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17.2

the quint
March 2025

the quint

volume seventeen issue two

**an interdisciplinary quarterly
from the north**

ISSN 1920-1028

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A quarterly journal, *the quint* is housed by the Faculty of Arts, Business and Science at the University of the North. The encouragement and support of this project by the Vice President Academic of the University College of the North is deeply appreciated.

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Northern Texture #1



Stuart Matheson

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EDITORIAL

It is March, and Spring is reluctant to arrive this year. The temperatures have fluctuated from cold to warm and back again. Two bald eagles have arrived and left, even though the light is starting to lengthen and the sunshine starting to warm. While we wait for the trees to bud and the grass to turn green, *the quint's* sixty fifth issue offers you enlightening material for this season's shorter nights and longer days. Articles by authors from Canada, Nigeria, the United States, and India are housed in this thought-provoking, catholic issue. Emmanuel Badewa, Erwin Jebb, Ryan Shewchuck, Jeffray Stepaniuk, Sonja Aagesen, Abdul Raouf, Konstantia Koutouki and Paul Watt's "Restorative Socio-Ecological Justice – Churchill, Northern Manitoba and the Hudson Bay Watershed" begins our offerings. This project update reports on the engagement of the University College of the North (UCN) in Daluhay's flagship project that is taking place in the Hudson-James Bays as part of its ACTION 15.4: Bioregional Resilience – Professional Coastal-zone Resource Management (CRM) Planning through the United Nations Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development 2030. UCN's Natural Resource Management Technology program's application of cutting-edge estuarine restoration approaches and the engagement of students, in part, through the Churchill Hudson Bay Interpretive Centre development currently under development, looks forward to the restoration of the Goose Creek Wet Meadow and Fisheries Habitat in the Churchill estuary. UCN and the Churchill Duke of Marlborough School will be providing a HUB model for sustainable development of the Hudson-James Bays Inland Sea that is aligned with Daluhay's global campaign to advance the

potential of the Indigenous world view to help transform our relationship with mother earth and accelerate positive change towards restoration and sustainability.

Next, George Steven Swan's "Lawrence of Arabia, Janet Laurie and Will Lawrence: A Triangular Inquiry" examines the influence that Oxford's more-senior University figures had on the lives of two of its pre-First World War graduates William George Lawrence and T.E. Lawrence (later, "Lawrence of Arabia") who were infatuated with a local neighbor Janet Elspeth Laurie. The fascinating mystery produced is indeed a case of *cherchez la femme*. Following, J. O. Egharevba and P. V. Osakue's "Analyses of Accessibility and Utilisation of Aquatic Facilities in Benin Metropolis, Nigeria" investigates the accessibility of recreational aquatic facilities in Benin Metropolis. Egharevba and Osakue recommend government should play an interventionist role in the provision and maintenance of recreational aquatic facilities in neighbourhoods without economic attractiveness to attract private investors.

Then, in "Rethinking Racial Realism in Selected South African Fiction," Grace Itoro Ibang discusses the complexities of the apartheid period in South Africa found in Nadine Gordimer's *My Son's Story* (1990), and Pamela Jooste's *Dance with A POOR MAN'S DAUGHTER* (1998). Ibang argues that these novels' depictions of the pain and trauma of apartheid, grounded in racial realism, not only critique racism, they also demonstrate the hopes and challenges of post-apartheid South Africa. Next, Yemi Atanda's "A Discourse on Insurgency: Dialectics of Metaphor and Reality in North-Central Nigeria" examines the dialectic between the street and the stage that is taking place in Nigeria, as mainstream media there continues its balanced and unbiased reporting of the insurgency happening there. He argues the violent impact Boko Haram has had in North-Central Nigeria in Olu Obafemi's *Near and Distant*

Cries and Ahmed Yerima's *Pari* by deconstructs acts of insurgency and reconstructs Nigeria, showing there is a future rising from the ashes of hatred that will embrace love and unity. Following, R. Rohini and A. Jayasree's "In Search of the Self: Self-Actualisation in Sudha Murty's *The Mother I Never Knew*" teases out the complexities of self-perception and belonging in Murty's writing which are not limited to the issues of women. Rohini and Jayasree examine two stories about mother-son relationships in *The Mother I Never Knew* that feature male protagonists who achieve self-realisation. The decisions their single mothers made to be socially acceptable are also considered.

Four film reviews are also housed in this issue. In "Nostalgia Gets the Blues: Walter Hill's *Crossroads* and the Critique of Historical Amnesia," Jeremy Christensen argues that Hill's 1986 film is a journey into the American South that uses popular culture to investigate America's deepest problems and interrogate intersectional issues of race and class. He finds *Crossroad*, insisting that the past, as it was and remains, ought not be hidden in nostalgia. This film, he says, sends a different message than many made during the Reagan years. In "Unveiling the Queer Subtext in the Early Malayalam Movie: *Deshadanakilli Karayarila (Migratory Birds Do Not Cry)*" KP Maneesha reconsiders P. Padmarajan's controversial 1986 box office failure which beoke new ground in the Indian film industry as one of the first Mayalam movies to deal with LGBTQ issues. Her thoughtful examination of *Deshadanakili Karayarila* (Migratory Birds Do Not Cry), finds the power of this cult classic lies in its ability to prompt audiences, then and now, to imagine what cannot be seen or be shown but can be felt deeply. This film, she says, force audiences to confront the limits of heteronormative imagination.

Following, Neepa Sarkar's "Memory and its Reenactments: *Akaler Sandhane*

(*In Search of Famine*) revisits the work of Mrinal Sen, a director known for his politically-relevant films and especially his focus on Bengal. Revolutionizing Indian cinema by using realism to discuss oppression and injustice, Sen, like Bertolt Brecht, believed film should provoke its spectators into an awareness that was often troubled and uncomfortable. *Akaler Sandane* (1980), she finds, is a film about The Bengal Famine of 1943 that offers its viewer no cathartic release. She concludes its audience can never be, and indeed never should be at peace as long as inequality and deprivation exist in the world. Then, George Orwell move over! Jason Wallin's "Hologram 1984: Resistance at the End of the World" deems Spinoza prescient. Discussing depictions of the end of culture and the end of the world in *Terminator* (1984), *Ghostbusters* (1984), and *Gremlins* (1984), Wallins argues these blockbusters are symptoms of what was '84's' intractable drive to resolve difference. He reminds us that in '84' that the murderous program of the time-jumping T-800 was thwarted, Zuul was banished to the void, and gremlins were temporarily subdued. Today, he finds the reappearance of these figures timely, habilitating the conditions of inalienable difference as embodiments of the permanent joyous revolution Spinoza would say we so desperately need.

No issue of *the quint* can be complete without its creative component. We are proud to present Sheila McLeod Arnopoulos's beautifully-crafted short story, "The Christmas Card." Arnopoulos's warm sensibility reminds us of who we hope we all should be. Stuart Matheson tests the visual weight of winter as it slowly leaves Manitoba. *Northern Textures* offers balance and heartening proportion as the world emerges from its snowpack. After extremes of darkness and cold, the ordinary at first is always extraordinary, auguring warm weather and geese arriving to celebrate

our seasonal turn. We also look forward to returning—with more thought-provoking material for your reading and viewing in June.

Sue Matheson
Editor



**Restorative Socio-Ecological Justice –
Churchill, Northern Manitoba and the Hudson Bay
Watershed**

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INTRODUCTION

Global and local economies are driven by transactional considerations, sometimes based on *fairtrade* concepts but more often focused on the competitive actualization of profits for a select few—though arguably the human condition is based upon *the quint: an interdisciplinary quarterly from the north* 15

relationships of mutual respect and giving. Over-extraction characterizes our relationship with the earth, illustrating our disrespect for the food chains that support the flow of life in which we are all grounded. While our global life support systems are failing, the link between people and our planet has no known possibility of duplication in the universe. A non-profit non-government (NGO) organisation in the Philippines, Daluhay sees the need to accentuate and apply the interconnectivity which is the foundation of the Indigenous worldview has never been more critical. One flagship project through the United Nations Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development 2030 is Daluhay's ACTION 15.4: Bioregional Resilience – Professional Coastal-zone Resource Management (CRM) Planning. The Daluhay approach includes a global campaign to bring forward the potential of the Indigenous world view to help transform our relationship with mother earth and accelerate positive change towards restoration and sustainability (Panopio et al. 2021; Pajaro et al. 2024). This initiative has a Philippine and Canadian component based upon independent and iterative Participatory Action Research (PAR) cycles honed by decadal bilateral exchange (Watts & Pajaro 2014) and the application of Global Information System (GIS) innovations (Pajaro et al. 2024).

Herein, Daluhay's focus is on the program advancement aimed to encompass the largest inland sea in the world, the *Hudson-James Bays*. This huge bioregion plays a pivotal role in the food security of the Canadian Inuit culture (Watts et al. 2017) and the communities around more than 10,000 km of coastline. This article outlines the framework and working design for the engagement of the University College of the North (UCN) and their Natural Resource Management Technology (NRMT) program. Currently under development, the UCN and the Churchill Duke

of Marlborough School are providing a *HUB* model for the sustainable development of the Hudson-James Bays Inland Sea. These efforts are supported by GIS expertise from Saskatchewan Polytechnic and long-term regional efforts currently through the non-government organization, Daluhay.

An earlier *quint* article linked the era of colonial dominance to the creation of treaties and the role of the *Doctrine of Discovery* in disrespecting indigeneity. Somewhat ironically, the Canadian government established treaties providing conditional Indigenous rights on what had been wrongfully taken from the Indigenous Peoples (Watts & Koutouki 2023). Respect for the rights of the food chain of others represents one of the first historic signs of humanity, yet colonialism and industrialization continue to significantly erode those rights. Northern Manitoba's hydroelectric development and follow-up actions have neither benefitted from Indigenous and traditional knowledge, nor from ecosystem and watershed restoration science; instead driven by corporate revenues, profit and unrealized good intentions. At the time of hydroelectric development in Northern Manitoba, the focus on corporate profit superseded both Indigenous rights of the food chains and from the experience of the current authors, shunned the involvement of freshwater scientists while ignoring ecological science submissions. The Northern Flood Agreement written in the 1970s did not take into consideration the broader cultural rights to the food chains, nor predict the level of degradation that would result. Canada needs to consider redress based upon what would be a historic national rescission of the Doctrine of Discovery and subsequent recognition of Canada's signed commitment of 2010 to comply with the United Nations Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. We present the argument that the rights to these local food chains were owned not only by the local

residents, but also by the Indigenous cultures themselves. The Churchill estuary and Goose Creek fisheries represents Canada's only location where the four great Indigenous cultures (Inuit, Athapaskan, Algonkian and Metis) shared resources prior to European dominance that has been characterized by treaties (Watts & Koutouki 2023). The restoration of this historic Indigenous meeting place and more broadly, efforts towards reconciliation through restoration could best proceed with the input of local, regional and national Indigenous leadership.

The authors maintain that the development of restorative socio-ecological justice in Northern Manitoba can be moved forward through the engagement and enhancement of the University College of the North (UCN) Natural Resource Management Technology (NRMT) program, based upon their holistic focus on environment, cultural inclusion and reflexive scientific capacity building. The earlier article on this topic (Watts & Koutouki 2023) proposed the establishment of an Indigenous Food System Restoration program with a cross-cultural collaboration centre in Churchill Manitoba, in part through ongoing and programmatic support of the United Nations Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development 2030. This development would celebrate the historic meeting place of four primary Indigenous cultural groups of Canada and respect for the food chains of others through restoration of the local Goose Creek fisheries. The UCN-NRMT program is interested in providing the support of an academic partner for the development of restoration along the Manitoba shoreline of the Hudson-James Bays, Inland Sea while stimulating the development of a network of Hudson-James Bays GIS HUBs and interpretive centres.

The current work reports on the progressions through the engagement of UCN as an organization and the development of the Churchill Hudson Bay Interpretive

Centre, as well as (Hudson and James) bays-wide activities through the Canadian Global Arctic Leadership Initiative. Currently in Northern Manitoba, First Nations (FN) organizations and communities seeking socio-ecological restoration as part of reconciliation include the Opaskwayak Cree FN, Mathias Colomb FN, and the Seal River Watershed group, based upon their website (<https://www.sealriverwatershed.ca>). In addition, many other Northern Manitoba FNs are struggling to protect remaining food systems and working towards the restoration of community-based food security as represented by Indigenous food systems. This includes, but is not limited to, the First Nations of Fox Lake, York Factory, Shamattawa, Tataskweyak and War Lake currently working as a group to adapt to the changes wrought by hydroelectric development (Rutgers, J. 2024). The authors suggest that Canada's commitment under the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People must include the restoration of Indigenous food systems and the educational support to both restore and manage that heritage (Koutouki et al., 2015). This approach is equally critical under the consideration of climate change mitigation. Further, the authors suggest that the recent rescinding of the Doctrine of Discovery by the Catholic church places the burden of food system restoration on Canada's national government that systematically provided a framework for corporate abuse, based upon that edict (Watts & Koutuoki 2023). The Indigenous communities of Northern Manitoba see themselves as stewards of the land and waters, with a desire to be part of assessing, managing and defining environmental changes for the benefit of the local people and the planet itself. Although Indigenous stewardship has occurred since time immemorial, the situation in the Anthropocene Era requires action to integrate traditional knowledge through new and innovative Indigenous-academic partnerships (Gordon et al., 2023).

UNIVERSITY COLLEGE OF THE NORTH AS A CHANGE AGENT

In a global context, developed settings are increasingly dependent upon less developed areas for water intensive commodities (Soligno, et al., 2019), a situation that is also reflected by the socio-ecological aspects of hydroelectric development in Northern Manitoba. There is growing recognition that human exploitation is placing intense pressure upon ecosystem services and that the increasing global population will require significantly more resources. Although there is evidence that environmental and other factors are resulting in a decline in global fertility rates, population has been projected to reach 9.4-12.7 billion by 2100 (Gu et al., 2021) based upon the World Population Prospects (United Nations 2019). The more people there are on the planet, the less there is for each individual and critically, we continue to erode the food chains that support human life. Worldwide to household countertop, wild resource-use is one of the most fundamental transactions between humans and the biosphere. The demand is truly for the rights of the food chains, the single most important life support system for humanity. These rights can be directly linked to the very structure of principled democratic educational delivery (Stepaniuk, 2019, 2021), particularly considering the global restoration imperative. To curtail impending impacts, social scientists, educators and citizenry must examine an array of techniques for generating germane ecologically conscious conduct and nurture the status of planet earth through restoration. The United Nations Decade of Ecological Restoration 2030 provides a window of global support for change. Achieving some semblance of compassionate and cerebral stewardship depends in part on political will. However, the development of new soft-path educational paradigms that respect indigeneity and the inalienable rights of the food chains can best lead cultures to responsible use and transformational

restoration.

In the past 30-years, UCN-NRMT Action Research has worked towards an increase in local acuity on resource use that continues to be well received. The student-driven actions and institutional commitment to a real-world case study have provided a foundation for a programmatic curricular design process. This approach has generated tangible benefits that include shared costs, training, empowerment, and curricular advancement. These activities are strongly correlated with an increase in place-based citizen awareness and conservation success. Results include a small-scale recreational fishery monitoring activities embedded in local mandates, limits and zoning, law enforcement and a locally accessible and *anchored* data repository. Informed by both culturally normative (value-centered) and socio-ecological theory that includes economics, UCN-NRMT students and faculty have helped to generate local solutions, responding to challenges in Northern Manitoba for more than two decades. This reflexive program provides an example of how to respond to intractable socio-ecological challenges and currently, build capacity for restoration science. Each year, a one-month off-campus practicum develops competency skills through training that are designed to provide future technicians with ecological *grounding* for community engagement. Collaborative design development and statistically reasoned data collection, fosters both respect for small-scale fishers and enhancement of community-based expertise. The NRMT program utilizes a situated learning approach and the notion of the apprentice observing *in the community of practice* (Lave and Wenger 1991) to develop knowledge, skills, and ethics. Faculty encourage the individual student's exploration of local fisheries-related instrumentation, analytical techniques, regional culture, and a holistic understanding through legitimate peripheral

participation (Bronfenbrenner 1979).

