite (binary opposition) about art has made us busy looking for definitions of what is an art and what is not art. Rancière separates the political involvement of artists from what he means by aesthetics. The link between the aesthetic and the political is not in the ideological involvement of the actors, but in the innovation and subjectification process that occurs to the audience. Aesthetics refers to a specific regime for identifying and reflecting on the arts: a mode of articulation between ways of doing and making, their corresponding forms of visibility, and possible ways of thinking about their relationships (Rancière, 2004).

Aesthetics is the distribution of the sensible. Rancière refers to the Holocaust event that changed the way humans view the body, as a result of thousands of mutilations displayedthrough visuals and visualizations. He saw that the form of art determined what the artist wanted and for what reason. This is why Rancière separated the interests of neutralizing art by making it articulate to convey a message to the world, or by withdrawing it from that particular realm and using it as a tool for direct intervention in its increasingly poor-quality environment. In Rancière's view, he finds this historically revolutionary art in critical art, which always seeks to contest domination by creating a sensitivity to alienation. This kind of criticalart form is intended to encourage the viewer to look for reasons for this alienation in contradiction to the world around them. Thus, it has moved to action. If the deduction is donedirectly by the artists, then the art system has lost its substance and the artists have been trapped in direct activism.

Aesthetic Regime of Arts

Rancière has a concept in which he argues that in order to voice that which previouslydid not have room to speak, the subject must perform an act of subjectification where he must fight the police or the structures and rules that dominate at the time so that what was previously unheard will have the opportunity to be heard (Rancière, 2004). The concept of equality that is recognized through aesthetics is the main premise of Ranciere's writings thatdiscuss aesthetic and literary philosophy (Riedner, 2012). Rancière does not approve of any kind of action that he thinks seeks to represent the proletariat, the poor, or those who are considered not to have high intellectual abilities to voice their voices (Rancière, 2004).

According to Rancière, the essence of politics itself is through acts of resistance to the police by providing opportunities for marginalized people in an intellectual hierarchy to speak. Based on these problems, Rancière (2004) argues that the ideal literary work is writing that is in the aesthetic regime of the arts. He divides regimes into schemes, namely ethical regime, representative regime, and aesthetic regime of the arts. The ethical regime according to Rancière is related to artistic images that are evaluated basedon their usefulness in society. In an ethical regime, literary or artistic works have an educational function and then hinder the creation of the authority of art or literary works. It can be assumed that the ethical regime then places literature only as a product of labor and has no political content. The second regime is the representative regime, replacing the ethical regime, the representative regime is a new innovation in combining art and labor. In this regime, art or literature is given its own scope with its own rules, and its position is above the product of ordinary labor. But then this representative regime develops into forms of normativity that define conditions which according to its imitation can be recognized as art exclusively and evaluated through this framework, as good or bad, adequate or inadequate, as well as differences between genres according to what is represented. The third regime is the aesthetic regime of the arts which according to Rancière is ableto express what is silent or unheard in it.

The aesthetic regime of art is a form of effort to achieve the equality that Rancière wants to achieve. In the aesthetic regime, art or literary works are considered as independent without being tied to any rules, hierarchies, or assumptions. Art or literature is not limited by the demand to educate and as a product of labor, but also not to be shackled by certain bourgeois exclusive content that distinguishes itfrom everyday life. It is in this aesthetic regime of art that allows for the emergence of aesthetic politics. Efforts to achieve equality can be achieved in this regime because in the end, the freedom offered by this regime is able to provide space for those who were previously unheard of because they were pressured by the police order to finally be voiced through art or literature.

Case Study: “People’s Justice” Artwork at Documenta Fifteen

The documenta fifteen in Kassel, Germany, curated by Ruangrupa, immediately became the world's attention after the decline of the installation art entitled "People's Justice" by the *Taring Padi* from Indonesia. The artwork is accused of being a tool of anti- Semitism. The work is in the form of a banner about twelve meters long and eight meters highwhich is packed with mixed figures which was created twenty years ago. There was strong reaction in both Germany and Israel. On Twitter, the Israeli embassy derided the artwork as "Goebbels' old-style propaganda" while Germany's Minister of Culture declared that she hadbeen "betrayed" by documenta's management and curators, who had ensured anti-Semitismhad no place at the exhibition. Hours after that comment, Documenta organizers had coveredthe art piece with a black sheet. This did not prevent the Exhibition Supervisory Board, whichincluded the Mayor of Kassel, Christian Geselle, from holding a meeting and deciding to remove the artwork.

This event re-examines the intersection between curators, artists, the works of art they create and external parties, including and especially the authorities, the media, and politically and ideologically opposing parties—to interpret one work. Sabine Schormann, Director General of Documenta, told the news magazine *Det Spiegel* that organizers did not screen any artwork beforehand, out of respect for artistic freedom. In June 2022, the management of Documenta Fifteen in Kassel decided to remove the artwork from *Taring Padi*, an art collective from Yogyakarta, Indonesia. The work entitled "People's Justice" deserved criticism because it features two figures with anti-Semitic stereotypes. However, so far there are no critics from Germany or Europe in general who areinterested in issues beyond that which are also closely related if we look back that this artwork actually shows the context of the New Order dictatorship in Indonesia from 1965 to1998.

Ruangrupa had been highlighted by the international media, not only because they manage the Documenta art festival as a curatorial team. However, the way the world's largestart event was managed by ruangrupa and the committee had become a public issue that hadeven been termed an 'art disaster' by the media landscape, especially Germany. Ruangrupa had been heavily criticized for being unclear about their position on the theme of antisemitism. Since the beginning of 2022 before Documenta was held, ruangrupa had not succeeded in breaking the allegation to support the anti-Jewish pattern by curating the Documenta festival. At that time, the Documenta management team had been warned by the German public and politics not to harbor anti-Semitic thoughts. In fact, ruangrupa allowed the Taring Padi collective to exhibit mural works the size of billboards, which has drawn public criticism, especially in Europe. The work, entitled “People's Justice”, depicts a soldier with a pig's head wearing a scarf bearing the image of 'Star of David' and a helmet bearing the words 'Mossad'. The figure of speech that is considered anti-Semitic is also seen in other figures which depict a male figure with the symbol 'SS' on a hat. In the context of German history, any art that is not reflective and contains racist content (especially anti-Jewish) is strongly rejected by the public. With the image of the canine-toothed figures and the crooked nose ofthe figures found in the Taring Padi painting, it is enough to give a caricature impression thatwas often used by the Nazis to discredit the Jews. In a public statement, the Israeli Embassy in Germany stated that the work was no different from the caricature agitation during the Nazi era.[1]

[1] See *Documenta Takes Down Art after Antisemitism Accusations.* The New York Times. https://www.nytimes.com/2022/06/21/arts/design/documenta-antisemitism.html

Before accusations of anti-Semitism against these works became public, the President of the Republic of Germany, Frank-Walter Steinmeier, had emphasized in a speech at the opening of Documenta that the German public would not tolerate art that is reckless on the issue of anti-Semitism. Despite having been warned by the German President, allegations of anti-Semitism (which previously had not been resolved by Documenta management team) resurfaced and sparked a negative reaction by the German Chancellor. Chancellor Olaf Scholzstated that he did not want to visit the Documenta festival and considered the results of ruangrupa's curation as 'terrible' and painful. Likewise, the Minister of Culture, Claudia Roth,continued and emphasized that he did not accept and rejected the negligence of Documenta,Ruangrupa, and those who were responsible.

The social context in this event is more complex and requires more elaboration. Of the disassembled work, Taring Padi stated:

> The 'People's Justice' was painted nearly twenty years ago, and expresses our disappointment, frustration and anger as politicized art students who also lost many of our friends in the street riots of 1998 which ultimately led to the dissolutionof the dictator.

The content of this work draws on the knowledge that began to emerge at that time revealing the involvement of Western democracies in exacerbating political and social instability in Indonesia in a systematic way – designed to overthrow the Indonesian Communist party and the incumbent president who sympathized with their agenda – which ultimately led to on the mass violence and genocide of 1965-1966 against at least half a million citizens, the detention of many more without trial, and the establishment of the New Order military regime.

Some Indonesian artists expressed their opinions much more dramatically on social media. They talked about state censorship and ask why *Taring Padi* and Ruangrupa didn't more strongly resist the dismantling of their work. Goenawan Mohamad, founder and senioreditor of the Indonesian investigative magazine "Tempo", wondered in his popular column "catatan pinggir" how a 20-year-old image against the New Order military regime in Indonesiacould suddenly be interpreted in its entirety as "anti-Semitic" in Germany. He argued that it is absurd that Indonesians, Indonesian-Chinese, or people from Papua should be expected tointerpret cruelty and hatred as an experience that must inevitably be linked to European anti-Semitism. Meanwhile, the renowned installation artist Titarubi speaks of a "monument of mourning" for artistic freedom internationally.[2] According to her, "monument of mourning" becomes a memorial monument to celebrate freedom of art that has ethical awareness in aesthetics. Freedom in art, no matter how small, is needed by people. When life is like that strict with all the rules and restrictions and tiresome burdens, art seems to offer a way of liberation, Titarubi added.

As the most populous Muslim country in the world, Indonesia does not have diplomatic relations with Israel. Anti-Semitic sentiment can be traced back to colonial officials and European travelers in the 19th century who systematically applied European stereotypesof Jews to local Chinese populations throughout Southeast Asia. Compounded by the legacy of colonial rule that negates critical thinking education for many Indonesians, it is notsurprising that in the

[2] See *Documenta 15: Monumen Duka di Friedrichsplatz.* Deutsche Welle. https://www.dw.com/id/monumen-duka-di-documenta-15-friedrichsplatz/a-62863402

end, the anti-Semitic sentiment was quite widespread.[3] There is a lot toask in the artwork and it's surprising that this image in the “People's Justice” had not provokea negative reaction from other audiences in the past. *Taring Padi* admitted that their approach may be "sloppy and careless". This experience, they said, will lead to a more cautious approach to the impact of imagery in the work. Unfortunately, Documenta didn't seem to be able to give its artists a platform to explain how careful explanation is. The accusation that the artwork reflects Goebbels-style Nazi sentiment is a hyperbolic and extremist, even reactionary, response; these accusations create a dangerous atmosphere in which the artist's safety was threatened. Institutional and government reactions have prevented constructive discussion in order to contextualize the politics of representation from multiple perspectives.