The curricular aim is local dialogue, revealing time-specific answers to socio-ecological and culturally perplexing issues. Mathematical resource models are used to facilitate annual and hierarchical discussions highlighting growth history of year-classes from a single walleye net sample which allows for a reduction in sample size required from wild stock. Expanding the NRMT to engage estuarine restoration and anadromous fisheries settings would significantly advance the program and create the potential for an increase in both student demand and graduate placement. The current efforts in the Hudson Bay watershed with emphasis on estuarine restoration have the potential to uplift the people of the Manitoba North and expand the existing UCN-NRMT program to focus on specific restoration strategies, perhaps best designed and implemented using an iterative and annual PAR cycles. Research supports the development of community-based approaches to fisheries and other aquatic resource co-management as a significant contribution to sustainable development across Asia, Europe and Northern Canada (Watts et al. 2017, 2022; Garcia-Lorenze et al. 2021). In the case of Northern Manitoba there is a need to establish a foundation of institutional capacity for science expertise associated with watershed restoration, while building off existing and programmatic community-based engagement. In Churchill, Manitoba, the population of the community and size of the individual Indigenous sectors has declined along with the erosion of local biodiversity and food-security. Considering the unique Indigenous milieu of the area historically, the development of co-management approaches to restoration might best involve cultural leadership roles that can link the current residents to others considering ecological restoration at the regional, provincial and national levels.

RESTORATION OF THE GOOSE CREEK WET MEADOW AND FISHERIES HABITAT

The path forward to developing the capacity and application of the UCN-NRMT program to include a focus on restoration and estuarine fisheries can be accomplished through several avenues of advancement. The application of cutting-edge estuarine restoration approaches, and the engagement of students, in part through the Churchill Hudson Bay Interpretive Centre development. The Goose Creek fisheries restoration can best be based upon a consideration of the changes that resulted from moving Churchill's water intake to CR30 and establishing the road that destroyed the fisheries. The uniquely shared history of the Churchill estuary is part of the multicultural history of Hudson Bay (Figure 1), a history often depicted differently through a variety of languages and cultures. At the time of those industrial decisions, the community felt that culverts and two bridges could preserve the fisheries. However, over the next decade there were huge die offs of fish trying to get past the road, eventually destroying that Indigenous food system. Prior to road construction, because the willows were somewhat taller in the area, they captured the snow in a way that resulted in a deeper depth and reduced density of the snowpack. This resulted in a slow and extended melt period that created fish habitat. The road turned the runoff from the snowpack into a cold lake on the east side, where previously a slow melt resulted in shallow rivulets that heated up as they flowed towards the estuary itself. That historic setting resulted in an incredible concentration of insect habitats that supported the seasonal fish migration and played a significant part in the unique role Churchill historically held as a meeting place for Indigenous and other cultures (Watts & Koutouki 2023).



Figure 1 Geographic aspects of Hudson Bay with limited language and cultural representation. Note that the inset illustrates the Churchill River estuary and the area identified for restoration.

Restoring a meadow area that includes a large tidal flat and an anabranching meadow requires a comprehensive approach that integrates hydrological restoration, vegetation management, and sediment stabilization. The first step is to assess the site's current conditions, focusing on tidal flow patterns, sediment retention, and the distribution of native and invasive species. For tidal flats, restoration efforts should prioritize

reestablishing natural tidal processes by removing barriers like levees or dikes that disrupt water flow. This will allow for the natural deposition of sediments, which is crucial for stabilizing the habitat and supporting salt-tolerant vegetation that provides shelter and food for coastal wildlife (Morris et al. 2013). Also, careful monitoring of erosion and sediment movement can help ensure long-term resilience against rising sea levels and storm surges (Hernández-Delgado et al. 2024).

For the anabranching meadow, restoration must consider the complex interactions between multiple active river channels, riparian vegetation, and sediment retention. Vegetation plays a crucial role in stabilizing these dynamic systems by reinforcing riverbanks, influencing flow distribution, and trapping sediment essential for maintaining channel structure (Henriques et al., 2022). For instance, Škarpich et al. (2016) found that anabranching river channels support greater biodiversity compared to incised single-thread channels, as the diverse flow paths and sediment deposits create varied habitats for plant species, and subsequently insect species. In contrast, channel incision has been associated with reduced plant diversity and lower groundwater levels, which negatively impact riparian ecosystems (Škarpich et al. 2016). However, the connections between riparian vegetation dynamics and anabranching river evolution remain poorly understood, making site-specific monitoring essential (Henriques et al. 2022). Poor management and human interventions, such as deforestation or water diversion, can disrupt these delicate systems, reducing their stability and longevity (Gurnell, 2014). Implementing remote sensing technologies can help track changes in river morphology, vegetation distribution, and hydrological connectivity, providing data-driven insights for adaptive management (Ivajnsič et al. 2022). Public engagement and policy development should also be integral to the restoration process,

ensuring that conservation efforts are informed by both scientific research and local knowledge. By integrating ecological principles with modern monitoring techniques, restoration efforts can create a resilient and self-sustaining meadow ecosystem. However, there is increasing North American evidence that the release of small dams can lead to dramatic increases in biodiversity and socio-ecological restoration (Nargi 2025). Essentially, the road network to CR30 in Churchill represents a dam, a unique opportunity for socio-ecological restoration and perhaps even reconciliation.

Collaboration between the Natural Resource Management Technology program of the University College of the north and the Hudson Bay project will provide UCN students with the opportunity to engage in experiential learning using real data to understand both the environmental and social impacts of a changing climate. The expansion of the GIS program at UCN-NRMT will provide students with expanded skills for considering spatial habitat change as well as the development of map story building capacity. Engaging with collected and observed data through the Hudson Bay region will demonstrate the power of geospatial analysis and how it can be used to empower communities and support ecological and environmental management as well as nurturing advanced professional resource management skills. Collaboration with the project can also help foster relationships between students and northern communities, institutions, and organizations. Students will get to experience participation roles that contribute to priority goals set by the United Nations Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development 2030. This will provide a unique opportunity to facilitate networking and further educational opportunities for students as they progress into their natural resource careers.

CHURCHILL HUDSON BAY INTERPRETIVE CENTRE

Students who live on the shores of the Hudson-James Bays Inland Sea have a local insight that is based upon day-to-day living, something that cannot be duplicated by visitors or seasonal workers. They also have a unique age-related perspective and investment in the future. Although the Hudson-James Bays include iconic species attracting the interest of travellers from around the world, few opportunities exist for local students to develop interpretive skills. The proposed pilot Hudson Bay Interpretive Centre (HBIC) in Churchill will provide both opportunities for student part time employment and the development of skills that would give local students an advantage in the tourism industry. At the heart of this proposed interpretive centre is the initiative co-sponsored by the Canadian Global Arctic Leadership Initiative (GALI) is intended to nurture the establishment of a network of GIS HUBS around the Hudson-James Bays Inland Sea. Churchill represents a somewhat unique perspective on the merging of culture-based names for locations and local HUBs around this inland sea could use the Churchill template (Figure 1) to provide their own names for locations and geographic areas. The bays-wide GIS platform would support the development of other interpretive centres as well as collaborative monitoring, restoration planning and integrated educational programs with specific linkages to the primary coastal concern in the area, food security. This could include local and bioregional proposals to capture waste energy and transform that towards food-security applications. In addition, the use of map stories that would form the core of the interpretive approach would be the property of the students, their school and their communities. The Fall 2024 PAR cycle in Churchill led to a buy-in from the local Duke of Marlborough School and a conceptual HBIC management regimen. In Churchill, the interpretive

centre is projected as being managed by an editorial board that includes students, staff, residents and various levels of academe. Effectively the interpretive centre material would become the story of the students, the school and the people of the community, owned by them. Historical sections within the map story for individual GIS-HUB locations could also include stories of past current and future community leaders. In addition, systems could be imbedded in the local data management to specifically store and protect traditional knowledge could be stored and protected. Each GIS-HUB or Hudson-James Bays interpretive centre around this, the largest inland sea in the world could best be owned by the communities.

At this time, the Churchill Duke of Marlborough School is considering an application to the local Mitigation Trust Fund to establish the Churchill Hudson Bay Interpretive Centre. The June 2025 PAR cycle in Churchill is aimed at advancing the interpretive capacity of local students and collaborative planning for the inauguration of the GIS HUB and proposed Interpretive Centre in June 2026. At the same time, efforts to establish a bays-wide network of GIS-HUBS is continuing through the support of Global Affairs Canada and the GALI program. In February 2025, the initiative was outlined at a regular meeting of the Hudson Bay Consortium resulting in broad interest in the concept from around this, the largest of Inland Sea in the world (Figure 1).

GLOBAL ARCTIC LEADERSHIP INITIATIVE (GALI)

Following the publication of the original article on restoration of Indigenous food systems (Watts & Koutouki 2023) funds were obtained from the GALI program to initiate a network of GIS-HUBS around the Hudson-James Bays Inland Sea. As part of that project, an approach was made to engage the Hudson Bay Consortium (HBC).

At a February meeting of the HBC, a presentation by project representatives from the University of Montreal resulted in the following inputs. The presentation delivered by Konstantia Koutouki, Alex Alexis, and Pierre Walckiers centred on the use of GIS stories as a method to engage students in participating high schools around the bays to create GIS map stories for their own local settings and provide a communication network for food security, ecological restoration and reconciliation strategies. This project aims to provide students with technological skills through the culturally appropriate medium of storytelling. The project also combines the use of multi-media, inclusion of elders as resources for the GIS stories, self-directed education and inter-community collaboration: all elements that are crucial to a successful learning experience by the students. Some of the topics that were suggested at the meeting by individual community members participating in the HBC included: food-security, animal migration, maternal health, hockey team movements across bays communities, tourism movements across communities and many more. The integration of the GIS stories and existing *apps* such as the hunters and trappers cell phone app, SIKU (siku.org) is a highly regarded approach by HBC members. It was also suggested that student capacity building could lead to new apps that could be used to share GIS data. Finally, there was much interest regarding the use of Indigenous languages for the GIS stories. Based upon the common language of local use, English is being used as a starting point for the Churchill HUB with the edition of some Indigenous place names and words (Figure 1). As partnerships are developed, it is planned that the use of French and Indigenous languages can be included as part of the program.

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LAWRENCE OF ARABIA, JANET LAURIE AND WILL LAWRENCE: A TRIANGULAR INQUIRY

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ABSTRACT

Twenty-first century North America witnesses academic investigation of U.S. university professionals' (e.g., professors') out-of-classroom dealings with students regarding the personal lives of those students. Said scholarly research fixes upon students who confronted pressing personal issues. On the part of professors so engaging with students, their flexibility/adaptability making them a better resource for students particularly proves relevant when students experience distress because undergoing, e.g., difficulties with intimate partners. Longstanding if unofficial practice along similar lines seems precedented at the University of Oxford. Recent studies of Oxford's pre-First World War graduates William George Lawrence and T.E. Lawrence

(later, “Lawrence of Arabia”) review these brothers’ infatuation with local neighbor Janet Elspeth Laurie. Will and she aspired to marry: T.E. unsuccessfully had proposed to her. His respective hope being frustrated, each departed weeks after graduation to work in Asia. Apparently each was counseled by a different one of two more-senior University figures. Thereby, contemporary findings appear valid even in a site as temporally, geographically and sociologically remote from today’s North America as the early twentieth-century University of Oxford.

I. INTRODUCTION

A. Two Interlocked Biographies: Brothers from the University of Oxford

Recent study of William George Lawrence, younger brother of T.E. Lawrence of Arabia, lamented concerning Will and Janet Elspeth Laurie (whom Will had aspired to marry) that we do not know why Will and Janet’s relationship ended. As young men, T.E. and Will competed for the affection of their childhood friend Janet. She related that T.E. uncharacteristically had offered her a proposal of marriage.

Each brother completed undergraduate degree studies at the University of Oxford in mid-1910 (T.E.) or mid-1913 (Will). Each thereafter hastened to southern Asia within weeks. Each brother’s immediate Asian undertaking was college teaching (Will, in India) or archaeological excavation (T.E. in Syria). Each departed their family’s home in the town of Oxford after having grown strongly attracted to Miss Laurie. Each scurried overseas after developing a personal connection to a University

of Oxford potential father-figure of academic rank or role somehow superior to his own.

B. Modern North American Perspective on Supportive Campus Environments

This final point regarding the University of Oxford can be informed by twenty-first century North American academics' investigation of U.S. university professionals' (e.g., professors') out-of-classroom dealings with students regarding the personal lives of these students (Guzzardo, et al., 2021: 41). That scholarly research fixes upon students who confronted, e.g., personal problems (Guzzardo, et al., 2021: 43). "Adaptability or flexibility is also necessary when students are experiencing distress (e.g., intimate partner problems,...)" (Guzzardo, et al., 2021: 48).

The instant discussion addresses the mutual relationships among Oxford neighbor-contemporaries: Will and Ned (who, in the relevant timespan, both were fulltime University of Oxford undergraduates) and Janet. Circumstances suggest linkages between Laurie and each brother's respective exit from Oxfordshire to southern Asia. Circumstances further summon attention to contacts (regarding their separate Asian adventures) between each brother and his respective one of two identified University of Oxford figures. The findings of Guzzardo, et al., look to have been valid even in a site as temporally, geographically and sociologically remote from today's North America as the early twentieth-century University of Oxford. And a hope behind reilluminating this young trio's interplay is energizing future research resolving at last, e.g., the mystery of Will Lawrence.

II. TWO LAURENTIAN BROTHERS ENCOUNTER MISS LAURIE'S ALLURE

A. *Ned, as Smitten by Janet*

i. 48 Hours in October

The frequently yet far from exhaustively-assessed T.E. Lawrence (Swan, 2022: 11-101) successfully completed work toward his Jesus College, University of Oxford degree in midsummer 1910 (Wilson, 1990: 67-68). By mid-September he learned the University's Jesus College would fund his postgraduate studies (Wilson, 1990: 69). Through November 1, 1910, Oxford's Ashmolean Museum's Assistant Keeper of the Department of Antiquities Edward Thurlow Leeds (Brown, 2005: 25 n. 1) and a then-University of Oxford Magdalen College Fellow (Wilson, 1990: 991 n. 68), the Assistant Keeper of the Department of Fine Art Charles Francis Bell (Brown, 2005: 51 n. 1), both anticipated Ned doing deskwork at the Ashmolean in 1911. His deskwork would comport with his anticipated Jesus College postgraduate-level program.

Keeper of the Ashmolean Museum Dr. David George Hogarth departed England for Constantinople in October to negotiate regarding 1911 archaeological excavation at Carchemish (Wilson, 1990: 73; Asher, 1999: 78). That spot lies approximately a half-mile from Jerablus, Syria (Mack, 1976: 39). But recruitment for this Carchemish project seems either to have been *undisclosed* to Lawrence, or disregarded by him. Lawrence's disregard would be consistent with that Leeds-Bell take on Lawrence as destined for 1911 Ashmolean deskwork.

Hogarth returned on Sunday, October 23 (Wilson, 1990: 70). T.E. appeared in the Ashmolean and solicited Leeds for work opportunities (Wilson, 1990: 73). Apparently he solicited no deskwork in Oxford. For Leeds writes: "Some time before

[November 1, 1910], he had asked whether I knew of any dig in the Near East or elsewhere in which he could participate” (Lawrence, T., 1988: 11). Or *elsewhere*.