“The Distribution of Sensible” and “People's Justice”

Another well-known concept from Rancière is *The Distribution of Sensible*. The distribution occurs when the police work as a means of order.

> The police is thus first an order of bodies that defines the allocation of ways of doing, ways of being, and ways of saying, ... it is an order of the visible and the visible. That sees that a particular activity is visible and another is not, that this speech is understood as discourse and another as noise. (Stoneman, 2011)

Rancière wanted to emphasize that what can be accepted is only what applies to the police and what does not fall within the police framework is disorder or noise. Police work for the distribution of sensible or the formation of a proper distribution to ensure that a set of perceptions of things outside of themselves can be rejected. The system of self-evident factsof sense perception that simultaneously discloses the existence of something in common andthe delimitations that define the respective parts and positions within it (Rancière, 2004). Distribution of Sensible thus presents a shared reality that is very exclusive in nature. Exclusivity is where certain groups benefit and are allowed while others are not allowed even though ideally, democratic principles allow.

This logic of propriety settles as a social order, norm, or whatever is accepted as truthand public opinion. Consequences for challenging propriety can have various consequences because they are baiting themselves to be ready to be blamed, 'the wrong', instead of being seen as an effort to emancipate and verify themselves to participate in different areas appropriately. The consequence of single identity is inhumane behavior when the law deprives them of their rights with the stigma of 'the wrong'. The wrong-the singularity of thelocal argument and expression of law-is distinguished from the particularization of right attributed to collectivities according to their identity and is only possible as long as its universality is separate from the naked relationship between humanity and inhumanity (Norval, 2012). Minority groups are thus very likely to be 'the wrong' because they have disappearedfrom the discourse of the community's single identity so that their rights and interests become legitimate, not to be taken into account or even castrated. These events may occur on a daily basis, for example when the prerequisite for a police officer is culturally not a citizenof a certain descent even though he holds a valid identity card or scholarship assistance is given to a certain culturally legitimized religious identity of the majority.

[3] See *The State of Antisemitism in Asia-Pasific.* American Jewish Committee. https://www.ajc.org/news/the-state-of-antisemitism-in-asia-pacific

This dilemma occursand seems culturally legitimate, but in fact, it is bad for public ethics when faced with the public rights of citizens who live in a democracy. In the case of *Taring Padi*'s "People's Justice","The Wrong" may be directed to the Jews if it uses the perspective of the artists who come from a Muslim-majority country with all the geo-political and geo-economic conditions that occurred in the past as the described in the previous section. But then, how does democracyethically allow groups like *Taring Padi* to voice what's on their minds? The strict social hierarchy continues to be practiced culturally to oppress each other and reject the intelligence of small groups who seem to have no knowledge base to understand the world they experience. Rancière also stated, "le sans part – those who have no part, to the conflict between parts of society" (Schaap, 2011). This concept also gives a signal that there are parts that do not have a part, or "the portion of the portionless". So Rancière emphasized that the task of democracy is to oppose what seems to be given to groups and actually has the potential to censor certain groups within it. Democracy as a formfor constructing dissensus over 'the given' of public life" (Rancière, 2004).

Conclusion

The complexity of Rancière's thoughts explores further questions that the author hasnot been able to solve in just one short article. The conclusion that the author proposes at the end of this paper is intended as an encouragement for both the writer and the readers toconduct more intensive and extensive research on the meaning and interpretation of a workof art as a communication tool to open up space for dialogue so that what has happened in Documenta Fifteen could be a reflection, that art, after all, could be a tool to encompasses the principles of freedom of thought and expression, may be reflected in its ability to address even the most delicate issues.

A series of concepts Rancière's ideas of equality can be placed as an effort todistribute social justice. His point about the concept of dissensus to reject the consensusmodel that can give the public and minority interests the absence, of course, is not only applicable in political thought but also in arts. The dissensus, as Rancière proposed, suggests that democracy does not allow for a final consensus because power does not apply absolutely ina democracy, so the voices scattered in the power consensus must be reconfigured toproduce a quality public life for every citizen, even in arts and culture. The democratic mind is thus an attempt to continue to listen and distribute justice that is imagined together so that nothing is scattered. This is possible because everyone, as well as artists, can articulate their experiences and thoughts of injustice so that they can be responded to in political hegemony.

Documenta Fifteen, with its horizontal strategy and open platform, however fragile, offers us the opportunity to engage in conversations about our wisdom, political interests, and privileged positions. These conversations are sometimes may uncomfortable, hurtful, and also offensive. This is where we need deliberative democracy: a staggering struggle, difficult if not impossible to reach a consensus. Documenta Fifteen has presented some of these experiments to its audience. This is an opportunity for a dialogue about the most important social, political, and human rights challenges of our time.

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"The House of Bernarda Alba" by F.G. Lorca: An Online Performance

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Abstract
The central theme of this presentation is the online performance of F. G. Lorca's "The House of Bernarda Alba", which was created in Greece by the theatre school of "Periplous Theatre" under the direction of Maria Kantife, during the 2021 quarantine. This performance, of a kind which is now known as digital theatre / performance, came about as a result of a complete method of acting teaching created by the acting teacher to enable the continuation of her work under isolation conditions, via video and video calls. After six months of online rehearsals, the play was performed via a group video call, which was also recorded, with the actors never actually meeting face-to-face but creating an atmosphere shared by all of them, so that the viewer could sense that all the actors were performing in the same world. This performance was the first of its kind in Greece and this work shows us how the arts can benefit from technology and how theatre can be experienced in different ways. It raises issues regarding theatre teaching methods, research and theatre practices, while at the same time it examines how an audience perceives an online performance when they themselves are viewing on online platforms (zoom).

Keywords: Lorca, Theatre, Online Platforms, Digital Theatre, Digital Performance, COVID, Rethymno, Quarantine, Theatre Teaching

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Introduction

Sometimes necessity leads to new paths of creativity. This will be demonstrated by this presentation, which concerns staging a performance during the quarantine period (2020-2021) exclusively through online platforms. The play 'The House of Bernarda Alba' by F.G. Lorca was presented by the graduating actors of the Theatre School of Theatrical Periplous in Greece (the name “Theatrikos Periplous” in Greek means “Theatrical Voyage”), specifically in the city of Rethymno (Crete). The study was based on the recorded performance from the archive of the Theatrical Periplous and on interviews with some of the participants.

The Theatre School was established in 2014 in Rethymno as a school of Theatrical Periplous, a troupe that has been operating continuously in the city since 1988 by Thomas Kantifes and Maria Kantife. The person in charge and acting teacher is the actress and Acting Coach Maria Kantife, who, after a long and recognized career on the theatrical stages of Greece's capital (Athens), chose to return to Rethymno and start training new actors there.

The School consists of four years of study and the trainees in the 3rd year participated in the staging of a theatrical performance. By 2020, they had already presented Aeschylus' Oresteia, Chekhov's The Three Sisters, and Hortatzis' Katsourbos.

How the Story Begins

The year 2020-2021 had already started working on the texts of Lorca's play 'The House of Bernarda Alba' when the announcement for the second lockdown was made in the end of October. From the previous year, when classes had been suspended for a few months, Maria Kantife, not wanting to stop the lessons, continued the meetings online, beginning to create a new method of digital teaching, which we will discuss in detail below. While everyone believed that normalcy would soon return, allowing classes and rehearsals to continue live, things did not turn out that way. The lockdown lasted the entire academic year, resulting in the performance gradually being set up through online platforms, without the trainee actors ever meeting in person, yet talking to each other as if they were side by side. Each act was recorded on video separately in real time (almost without editing) and was presented again via an online platform to the audience.

Maria Kandife’s Digital Teaching Method

The year's classes did not stop. Kantife began teaching through video and online calls, leading the group through a new, original process. The students gradually began to integrate to the process. They transformed their rooms into workspaces, moving furniture to create areas for improvisations, acting exercises, etc. The pattern was as follows: The instructor gave instructions for assignments, the students recorded them on video, then sent the videos to the instructor, and she sent them corrections. In lessons with group video calls, everyone watched all the videos and listened to the necessary corrections. The use of videos proved to be very functional as, in this way, the trainees had the opportunity to see themselves and better understand the corrections given to them. They observed their bodies and listened to their intonations under their teacher's guidance, and they began to progress rapidly (Tzanidaki, 2022).

The goal of the educational system advocated by Maria Kantife is the truth of the role and the performance of every moment on stage "every time like the first time". A line of acting very

close to the theories of Stanislavsky and the Actor Studio. This was also the goal of the online training process, without any discount. The minds and bodies of students should remain functional and creative within the conditions of confinement. For this reason, she asked the rest of the teachers of the School, Thomas Kantifes, Andromachi Varsami and Anna Tzanidaki, to start lessons again through online classes. So in the middle of the year and while the quarantine continued, the School was operating normally with courses in Acting, Improvisation, Stage Perception, Physical Expression, Movement - Dance, Expressive Song, Theater History, etc.

Research and Study on the Play

Before we delve into further details, let's see the plot of the play. The story is set in Andalusia where sixty-year-old Bernarda Alba, after the death of her second husband, imposes a strict eight-year mourning period in her house, forbidding her five daughters from going outside or having social interactions, especially with the local men. This restrictive condition, combined with the daughters' repressed need for life and love, creates a suffocating atmosphere in the house that in the final act resembles a bomb ready to explode. The presence of a man, Pepe el Romano (who never appears in the play), with whom three of the five girls are in love, will be the reason the bomb will explode, and control will slip from the hands of the strict Bernarda, leading to the death of her youngest daughter.

Figure 1: Snapshot from the second act. Each of the participants is at her home. (Theatrical Periplous Archive)

In the play, the power of society is dominant, with neighbors peering from half-open windows, judging the lives of others. Their influence affects Bernarda herself, who aims to make everything in her house appear as if it is going well.

The central characters, all women, are Bernarda, her five daughters (Angustias, Amelia, Magdalena, Martirio, Adela), the housekeeper, Poncia and Bernarda's mother named Maria Hosefa. Additionally, some neighbors and Bernarda's two maids also appear. In this performance Bernarda was played by Maria's Kantife voice and the rest casting was: Marina Nikaki as Angustias, Foteini Karagadaki as Amelia and maid, Nikoleta Makrigianni as Magdalena, Nikol Mitsopoulou as Martirio, Marianna Photopoulou as Adela, Anna Tzanidaki as Ponthia, Stella Frantzeskaki as Maria Hosefa and Nikolleta Komodromou as neighbor.

It should be noted that the rendering of the text was done by the whole team, with the assistance of Giannis Kallergis, who was knowledgeable in Spanish.

As mentioned above, the goal was the truth of the roles and therefore the first step of the theatrical process is always the study of the work and the research about the characters and the era. With Kadife's guidance, the trainees try to discover the "why" of their roles, their relationships with other roles, their wants and their ways of expressing themselves. A study was made on life in Lorca's Spain, on the position of women, on the political conditions of the period, and the truth of the central character, Bernarda Alba, a character that is often rendered one-dimensional, representing oppression and fascism, was sought. Yes to that, but Bernarda is more than a symbol, she is also a person, and as a person the team of the Theater School sought her out. She has been driven to this behavior by the society that has so oppressed her, as well as the author himself. It is strange that the daughters are "imprisoned" in the "musts" by their mother, a woman who has gone through the same things and perhaps in her heart understands them too much. She cares for them but tries to protect them in the wrong way. Bernarda's search for womanhood and humanity led the role relationships down very interesting paths.

At the same time, the group's real-life confinement conditions came to unite in a unique way with those of Lorca's work. The original idea for the stage performance was to create box-rooms on the stage for each of the women in the play where from there they would interact with the others. Only at the end, when Adela resists and goes outside the frameworks allowed to her, the action would descend on the central stage. The only one who would come out of her "box" would be Bernarda to supervise the other "boxes" and her assistant and alter-ego Ponthia.

And while the lockdown due to the pandemic continued, the boxes that would be placed on stage were turned into computer "windows", where each of Bernarda's daughters lived. She was chosen to appear only with her voice, pulling the strings, invisible, holding the "box" she thought protected her daughters. And only at the end does the box break and Bernarda appears as normal, more human than ever and more broken than ever. Because she felt evil coming. She knew what the girls were going through and pretended not to see. She didn't have the strength to handle it and this weakness made her strong, cruel and distant.

Figure 2: Symbolic moment from the opening credits of the play. Bernarda keeps her daughters in a box. (Theatrical Periplous Archive)

The Performance

Rehearsals were held in the same way as lessons. The trainees had their own scene meetings, worked on their pieces, wrote the video, sent it to the instructor and got the corrections. In the live online meeting, everyone re-watched all the videos or re-enacted the scenes.

As time went by, the need to create the stage space began to arise. All "windows" had to belong to the same house. Thus everyone's space was taken care of, the lighting began to be made with portables and whatever was available in each house The costumes began to be made by each person with common elements, etc. (Theatrikos Periplous, 2024).

In essence, a theatrical performance began to be created where each "actor" performed while addressing the computer or mobile screen, which was placed in a pre-planned spot to cover the "stage space" that had been decided. Roles exiting the scene disabled their windows while re-enabling them upon entering.

Figure 3: At the second picture you can see the view and the “stage” space of the first picture’s actor. At the third picture you can see the final result of the scene. (Theatrical Periplous Archive)

Care was taken of where they would look so they could see their partner in the other window, or give items that were 'transported' from one window to another (Figure 3).

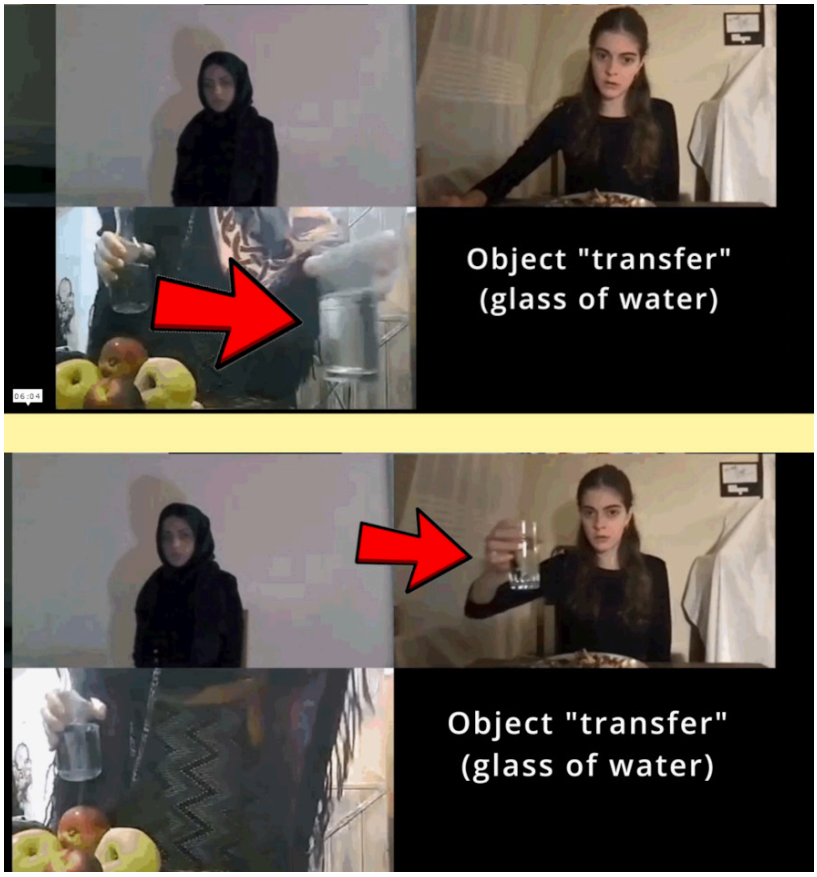

Figure 4: Snapshot of the transfer of a glass of water from one window to another. (Theatrical Periplous Archive)

The months of work were many and this process had become very natural for both the trainees and the trainer.

In the final scene of the play, Kantife thought of doing something even more complicated. All the heroines unfurled a white cloth which was passed from window to window. This was achieved with 5 identical cloths each of which was procured separately by the heroines which they unfolded under Kantife's instructions (Figures 4 & 5).

Figure 5: Snapshot of the final scene (Theatrical Periplus Archive)

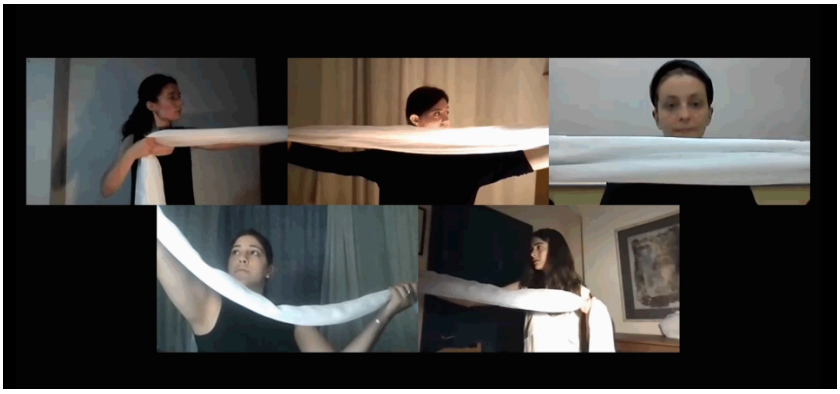

Figure 6: Snapshot of the final scene (Theatrical Periplus Archive)

The music (some of the tracks was specially written for the performance by Vangelis Linoxilakis) was one of the tricky technical parts because it had to come in from one source so everyone could hear it at the same time. So one of the students who wasn't acting in the show (Giannis Mathioudakis and Marios Maragoudakis) would join the video call and put in the sounds when needed. Of course, the music did not reach all the laptops uniformly, but the participants reacted as if they were listening to it normally. To help the audience, the sounds were re-introduced on top of the final video and this was one of the very few interventions made to the final result.

As mentioned again the acts of the play were performed in their final form with flow like a normal performance, within three days (each day and an act) and thus recorded by the recording of the platform. Apart from the music that came in after processing (which, as we mentioned, they actually listened to during the performance) the only intervention was the addition of an improvisation that the girls had done with the condition "alone in your room" in the second act.

This performance reached the audience through a live session on an online platform, where approximately 100 viewers watched it. After the lifting of the quarantine in the fall of 2021, the Theatre School held a screening of the performance at the location where the classes are conducted, allowing more viewers to watch it (Unknown, 2021).

Figure 7: Snapshot from the live screening of the performance after the lifting of the quarantine (Theatrical Periplous Archive)

This performance is an important example of the creativity that emerged during the quarantine conditions and opened a new path in digital theater. It was the first and only complete performance created in Greece in this manner and features the following characteristics:

On the technical side:

- The scenes were performed without editing, as a theatrical scene would be played. (An exception, as mentioned, is the scene with the girls' improvisations in the second act and the music that was reinserted at the end to improve the sound. Minor corrections were made in some areas to the colors in an effort to fix any imperfections due to poor connection quality during recording.)
- Use of the online platform and its recording features.
- Creation of a unified stage space fragmented into eight different homes.