Laurentian biographer Korda seemingly feels T.E.’s inevitable return to Syria an irresistible yarn. For Korda announces: “Lawrence himself, when he heard about Hogarth’s trip to Constantinople in 1910, had asked his old friend E. T. Leeds, at the Ashmolean, if there was any chance of his being included in the party going to Jerablus with Hogarth” (Korda, 2010: 185). Enthusiastic Korda here cites sources for neither “Hogarth’s trip” nor “Jerablus” nor anything else on his page. As just seen, Leeds’ T.E. mentioned neither Jerablus nor Hogarth. Instead, T.E. asked something indisputably *nonspecific*. For Lawrence’s inquiry proves egregiously open-ended (“Near East or elsewhere”) by the memoir of his own auditor, Leeds. *Elsewhere*.

Too, the frequent Museum-goer Ned questions Leeds for employment slots across the sea only post-October 23. For Leeds records: “I sent him at once to Hogarth, knowing the admirable impression he had made the previous year” (Lawrence, T., 1988: 11). Hogarth thereby proves present in Oxford. If Leeds sent Lawrence “at once to Hogarth,” then did Leeds know Hogarth was at his desk in the Ashmolean? Monday, October 24, being the Keeper’s first workday since return from Turkey, one expects Hogarth and Leeds at their worksite and the latter conscious of the former. *Quaere*, whether something profoundly had distracted Ned from Syria and Hogarth’s Museum alike through *October 23*. Yet what?

As though himself seduced by a Syria return-inevitability, Asher asserts similarly to Korda: “As a frequent visitor to the Ashmolean, Lawrence had discovered Hogarth’s plans, and asked Edward Leeds casually ‘if he knew of any excavations [sic: dig] coming up in the Near East’” (Asher, 1999: 79). If on Monday, October 24, Lawrence

was frantic to escape Oxford to far-off lands, then it was accordingly less likely he inquired of Leeds “casually.” But Asher cites no source to substantiate his adverb. If T.E.’s October 24 motive was (affirmatively) return to Syria not (negatively) *escape from Oxford*, then why did Leeds’ recall T.E. delivering Lawrence’s “or elsewhere” message (mysteriously amputated from Asher’s misquotation of Leeds)?

Leeds knew all Carchemish personnel had been named earlier (Lawrence, T., 1988: 11). However, Leeds did point him to Hogarth. Therefore, the Lawrence-Hogarth interview could not precede Monday, October 24. Hogarth accepted Ned anyway. This climaxed what Lawrence’s authorized biographer categorizes his “sudden decision to join Hogarth’s excavations at Carchemish” (Wilson, 1990: 70). So Ned decided something all of a *sudden* about October 23.

Meanwhile, Hogarth master-minded Lawrence’s University of Oxford Magdalen College Senior Demyship (permitting research travel) of a hundred pounds yearly (Stewart, 1977: 64-65). This subsidized him while Hogarth’s Carchemish hireling. The sum equaled a third of his father’s annual expenditures on a minimum of eight people in 2 Polstead Road (Stewart, 1977: 65). Ned surprised Leeds and Bell with *November* news he would serve in Syria during 1911. Hogarth’s lightning intervention for a youth neither considered for Carchemish nor promoting himself for Carchemish until after Sunday, October 23, beckons scrutiny.

ii. The Fraught Hour

Dr. John E. Mack’s biography of Lawrence won the Pulitzer Prize. For Mack, elderly Janet Hallsmith (the former Janet Laurie) recalled herself as a young adult dinner-guest in the Lawrence family’s home in Oxford. Following their meal, the pair had lingered at the dinnertable joking over other Lawrence brothers. Ned provided privacy

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by bolting the door, and proposed to her: “Though she felt that the proposal was a serious one, in her astonishment she laughed at him. He seemed hurt, but merely said, “Oh, I see,” or “All right,” and spoke no more about it” (Mack, 1965: 65, citing Interview with Mrs. Hallsmith, March 25, 1965). According to Laurentian biographer Lawrence James: “Soon after, she developed an attachment to his younger brother Will, which displeased Mrs Lawrence” (James, 1993: 30). If Ned had proposed marriage to Janet after Sunday night dinner on October 23, then her refusal thereof might have driven him reeling from England in seven weeks.

Ex hypothesi, Ned had suspended frequent Ashmolean Museum-going (mentioned by Asher) between September 24 and October 23 because otherwise occupied (or preoccupied). He planned postgraduate work practically. He sensibly laid groundwork for 1911 deskwork in the Ashmolean. Thus he ignored as autumn 1910 background noise any news of Hogarth and Carchemish. His realistic moves made the more credible his suit for Maid Laurie’s hand. Her family was in Oxford. There could he and she support themselves, together.

He advanced unsteeled against rejection of his bid in her laughter. He impulsively thought to flee the scene of his defeat: Oxfordshire. The very interior of his parents’ 2 Polstead Road house, e.g., their dining room, and the sight of his own brother Will, and many streets of Oxford all must remind him of Janet. She thereafter might become a fixture inside the Lawrence family home, were the ingenue and Will to become an item. Frantic (if only internally), he asked Leeds for a job-lead to digs *anywhere*. Become frantic, then he would be the less likely looking blasé. Too, if Asher correctly reports that “Lawrence had discovered Hogarth’s plans,” then why need Ned ask Leeds whether plans existed?

As one scholar of T.E. Lawrence, Philip Neale, posits: “It was shortly after this rejection from Janet that Ned made the sudden decision to go to Syria and Carchemish as an archaeologist” (Neale, 2021: 98). Mack admits: “We will never know in what way Lawrence’s disappointment in love affected his decision to leave England and live in the Middle East, in its predominantly male society, for the better part of the next five years” (Mack, 1976: 66). Psychiatrist Mack nonetheless acknowledges: “Yet I am of the impression that this disappointment played a significant part in Lawrence’s turning to Syria and to Carchemish” (Mack, 1976: 67). Ned took sail on the *Saghalién*, a Messageries Maritimes steamer, for the Near East on December 10, 1910 (Wilson, 1990: 76).

ii. Hogarth and the Supportive Environment Idea

Imagine a newly-minted University of Oxford graduate confiding (about his heartbreaking bid to wed unwilling Laurie) in a University authority like Dr. Hogarth. This elicits Hogarth’s paternal response. The Guzzardo, et al., study of student-faculty relationships found that campus figures not unlike this Keeper of the Ashmolean significantly can counterbalance contextual challenges. They can better-arm students confronting personal challenges (Guzzardo, et al., 2021: 43).

In truth, Hogarth resembled a Super Faculty Figure. For regarding 1908 developments, Laurentian biographer Desmond Stewart understood: “For Lawrence, David Hogarth’s election to succeed Dr. [Sir Arthur] Evans ‘both as Keeper of the Antiquarium and of the Ashmolean Museum as defined by the new Statute’ was to prove important. The new statute unified the Museum and the University [of Oxford] Picture Galleries and gave Hogarth, as Keeper, an enhanced status and income” (Stewart, 1977: 26). That election seems soon vindicated. The total of the Ashmolean’s

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visitors itself was enhanced during Keeper of the Ashmolean Museum Hogarth's initial year by more than a quarter, to 18,862 from 15,024 (Stewart, 1999: 64). And in autumn 1910, Hogarth was a Fellow of Magdalen College (Wilson, 1990: 991 n. 68).

Weigh whether insights of Guzzardo, et al., help render more explicable a 1910 T.E.'s sudden dash *escaping Oxford* (rather than *toward Syria*).

B. Will, as Smitten by Janet

In context of recounting T.E.'s bootless proposal to Miss Laurie, Mack relates: "Janet's heart was turning to Will despite the more than three years' difference in their ages. He was the tallest and handsomest of the Lawrence boys and in her view the most 'dashing'" (Mack, 1976: 65, citing Interview with Mrs. Hallsmith, March 25, 1965). Mack offers: "The relationship between Janet and Will deepened: he wrote poems which he gave her, and despite Mrs. Lawrence's opposition (ostensibly on the ground that Will—nearly twenty-five when the war [World War I] began--was young for his age), intended to marry her" (Mack, 1976: 480 n. 41, citing Interview with Mrs. Hallsmith, March 25, 1965). Will Lawrence successfully completed Oxford degree work by August 1913. He sailed in September for India to teach at a missionary institution.

Jolley submits that the sole explanation for going to India is his letter from India to a Fellow at the University of Oxford: Ernest Barker. Will therein said he could not doubt love, because Will had known beauty in a human being. Barker later told the world he knew what Will meant. Yet Barker withheld that underlying knowledge.

Envision a soon-to-be, or a brand-new, University of Oxford graduate: Will,. He feels pressed to confide in another about his stalled aim to marry more-than-willing Maid Laurie. So Will opens his heart to a University figure somehow senior
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to him: Fellow at the University of Oxford Ernest Barker. Guzzardo, et al., held that caring campus authority figures should adapt even course policies to students' needs (Guzzardo, et al., 2021: 48). As seen hereinabove, they specified: "Adaptability or flexibility is also necessary when students are experiencing distress (e.g., intimate partner problems,...)" (Guzzardo, et al., 2021: 48). If the foregoing were the case, then said frustration and consequent Barker input might the more obviously (than otherwise) help explain why Will sets-off for Asia.

III. T.E.'S OCTOBER 22, 1910, DEFAULT FUTURE: POSTGRADUATE STUDY

Ned matriculated the University of Oxford on October 12, 1907 (Wilson, 1990: 42). Thomas Robert Tighe Chapman "Lawrence"—during 1914 to become by inheritance Sir Thomas, the seventh Chapman baronet (Wilson, 1990: 941-943)--felt concern for his nineteen year-old son, Ned. He conferred with his 2 Polstead Road, Oxford, family's spiritual shepherd Reverend Alfred Millard William Christopher (Knightley and Simpson, 1970: 12). Canon Christopher had retired in 1905 from the family's church (Wilson, 1990: 44): Saint Aldate's (Wilson, 1990: 27), on Pembroke Street. There he had baptized fifteen year-old T.E. on March 26, 1904 (Yagitani, 2021).

After Thomas turned to him, the Canon successfully solicited service as Ned's mentor from the University's Laudian Professor of Arabic David Margoliouth (Knightley and Simpson, 1970: 12-13). It is said that Professor Margoliouth proposed Hogarth to assist this newcomer, as well (Yardley, 1987: 33). The Canon, in writing, recruited Hogarth also to stand *in loco parentis* for Ned as requisite (Knightley and Simpson, 1970: 19). Who better than Hogarth to prove parental? All unfolds as if Chapman, personally, had read that century to come-Innovation in Higher Education
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study *“The Ones that Care Make all the Difference”*: *Perspectives in Student-Faculty Relationships*.

Regarding T.E. in 1910, both Leeds and Bell, according to Korda, still “envisioned him safely seated at a desk in the Ashmolean Museum in Oxford, examining potsherds on his return from France” (Korda, 2010: 178) after November first. Bell had accepted Lawrence as unofficial Ashmolean Museum acolyte (Asher, 1999: 39) and befriended him (Asher, 1999: 33). Too, bear in mind that Bell was both (Sattin, 2015: 77): (1) the figure behind Lawrence’s 1909 initial Syria trek (Wilson, 1990: 52-53, citing C.F. Bell notes on LH:TEL. British Library, London Add. Ms. 63549); and (2) promoter of the research topic embraced in Lawrence’s postgraduate-level Bachelor of Literature (B. Litt.) Jesus College application (Wilson, 1990: 69). Therefore, on November 1, 1910, Bell could know whether Syria seduced Ned irretrievably during 1909. This in-the-know Assistant Keeper of the Department of Fine Art expected Lawrence to inspect potsherds in Oxford during 1911 while Hogarth’s team toiled in Syria. Absence from Oxford on an engagement in Syria, at least one irrelevant to the proposed B.Litt. credential, meant disqualification from Jesus College funding (Wilson, 1990: 73).

During January 1909, Bell had introduced Dr. David Hogarth to Lawrence (Sattin, 2015: 34). In Laurentian biographer Flora Armitage’s version of Lawrence’s exit toward Carchemish: “He had thought to continue working on medieval pottery for a higher degree, but D.G. Hogarth who had kept a close watch on him ever since his Oxford City school days when he arranged some of the pottery cases in the Ashmolean Museum, persuaded him to abandon the idea” (Armitage, 1956: 53). The paternal-filial feature of the Hogarth-Lawrence relationship (Armitage, 1956: 235) is documented. Sattin states of the pair:

In his introduction to *Accidents of an Antiquary's Life*, Hogarth noted that

“your true Antiquary is born, not made. Sometimes an infirmity or awkwardness of body, which has disposed a boy to shun the pursuits of his fellows, may help detach the man for the study of forgotten far off things.” He was certainly not writing about himself, for he goes on to admit that, even though he had the required illnesses as a child, he was no born antiquary. But as he wrote these lines in Oxford in 1909, it is tempting to think that he had in mind his young new acquaintance. If not, it is a remarkable coincidence because Lawrence fitted the description perfectly, right down to the infirmity: five years earlier, when he had just turned sixteen, he had broken his leg in a fight at school (Sattin, 2015: 33, citing Hogarth, D.G., *Accidents of an Antiquary's Life* 1 (Macmillan 1910) (footnote omitted).

It is widely claimed that Hogarth eyed Lawrence as likely “protégé” (Norman, 2014: 22; Armitage, 1956: 57; Knightley and Simpson, 1970: 29; Stewart, 1977: 64) in Syria. Laurentian biographer Richard Aldington alleged “a strong presumption that Hogarth hoped to train him up as a successor” (Aldington, 1955: 76). If these assertions are halfway accurate, then Hogarth’s arrangements respecting 1911 Carchemish sans apprising Lawrence firsthand or via either Leeds--an Ashmolean Assistant Keeper since 1908 and Ned’s friend from then on out (Tabachnick, 2004: 112)--or Bell before October 24 make matters murkier. For lack of posting T.E. on Carchemish is consonant with unquestioned acquiescence, as late as October 22, 1910, of postgraduate study in Oxford as T.E.’s default future.

But after October 23, in Laurentian biographer Michael Asher's words, "Hogarth leapt at the idea" (Asher, 1999: 79) of installing T.E. in Carchemish. In 1910, Hogarth's pull rendered possible Ned's accession to his excavation unit (Wilson, 1990: 73). This swerve evidences (robustly if circumstantially) some unrecorded tectonic shift between October 22 and October 24. It also evidences (circumstantially yet potently) that, whatever changed had touched both Hogarth and Lawrence.

IV. POST-OCTOBER 23, 1910, EVENTS

A. The News of 1910-1911

i. Lawrence Single (or Not) Welcomed to Carchemish (or Not)

On November 1, 1910, the Ashmolean's Assistant Keeper Bell was indeed in the know about whether Syria irreversibly had enraptured Lawrence during 1909. Yet Bell presumably was in the dark about whether there had been a Lawrence marriage proposal skewered by Ned's neighbor Miss Laurie on or about October 23, 1910. As seen hereinabove, Dr. Hogarth returned to Oxford on Sunday, October 23, from his trip to Turkey (Wilson, 1990: 70). Says Lawrence's authorized biographer (Wilson, 1990: 5) Jeremy Wilson:

Lawrence went to see E.T. Leeds at the Ashmolean, who later recalled that Lawrence had unexpectedly asked him whether there were any digs in prospect "in the Near East or elsewhere" which he might join. Leeds knew a great deal about Hogarth's Carchemish plans and had replied, "Why on earth didn't you speak sooner?" (Wilson, 1990: 3, citing Leeds, E., *Recollections of T.E. Lawrence*, (manuscript) 82, (Leeds Papers); and Wilson, J. (ed). (1988); *Letters from T.E. Lawrence to E.T. Leeds*.

(Andoversford: Whittington Press, 11).

As just observed, by October 23, 1910, Dr. Hogarth had known Lawrence for 21 months. Dr. Hogarth had been recruited to serve *in loco parentis* for him. If Hogarth parentally had expected Maid Laurie wooed and won by Lawrence, then befitting becomes a pre-October 24 Hogarth preferring Ned serenely scrutinizing potsherds within convenient range of both 57 Victoria Road (the Laurie family's address) and 2 Polstead Road (the Lawrence family's address) during 1911. Bell thus envisioned him yet on November 1.

For Hogarth, plausibly, might foresee 1911's Ned either engaged to be married or as newlywed husband of Mrs. Janet Lawrence. And Hogarth might have disapproved of hiring an expedition member unschooled in archaeology and absolutely inexperienced in archaeological employment. (If applied to T.E., then maybe superior characterization of Hogarth's undesired hirees could include parties inexperienced in *any* remunerative employment, like Lawrence's father who "although a well-educated man, never took up a job" [Nutting, 1961: 10]). Hogarth might worry that a hiree's engaged, or newly-married, status would distract an inexperienced and unseasoned nonprofessional hireling from primary devotion to Hogarth's worksite.

As it transpired, Hogarth's 1911 Carchemish excavation actually underwent such complication with a figure both experienced and seasoned. Before October 23, 1910, Reginald Campbell Thompson was selected as Hogarth's Carchemish deputy (Wilson, 1990: 73): "Assistant and Surveyor" (Stewart, 1977: 65). A cuniformist (Wilson, 1990: 80), this Cambridge product was a dozen years T.E.'s elder. He had passed winter 1904 serving in the excavating at Nineveh (Sattin, 2015: 91).

That Thompson was engaged to be married was well-known (Graves, 1927:
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35). On February 18, 1911, Ned wrote to his family that Reginald “is to be married in Aleppo this spring. He wants a house and a piano for his bride” (Lawrence, M., 1954: 134). Thompson was to marry upon the close of the Carchemish digging season (Wilson, 1990: 89). And Reginald was enwrapped by his lady’s arms before August (Sattin, 2015: 124 and 127). He refused return for a second digging season sans spouse (Korda, 2010: 202).

This prospect horrifying everyone else, Thompson was replaced (Korda, 2015: 202). Hogarth, to be Keeper of the Ashmolean Museum from 1908 until 1927 (Tabachnick, 2004: 79), named Thompson’s successor. He was an assistant keeper of the Ashmolean Museum (Korda, 2015: 202). Thereby, Hogarth’s pre-October 23, 1910, arrangements concerning 1911 Carchemish excavation (Wilson: “the purpose of this visit to Constantinople”) reached without so apprising the would-be upcoming husband T.E. (Wilson: “Lawrence seems to have learned...while Hogarth was still away”) look logical.

The purposes of this pocket factual-review about Marriage have been two. First, these facts might facilitate weighing whether Lawrence as (un)engaged or (un)married marked a factor in Hogarth’s mind regarding his recruitment. Second, the resolution (if only contingent) of that issue could in turn facilitate estimating likelihood Hogarth *knew* of T.E. ambitions about becoming engaged, i.e., ambition revolving around Janet Laurie.

ii. T.E. to Be an Archaeologist (or Not) in 1910-1911

Ned resisted becoming an archaeologist. Drawing on Laurentian letters of December 1910 and January 1911 from Jebel, Lebanon (Tabachnick, 2004: 8), Stewart grasped that: “Although his [1910 University of Oxford undergraduate] thesis was now 48 Vol. 17.2 (March 2025)

written, he was still seeking evidence for his ideas, not intrinsic interest or inspiration. Instead, the dream of printing beautiful western books beautifully in England seemed about to be accomplished” (Stewart, 1977: 71). Harvard Medical School Professor Mack concluded: “His valuable contributions to the work at Carchemish notwithstanding, it is doubtful Lawrence would ever have had the discipline, or the desire, to concentrate with sufficient single-mindedness on a particular academic project to become a professional archeologist” (Mack, 1976: 86).

Lawrence *rejected becoming an archaeologist at Carchemish.* The twenty-two year-old was to write his mother Sarah on April 11, 1911, *from Jerablus* that “I fear my opportunities of doing something good that will count will be very small: at least I am not going to put all my energies into rubbish like writing history, or becoming an archaeologist. I would much rather write a novel even, or become a newspaper correspondent” (Brown, 2005: 34). *Rubbish like becoming an archaeologist.* Harold Orlans recognized these April 11 words were plain truth (Orlans, 2002: 18). Lawrence consistently refused to channel all his energies into dustbin-labor like archaeology.

Year after year, the facts spoke for themselves. For Sir Charles Woolley was Director of British Museum digging in Carchemish between 1912 and 1914. Sir Charles outlined his subordinate’s performance. Laurentian behavior corresponded to Laurentian energies withheld from trash like laboring to become a field archaeologist: “In the actual work he was very erratic. It all depended on how far he was interested, and not everything in field archaeology did interest him or appeal to his sense of values” (Lawrence, A., 1937: 69).

Lawrence was to tell George Bernard Shaw: “I was brought up as a professional historian, which means worship of original documents” (Garnett, 1964: 356). Whereas

Woolley added: “I think he disliked Germans in general because his own type of scholarly mind was so different from theirs, and he would rail at their meticulous scholarship and lack of imagination. The only German for whom I remember his speaking a good word was the librarian of the royal library at Munich who visited us at Jerablus and enthused over our bookshelf, declaring that of the six books he loved best in the world Lawrence had five” (Lawrence, A., 1937: 75-76). *Rail at meticulous scholarship. Not investing all his energies into rubbish like writing history.*

On December 10, 1913, Lawrence did write from Carchemish to Mr. Vyvyan W. Richards as if so enamoured of Carchemish as to reconcile himself to being an archaeologist:

The fault was in ever coming out to this place, I think, because really ever since knowing it I have felt that (at least for the near future) to talk of settling down to live in a small way anywhere else was beating the air : and so I gradually slipped down, until a few months ago when I found myself an ordinary archaeologist. I fought very hard, at Oxford and after going down, to avoid being labelled : but the insurance people have nailed me down, now” (Garnett, 1939: 160-161).

I have got to like this place very much : and the people here—five or six of them—and the whole manner of living pleases me. We have 200 men to play with, anyhow we like so as the excavations go on,...It is a place where one eats lotos every day, and you know that feeling is bad for one’s desires to do something worth looking at, oneself (Garnett, 1939: 161).

This language is consistent with the verdict of his boss Woolley. It is language comporting with a jobsite supervisor awarded his rank thanks to unearned birthdate, nationality and sex: “200 men to play with” implies the favorable and the unfavorably nationalities at Carchemish wherein to be born. It squares with a supervisor whose work—when he does work—is restricted by the extent of his interest and the work’s appeal to his values. The dig Lawrence describes is indeed devoid of the Germans’ derided “meticulous scholarship.” His Carchemish—not the real Carchemish of native diggers down in his dig—appeals hypnotically. For its describer consumes lotos daily, as his native diggers cannot. This letter to Richards cannot evidence Lawrence’s affirmative move *to Syria* in 1910-1911 for sake of a professional career-ladder into the archaeology profession. It constitutes evidence leaving open the *flight from Oxfordshire*-explanation of Oxford events post-October 23, 1910.

The purposes underlying this capsulized factual-review about Archaeologist have been two. First, these facts could facilitate weighing whether Lawrence during 1910-1911 *ever* desired to become an archaeologist. Second, resolution of that matter might, in turn, assist in estimation of the likelihood that: (1) his relocation from Oxford to Carchemish had been a thoughtful exit *to Syria* (affirmatively) because energized by career aspirations, however inchoate; or instead that (2) his jump to Carchemish constituted an impulsive flight *from Oxfordshire* (negatively), because fueled by dismay over Janet’s rejection of a marriage proposal from Ned.

iii. The Ethics of Care

Besides a hurried journey through the Negeb shortly prewar, and three weeks in Egypt, Carchemish marked his sole serious engagement in plumbing the past (Stewart, 1977: 79). Yet there roistered T.E., apparent apprentice-archaeologist in *the quint: an interdisciplinary quarterly from the north* 51

Carchemish on April 11, 1911. Why? Hypothesize Hogarth accompanying Lawrence to Carchemish (Wilson, 1990: 78) at least partially because the would-be postgraduate student's marriage engagement-offensive guttered out. The disappointed desperado's environment most salubrious shortterm probably appeared one *remote* from sidewalks trod by Oxfordshire's Ned-resistant spinster: Janet. Korda styles spring 1911 life in Carchemish a "a long way from Oxford, indeed about as far as Lawrence could get" (Korda, 1910: 193-194). Lawrence James judges: "Virtual exile in Syria suited Lawrence" (James, 1993: 46). *Exile*.

Phillip Knightley and Colin Simpson charted Hogarth's February-March 1911 "roundabout journey," e.g., Beirut-Haifa-Nazareth-Deraa-Damascus-Homs-Aleppo, with Lawrence to Carchemish: "The trip was highly successful. The excitement Lawrence had felt over his first visit to Syria in 1909 was reawakened. At the side of his master he fell for the lure which that country has held for many an Englishman" (Knightley and Simpson, 1970: 39). Korda fancies Lawrence "almost irrationally happy" (Korda, 2010: 193) come May 1911, even while he reviled rubbish like sinking to being an archaeologist.

As biographer Desmond Stewart elaborated:

[W]hatever his attitude to archaeology, Lawrence had powerful reasons for wishing the Carchemish excavations to continue. In return for his help with the pottery, the photographic records and the local labour, he lived a more expansive life than he could have afforded in England. As a history teacher in a secondary school, or even as a don, he would have met fewer interesting people and have had less time to himself; he would scarcely have become so swiftly an important figure in his surroundings

(Stewart, 1977: 81).

Hogarth thereby appears positively, even protectively, fatherly. He seems that much less negatively opportunistic. For now Hogarth much less than in 1910 resembles a selfish seducer of 22-year-old, professionless Lawrence from career ladder-work on medieval pottery toward his University of Oxford advanced degree (Armitage: “persuaded him to abandon the idea”). Lawrence’s shortterm story appears proffering his Happy Ending.

Remember the Guzzardo, et al., ethics of care framework’s insights into the student-faculty relationship. The relationship can be seen running between: (1) a *carer*, i.e., Ashmolean Museum Keeper Dr. Hogarth; and (2) the *cared for*, i.e., Ned, the University of Oxford undergraduate acquainted with Hogarth (and under Hogarth reluctantly to resemble an apprentice-archaeologist). The ethics of care process prescribes the carer be: (1) engrossed with the cared for (Hogarth instantly enlists T.E. for Carchemish); (2) incentivized by the needs of those cared for (Hogarth magically conjures T.E.’s Demyship); dedicated to their relationship’s success (Hogarth personally—thanks to ten camels and eleven baggage horses (Korda, 2010: 191)--accompanies T.E. to Jerablus); and (4) seeing their cared for in a good light (Guzzardo, et al., 2021: 45).

B. The Reverberations in 1912-1923

In February 1912 Lawrence crowded-on his March 1 anniversary of arrival at Carchemish (Korda, 2010: 191). Concerning Lawrence of about that juncture, Korda relates: “The world of caravans, camels, desert, and Bedouin nomads would hold Lawrence to the Middle East for the next three years, except for brief visits home,

and spare him the decision about what career to follow, until at last the outbreak of World War I thrust him into the career for which he had been training himself all his life” (Korda, 2015: 204). But, to borrow Korda’s language, which “1912 career to follow” *had* he?

As just observed, Stewart pinpoints Hogarth minion-T.E.’s overnight delight “in his surroundings” as Big Frog in a Little Pond. His importance as Hogarth satellite need not prove command of skills both specialized and demonstrably practical outside the Carchemish microenvironment into which Hogarth had escorted him. Therein, Stewart’s “more expansive life than he could have afforded in England” greatly gratified Lawrence. In context of objective evidence, Carchemish resembles a kind of sheltered workshop for a foreigner empty-handed of in-demand occupational skills. He therein indulged himself in the more expansive lifestyle than he could finance in England. For this European, going home to Will Lawrence, Janet Laurie and Vyvyan Richards must mean a step downward.

To frame the immediately-preceding point in different words, borrow an older and wiser T.E.’s words. For T.E. explained to Hogarth on June 13, 1923:

I haven’t a trade to follow: and won’t do the two or three things for which I’m Qualified : hence I’m reduced to soldiering. You see, I’m 35 nearly: and that’s too old to make a fresh start in a skilled business” (Garnett, 1939: 424-425).

You talk about Govt. money. I take it every week, so that I haven’t any scruples: but I’m worth more than 3/- a day only in politics & Middle East, & there I don’t play: and a temporary job at a high salary would only cart me worse that ever at the end. It’s hard enough, now, to go poor

again : and every year of money would make it far worse.

When I saw [First Lord of the Admiralty Leopold Stennett] Amery he was thinking of coastguard or lighthouse for me...(Garnett, 1964: 425).

Why was T.E. distracted from either learning a trade to pursue or launching himself into a skilled business niche before time (as he reasoned) ran out? Why was he to go poor during 1923 because worth nothing more than 3/- *per diem*? On June 28, 1927, Lawrence wrote to Robert Graves of “D. G. Hogarth to whom I owe every good job (except the R. A. F.) I’ve ever had in my life” (Grave and Hart, 1963: I, 50). Was the easterly-leading Hogarth of 1910-1911 primarily predator, pater, or Pied Piper?

V. HOGARTH AS FATHER-CONFESSOR

By 1927, rather as if David George Hogarth not Baron Chapman had played the part of T.E.’s progenitor, his hope was to have Hogarth telling his story. Lawrence solicited Hogarth on June 1 to be his biographer (Orlans, 2002: 169, citing 1927 letter: June 1 to Hogarth, [copy, Imperial War Museum, London]). By about that time during Lawrence’s life, one internationally-respected voice in western European psychiatry was positing:

A great longing dominates all persons. They seek the one who will understand and comprehend, who can divine their secret wishes. The more a person shrinks from the realization of his inmost thoughts, so much the more will the hidden yearning strive toward discovery.

Numberless are the individuals who are forever complaining that they are misunderstood and misjudged, that they have found no one who has entered into their mental life. This complaint very frequently proves to be sexually determined. There are instinctive impulses which desire recognition and satisfaction...(Stekel, 1953: 65).

But Dr. Hogarth died on November 6, 1927 (Garnett, 1964: 551 n. 2). That December 1, Lawrence wrote Edward Garnett:

The shadow of Hogarth's going is still always there whenever I turn round to think. He was really the parent I could trust, without qualification, to understand what bothered me. And I had grown to lean on his knowledge of my motives not a little...(Garnett, 1964: 551 (footnote omitted)).

His knowledge of my motives. The parent I could trust to understand what bothered me. Phillip Knightley and Colin Simpson opined: "He became Lawrence's mentor, confessor, and patron, and it is no exaggeration to say that without Hogarth there might have been no Lawrence of Arabia" (Knightley and Simpson, 1970: 19). Sattin introduces Hogarth in his chapter entitled "Father Confessor" (Sattin, 2015: 30).

Lawrence on April 14, 1927, informed Charlotte Shaw of: (1) the bastardy of his own mother; (2) who had served under Thomas Chapman's wife as nursemaid and took her husband from her; that runaway-couple (3) always believing themselves "living in sin"; and (4) fearing their sons would discover as much; (5) "Whereas I knew it before I was ten, and they never told me..." (Brown, 2005: 345). Michael

Korda observed that “the fact that Sarah bore Thomas eight children argues for a fairly intense erotic attachment on both sides” (Korda, 2010: 148). Weigh whether these half-dozen topics prove somehow sexually-oriented.

Now, ponder whether Ned felt the want of any real parent who was neither: (1) demonstrably adulterous by habit, e.g., his Anglo-Irish father Thomas, in Oxfordshire remaining husband of his wife Edith in Ireland still mothering their four daughters (whether or not Ned knew that last, by age nine); nor (2) provably habitual fornicatrix, e.g., his never-to-marry-mother Sarah Lawrence (impregnated at least four times, to her nine-year-old boy’s knowledge). If that was how Ned felt, then in whom could that little Evangelical Protestant have reposed “trust, without qualification” about *anything*?