On the theatrical side:

- Rehearsals were conducted as usual, like in all theatrical performances.
- Despite the distancing conditions, direct interaction between the actors was achieved.
- Everyone performed in front of a screen where they saw their partner in a very small square, yet a sense of immediacy and unity was created so that even the participants themselves did not feel they were far apart.
- A directorial approach was given that expressed both the play and the conditions to which everyone had to adapt.

Conclusion

This particular performance served the time and the conditions of the period in which it was created. Outside the context of quarantine, there might not be a need to repeat such work in exactly the same way, and this makes it unique. It is the greatest proof that theater cannot disappear; it will survive under the most challenging conditions and in the most unusual ways. This performance had no financial gain. It was created out of the need for creation, the need to resist confinement, initially encouraged by Maria Kandife and subsequently by the dedication of the entire team.

Thus, in a very natural way, an innovative artistic proposal and a new theatrical path were created using modern digital media, which, outside the context of forced isolation, can evolve.

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"Ένα διαδικτυακό θεατρικό θαύμα. Δημιουργώντας μια θεατρική παράσταση μέσα στην καραντίνα" by Anna Tzanidaki, Digital archive Istorima. Ιωάννης Μαθιουδάκης: archive.istorima.org/interviews/EL-20056

"Το σπίτι της Μπερνάρντα Άλμπα. Προβλήθηκε η πρώτη παράσταση που δημιουργήθηκε διαδικτυακά από το Σχολείο Θεάτρου" by unknown author: https://rethemnos.gr/to-spiti-tis-mpernarnta-almpa-toy-sch/

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Mathematical Interpretation of Perspective in a Combine Painting Composed of Multilayer Cuboids

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Official Conference Proceedings

Abstract
Cuboids are one of the most common geometries, and the multilayer cuboid is often used in various sculpture and science. Combine painting is an art that incorporates 3D sculpture into 2D painting and produces various visual effects. A significant component of 2D painting is perspective, and the geometric variation of sculpture affects the visual effect of the art through harmony with the perspective of painting. A geometrical analysis was conducted according to the tilting angle variation of a multilayer cuboid. It was proven that as the angle increases, the overall length and area of the multilayer cuboid in the perpendicular view increase. In the vertical view, the lengths of each cuboid must overlap under a certain condition, and the overlap frequency increases with increasing tilt angles. These geometric analyses can aid in designing multilayer cuboid sculptures that fit the perspective of the 2D art works in the combine painting.

Keywords: Perspective, Multilayer Cuboid, Combine Painting, Angle Variation, Geometrical Analysis

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Introduction

Beyond math, science, and art, the cuboid is one of the most used shapes in everyday life. Multilayer cuboid geometry is simple and useful, allowing you to stack cubes of different shapes into structures that can be used to explain mathematical and scientific phenomena, as well as in other fields such as Lego and games. For example, multilayered cuboids are an important engineering element in microelectronic devices (Lau, 1993). Animal skin and plant tissues also have multilayered cubic structures, which play an important role in regulating physiological phenomena or protecting organisms from the outside world (Brocklehurst et al., 2023). Multilayered cuboids are also very interesting geometrically and practically, because by adjusting the size and angles of the cubes, we can create almost any structure we can imagine. Recently, there has been a growing effort to understand these multilayer cuboids mathematically (Sachs et al., 2021; Wang et al., 2020).

Combine painting is a new field that combines 2D painting with three-dimensional sculpture. The three-dimensional effect created by a 3D sculpture object in the painting works of a 2D surface creates various visual effects. However, since the Renaissance, efforts have been made to increase the sense of three-dimensionality in 2D paintings, and the perspective technique is the most representative one (Folland, 2010; Ikegami, 2010). 2D painting uses perspective to represent a three-dimensional surface, and as several point perspectives are used, painting has an excellent visual effect with a variety of three-dimensional effects (Li, 2023). However, once a 2D painting is completed, the perspective is fixed. On the other hand, in terms of sculpture, a 3D objective can be viewed from any perspective. Unlike 2D painting, the perspective changes depending on the viewer's gaze. Therefore, even if one 2D painting has a certain perspective, depending on how the 3D sculpture is incorporated into the 2D painting, the overall three-dimensional effect of the combined painting will vary, which will produce various visual effects. In this respect, interpreting combine painting in terms of perspective is an interesting topic (Soriano-Colchero1 & López-Vílchez, 2019; Conway & Livingstone, 2007). However, unlike the fields of science and engineering, there are not many attempts to mathematically understand the multilayer cuboid used in art.

This study analyzes the geometric phenomena that occur when a group of cuboids align with the perspective of a 2D painting. We analyzed the phenomenon that a one-directional cuboid stack overlaps the length of each cuboid seen perpendicular to the tilt direction according to the tilt angle variation, and the geometrical changes such as the length and surface area of the entire cuboid stack were mathematically analyzed.

Example Combine: Incorporation of a Cuboid Stack Onto a 2D Painting (Example 1)

A multilayer cuboid was designed by adjusting the height of each cuboid of the same width to fit well the area of the ship shown in Figure 1. Twenty-nine cuboids with a width of 0.6 cm, of which length were equal to their heights, successfully fit the area, attached perpendicular to the painting. Looking at the front view, the painting perspective and the vertically lined cuboids are not that awkward in terms of the overall three-dimensional effect. However, when viewed from the top view, the line direction of the cuboids and the perspective of the painting are inconsistent, creating an unharmonious feeling (Figure 1).

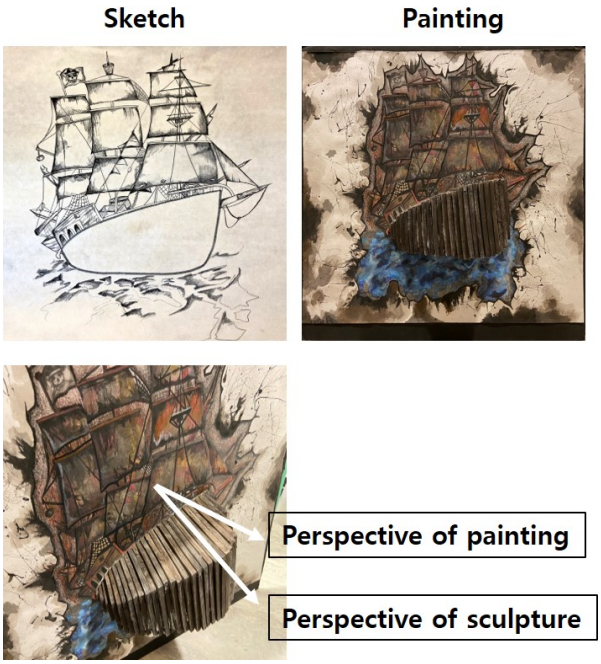

Figure 1: Mismatching of perspective of painting with sculpture (Case study of Example 1).

Effect of Angle of Cuboid Stack on Variation of Length and Surface Area of the Front-View of the Sculpture (Example 2)

Figure 2 is the geometry of an example multilayer cuboid seen from the top view and front view. Front view is the x-y plane, and top view is the x-z plane. First, looking at the top view, as the multilayer cuboid tilt angle changes, the shape changes, but the overall area does not change.

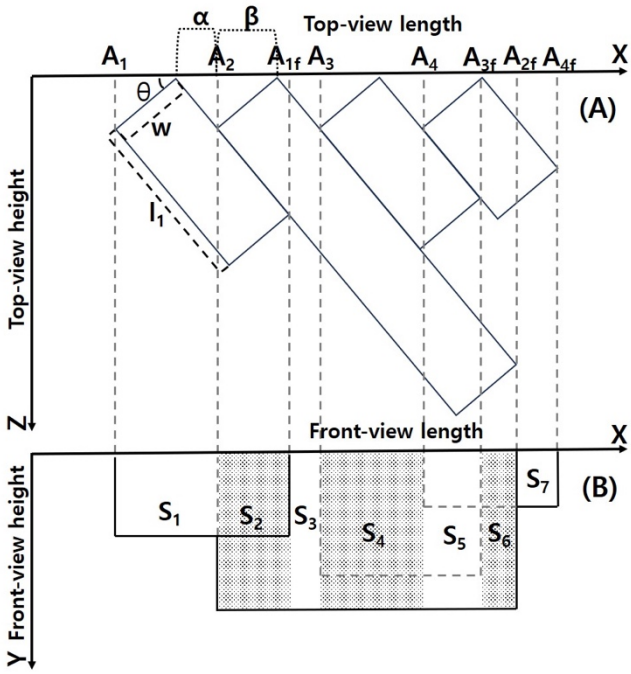

Figure 2: Illustration of lengths of each segmented front-view surface area of an example cuboid stack (Case study of Example 2).

Top- and front-views both use x-direction. The x-directional movement of a cuboid in the top-view is recognized as movement in the same position in the front-view. Therefore, the x-position and relative distance of each movement of the cuboid in the top view are applied the same as those in the front view. Figure 2 is an example of four cuboids with different lengths and heights forming a multilayer. The starting position point in the x-direction of each cuboid is denoted as A, and the ending position point is denoted as A_f.

As shown in Figure 2. Due to the tilt angle of the cuboid stack, the length (x-direction) and the overlapped surface area in the front view of each cuboid changes, as well as the entire front-view surface area of the multilayer cuboid. In a case, by adjusting the angle of the cuboid stack and aligning it with the painting perspective, the top view could be harmonized with the painting, but surface variation occurs in the front view. Therefore, it is necessary to analyze the effect of the tilt angle on the length and surface area of each cuboid in the front view.

The length of each front-view segmented surface area varies depending on the length and angle of each cuboid that makes up the multilayer (Figure 2). This makes various length combinations of A and A_f, as shown in Table 1.

Cases	The segmented length of the front view surface area
$A_i A_{i+1}$	$(\alpha+\beta)$
$A_{if} A_{i+j}$	$[\ \alpha(j-1)+\beta j\ ] - l_i \sin\theta$
$A_{i+j} A_{if}$	$l_i \sin\theta - [\ \alpha(j-1)+\beta j\ ]$
$A_{if} A_{i+j\,f}$	$l_{i+j} \sin\theta - l_i \sin\theta + (\alpha+\beta)j$
$A_{i+j\,f} A_{if}$	$l_i \sin\theta - l_{i+j} \sin\theta - (\alpha+\beta)j$

Table 1. Segmented length of the front view with respect to allocation of end points of cuboids.