On April 14, 1928, the blow of Hogarth’s death would be a little less fresh. Then, Colonel Lawrence emphasized to draughtsman (Garnett, 1964: 304) William Rothenstein: “Hogarth *shone* at Oxford because he was humane, and knew the length and breadth of human nature, and understood always, without judging” (Garnett, 1964: 583 (Lawrence’s emphasis)). Maybe this don did know human nature’s breadth and length. Then Hogarth’s scope exceeded the ken of: Aristotle; the unloved, by Thomas Edward Lawrence (Brown, 2005: 337), Saint Thomas Aquinas; William Shakespeare; Dr. Sigmund Freud; and Nobel laureate Bertrand Russell. Perhaps more plausibly, Dr. Hogarth did understand Lawrence nonjudgementally and always.

To Lionel Curtis, the Colonel wrote on December 22, 1927, that “[i]n my own case I feel that I have lost what I valued at Oxford; for D.G.H. was in a real sense a part of Oxford. Indeed I fancy that for me he was Oxford, entire and unqualified. He was a don, unimaginable away from the place” (Garnett, 1964: 557). Even if “he was

Oxford, entire” means the University exclusively (excluding, e.g., Janet Laurie), the Colonel selected these words when he had an elder brother and two younger brothers who had been graduated by the University of Oxford after each (like the Colonel, and with him) had resided together at nearby 2 Polstead Road for years: “Lawrence had lived out his boyhood in the shadow of the university” (Armitage, 1956: 37). For their 2 Polstead Road abode lay but a few minutes ride by bicycle (Korda, 2010: 490) or a quarter-hour stroll from the University of Oxford’s All Souls College (Orlans, 2002: 141).

Knightley and Simpson say that it was of the days when Hogarth made possible Ned’s relocation to Carchemish that T.E. later wrote of him (Knightley and Simpson, 1970: 30) in that letter to Curtis on December 22: “He was my background, in a curious sense, the only person to whom I never had to explain, the ‘why’ of what I was doing” (Garnett, 1964: 557). *Never had to explain the “why.”* Indeed, Lawrence immediately continued for Curtis: “He was strangely understanding (Garnett, 1964: 557). *Understanding.*

In April 1910, a bout of pneumonia-complicated influenza slew Sir Thomas Chapman “Lawrence” (Mack, 1976: 270). Dr. Mack, the Harvard University psychiatry professor, (Tabachnick, 2004: 116), relates: “There is to my knowledge no written statement of Lawrence’s about his father’s death, nor any information on how he reacted to it” (Mack, 1976: 270). Contrast Lawrence’s seeming silence in the wake of Baron Chapman’s decease against his expatiation upon his loss of the Hogarth who had become “a second father to him” (Nutting, 1961: 11). *Filial.*

If Ned were distraught during the night of October 23 from the open wound of an hours-past failed proposal, then decide whether he serendipitously could encounter

Hogarth via Leeds on October 24. If he did that day discover Hogarth comfortingly *in loco parentis*, then estimate the odds Lawrence revealed courtship initiatives hatched between 1909 and 1910 but quashed by Janet's reluctance not 24 hours earlier. If Ned did disclose his suddenly abortive courtship, then ponder whether enlistment with Hogarth hustling him toward southern Asia provides its plausible consequence. *Pre-October 23, 1910*, as potential-husband T.E. seemingly receives zero reach-out from Hogarth. (Leeds: "Why on earth didn't you speak sooner?") *Post-October 23, 1910*, womanless Lawrence voyages to Asia forthwith, thereupon to be personally accompanied to Carchemish by Hogarth.

Providentially, as Canon Christopher could suppose, Hogarth already had determined upon Reginald Campbell Thompson as his Carchemish on-site lieutenant (Wilson, 1990: 73; Sattin, 2015: 78) by October 24. If Hogarth after October 23 had been concerned about a 22 year-old man missing the ingenue her suitor felt right for him in Oxford, then the 34 year-old (Sattin, 2015: 97) Thompson seemed peculiarly likely to sympathize with their subordinate: Lawrence. For it was far from secret in May 1911 that Thompson was engaged to be married (Graves, 1927: 35). He felt disappointment when his bride-to-be had not accompanied him to Asia (Sattin, 2015: 108).

Thompson was to wed directly after the conclusion of the digging season (Wilson, 1990: 89). In June, Lawrence wrote Leeds about Thompson's packing-up: "the course of true love" (Wilson, 1990: 89, citing T. E. Lawrence to E. T. Leeds 2.6.1911 Letters from T. E. Lawrence to E. T. Leeds p. 22. Leeds papers). As seen hereinabove, he actually refused return to Carchemish unless his new Mrs. Thompson could join him there (Korda, 2010: 202). Director of the British Museum Sir Frederic

G. Kenyon (Tabachnik, 2004: 100) barred that option (Wilson, 1990: 98).

Ned's 1911 satisfactions in his Carchemish situation need not belie heartfelt anguish continuing from 1910's failed proposal. Dr. Mack reported Janet's recall: "We were joking about his brothers when he suddenly proposed" (Mack, 1976: 65). Therefore, his brothers were on the couple's minds. If she wished to soften her rejection, then mentioning attraction to Will might have been her tactic: Janet loved not Ned the less, but loved Will the more! Malcolm Brown and Julia Cave even record as fact: "Her response was to laugh--partly due to sheer astonishment, but partly because she had by then become attracted to the third brother, the tall and handsome Will" (Brown and Cave, 1989: 23). Stewart explicitly records as fact that "she rejected him in favor of Will" (Stewart, 1977: 30 n.).

If Ned believed the younger Will his up-and-coming rival, or at least so surmised, then December 1910 departure to Carchemish might look as though burning no bridges back to the Maid of Oxfordshire. For on October 24, 1910, Janet was 24 years of age. Yet professionless Will was only 20. And Will would be anticipated to attain his University of Oxford degree in mid-1913. Any such Will-variable in a lovers' triangle (supposing matters were as simple as a triangle) must imply no wedding vows for years, thereby ensuring Janet's retention on the Oxfordshire marriage market.

Simultaneously, the gravitational pull of Will might more tightly retain Janet in the orbit of 2 Polstead Road. That must keep her conveniently on-hand to hear any better-polished, T.E. second proposal. Meanwhile, too, Janet witnesses gentlemanly T.E. seem in the short term to leave the field open to his brother. That looks fraternally chivalrous. It appears not necessarily motivated by selfish shortterm escape from the fresh wound-agonizing Oxford presence of Janet and the fresh wound-agonizing 2

Polstead Road presence of Will.

In the meantime, also, only early during June 1911 was T.E. to learn the Carchemish excavations could continue (Korda, 2010: 196) in Wilson's words, "perhaps even into August" (Wilson, 1990: 89) 1911. T.E.'s aforementioned 1911 letter to Leeds reveals how "Thompson is packing with a sort of ghoulish joy" as of June 2 (Wilson, 1990: 89, citing T. E. Lawrence to E. T. Leeds 2.6.1911 Letters from T. E. Lawrence to E. T. Leeds p. 22 Leeds papers). Yet even were the dig extended into August 1911, there might be no Carchemish second season at all (Korda, 2010: 196). Thereby, Ned as Oxfordshire suitor can live to fight another day on familiar ground.

Hence, his late 1910 farewell to Oxford might signify a merely months-long addition of an official Man-of-the-World veneer to the professionless, erstwhile college boy. A suitor suited to playing the long game could return home in mid-1911 to visit or to remain, conspicuously prior to his proposal-dismissal's first anniversary. His clumsy proposal had been ill-starred. But its rejection was *not* irreversible.

Concededly, T.E. might at no time have disclosed any personal anguish, or personal doubts, to another particular elder whom he much-admired. He was Charles Montagu Doughty (Armitage, 1956: 158). It had been Doughty from whom he had sought counsel concerning the Near East preceding his 1909 initial venture there (Tabachnick, 2004: 49). Ned's nondisclosure in the Doughty case might make slightly less likely on its face that this shy Lawrence lad would confide, concerning his unconsummated love-life, in an official Ashmolean Museum authority-figure. *Circa* 1910, did University of Oxford men really confide in Oxonian authority-figures concerning their unconsummated love-lives? If so, then who did but T.E. Lawrence?

VI. THE MYSTERY OF WILL LAWRENCE, PART ONE: INDIA

Regarding William George Lawrence, Alison L. Jolley recognized that on August 1, 1913, *The Times* reported him in the Second Class on the class-list the Oxford School of Modern History's examiners issued. Jolley realized that in early September 1913 Will was at sea to Port Said aboard the *S.S. Egypt* (Jolley, 2021: 26). Jolley acknowledges: "The only explanation I have been able to find, in Will's own words, for what drew him to India comes from a letter written to Sir Ernest Barker. Even here, he [Will] admits: 'There's no reason I can give, beyond that I felt it was up to me somehow to come, a feeling strong enough to admit of no doubt....That's faith, I think, a trust in the dark that is mainly instinctive.'" (Jolley, 2021: 26-27).

A. *Sir Ernest Barker Hints at a Personal Connection with Will*

Jolley's source is the aforementioned Sir Ernest Barker's quotation from Will's letter, a letter itself now lost (Jolley, 2021: 27 n. 48). Sir Ernest, as former Fellow of Saint John's College, was to recall Will as his pupil "during the whole of his course in Modern History" (Lawrence, M., 1954: 395). And Will's words, which Jolley accurately presents with ellipses as found in Barker, continue in Barker's March 1953 (Lawrence, M., 1954: 397) quotation. For the paragraph from which Jolley drew concludes immediately:

"The thing is that there are some people---and I'm more or less in line with them---who find religion akin to human affection, not a thing to analyse but to feel. You can't explain falling in love, but you can experience it. And the danger of this position is that you get men like [1913 Nobel Prize for Literature-recipient poet Rabindramath] Tagore who seem

almost to patronise God with a Platonic affection; and sentiment passing for love is blasphemy. For myself, I've said at times, and meant it, that I could never doubt love having known what beauty can be in a human being." (I know what lay behind that last sentence, but of course I keep that knowledge to myself.) (Lawrence, M., 1954: 396).

Love you can experience. I never could doubt love. Known beauty in a human being. Compare with Will's the religious attitude of Baron Chapman as remembered by Will's youngest brother, Professor Arnold Walter Lawrence:

My mother...held religious convictions profoundly. She totally accepted the tenets of her brand of Christianity and had no doubt they constituted a complete code of binding rules for conduct; but she could only in a small part share in my father's emotional, almost mystical, religious feeling (Mack, 1965: 474 n. 70, citing letter to the author, November 1, 1968 [ellipsis in Mack]).

Will cannot doubt love because he had contemplated beauty's possibilities in flesh and blood. If William George Lawrence thereby meant his parents or four brothers or his other beloved relatives (on the dubious chance he had met one, even), then preferable would be using the plural "what beauty can be in human *beings*" or even "what *beauties* can be in human *beings*" not the singular "what beauty can be in a human being." The plural especially would befit because Will, an Evangelical, explains adhering to his missionary school (St. Stephen's College) in a spirit of "faith" and in context embracing "God." In 1913, some Christians consciously could have

cultivated habitual inclusivity by valuing countless beauties discoverable within the brotherhood and sisterhood of all humanity under the fatherhood of God.

Contrariwise, Will in this moment links his love idea with use of the singular: “what beauty can be in a human being.” In his prior sentence he seems endorsing a “love” beyond “a Platonic affection.” If what beauty can be in a particular person arouses love (not sentimentality) *beyond* Platonic affection in such a tall, physically healthy, handsome, heterosexual, 23 year-old male, then consider the generically typical target of such love. Ponder the possibility Will’s romantic will had been bewitched by some nymph, or that had he become inspired by her.

Now name each particular party, embodying some beauty, whom history associates with Will Lawrence. True, he did go boating on the Cherwell with Miss Gwendolyn Morwenna Kinsman Jane: Will provided a hansom cab (Jolley, 2021: 12). He also was to be Morwenna’s postal correspondent (Jolley, 2021: 88). But in the words of Morwenna, born in late January 1885 (Gwendoline Morwenna Kinsman (Jane) Barnes [1885-1974]), Will was “too young” (Jolley, 2021: 13). Will, born on December 10, 1889 (Tabachnick, 2004: 110), would have noticed their age-gap as clearly as did Morwenna. What names remain?

Quaere, whether Will had confided (concerning his unconsummated love-life) in a father-figure within Saint John’s College. If so, then that figure could know the name of a lovely whom history accurately could associate with Will. His former teacher Barker injects language implying (or at a minimum, hinting) as much: “I know what lay behind that last sentence, but of course I keep that knowledge to myself.” Sir Ernest’s sentence is gratuitous.

Sir Ernest published this in a context arranged by the Lawrence family: “I am

proud to be writing now, at Mrs. Lawrence's request, this introduction to the letters written by her son Will (W. G.)" (Lawrence, A., 1937: 395). Therefore, Will's mother Sarah welcomed inclusion of his contribution to *T. E. Lawrence by His Friends*. Nor did Will's youngest brother, Professor Lawrence, bar its inclusion in that book he edited. Nor did Will's older brother, Montagu Robert "Bob" Lawrence.

Will's father Thomas and his brothers T.E. and Frank Helier Lawrence all were deceased. Thus Sarah, Arnold and Bob totaled Will's surviving close kin (effectively speaking, all his kin). Hence, Barker's 1953 declaration that he knew what lay behind Will's "I could never doubt love having known what beauty can be in a human being" appears to have been credible to Will's entire living family, speaking realistically. In all events, Sir Ernest's claim was inoffensive to them.

B. Will Hints at a Personal Connection with Two Barkers

In the first paragraph of his letter of December 27, 1913, to Sarah, Will informed her: "Just been up to Dacca to see the grave of Mr. Salkeld, Mrs. Barker's brother, not that I could do anything useful there but in order by any means to please her. I would like to do something really big for the Barkers" (Lawrence, M., 1954: 484). *By any means to please her. Do something really big for the Barkers.*

Sir Ernest's wife was the former Emily Isabel Salkeld. Her brother Henry Lyde Salkeld had been born during 1873 in Stockport, Cheshire. During 1902 (Doran, 2020), Henry married Blanaid Ffrench-Mullen (sic), who had been born in India on August 10, 1880. Their son, Cecil Ffrench Salkeld, was born in Assam, India on July 9, 1903 or 1904.

Henry Lyde Salkeld was a member of the Indian Civil Service. He was Assistant Commissioner in Assam. Typhoid had claimed Henry's life during 1909 (Doran, *the quint: an interdisciplinary quarterly from the north* 65

2020). Will's December 1913 visit to Henry's grave was a small gesture, inevitably. Yet it well might be welcomed by the Barkers. However, Will tells Sarah he still wants to do much more. But why?

In any case, when Barker wrote "I know what lay behind that last sentence, but of course I keep that knowledge to myself" he was being gratuitous for the *second* time.

VII. WILL AT ONCE WENT OUT

For in Barker's memoir of T.E. Lawrence for *T. E. Lawrence by His Friends* of 1937, Barker already had related:

I cannot refrain from some words about W. G. Lawrence, partly because my memories of T.E. are so closely connected with my memories of him, and partly because I felt so deep an admiration, indeed affection, for what he was in himself. He came up to St. John's as an Exhibitioner in 1909, and after taking his degree in 1913 went out at once to St. Stephen's College, Delhi. He had such gifts of sympathy that in a brief space he made himself the friend of many Indians and learned their minds;...(Lawrence, A., 1937: 44-45).

Barker is gratuitous here for the *first* time.

A generation had elapsed between Will's departure from Oxford and these lines from Barker. Into Barker's word-portrait of Will he saliently inserted a gratuitous detail. For Barker's Will, upon earning his degree in 1913 went out **at once** to St. Stephen's College. Even after a gap of 22 to 24 years, Barker still tells Will's story to

encompass Will's leap *forthwith* to India. *Quaere*, whether: (1) Barker knew what lay behind Will's relocation "at once" to southern Asia; but (2) Barker kept silent for sake of others' privacy; because (3) Will's departure story embraced Miss Janet Laurie; and although by 1935 (4) T.E. and Will were lost, Mrs. Janet (Laurie) Hallsmith, her husband Guthrie Hallsmith and their brood of four could continue very much alive for decades. So did they all. Janet's daughter Elspeth "Ellie" Hallsmith as twenty-first century memoirist (under the name of Emma Smith) restored Janet Laurie to life for history. Ellie survived into 2018.