Mathematical Analyses of Length Variation According to Angle Increase

The Effect of Angle on the Front View Length of the Multilayer Cuboid

The first characteristic feature in the Example 2 case study is that the front view length of each cuboid changes depending on the tilt angle. It is meaningful to check whether there is a general direction for the total front-view length according to the change in tilt angle of the multilayer cuboid. For the non-overlapped multilayer, the total length depends on the last cuboid.

$$\frac{\partial(w\cos\theta+(n-1)\frac{w}{\cos\theta}+l\sin\theta)}{\partial\theta} = \frac{w\sin\theta}{cos^2\theta}\,[(n-1)-\ cos^2\theta] + l\cos\theta\ \geq\ l\cos\theta\ \geq 0 \qquad (1)$$

Following Eqn. 1, the total front-view length increases, as the tilt angle of the multilayer cuboid, since the derivative is positive according to angle increase.

In the Example 1 case study, at angles 0, 5, and 15, the 29th cuboid is the final cuboid in the multilayer. At 30 and 45 degrees, overlapping occurred and the 25th cuboid is final in the multilayer. However, even in the case of overlapped cases, Eqn. 1 is equally satisfied, so we can see that as the angle increases, the front-view length increases (Table 2).

Angle (degree)	0	5	15	30	45
Length (cm)	17.4	17.58	18.33	20.75	25.88
Surface area (cm^2)	101.76	105.62	115.19	136.81	171.42

Table 2. Case study of Example 1. Variation of length and surface area of the front-view according to the cuboid stack angle.

Condition for Increasing the Front View Length of the Tilt Angled Multilayer Cuboid Over the Non-tilted Whole Multilayer

Equation 1 shows that the multilayer length increases with angle. In addition, through the Example 1 study, it was confirmed that the overlapping multilayer (25th cuboid in the final) exceeds the length of the non-tilted whole multilayer. Therefore, it is necessary to elucidate the condition at which this happens. For a multilayer with n cuboids, Eqn. 2 is the condition when the cumulated length of the multilayer from 1th to ith cuboid is greater than or equal to that of the non-tilted multilayer from 1th to nth cuboid, the whole multilayer.

$$w\cos\theta + \frac{(i-1)w}{\cos\theta} + l_i\sin\theta - nw = \frac{1}{\cos\theta}[w(\cos\theta)^2 - (nw - l_i\sin\theta)\cos\theta + (i-1)w] \geq 0 \quad (2)$$

Where w, l are width and length of each cuboid, respectively. The condition that Eqn. 2 is satisfied for any value of $\cos\theta$ is $determinant\ (Eqn.\ 2)\ \leq 0$ (Eqn. 3).

$$n - 2\sqrt{i-1} \leq \frac{l_i\sin\theta}{w} \leq n + 2\sqrt{i-1} \quad (3)$$

The Effect of Angle on Overlapping of an Angled Multilayer Cuboid Over Another

However, the overlapping found in the example 1 case study could occur not only in the 25th cuboid but also in other cuboids. In other words, there is a need to investigate the impact of angle on the last cuboid seen in the multilayer. The mathematical interpretation of this is as follows. Equation 4 describes the difference of front-view length between the multilayer of last cuboid ith and that of jth, and Equation 5 is the necessary condition for Eqn. 4.

$$f = \left(w\cos\theta + \frac{w}{\cos\theta}(i-1) + l_i\sin\theta\right) - \left(w\cos\theta + \frac{w}{\cos\theta}(j-1) + l_j\sin\theta\right) \geq 0, \quad i < j \quad (4)$$

$$f = (l_i - l_j)\sin\theta - \frac{w}{\cos\theta}(j-i) \geq 0$$

$$\sin 2\theta \geq \frac{2w(j-i)}{l_i - l_j} > 0 \ and \ l_i > l_j \quad (5)$$

Where $l_i\ and\ l_j$ are lengths of ith and jth cuboid, and $i < j$.

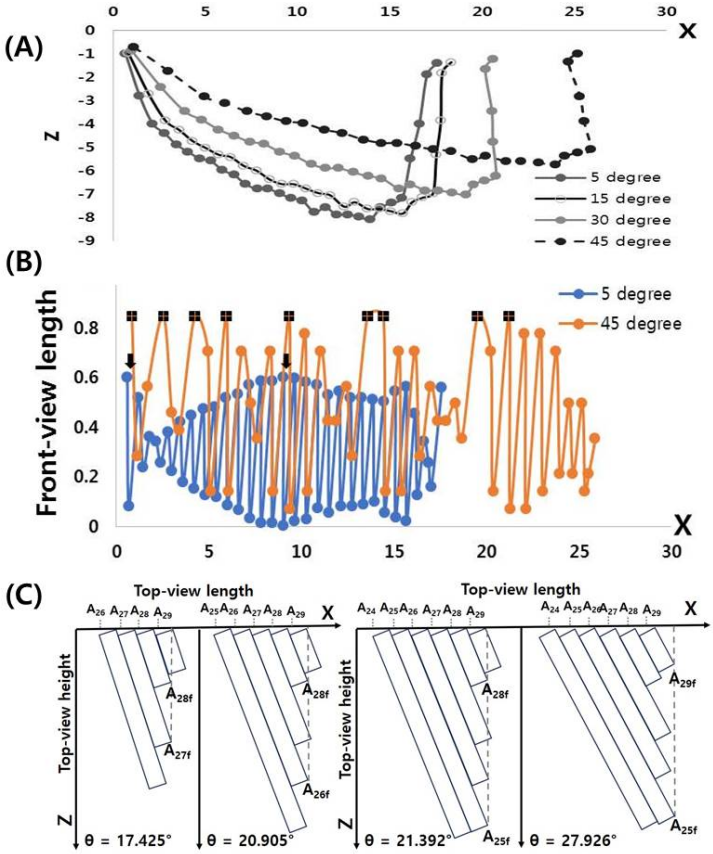

Figure 3: Case study of Example 1. (A) Variation of length and height of top-view of the cuboid stack. (B) Variation of series of segmented length according to the cuboid stack angle.

Rectangle square and arrows: A_i-A_{i+1}. (C) Minimum angles for overlapping cuboid stack.

Equation 5 implies that the front-view length of ith in the final cuboid could be larger than that of jth cuboid, regardless of less number of cuboids. As seen in Figure 3(A), 25th cuboid was the last one in the stack at 30 and 45 degree of angles, satisfying Eqn. 5. Also, Eqn. 5 shows that the potential of overlapping is proportional to $l_i - l_j$ but negatively proportional to the width of the cuboid.

However, when the length and width of all cuboids are determined, angle variation has the greatest influence on the view of the cuboid stack. The effect on overlapping according to angle is shown in Eqn. 6.

$$\frac{\partial f}{\partial \theta} = w(j-i)\sec\theta\tan\theta + (l_i - l_j)\cos\theta \geq 0, \ \ 0 \leq \theta \leq \pi/2 \tag{6}$$

According to Eqn. 6, it can be seen that as the angle increases, the probability of overlapping increases. Due to overlapping, the number of cases, A_{if} A_{i+jf}, in Table 1 increases, which inevitably increases the frequency of α+β front-view length, the distance between A_i A_{i+1}.

Therefore, as the angle increases, the length series tends to become more complex, which can be confirmed through the Example 1 case study (Figure 3[B]).

Equation 5 can be used to simulate various overlapping conditions. For example, in the Example 1 case study, the minimum angle at which various overlapping cases begin to occur

according to the proximity of A_{if} can be calculated using 29 cuboids. The simulation results are shown in Figure 3(C) and Figure 4.

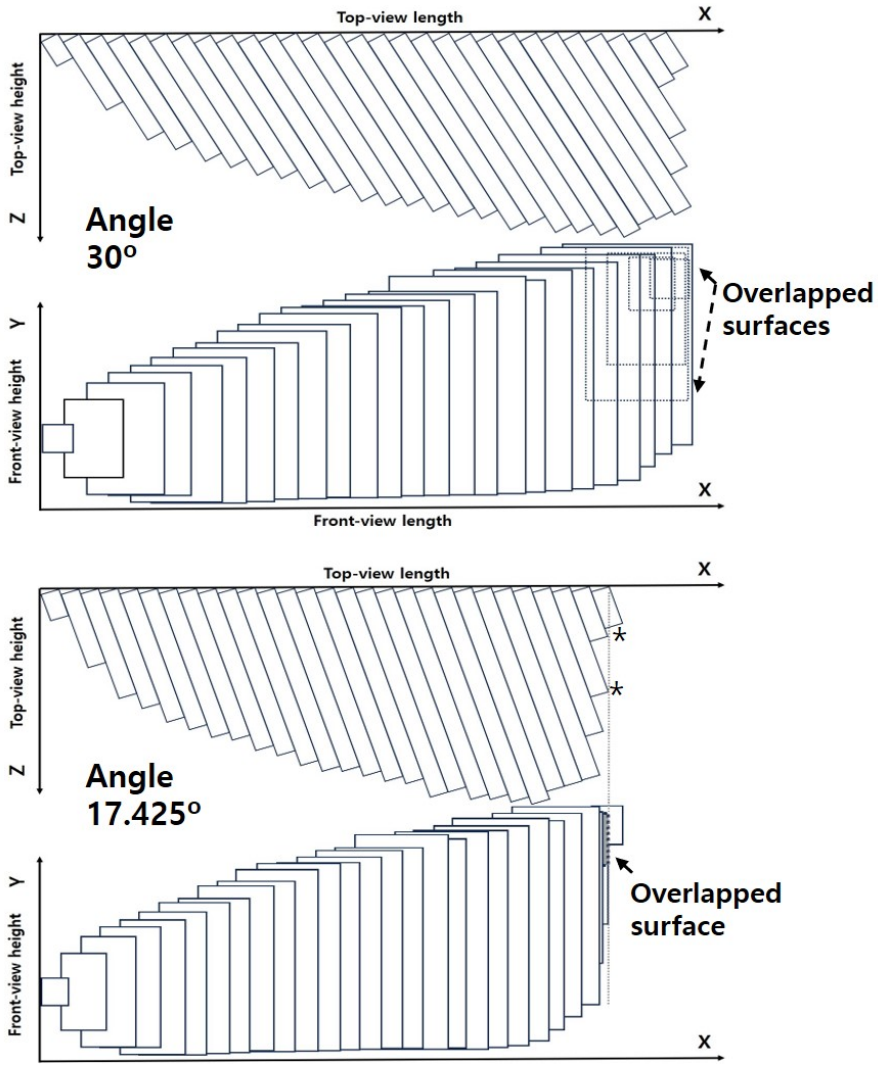

Figure 4: Case study of Example 1. Overlapping images of the cuboid sculpture (30° and 17.425°).

Segmented and Apparent Surface Area of Front View Dependent on Length Variations

The segmented surface area of the front-view in Figure 2 is summarized in Table 3. Each vertical segment may have overlapped surface areas. In this case, the apparent surface area of front view in each segment becomes the segmented surface area with the longest height. Ultimately, the total surface area of the front view can be expressed as follows.

$$Surface\ area\ of\ the\ front\ view = \sum_i L_i \times Max(H_i) \quad (7)$$

Segment	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Surface areas of sub-segments	H1xL1	H1xL2					
		H2xL2*	H2xL3	H2xL4*	H2xL5*		
				H3xL4	H3xL5	H3xL6	
					H4xL5*	H4xL6*	H4xL7
Apparent surface area	H1xL1	H1xL2	H2xL3	H3xL4	H3xL5	H3xL6	H4xL7

Table 3. Segmentation of front view surface area for the Example 2 case study.
H is the height of each cuboid. L is the segmented length of
the angled stack of cuboids. * Symbolizes overlapped surface area.

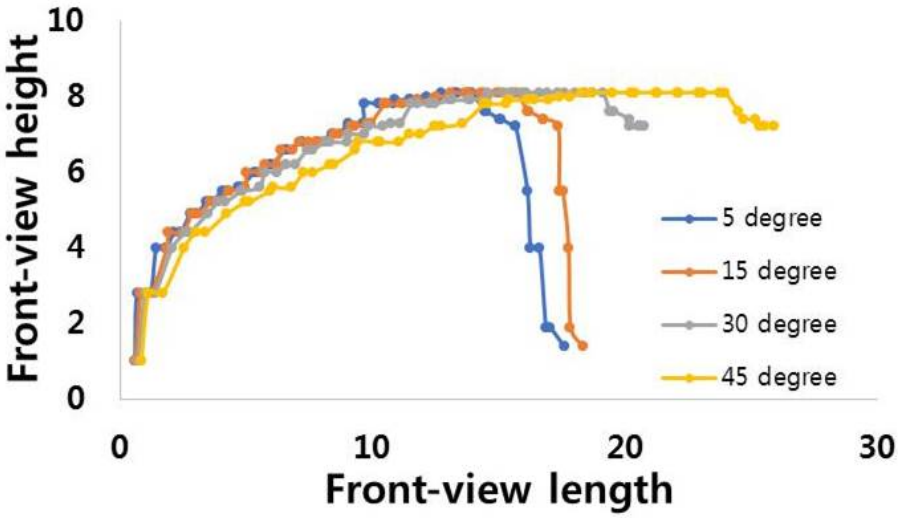

Figure 5: Case study of Example 1.
Variation of height of the front-view of the cuboid stack.

According to Eqn. 1, as the angle increases, the total length increases. And, Eqn. 7 tells us that the height at each segmented surface becomes the largest height among the segmented surfaces. Figure 5 shows the height of the segmented surfaces according to each angle as applied to the Example 1 case study. Therefore, the total surface inevitably increases as the angle increases. By applying Eqn. 7 to the Example 1 case study, the front-view surface area could be calculated according to each angle (Table 2). In addition, the simulation images could be compared, after incorporating the top-view surface according to angle variation into 2D painting (Figure 6). As shown in Figure 6, it can be seen that the harmony with the 2D painting perspective appears differently depending on the angle variation of the multilayer cuboid.

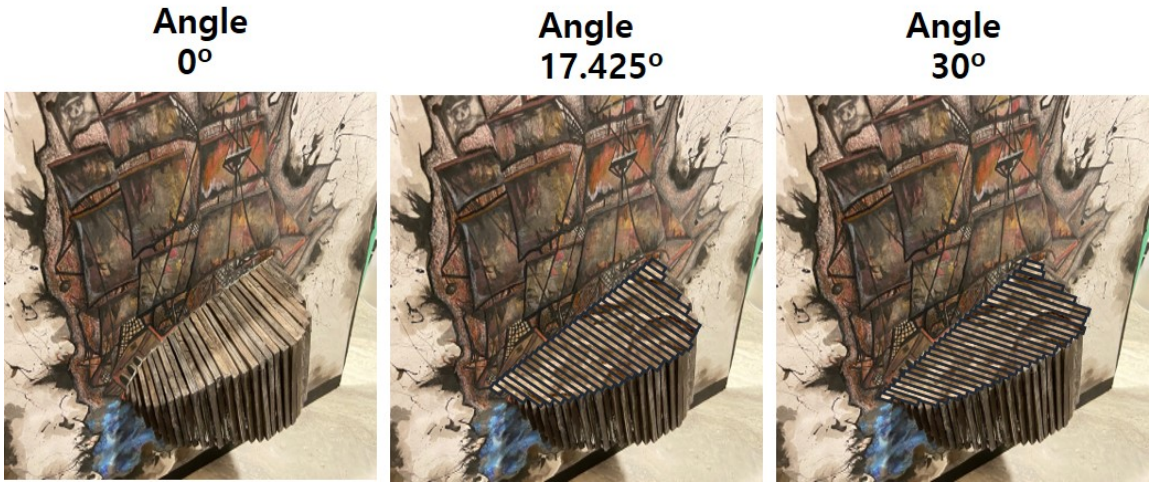

Figure 6: Comparative images of top-side view of the original painting depending on angle variation of the cuboid stack.

Conclusion

This study is about geometrical analysis according to angle variation in one-directional multilayer cuboid onto a painting. It was proven that as the angle increases, the visual length and surface area of the multilayer stack increase. Meanwhile, overlapping is a phenomenon caused by differences in the relative lengths of each cuboid, and in this study, the mathematical conditions under which such overlapping can occur were confirmed. Additionally, it was ascertained that as the angle increases, the possibility of overlapping also increases.

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Fantasy's Role in Approaching War: A Comparison of Lewis' "The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe" and Barrie's "Peter Pan"

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Abstract
This study examines the versatility of fantasy. Fantasy can be stated to be serving as an escape from the ugliness of reality, as well as a medium to propagandize those ugly aspects, specifically regarding war. The study focuses on *Peter Pan* and T*he Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*, and provides an analysis on how various aspects of the genre are reflected through these works. Peter Pan, although it was written before both world wars, due to involvement of Barrie in war propaganda in the US, is believed to have an impact on Roosevelt's representation of war as a great adventure, echoing Barrie's Peter. This conceptualization of war is analyzed as reflecting the power of fantasy to impact mass society. On the contrary, Lewis' work is discussed to be an escapist work in this research, serving as a secondary reality away from the Primary and functions as a means of criticism. This study compares Lewis's and Barrie's literary texts regarding their relations to both world wars and explains the evacuation of children during World War II and Barrie's contributions to war propaganda, portraying war as a great adventure. Therefore, it is concluded that fantasy has the ability to criticize the primary reality through subversion, while also affecting the ways people view events as disastrous as war.

Keywords: War, Propaganda, Escapism, Fantasy

1. Introduction

Fantasy as a genre often viewed as a mere escapism, however, it is also a powerful narrative tool to shape societal perceptions. Fantasy, in the face of devastating events such wars, yields the ability to construct the human experience. As a narrative tool, it can both criticize and romanticize war. Therefore, it can be claimed that fantasy serves a dual purpose in this regard. Consequently, it raises the question of how the escapist elements of fantasy can provide comfort while distracting from real-world struggles, as well as offering criticism and commentary regarding these challenges.

The 20th century opens the doors for the novels of Tolkien, Lewis and Le Guin to be categorized as fantasy literature. After the publishing of Tolkien's *The Hobbit,* fantasy literature of the early 20th century started to rise and find a place for itself within the literary scope, setting the identity for the genre. However, it can also be seen that the genre's attitude started to shift after the two world wars and took a turn away from the Victorian and early 20th century attitudes to a more social form rather than individualistic (Yılmaz, 2021, 1-6).