A. The Deeper Background to Will's Advent to Delhi

i. Laurie's Passion for Will Burns After Losing Basil

Mrs. Janet Hallsmith's 1965 interviewer Dr. John Mack records that, prewar: "The relationship between Janet and Will deepened: he wrote poems which he gave her, and despite Mrs. Lawrence's opposition (ostensibly on the ground that Will--nearly twenty-five when the war began--was young for his age) intended to marry her" (Mack, 1976: 480 n. 41). Janet's daughter Ellie at age seventeen in 1940 (Smith, 2013: 126-132) believed that in 1914 "[a]t the beginning of the Great War" Janet and Will were "engaged" (Smith, 2013: 132). In turn, in the words of Janet's grandson Barney Jones, Barney had learned from his mother Ellie the story "that she [Janet] ended up by the end of the war single and emotionally scarred after three men she had hoped to marry all died...and that the one she really loved was Will Lawrence" (Jolley, 2021: 80).

Punters might hazard that Janet's passion for her junior, Will, blazed indeed during 1912 and 1913. Her elder from a high-profile Evangelical family (Jolley, 2021: 78), Clarence Basil McNeile, had died on October 9, 1911 (Jolley, 2021: 78). Janet

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had looked to marry McNeile (Smith, 2008: 142, 189 and 281; Smith, 2013: 86). His family appears to have been known to the Lawrence family (Jolley, 2021: 78-79).

ii. A Nympholept Enters the Scene

In his June 8, 1911, letter to Oxford from Carchemish, Ned replied to “Will’s of the 18th since it is the only letter I have had lately” (Garnett, 1964: 108; Lawrence, M., 1954: 164). He offers advice about Will’s University studies: “What is a nympholeft [sic]? It sounds like some sort of newt: don’t use these words: your letter on the whole needs a chastening of Bunyan, and perhaps Addison” (Lawrence, M., 1954: 165). Jolley explains that Will weighed penning a paper about Arthur Rimbaud, the poet (Jolley, 2021: 16). Will’s work tentatively was named “A Nympholept: Arthur Rimbaud “ (Jolley, 2021: 16 n. 20).

The sibling in Syria was destined to translate, as T.E. Shaw, the entire *Odyssey* into English from ancient Greek, postwar (*The Odyssey of Homer*, 1959). Yet Ned in Carchemish identified neither a nymphole**Pt** nor a nymphole**Ft**. Alison Jolley seemingly feared the same for 2021 students of the interwoven biographies of Will and T.E. For Jolley prudently notes:

Here I would like to thank Professor Seth Whidden of the Rimbaud and Verlaine Foundation for suggesting what Will might have been considering writing: ‘This use of the word nympholept does not evoke anything specific in the Rimbaud...universe. My sense is that it merely refers to being raptured or frenzied. One could indeed say that during the short span of his poetic output, Rimbaud was caught in a frenzy of desire for ungraspable nymphs, if the nymphs can be read as ultimately

unattainable poetic truths' (Jolley, 2021: 16 n. 20).

Sophisticated Professor Seth Whidden doubtlessly knew “poetic truths” inside and out. But Whidden knew not Janet Elspeth Laurie.

To a certainty, Rimbaud proves *himself* poet alert to the nympholept. For Rimbaud’s poem *Winter Fete* offers: “Horace nymphs with First Empire headdresses,--” (Rimbaud, 1957: 93). Who was Horace? During 1821, Horace Smith (1779-1849) had published *Amarynthus, the Nympholept: A Pastoral Drama, in Three Acts* (Smith, 1821; Smith, 2018). When was the French First Empire? It was ruled by Napoleon I from 1804, i.e., during Smith’s adult lifetime.

During Laurie’s lifetime, the definition of nympholepsy began with: “A species of demonic enthusiasm supposed to seize one bewitched by a nymph,” the victim thereof becoming a nympholept (Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary, 1948: 683). Lawrence’s editor David Garnett printed T.E.’s June 8, 1911, letter with the correctly spelled “nympholept” (Garnett, 1964: 109). Garnett himself helpfully noted: “Nympholept = one carried off by nymphs or inspired by the nymphs with an enthusiasm for the unattainable” (Garnett, 1964: 109 n. 1). Did the nympholept concept ever correspond to anything in the Arthur Rimbaud biography?

In 2023, Princeton University Emeritus Professor of Literature Michael Wood reminded Britons about one Rimbaud poem in particular:

A Season in Hell has a sort of narrative sequence, and parts of it are plainly, if also luridly and metaphorically, autobiographical. There is a section that depicts Rimbaud’s violent and much interrupted affair with Paul Verlaine....Verlaine is the Foolish Virgin and Rimbaud the Infernal

Bridegroom, and the section is called ‘Deliria I’. The virgin reports that she ‘has neglected all my human duties to follow him’, and wonders whether he has ‘the secrets to change life’. He laughs long and horribly (Wood, 2023: 12). “And all these remarks point to one of Rimbaud’s favourite and most powerful literary moves: the flight into mythology that seems less mythological every minute, but definitely real” (Wood, 2023: 12).

Myth. Nymph. Definitely real.

Around late summer 1871, Arthur mailed new Rimbaud poems to Verlaine. After May 1872, a Rimbaud-Verlaine escapades-chain not unlike a troubled love affair saw the pair flee Paris to Brussels and thereafter to London. Thereupon a quarrel preceded their reuniting in Brussels. There, intoxicated Verlaine lightly wounded Rimbaud with a gunshot. It resulted in Paul’s sentence to two years of imprisonment (Baran, 2012: 136-137).

iii. The Stage Called Oxfordshire

Imagine that an accurate edition of *A Season in Hell* (“flight into mythology”) might somehow reach Will’s hands. Or perhaps surviving notoriety of this couple (“bewitched,” “frenzied,” “demonic enthusiasm”) reached Will’s ears. Thereby, he then could fancy Rimbaud either *being* a nympholet, or *having* a nympholet. On May 18, 1911, did the word nympholept evoke anything specific in Will Lawrence’s own universe?

The postwar young mother Mrs. Janet Hallsmith retained more than one photograph documenting her prewar visit (accompanied by Clarence Basil McNeile) to

her paternal Uncle Stuart Laurie's home named Plas Magen, in Beaumaris, Anglesea, Wales (Smith, 2008: 188). There Stuart Laurie lived with her Aunt Jessie Laurie and Aunt Annie Laurie. Stuart's Plas Magen was photographed ivy-covered, with a pony trap poised to provide a ride (Smith, 2008: 189). These are details indicative of a prewar picture shot in a season of warm weather, albeit "Mummy is wearing a skirt that comes right down to her ankles" (Smith, 2008: 189).

Thus, a 1910 hope-filled for Basil becomes the more likely year for this joint-expedition than does Basil's tragic 1911. For his October 9, 1911, decease from tuberculosis implies Basil the less likely to travel to Janet's family during 1911's warm weather than during 1910's warm weather. Basil died within three weeks after 1911's summer died. However, Janet is recorded by the April 1911 census at the address of Basil and his parents in Bishop's Sutton, Hampshire (Jolley, 2021: 79).

Thereby emerges the immediate point. If Will were attracted seriously to Janet (i.e., entranced by the nymph) before May 1911, then Will (by his May 18 "nympholept" letter to Ned) probably descried portents of impending marriage through out-of-town visits to each counterpart's kin by the Basil-Janet couple. Bear in mind Basil's sojourn to Plas Magen, plausibly by 1910, and Janet's to the McNeiles' Bishop's Sutton abode in April 1911. If those portents discouraged any aspiration of Will (or of T.E.) for Janet, then it becomes no marvel that the earliest indication Jolley discovered that Will might serve with an overseas missionary body after graduating from St. John's College (University of Oxford) lies in evidence from not six weeks prior to Will's "nympholept" letter.

For Ms. Jolley refers to Ned's April 11, 1911, letter to Sarah from Carchemish (Jolley, 2021: 13): "Poor father! His sons are not going to support his years by the

gain of their professions and trades. One is a missionary [Bob]: one an artist of sorts and a wanderer after sensations [Ned]; one thinking of lay education work [Will]:.... None of us can ever afford to keep a wife” (Brown, 2005: 34). If Janet were to marry Basil, then neither Ned nor Will would expect so keenly as before to shoulder any duty to a wife.

Will was one to compose poems. One reads Will’s charmingly affectionate February 18, 1914, poem to and about Ned (Jolley, 2021: 43; Lawrence, A., 1937: 85; Sattin, 2015: 208) today. Janet recalled receiving poems from him (Mack, 480 n. 41). If Will felt enchanted by Laurie’s allure, then by May 18, 1911, Will must have struggled to suppress a frenzy of desire for a decreasingly attainable female.

Janet recalled herself as at least equaling Ned’s adult height (Mack, 1976: 65). Too, she was Will’s senior by 41 months. Hence might some skeptics doubt the Maid of Oxfordshire struck Will as a seductive nymph, even were Will a nymph-lusting, romance-prone poet. But Ellie emphasizes Janet had been “*exceedingly slim*” (Smith, 2008: 247 [Smith’s emphasis]). Ms. Jolley during 2023 focused precisely upon that memoirist’s two-word detail (Jolley, 2023: 63, quoting Emma Smith, *The Great Western Beach: A Memoir of a Cornish Childhood Between the Wars*, (London: Bloomsbury, 2008, p. 247). Will was approximately seven inches-taller than Ned and thereby that much taller than Miss Laurie: Will stood more than six feet tall (Simpson, 2011: 360).

If slender Janet nestled beside Will, then that much-taller male beheld an ingenue both literally less carnal than he and (if no goddess) gamine. Whatever the patent thinking attaching to Will’s prospective Rimbaud paper’s title, consider the strongest guess formulated in 114 or 115 years about what can have made Will prone

to articulate *any* topic in terms of a nympholept: William's noun conjures a sliver of bygone author Rimbaud's world: "Horace nymphs." Before May 18, 1911, had never to be won-Janet (as nymph) taught Will (as nympholept) "what beauty can be in a human being"?

In fairness to T.E. as a speller, brother Montagu Robert "Bob" Lawrence declared that "Many of the letters by T.E. were damaged by water and have been exceedingly difficult to read" (Lawrence, M., 1954: x). Nevertheless, "I have transcribed them with great care both in regard to idiosyncrasies of spelling and punctuation" (Lawrence, M., 1954: x). Despite Bob's heroic efforts, in his edition (three paragraphs beyond Ned's passage quoted immediately hereinabove) appears: "{next word not clear}" (Lawrence, M., 1954: 166). Bob Lawrence's insert corresponded to Garnett's editorial insert at that point in Ned's letter: "[*word illegible*]" (Garnett, 1964: 110).

If in 1911 Will correctly had written Ned of a nymphole**Pt**, then maybe T.E. replied with proper spelling about a nymphole**Pt**. Perhaps David Garnett knew the noun. He was a publisher and novelist, as well as serving between 1932 and 1934 as literary editor at *The New Statesman* preceding the 1938 publication of his edition of *The Letters of T. E. Lawrence* (Tabachnick, 2004: 63). Hence, Garnett as vobabulary-king plausibly could recognize the word albeit it met one's eyes "exceedingly difficult to read." Garnett did print the noun spelled properly (Garnett, 1964: 109), as seen hereinabove.

Whereas, years thereafter, perhaps Bob Lawrence the physician no more knew the noun than had T.E. in 1911 (even if T.E. had accurately copied Will's correct spelling into Ned's holograph). Because he perused Ned's word after it had suffered water-damage, Bob misread it to be nymphole**Ft**. He published Ned's noun thus in

1954. If undergraduate Will (but not his two brothers who were University of Oxford alumni already: Bob and Ned) comprehended what ‘nympholept’ signifies, then estimate the extent its meaning likely loomed larger in Will’s reasoning or in Will’s subconscious than in theirs.

Did *nympholept* likely weigh heavily upon Will’s thinking?

iv. Time Enough for Janet-Will Passion’s Burst Bloom

Any October condolences to Janet from T. E. or Will concerning the October 9, 1911, death of Mr. McNeile, or any December Yuletide greetings from T.E. or Will to each among the numerous Laurie family, tactfully could mark a socially respectable reopening of personal contacts with her (if contact had been suspended at all). T.E. corresponded from Oxford on August 26, September 26, and November 9, 1911 (Garnett, 1964: 120-125). On Saturday, November 11, 1911, he attended his University of Oxford degree awarding-ceremony (Wilson, 1990: 98). Imagine a grieving Janet being invited (wherever her address) to join all the Lawrences, i.e., an isolated nuclear family’s household, at Ned’s ceremony. She politely could be greeted by Will’s family at that public event. She reciprically might offer congratulations and fresh farewell to Ned. For he expected departure anew to Syria that month (Garnett, 1964: 125).

Thereafter, Thomas and Sarah (whether or not Will) but not Ned might invite Janet (whether or not all the Lauries) to join a family birthday-celebration. If Janet were employed, then most conveniently for her was the fall of Will’s birthday on Sunday, December 10, 1911. William George Lawrence turned 22 (Tabachnick, 2004: 110). Miss Laurie was 25. If pre-1912 social familiarities between Will and Janet, personally, had been tabooed by Basil’s role or perhaps chilled by Ned’s presence,

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then each impediment now had disappeared.

For T.E., again invisible in Oxford, had been due in Beirut on December 10 (Garnett, 1964: 125). He writes to his chief Hogarth from Aleppo, Syria on December 12, 1911 (Garnett, 1964: 126). He writes Hogarth from Jerablus, Syria on December 16, 1911 (Garnett, 1964: 127), and from Aleppo on December 27, 1911 (Garnett, 1964: 130). Ned failed to return to England until Christmas 1912 (Aldington, 1955: 92).

However, Ned's 1911 autumnal exit from England need not prove his heart grown cool to Janet. On July 28, 1911, he had been in Jerablus (Wilson, 1990: 94). Falling badly ill on July 29, that diarist recorded: "Cannot possibly continue tramp in this condition" (Wilson, 1990: 94, citing T. E. Lawrence, diary entry for 29.7.1911, IN Lawrence, A. [ed.], *Oriental Assembly* [London: Williams & Norgate, 1939 and New York City, NY: E. P. Dutton, 1940], p. 46). He relinquished hope on August 3 for summertime journies afoot, and on August 12 took sail from Beirut for England by way of France (Wilson, 1990: 97). Perhaps he could not suppose McNeile's October 9 death promptly to open the way for another man to woo Janet eventually, and consequently he had planned Near East tramping instead.

In Oxford on August 26,, he was gratified to know pressure was being applied on the British Museum by Hogarth for a 1912 season in Syria (Garnett, 1964: 120-121). By September 26 he gladly writes Mrs. Andre Rieder, teacher at the American Mission school in Jebail (Tabachnick, 2004: 158), that his second season was assured (Garnett, 1964: 123) at Carchemish. That marked a spot remote from McNeile, *living still*. It meant at an address far from the female who had set her heart on a man not Ned.

If an intimate, Will-Janet private connection (whether unromantic or not, in origin) gelled from late 1911 into latter 1913, then the couple could ride the flow of events. The two should expect Will's July 1913 successful completion of Oxford School of Modern History studies heralding his own University of Oxford graduation. They realistically could peer beyond his graduation to Will's post-July 1913 foothold in a serious career. For Janet and Will, or at any rate Will, would have witnessed close-up the celerity whereby T.E. (post-July 31, 1910) had hammered-together the rungs for his own University of Oxford academic career-ladder (before October 23, 1910).