It can be observed that the studies on fantasy have aided research in identifying behaviors such as escapism. Hirschman explains escapism as a hedonic behavior, noting that individuals deal with escapist activities "in order to escape a reality that the individual finds difficult or is unable to deal with adequately," and adds that escapism provides ways for individuals to be in a more pleasant and desirable state of being temporarily (2013, 64). For Hirschman, the "more desirable state" might be a less stressful and more comfortable state of being, a mere distraction from their struggles for individuals, and the value of this "more desirable state" lies in the fact that it reduces anxiety and stress (64). In this regard, it can be stated that fantasy offers its readers a "more desirable state" by transforming them to a secondary world where they can *temporarily* get away from their struggles. During periods of conflict, individuals often seek mechanisms to understand and accept devastating events or ways to dissociate from them and reject their existence. For instance, artists might engage in this process through the creation of paintings or sculptures, utilizing their art to embody the emotional responses created by the unpleasantness within their imagination. In a similar way, authors might construct a parallel fantasy realm within their works to have the same effect, offering an imaginative secondary space to reflect and process the real-world turmoil. Lands like Neverland and Narnia serve as fantastical escapes for readers through literature. The temptation of seeing oneself flying to Neverland with Peter Pan or passing through a magical wardrobe into Narnia to meet Aslan captivates the imagination. These narratives by Lewis and Barrie highlight the enchantment of escapism, particularly through the depiction of child protagonists who embark on adventures to flee the harshness of their realities. The escapist appeal in these novels can thus be attributed to the children's experiences in the real world and the historical contexts in which these stories were written. These elements underscore the profound impact of historical and personal circumstances on the creation and reception of such literary works. Therefore, individuals can take on a journey to Neverland and to Narnia in search of a distraction from these realities or for a safe place in the face of conflicts. However, while offering a safe space to its readers, it can be seen in works such as *Narnia Chronicles* that it also offers an alternative approach, a commentary to what is desired to be escaped from, or can be used as a way to make them more bearable just like how Peter Pan and his Great Adventures in Neverland were used as an allegory to romanticize and propagate World War I in the US.

In this regard, this study aims to answer how Peter Pan and his great adventures to Neverland was used as an allegory to propagate and romanticize the Great War in the US, in what ways *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* offers a criticism to World War II and how these two instances are examples of escapism within the scope of fantasy literature. Hence, this study will examine the dual role of fantasy genre as a medium for critiquing and propagating war and to investigate its power to shape the human perception of war. In this regard, a historical contextual analysis and a literary analysis as well as a comparative approach will be employed to examine the role of the particular texts in demonstrating the dual purpose of fantasy and the themes of propaganda, escapism and the portrayal of the impact of war on children will be concentrated on. For this purpose, this study will first review the literature on fantasy genre and its relation to escapist literature, then analyze the historical role of *Peter Pan* during World War I and the critical implications regarding World War II in *the Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* before comparing these two works to further understand the dual purpose of fantasy literature.

2. Fantasy as an Escapist Genre

For the past two centuries, fantasy functioned as "a capable and compelling alternative to the realistic novel" (Landow, 1979, 9). Although as a genre it seems unlike what we accept as real, fantasy is not independent from our comprehension of reality as it depends on what we perceive as impossible and unexpected and what we accept as probable and likely (9). Landow explores the historical perception on air travel and notes that "Air travel, telecommunication, lasers, and creation of new elements were found only in the realms of magic and faerie but a short time ago" (9). However, all these once impossible concepts are now within the realm of probability. Reality in fantasy can also be seen as a means to stress moral values, for instance presenting selfishness as evil and destructive (14), hence highlighting the accepted reality. One method of fantasy to demonstrate the accepted reality is through transformation. It does not only transform the "single entire world itself" but also immerses the readers into an alternate realm characterized by a distinct system "often disconcerting and occasionally terrifying" (25), essentially setting a division between fantasy and everyday reality (26).

Tolkien's famous article "On Fairy-Stories" published in 1947 marks an important point in the history of fantasy as it attempted to present fantasy as a literary genre and provide a definition to the form (Yılmaz, 2021, 10). In his definition of fantasy, Tolkien proposes the division between the Primary and the Secondary realms. The Primary is stated to be the land of humankind and the Secondary or Faerie is the land of fairy, of magic (12). Tolkien characterizes Faerie mainly on three characteristics: Process of creating visions of fantasy, willing suspension of disbelief and rearrangement of the primary material (12). According to Tolkien, the process of fantasy visions is created by the story-maker or sub-creator, and the sub-creator does this through the use of "enchantment" – magic (2008, 41). It is the pinch of fairy dust sprinkled on Wendy to take her to Neverland. It is the product of the desire to have the power of the enchanter to "make heavy things light and able to fly, turn grey lead into yellow gold, and the still rock into a swift water" (41). Willing suspension of disbelief is a state of mind in which the characters and the readers suspend their disbelief regarding the workings of the Secondary. Tolkien claims that within the realm of Secondary, what the sub-creator relates is true, hence you accept it as true even though it is against everything the Primary accepts as probable (52). Belief in the Faerie is a spell, and the moment disbelief is failed to be suspended, the spell is broken, and you are suspended out of Secondary (52). The third characteristic of the Faerie is that it reconstructs reality, therefore, fantasy uses what humankind accept as real as its primary material and as Tolkien notes, the sub-creator should not wander

away from what is familiar while rearranging the primary material, because "it is easier to produce this kind of 'reality' with more 'sober' material" (60-61).

Tolkien's statements on fantasy can be claimed to be emphasizing the versatility of the genre. Tolkien asserts that fantasy has the ability to arrest strangeness. It is the act of capturing the realities of the Primary and transforming it through strangeness in the Secondary. For Tolkien, it is both advantageous and disadvantageous because it both subverts the disturbing materials from the Primary and open doors to escape from them in the Secondary, where we find consolation and hope, but also put us in a position in which we are forced to face those disturbing materials (60-73). In this regard, it can be stated that themes such as war can be presented in a new context in the Faerie. However, it is both a benefit and a drawback because while war is portrayed in a more acceptable context in the Secondary, such portrayal still functions as a reminder and puts us in an uncomfortable situation. Hence, it is both escapist and symbolic, it is both a safe space and a force that pushes us out of our comfort zone.

3. War Through Fantasy's Lens

The world experienced one of the most destructive and devastating periods in its history in the first half of 20th century due to two great wars. These unprecedented wars redefined and transformed the workings of the world and people's perception of it. 1914 was a turning point for the entire world and laid the basis of World War II. The second world war was even more lethal and destructive than the first one. It may appear that the atmosphere and the rate of death do not provide a suitable setting for the creation of art and literature, however, it can be argued that the works that emerged after the wars prove that the situation is exactly the opposite as it can be observed that the aftermath of these tragic wars was depicted in many works of literature and art. As a result, it prompted not just alterations in people's perception of the world but also led to the rise of new ways of approaching the world.

Britain's participation in World War I was marked with the war declaration against Germany on August 4, 1914. Britain then started work on campaigns to propaganate war and led these campaigns from Wellington House. Wellington House had different sections for different nations at the bureau (Sanders, 1975, 119-20), however, there was a special branch particularly working on the propaganda in the US (120) as the Wellington House's war propaganda was especially aimed at the US (119). Many lecturers and experts were sent to the US for this purpose (119) and even the Scottish playwright and novelist J.M. Barrie was among these experts (Robertson, 2009, 59). The efforts of the Wellington House finally proved successful in 1917 when the US declared war on Germany, essentially becoming a participant in the war. Only twenty years after this devastating war, World War II started in 1939. Britain's involvement in the war was due to its alliance with the US, Soviet Unions and China against Germany, Japan and Italy. Similar to World War I, World War II as well not only resulted in devastating casualties, but also brought about profound transformation in global dynamics and shifts in societal ideologies.

Consequently, these lethal events left a mark in human history as one of the most devastating periods. These wars fundamentally disrupted the existing world order, altering borders of nations and transforming traditional systems. Hence, the artists of the era could not keep their silence in the face of the immense loss of life and widespread destruction, so they responded to the destruction of war through their works. As a result, it can be argued that the period defined by the onset of two world wars marked a new era of ideas, influencing world literatures including British literature.

3.1. War as a Great Adventure

Scottish playwright and novelist James Matthew Barrie published his most known work *Peter Pan* in 1904. Although it was originally written as a play, later it was adapted into a novel by Barrie (Lowne and Bauer, 2024). The plot follows Peter, or the boy who never grew up, from a distant land called Neverland and known for his mischievousness and ability to fly, as well as his interactions with Wendy and her brothers, John and Michael. The novel begins with the assertion, "All children, except one, grow up" (Barrie, 2005, 28).

Barrie's work portrays a secondary realm in which children never grow up. When examining *Peter Pan* and the Great War within the same context, one can raise the question of what connection might exist between Barrie's work and the war, despite the novel being written a decade prior to the conflict. Robertson explores the role of Barrie's text and character in romanticizing war and heroizing those who lost their lives during the war and states that before the war, Peter Pan as a character symbolized "eternal boyhood of youth and joy and heartlessness" (2009, 51), hence he symbolized a life free of responsibilities and emotions that comes with adulthood. Therefore, it can be argued that Peter Pan's journey to Neverland is an escape from the primary realities of adulthood. Neverland transforms the unpleasantness of the Primary by arresting strangeness and locating it in a more bearable position, while also making the reader face those realities of adulthood through the adventures of the Lost Boys, Wendy and her brothers and Captain Hook. However, Robertson states that after the Great War, the meanings the boy who never grows up signified shifted. Robertson writes: "With the advent of the war, he signified the seductive lure of combat as the "great adventure," promising death for a glorious cause as preferable to the prosaic indignities of adulthood and aging" (51). Therefore, it can be claimed that Peter Pan after the war represented an escape from the unpleasantness of the war, of grief and pain by providing it a realm in which it can take a more pleasant form. Peter Pan and his great adventures to Neverland started to symbolize the nobility of death for one's nation, of martyrdom, of the glory of never growing up, and present it as a great adventure.

Robertson then explores the basis of this idea of war as a great adventure. Robertson claims that Barrie's text *Peter Pan* was the first to pave the way for the propaganda romanticizing war and death during the war (51). Based on Robertson's analysis, it can be asserted that what ignited the first fuse of this discourse was a quote from *Peter Pan:* "to die will be an awfully big adventure" (Barrie, 2022, 101). It can be seen in the historical explorations of Robertson that it all started with famous theatre producer Charles Frohman's desire to stage *Peter Pan* in New York. Among the plays Frohman produced, *Peter Pan* had a very special place for him (2009, 57). Additionally, during the staging of the play, Barrie and Frohman formed a close relationship as Robertson states and perhaps for this reason too it can be asserted *Peter Pan* had a significant importance in his life and the way he perceived the world (55).

Lusitania, a British-registered ocean liner, was torpedoed by the German Navy and sunk, and it was marked as the final point which led the US to participate in the Great War by declaring war against Germany. Frohman was one of the victims of this attack as well (57). It was later published in a periodical that Frohman's last words were: "Why fear death? It is the most beautiful adventure life gives us" (57). In regard to Robertson's exploration on *Peter Pan* and World War I's connection, it can be argued that the words of Peter Pan had an impact on Frohman's perspective on death. Death is depicted as the Neverland, a secondary realm that offers an escape from the harsh realities of the Primary. Additionally, according to Robertson,

Frohman's words idealized him as an "image of a gentleman: gallant, self-sacrificing, fearless, competitive, and welcoming Death as but one more test of virtue and manhood" (57), hence shaping the perception of society in the face of war and death. Essentially, it can be claimed that he was immortalized as a man who was not afraid to die because he was not afraid to live. Thus, it can also be argued that Frohman got his great adventure and embarked on his journey to Neverland as a hero. According to Robertson, the death of Frohman and consequent glorification of him as a hero takes functions as a symbol in the society, demonstrating heroic valor associated with sacrificing one's life in wartime (57).

Barrie's role in war propaganda and romanticizing death did not die with Frohman. Barrie's involvement in war propaganda efforts continued beyond Frohman's legacy. Barrie maintained his propaganda visits to the US, during which he stayed with former President Theodore Roosevelt (60). As noted by Robertson, it is highly likely that Roosevelt and Barrie engaged in discussions about the war during this visit (60). Perhaps for this very reason, after the end of the Great War, Roosevelt's book which contains a collection of essays was published under the name *The Great Adventure* in 1918. In this text, Roosevelt further emphasized the nobility of death during wartime and glorified it as a great adventure. It can be stated that Roosevelt's attempt to romanticize and glorify dying in war alludes to Barrie's work. The very first essay of the book begins with the assertion "Only those are fit to live who do not fear to die; and none are fit to die who have shrunk from the joy of life and the duty of life" (Roosevelt, 1919, 1). It can be argued that Roosevelt suggests that the worthiness of life is intrinsically linked to a lack of fear of death. He further claims that true adventure is attainable only when the concern for personal safety is superseded by a greater purpose. Hence, he asserts that being worthy of living necessitates taking risks and demonstrating selflessness (1). Furthermore, Roosevelt also states that the value of a country and nation is upheld by individuals who prioritize it over their own safety as a great nation is a collective entity composed of individuals ready to sacrifice themselves (3-4). Hence, Roosevelt glorifies and romanticizes death and martyrdom in war, portraying those who sacrificed themselves for their nation as torchbearers and these torchbearers, who lead a nation's progress, are not afraid to undertake the great adventure (8).

Although neither Frohman nor Roosevelt claimed to directly derive their statements from *Peter Pan,* it can be argued that there is a pattern that can be link the words of Peter Pan, Frohman and Roosevelt. Robertson writes that "Peter Pan reflects the emotional numbness of his creator" (2009, 51). Thus, it can be claimed that Peter Pan carries the traces of the thought patterns of his sub-creator and when the words of these three figures are examined, it can also be observed that just a quote created by the sub-creator of Neverland opened an escape door for the residents of the Primary by arresting strangeness. Through this escape, death was no more a painful concept but a great adventure, a journey all should be willingly ready to undertake. Therefore, Barrie's fantastic text functioned as a narrative to transform the unbearable realities of the Primary.

3.2. Children of War

Following Barrie's timeless work and the ending of World War II, in 1950 C.S. Lewis published *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe,* the first book in the Narnia Chronicles series. As emphasized by Lewis's narrator, the plot revolves around four siblings named Peter, Susan, Edmund and Lucy, and is centered on "something that happened to them" (Lewis, 2008, 9). It is also indicated by the narrator that these children were evacuated from London during the war and relocated to a professor's house "in the heart of the country, ten miles from the nearest railway station and two miles from the nearest post office" (9). The transformation of the

siblings from the Primary to the Secondary occurs when the siblings pass from a wardrobe into Narnia. Therefore, it can be argued that the wardrobe functions as a portal for these children to escape the ugliness of the Primary.

When examined within a historical context, Lewis's text can be seen as bearing the traces of World War II and the children's evacuation process during the war. The disasters caused by the war not only impacted adults, but also children. Unlike Peter Pan, who could escape adulthood and the ugliness of the adult world by flying to Neverland, the children of World War II had no such refuges from the war. Consequently, it can be stated that Lewis's Narnia functions as a safe place where children could find solace and escape from the adversities of their reality.

During World War II, Britain arranged for the disabled, elderly and children to be evacuated out of London to areas they believed to be safe and away from air strikes (Waugh et al., 2007, 168). Almost 1.9 million people were evacuated out of London, of which nearly 1.5 million were children on August 31, 1939 (168). Even though the government planned the logistics of the evacuation process carefully, there was unfortunately an oversight in the selection process of the foster families as there was no standardization to monitor those potential hosts. Consequently, this led to some children to be placed in unsuitable or unsafe houses (168-69). Many children were physically, sexually and emotionally abused under the care of their foster parents due to the lack of proper screening (169). These traumas created a world which is unlivable and unbearable for children, dominated by unimaginable disasters. Through a reading of Lewis' text, it can be stated that it is the case for Peter, Susan, Edmund and Lucy as well. Although the siblings find the Professor's house interesting and intriguing, they do not want to leave each other's side and do not feel safe in this unfamiliar place. There is a road full of unknowns ahead of them and it can be claimed that they have a hard time coping with it. Consequently, Narnia offers them an escape by arresting strangeness.

Unlike Peter Pan's great adventure, these siblings "adventure" is not a symbol utilized to romanticize war. Regarding Tolkien's statements on arresting strangeness and using materials from the Primary in Faerie, it can be asserted that while Narnia offers an escape from the grim façade of the Primary, it also functions as a reminder and a criticism of the brutality of that world. Hence, it can be stated that the White Witch is a symbol of evil and Aslan is a symbol of goodness. Additionally, it can also be argued that Aslan's role in the narrative is to represent the "right" side of the war from the perspective of siblings and the protector of them and Narnia. Lucy asks the Faun who the White Witch is that frightens them so much. The Faun answers: "It's she that makes it always winter. Always winter and never Christmas" (Lewis, 2008, 16). The White Witch is who causes a permanent winter, endless oppression and despair in Narnia, hence it can be argued that the White Witch is a symbol of tyranny and brutality of World War II. Like Narnia, an endless winter prevails in London, where the siblings had to flee because of the war. Therefore, the rule of the White Witch in Narnia can be discussed to have parallels with Europe under Nazi oppression as they are both characterized by fear, control, and the suppression of joy and hope.

The connection between Aslan and England can be explored through the fact that England's symbol animal is the lion. In this regard, once again "Aslan [...] the great Lion," (58) can be argued to be representing the "right" side of the war. He represents goodness and hope. For this reason, the children side with Aslan in the war, and it can be argued that their victory over the Witch in the Secondary reflects the hope for England's victory over the Nazi power. Furthermore, at the end of the war in Narnia, the siblings reign as kings and queens for many

years in Narnia and get old in a world where they can be happy, find hope, and build a life for themselves in which they can be happy. Thus, they rule in a realm where they can *live.*

Eventually, they find their way back home in this secondary realm, as opposed to the primary realm. However, when they return home, they find that nothing has changed even though years have passed in Narnia. They managed to change and save Narnia, restoring the order and peace there, but the primary world failed to be changed and failed to offer a safe space for these children, despite the evacuation process. So, winter still reigns in this world, but it is never Christmas.

4. Conclusion

The 20th century witnessed an era of great destruction and saw the radical transformation of the established world order and prevailing ideological systems. Moreover, this age of destruction, death and brutality brought with it the need to escape from the cruel realities of life, both as a means of making harsh realities more bearable and as a way to express one's stance towards such cruelty. Within the scope of literature, the timeless works of Barrie and Lewis can be viewed as a response to this need, exemplifying the versatility and richness of fantastic discourse.

When the texts of Barrie and Lewis are analyzed, it can be observed that these works underscore the versatility of fantasy in addressing the destructiveness of war. Both authors employ different approaches to this theme while following the conventions of a secondary realm. While Peter Pan's great adventure functions as a symbol of the romanticization of war, the adventures of Peter, Susan, Edmund and Lucy confront the reader with the harsh realities of it. Thus, while the discourse offered through Barrie's work glorifies self-sacrificing yourself for your nation, Narnia demonstrates that a world which is safe and free from traumas of the wars declared by adults is possible. It is both an escape from the Primary and a reminder of the cruelty and failure of that world, hence a criticism of it. In Narnia, children succeed in restoring order and peace, but adults have failed in this sense in the Primary.

In both examples, the success of the fantastic discourse in shaping people's perception of war can be attributed to the successful establishment of the secondary world. Both the great adventure to Neverland and the journey from the wardrobe to Narnia were made possible by arresting strangeness and transforming the bad and intolerable through strangeness. Therefore, it can be claimed that this dynamic enables the possibility of an escape, whether it be an effort to romanticize, critique, or transform the circumstances. On the one hand, it is a journey to safety, but it is not always a quiet escape. Such escape can be discussed to be carrying a hope within to return, to talk about what happened and all possibilities experienced, just like the kings and queens of Narnia returning for those possibilities. However, death in the *primary* meaning, no matter how romanticized it is, is an adventure from which there is no return.

Finally, it can be argued that the willing suspension of disbelief plays a crucial role in fantastic narratives' formation of approaches to death and war. It was due to absolute belief in Neverland and great adventure that war and death was approached as a virtue, an image of manhood, of glory. What showed that a better and safer world was possible was the acceptance of the existence of Narnia. Therefore, a secondary reality regarding war and death existed because the belief in the absolute reality of the Primary was suspended, and it was accepted that there is more than one way to perceive the world, consequently shaping dominant narratives. In

conclusion, it is not the discourses of the Primary that shape approaches to war, but discourses of the Secondary.

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