Simply suppose this couple's waxing mutual attraction. A Will-Janet acquaintanceship reasonably could revitalize sometime after the November 11, 1911, University of Oxford ceremony. If so, then it well might mean maturing mutual allegiance sprouting about July 11, 1912. That date, Janet turned 26. *Tick-tock*. If so, then their mutual allegiance well might ripen about July 11, 1913. That date, Janet turned 27 (Janet Elspeth Laurie). *Tick -tock. Tick-tock*.

Thereby, their hope to hear wedding-bells by or before September 1914 would be natural. At any rate, Dr. Mack recounted as a matter of fact: "Despite Mrs. Lawrence's objections Janet and Will had hoped to marry, but he was killed in the war in 1915" (Mack, 1976: 65). *Ex hypothesi*, Sarah's obstinate resistance elicited the couple's mutual pledge (even if only a secret one) to marry someday. From such discreet mutual pledge recounted by Janet to young Ellie could have been born that daughter's own term wielded in her ripe old age: "engaged."

B. The Immediate Background to Will's Advent to Delhi

Freer Andrews, a member of its teaching staff, arrived in England during summer 1912. They recruited Oxford and Cambridge graduates for an abbreviated service program. For two years the graduates would serve as lay teachers, in Jolley's words, "while considering their life's vocation" (Jolley, 2021: 18). Will initially met Principal Rudra in the Oxford residence of Francis Fitzhugh Monk, a professor (Jolley, 2021: 19).

Principal Rudra recollected of Will:

I visited his home at Oxford and saw his father and mother and youngest brother. In the atmosphere of that well-ordered and cultured English home I at once understood the type of man who was to join the Staff of St Stephen's. The parents were anxious to see me and to be sure that he was coming to healthy surroundings in India. Many were the questions I had to answer (Jolley, 2021: 19, citing S. K. Rudra, 'In Memoriam W. G. Lawrence', *St Stephen's College Magazine*, June 1916).

Dr. Mack discerned "Mrs. Lawrence's original hope that her sons would provide her personal redemption [from myriad sins of fornication, and of her life lived in sin] by becoming Christian missionaries" (Mack, 1976: 32). Will's redemptive role wafted in the air of the Lawrence household. At least it had fed into Ned's offhanded mention of Will's overseas service potential to Sarah ("thinking of lay education work") in his aforementioned April 11, 1911, letter (Brown, 2005: 34). Will volunteered for the St. Stephen's Staff (Jolley, 2021: 18, citing Hugh Tinker, *The Ordeal of Love: C. F. Andrews and India* [Oxford University Press, 1979, p. 60]).

Quaere, whether: (1) Evangelicals Thomas and Sarah together joyously foresaw
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their son Will assuming a religious mission, temporarily; while (2) Sarah alone gleefully foresaw Will detaching from Janet and not to return until three years after Sarah had hosted Rudra in 2 Polstead Road; whereas (3) Will and Janet agreeably foresaw Will's September 1913 departure to St. Stephen's College, a missionary institution (Jolley, 2021: 27), to contemplate Will's true vocation and empower him to prove his adulthood ("young for his age") abroad for profoundly religious Sarah across the course of one year.

Will and Janet might have observed firsthand what Mack gathered concerning T.E. and Sarah. For in 1909, "when he went to Syria [Ned's aforementioned "Syria trek"]", his mother believed that he was on a special mission of some kind, one with religious significance" (Mack, 1976: 32). The 1913 couple could present evidence to Sarah (by about September 1914) of their adult, mutual devotion's depth. Their love by then would have proved sturdy enough to endure their yearlong division. And this cross they carried in joint devotion to Will's special mission. Like Ned's before it, Will's Asian sally entailed a religious dimension.

Some might contest whether mutually enthralled, red-blooded adults (witnessing the approach of Will's summer 1913 detachment from the University of Oxford) could think so optimistically or casually about yearlong separation by so many miles. For of western Europe during their time, whether or not in all times and everywhere, was this much asserted:

The feeling of displeasure at separation is often the first manifestation of a great and true love; forcible separation can evoke frightful states of unbounded emptiness, nameless misery, and the most despairing desires, which draw the whole psyche into sympathetic accord and often

lead even to a complete disgust with life. This strong longing is one real difference between real love and the usual sexual urge, in which case the longing for the person is unusually extinguished after the actual sexual act (Hirschfeld, 1939: 166).

Brightly more sunny than Hirschfeld, Korda contributes how, when T.E. served in Syria during 1911: “The entire Lawrence family seems to have been engaged in writing an endless series of letters and postcards, so that Lawrence seems to have known as much about what was going on at 2 Polstead Road as if he had still been living there, and there was hardly a detail of his own life in Jebail on which he did not report home at length” (Korda, 2010: 189). Consider too that from Carchemish on November 14, 1912, Ned had written to Polstead Road that he hoped to be “home about Dec. 24” (Lawrence, M., 1954: 244). He looked to pass “perhaps a fortnight in Oxford” (Lawrence, M., 1954: 243). On December 17, 1912, he had reached England (Wilson, 1990: 114). He was there for Christmas (Aldington, 1955: 92). Ned did not depart England for Calais until January 9, 1913 (Wilson, 1990: 117).

Fewer than seven months after this departure to Calais, he was home again. T.E. arrived by mid-July 1913 (Wilson, 1990: 125). His father Thomas met the expenses of Ned’s guests from Carchemish: Sheikh Hamoudi ibn Sheikh Ibrahim el Awassi (Tabachnick, 2004: 74), and Dahoum (Knightley and Simpson, 1970: 43). This was a trip when T.E. patriotically worried over Will’s St. John’s College friend (Stewart, 1977: 114) from Egypt, Ahmed Abdul Ghaffar. For Gaffar could walk to 2 Polstead Road for a visit with Will (Lawrence, A., 1937: 45). Gaffar thereupon could contaminate T.E.’s guests Dahoum and Shiekh Hamoudi with Gaffar’s skepticism about the British empire (Stewart, 1977: 115 n.).

T.E. writes to Charles Francis Bell (Brown, 2005: 51 n.1; Asher, 1999: 26), from 2 Polstead Road on August 12, 1913, about that date's Oxford doings with Dahoum (Brown, 2005: 51-52). Bell had been behind those doings (Brown, 2005: 51 n. 2): Dahoum was painted (Brown, 2005: 51-52) by portraitist Francis Dodd (Brown, 2005: 51 n. 3). Thus, before September 1913 Will and Janet both could have enjoyed Ned's company when he had hoped to spend about two weeks at Oxford in England during Christmastime 1912. Thereafter, while the couple celebrated Will's winning his degree, both could have enjoyed Ned's company during his summertime 1913 vacation.

If the couple's reunions with T.E. meant that in August 1913 his Syria lay right across the street psychologically, then Will's Delhi lay just on the opposite side of the block psychologically. Will was to visit T.E. in Syria for approximately ten days of September 1913 (Jolley, 2021: 27; Lawrence, M., 1954: 442-444). As indicated hereinabove, on February 18, 1914, Will composed for Ned:

I've talked with counsellors and lords
Whose words were as no blunted swords.
Watched two Emperors and five Kings
And three who had men's worshippings,
Ridden with horsemen of the East
And sat with scholars at their feast,
Known some the masters of their hours,
Some to whom years were as pressed flowers :
Still as I go this though endures
No place too great to be made yours (Lawrence, A., 1937: 85).

In touch from India with their Oxford neighbors on April 15, 1914, Will tells his “Darling Mother” (Lawrence, M., 1955: 522) of what he hears from Janet’s elder sister Margaret Frances Laurie (Lawrence, M., 1955: 523). Will’s peacetime southern Asia sounds less like an expanse of exile isolating Englishmen than it sounds like his Lawrence household’s cozy neighborhood.

Amor vincit omnia.

VIII. THE MYSTERY OF WILL LAWRENCE, PART TWO: JANET

A. Something *Happened*

Dr. Mack found that Will and Janet hoped to wed (Mack, 1976: 65). Janet he styles Will’s “sweetheart” as of the First World War’s advent (Mack, 1976: 480 n. 41) during 1914. As already seen, Janet was to lead her seventeen year-old daughter Ellie to understand that as of the launching of the war the pair were “engaged” (Smith, 2013: 132). Thereby is evidenced engagement extending at least until August 4, 1914. But *something* happened. As seen hereinabove, Jolley acknowledges: “Perhaps we will never know why Will and Janet’s relationship came to an end” (Jolley, 2021: 80).

i. War Intrudes

On August 4, 1914, the United Kingdom declared war on Germany. In Kasauli, India, Will learned of it that evening (Lawrence, M., 1954: 565). The same month, 24 year-old Will’s 21 year-old brother Frank Helier Lawrence (Yardley 1987: 23) wrote Sarah: “I have filled up the form for the Special Reserve not lightly nor without thought” (Lawrence, M., 1954: 615). Frank was not the only unwed, Laurentian fire-eater of wartime’s early weeks.

In 2 Polstead Road, T.E. wrote on October 19, 1914: “Turkey seems at last to

have made up its mind to lie down and be at peace with the world. I'm sorry, because I wanted to root them out of Syria, and now their blight will be more enduring than ever" (Garnett, 1964: 187 [footnote omitted]). He really was rooting them out of Syria by October 19, 1918. For David Garnett notes regarding T.E.'s October 1914 disappointment: "Turkey attacked Russia and the British Empire ten days later" (Garnett, 1964: 187 n. 1).

The British and Turks were at war on October 30 (Orlans, 2002: 23). *Now* no fire-eater spitting bullets, T.E. was to arrive in Cairo as a civilian. There he was commissioned without physical examination and with zero Army training (Korda, 2010: 252). Estimate therefrom how much action the British Army expected *this* fresh-face lieutenant to undergo. Korda observes: "As 1916 began, there was nothing to suggest that Lawrence would ever get into combat" (Korda, 2010: 282). In November 1916 (Wilson, 1990: 328-333), his assignment to become liason to Emir Feisal ibn Hussein in Arabia ignited unwed Ned's opposition: "This being much against my grain I urged my complete unfitness for the job: said I hated responsibility" (Lawrence, T., 1938: 89).

ii. Love Intoxication Deludes

And 1914's perils conjured an atmosphere, as the internationally-known psychotherapist Dr. Wilhelm Stekel recorded, generating "a very frequent phenomenon" (Stekel, 1939: 176):

The lover departs from his fiancé or mistress with all the signs of pain and grief associated with separation. In most instances he demands surrender, because he will probably be killed without having possessed

her. This sacrifice, as a rule, was made. It is seldom refused or never requested. Others become engaged before being called to the colors and swear holy vows, while still others marry as rapidly as possible. It is a veritable love intoxication that has befallen both partners and, like all erotic ecstasies, may increase without limit in the face of death. In the beginning the man's passion increases. After a certain latent period, letters by degrees arrive more seldom or remain absent entirely (Stekel, 1939: 176-177 [footnote omitted]).

Was those self-dramatizers' "probably be killed without having possessed her" just a line? Surely the strongly reluctant ladies resisted altogether! Dr. Stekel's footnote reads: "Many men used this line to conquer sexual objects who were very refractory ; they were usually successful" (Stekel, 1939: 347 n. 2). Or had the psychotherapist heard mostly *males'* recollection of the matter?

In England, was Janet scenting intoxicating love in the air all around her? Could she guess a crisis bigger than both of them must incite Will to defy Sarah soon and to make Janet his wife at last? Suppose that once shooting started, patriotic Will *instead* selflessly requested from Janet an August 1914 extension through the duration of the war of their (secret or otherwise) engagement. Whether or not Will dispatched such post-August 4 request, on peacetime's July 11, 1914, Janet already had attained the age of 28 while never-married yet. *Tick-tock. Tick-tock.*

iii. Biological Clock Obtrudes

Dr. Stekel observed about the Europe of the lifetime of Janet, Will and Ned:

Nearly every girl passes through an age when she proudly proclaims that she will “never marry.” This snobbish attitude is common. It hides the fear of remaining single. It means that if she remains single the girl can claim this state to have been her deliberate choice (Stekel, 1962: 285).

From 1914, likely husband-hunters’ precedents that lay both before Janet’s eyes and near her heart were unpromising. For World War I was to come and go leaving not merely Miss Margaret Frances Laurie but all three of Janet’s older sisters unwed still (Smith, 2008: 280). Throughout years preceding August 4, 1914, every Laurie sister surely had comprehended how, as Simone de Beauvoir described western Europeans in the initial half of the twentieth-century, the sexes’ circumstances in youth were “... not symmetrical; for young girls, marriage is the only way to be integrated into the group, and if they are ‘rejects’ they are social waste. That is why mothers have always at all costs tried to marry them off” (De Beauvoir, 2011: 441).

If this were accurate of mothers “always,” then what of English widows like Janet’s mother? Mrs. Mary Laurie had borne five daughters. Destiny decreed mother Mary watch her sole son emigrate to Saskatchewan (Neale, 2021: 96). If only one clutched *objective* evidence indicative of Janet’s anxiety (or lack thereof) about advancing age!

On March 25, 1965 (Mack, 1976: 482 n. 41), Janet told New England’s John Edward Mack about England’s Thomas Edward Lawrence that: “She had always felt toward him as an older sister toward a clever brother, and he also inspired in her a feeling that he needed to be taken care of” (Mack, 1976: 65). T.E. was born beyond peradventure in August 1888 (Mack, 1976: 18). *Felt toward him as an older sister.* And Philip Neale accurately assigns Janet’s birth to 1886 (Neale, 2021: 94).

Citing no source, Neale records that her father James Laurie died when Janet was twelve (Neale, 2021: 96). But on that spring 1901 day (An Anglesley Gentleman Drowned: Boating Fatality at Hythe) when *T.E. was twelve*, Janet was fourteen. For she had been born on July 11, 1886 (Janet Elspeth Laurie), in Fawley, Hampshire (James M. Hallsmith, 1920-2002). Addressing other topics, Neale elsewhere cites Emma Smith's, i.e., Ellie's, 2008 volume of her memoirs (Neale, 2021: 96 n. 3, 105 n. 13, 106 ns. 14-15 and 108 n. 17). Neale's conscientious reading of that volume presumably lay behind his error. For he states Janet was 32 when she married in September 1919 (Neale, 2021: 103), an error of Emma Smith's (Smith, 2002: 158).

Between her two volumes of memoirs, Smith affirmed Janet as twelve years of age upon James' decease a minimum of four times (Smith, 2008: 47, 188, and 280; Smith, 2013: 26). If the memoirist wrote in the voice of her remembered younger-self, then for Ellie had Janet poignantly underscored Janet's age of only twelve at the death of Ellie's grandfather James? Standing before all four of her offspring, did Janet pare a couple of years from her age?

Her British Red Cross Society Volunteers, 1914-1918 records list Janet Elspeth Laurie, of 13 Windsor Road, Church's End, Finchley, beginning service on August 19, 1915, ranked "Nurse." It mysteriously under "Birth" provides "Circa 1887," yet definitively lists under "Age at engagement" this: "28" (*Janet Elspeth Laurie*, British Red Cross Society Volunteers, 1914-1918, MyHeritage). But Miss Laurie had turned 29 years of age during July 1915. Did she plan to pose as young enough to attract a proposal of marriage from some younger-yet wounded warrior?

Would that work?

iv. Geoffrey Lightens Janet's Moods

From whatever motives, Janet (less youthful, and likely less patient than Will) turned elsewhere. Wilson published his weighty biography of T.E. long prior to Emma Smith's widely-read report in 2008 of her late mother Janet's engagement to Geoffrey Martyn Bazin (Smith, 2008: 158, 189 and 288). Whereas Philip Neale long after 2008 highlighted a March 2, 1915, letter from Will's brother Frank to Mrs. Laurie (Neale, 2021: 100-102). It closes: "I hope you and Nancy [Remember Ellie's Aunt Annie and Clarence Basil McNeile at Plas Magen?] are both perfectly well again now. I do not think there is much need to ask if Janet is" (Neale, 2021: 102, citing Letter from F. H. Lawrence to Mrs. Mary Laurie, 2 March 1915 [unpublished]). Upon discussions with Alison Jolley, Neale ventures: "Why Janet's health need not be enquired about, (sic) is not clear, although it may be because Janet had become engaged to Geoffrey Bazin at that point and was looking forward to a happily married life" (Neale, 2021: 102 and 102 n. 10).

For Jolley submits: "Interestingly, having now seen the letter written by Frank to Janet's mother at the start of 1915...it occurs to me that if the last line might be taken to refer to Janet's happiness over her coming marriage, then Will could not have returned from India with any thoughts of being her beau" (Jolley, 2021: 80-81). If ingenuous Frank on March 2 believed Janet and Will (far distant from Frank for many months) never were engaged, then on March 2 Frank playfully could imply cloudless cheer about Janet's joy over her approaching vows. Frank indeed would believe Miss Laurie and Will never had been engaged, if a Will-Janet engagement remained altogether secret.

Or, their mutual pledge could have been withheld from Frank anyway. Born on

February 7, 1893 (Yardley, 1987: 23), Frank was three years and two months Will's junior. An engagement entered *circa* August 7, 1913, would have found Frank at the age of 20 years, six months. Janet, already at age 27, could insist that Frank was too callow to safeguard lovers' secrets in the house of Sarah.

Something controlling transpired between August 4, 1914, and before March 2, 1915.

v. Will's Optimistic Moods

As Ned on July 17, 1915, was to warn Will, their father expected Janet to marry in "only a very short time" (Jolley, 2021: 78, citing T.E.L. to W.G.L., 17 July 1915, Bodleian Libraries, Oxford, MSS. Eng. C. 6741). What happened between August 4, 1914, and before March 2, 1915, was no maiden's contention that the Great War barred wartime's wedding of Will and Janet. For Janet fixed upon marrying in September 1915 combat soldier Geoffrey Bazin on leave from the conflict in France (Smith, 2013: 24). If she had felt enveloped by others' love intoxication beginning on August 5, then her flit from engagement with Will on August 4 into engagement with Geoffrey before the next March 2 need not be belittled as purely personal fickleness

Simply suppose prudent request during unsettled August from Will to Janet. Will solicits postponed proclamation of their engagement past some preagreed announcement target-date, e.g., September 1914. Said proposition might appear reflecting negatively upon Will. For to some it might mean Will almost offhandedly thoughtless of the older Janet. It might even be construed to evidence: Will in 1914 no more embodied backbone to stand beside his bride-to-be before Sarah to declare their wedding-date (with or without her blessing), than his immediately older brother in 1916 was to show stomach to confront Turks (Lawrence, T. 1938: 89, ch. XVII; *the quint: an interdisciplinary quarterly from the north* 87

Lawrence, T., 2011: 74, ch. 19). Pick the more fearsome foe: Sarah in Oxford, or Turks in Arabia. Would *Lawrence of Arabia* have been too cowed to confront their mother regarding Will's love for Janet?

On the other hand, try to interpret this speculative postponement-request more mercifully toward Will. Europeans innumerable anticipated a short war. Conflict sharply curtailed was expected widely among Europe's armies themselves (Wiles, 1977: 508). Adolf Hitler enlisted for military service on August 16, 1914 (Maser, W., 1976: 40). This volunteer for the Bavarian Army left for combat training in October: "Hitler's biggest concern during these weeks, if we take him at his word, was that the war would be won by the time he got to the front" (Ullrich, 2013: 53). He was in combat 65 days post-enlistment (Maser, W., 1976: 40-43).

On August 5, 1914, Will optimistically had written Polstead Road:

The C.O. here thinks it will be all over with Germany in six weeks, and we can only pray it will be so. A long protracted death-struggle would be the most terrible war of Europe. I'm trusting that the English fleet will begin by an overwhelming victory, and then our part will be over, and you'll be assured of food coming into England safely (Lawrence, M., 1954: 565).

Six weeks from August 5 meant around September 16: Hitler was not to leave Munich for training until October 10 (Ullrich, 2013: 53). If Adolf were ridiculous, then how ludicrous was that C.O.?

Will optimistically wrote home on August 13 that "surely the war should be over quickly. To judge by German proclamations they've lost their head which is a good

sign” (Lawrence, M., 1954: 570). Therefore, the Will of August 5 and of August 13, 1914, in any case could expect an engagement’s extension through the war’s duration to expire on or before newly-noncombatant Britain’s glorious New Year’s Eve 1914. If Will in mid-August solicited an engagement extension at all, then he need never have schemed indefinite infliction of frustration upon Janet.

B. Wartime, Will Consults Janet

i. A 1965 Version of Will and Janet Facing 1914

Consistent with Janet as spouse-starved in August 1914 appear versions of her counsel offered Will about enlistment. Informed firsthand by Janet, Dr. Mack relates of Will: “When the war began he had written to his sweetheart for advice on whether he should return from India to join the army. Unable to decide how or what to reply, she had written, finally, after much deliberation, that it might trouble him later if he did not return” (Mack, 1976: 481 n. 41). In Mack’s paraphrase of Janet’s 1965 language, the 1914 lady declines to advise. Instead, she indecisively speculates about Will’s future psychology. Through this reading, the couple is not face to face and Janet need not be deemed an operative factor in events.

By another reading, she damns with faint praise his taking arms. For Mack relays reply empty of anything affirmative. If so, then her reply was consonant with Janet hungry for a husband in her arms. For William’s warring means dividing the couple, whether lawfully wedded spouses or not. By damning enlistment with faint praise, Janet renders herself *discourager* of taking arms.

By a third reading, consider Janet indeed damning enlistment with faint praise. Then suppose her Mack-paraphrased words touched a youth insecure about her judgement of him. Will could fear this her implicit message: Will’s declining

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enlistment means *Janet* might be troubled later. Will worries his declining enlistment will deter Janet from binding herself lifelong to a nonvolunteer. Thereby her language prods enlistment. Janet ironically renders herself *encourager* of taking arms.

During her March 25, 1965 (Mack, 1976: 482 n. 41) interview with Dr. Mack, Janet was incentivized to be factual. For Bob Lawrence had pointed Dr. Mack to her and another Laurie sister, and to their brother Andrew (Mack, 1976: 64). She could guess that Mack had access to Professor Arnold Lawrence, to Canon E. F. “Midge” Hall and his wife as transpired on December 16, 1965 (Mack, 1976: 481 n. 42), and various other Oxford town, High School, and University of Oxford witnesses to herself and Will and T.E. Lawrence. She could suspect some yellowing University of Delhi records surrounding Will’s wartime early-exit would be disclosed upon inquiry from “Harvard University,” whether or not available otherwise to an unknown Yankee named John E. Mack.

All of this is, at a minimum, not inconsistent with Janet coveting a husband and never consciously to cheerlead enlistment.

***ii.* A 2008 Version of Will and Janet Facing 1914**

To be sure, Janet’s daughter Ellie during 2008 wrote (as Emma Smith) emphatically of her understanding as a lass the summer she turned eight: “Mrs[.] Lawrence, *his* mother, blamed *our* mother [Janet] for having encouraged Will to join the Royal Flying Corps” (Smith, 2008: 243 [Smith’s emphasis]). This is an elderly novelist and memoirist-author’s reconstruction of herself as small girl grasping mother-Sarah’s grief as told by mother-Janet. Emma nowhere says Janet did nudge Will to the Royal Flying Corps. She simply states Sarah poured blame over Janet for so doing. In this version, the undescribed couple could be face to face (not intercontinental
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correspondents). Sarah sincerely seems to see that Janet *was* an operative factor.

This version has Sarah blame Janet because Will joined the Royal Flying Corps. But Will's appointment as Second Lieutenant in the Army was reported on April 15, 1915 (Jolley, 2021: 56, citing War Office Supplement to the *London Gazette*, citing 19 April 1915). He transferred to the R. F. C. in summer 1915 (Jolley, 2021: 56 and 58; Jolley, 2023: 75). Perhaps long-heartbroken Sarah had forgotten his Army lieutenancy, or Janet saw no need to mention it to Ellie, or else twenty-first century Ellie Hallsmith/Emma Smith forgot it generations later.

If Will joined the Army independently of Janet and she applauded only his transfer, then Janet's sin should have looked small in Sarah's eyes. True, for actual fliers (whether or not R. F. C. men on the ground) the Royal Flying Corps was or grew extraordinarily hazardous. But this might not have been known to female civilians (e.g., Janet or Sarah) in mid-1915. The British government presumably shrank from publicizing perils aloft.

More specifically to Will, in 2023 Alison Jolley recognized: "With nothing as yet having come to light in Will's own words explaining his attraction to the new flying service, this has always remained something of a mystery up to now" (Jolley, 2023: 75). Mrs. Lawrence once might have filled this evidentiary gap with three words: "Janet Elspeth Laurie." Instead, Jolley quotes a 1916 memoir of Will. She determines it apparently penned by one among his Saint Stephen's College colleagues in Delhi. Upon netting his commission in England:

his friends never dreamt for a moment that he would be content with regimental work. They heard with little surprise that he had quickly qualified as an observer in the Royal Flying Corps. Everybody thought

he had obtained his heart's wish and that the full charm and genius of his character would shine forth, but his military service was all too short to show what he might have achieved (Jolley, 2023: 76, citing 'The Late Lieutenant Lawrence', *Civil & Military Gazette*, 27 May 1916, p. 8).

His heart's wish. So everybody thought. This leaves scant scope wherein to hypothesize that Will turned to the Royal Flying Corps because beneath Miss Laurie's sway.

All this is, at least, not inconsistent with Janet hungering for a husband and never endorsing enlistment.

iii. A 2013 Version of Will and Janet Facing 1914

In 2013, the five years more-elderly Ellie (as Emma) wrote of Will's World War I enlistment as she had understood it during post-Dunkirk's (Smith, 2013: 126) 1940. In her Dunkirk-shadowed thinking at age sixteen, she understood of Janet:

At the beginning of the Great War [in August 1914], Will Lawrence, to whom she was then engaged, asked her whether he should continue to pursue his vocation of missionary out in India, or stay on in England and fight for his country; and when she advised him where, in her opinion, his duty clearly lay, he enlisted in the RFC (Smith, 2013: 132).

Note Mack's paraphrase of what Janet told him firsthand in 1965. He records her "Unable to decide" (Mack, 1976: 481 n. 41) about volunteering upon war's outbreak. Contrariwise, Janet's sixteen year-old daughter word-paints her mother dramatically. Her Janet forthrightly points Will where "his duty clearly lay" as hostilities arose.

Note that Mack's paraphrase of what he heard firsthand from Janet in 1965 records Will writing "for advice about whether he should return from India" (Mack, 1976: 481 n. 41). **From India.** Contrariwise, Janet's sixteen year-old Ellie more dramatically fancies Will asked whether he should "stay on in England and fight" (Smith, 2013: 132). **Stay in England.**

These two "in England" could share counsel face to face. Will inquires whether to "fight for his country," i.e., England. The before-and-after of "she advised" and "he enlisted in the RFC" suggests Janet as operative factor in the 2013 version right down to Will's entry into the Royal Flying Corps. But Will decided, as seen immediately hereinabove, to transfer from the Army into the Royal Flying Corps during summer 1915 (Jolley, 2023: 75) while already wearing his wartime uniform.

This 2013 version proves dubious inasmuch as Will posted his father on January 21, 1915, that he had that day written "to apply for a commission." He had asked "for a post in any regiment, in Special Reserve or K's [Secretary of State for War since August 3, 1914, Field Marshall Lord Horatio Herbert Kitchener, First Earl Kitchener's (Tabachnick, 2004: 103)] Army." Will writes to Oxford from "Maitland House" (Lawrence, M., 1954: 584). At St. Stephen's College, Maitland House was purchased during 1905 as a staff residence (Vepa and Viswanathen). Face to face dialogue with Janet "in England" had naught to do with wartime application for a commission. This 1954 source, was edited by Will's eldest brother Montagu Robert ("Bob" Lawrence (Mack, 1976: 51) under the eyes of—or at least to be read by—*Sarah Lawrence*. This January 21, 1915, letter was available to the public in 2008 and 2013.

All of this depiction of a 1940 teenager's vivid imagination is, at a minimum, not inconsistent with Janet's craving a spouse and extolling enlistment not at all.

The 2013 version might have been the sixteen year-old's literal belief, in her post-Dunkirk moment anyway. For two pages earlier she delimits her melodramatic personal context: "We can hear the ominous drone of enemy aircraft, and the sickening sound of explosions;....At sea, the German submarines---U-boats---are forever prowling to and fro, torpedoing the merchant navy vessels laden with food supplies being sent to us from America" (Smith, 2008: 130). The same page emphatically relates a friend's death from bombing in England:

Josephine Pipon---tall, beautiful, opinionated, laughing Josephine, aged nineteen, is dead: impossible to believe---*impossible!* But it is true.

....And why am I skulking here in the shameful obscurity of Crapstone [England]?

Why did I cut and run [from Queen's Secretarial College, Egham, Surrey (Smith, 2013: 117] as I did? How cowardly of me, how disgraceful. How could I have been so craven? (Smith, 2013: 130 [Smith's emphasis]).

In sum, the sixteen year-old's characterization of 1914 or 1915's Will and Janet is dredged during 2013 from memories of 1940. Underlying all is Janet's reminiscence told to Ellie or perhaps absorbed by Ellie from family hearsay, e.g., through her four Laurie-aunts or Grandmother Mary Laurie in 1940 or even during 1935. For Ellie turned twelve on August 21, 1935 (Smith, 2008: 103, 183, 271-272 and 296). That birthday followed T.E.'s May 19, 1935, death (Tabachnick, 2004: 109).

Ellie then had witnessed Janet become, and continue to be, upset greatly (Smith,

2008: 334). His decease and Janet's grief might have loosened female tongues. Mrs. Laurie and some of Janet's four sisters might have gathered to celebrate Ellie's birthday. They might repeat in front of female blood-relatives (e.g., Ellie) various Laurie/Lawrence family secrets. They might gossip so notwithstanding that junior females' misrecall three generations thereafter could garble the elders' revelations.

The teenager's characterization of 1940 is colored by 1940 terrors. True, the memoirist records her belief at sixteen that in 1914 or 1915 Janet had envisioned Will's duty to "fight for his country." But elderly Ellie as Emma Smith recounts her 1940 belief being backdropped by duty self-imposed upon a self-scourging girl: Ellie herself, of threescore and more years-past. Thereby, if adult Will's duty was enlistment in the RFC (which Will did, ultimately), then adolescent Ellie's duty is re-entry into Queen's Secretarial College (which she did, shortly).

Emma Smith (i.e., Ellie) in 2013 regaled readers with that 1940 "fight for his country" passage on page 132 of her memoir. And in 1939 any male or female eighteen years of age could volunteer for the Army, Royal Air Force or Royal Navy (Smith, 2013: 109). Janet's twins Pam and Jim turned nineteen in October 1939 (Smith, 2013: 109). That followed Britain's entry into the Second World War on September 3 (Smith, 2013: 107). Pam hurried to enlist with the Women's Auxiliary Air Force (Smith, 2013: 109-110).

On page 110 of her memoir Emma (Ellie) already had detailed 1939 events engulfing her brother, bearing the name of Janet's father:

Jim, meanwhile, true to his declared principles of declining to play an active part in this or any war, and unmoved by the scorn that Josephine [Pipon] continues to heap upon him, has registered as a conscientious

objector. He has written to inform his Teddy [Saint Edmund's. Smith, E. 2013: 80] Hall tutor that he is terminating his studies for a degree in Modern Languages, and won't, therefore, be returning in the autumn term to Oxford University. Until, at least, the date of his tribunal—in front of which panel of judges he will presently be required to defend the sincerity of his awkward beliefs—Jim has applied to work at St Hugh's Settlement, a farming community run by and for dedicated pacifists. And what, I am wondering, does Mummy think of the behaviour of her twins, her son and her daughter, each of them motivated by such differing views, and starting off in diametrically opposite directions? She, our mother, a decorated heroine of the Great War [in her hometown, London], and married to a hero who was awarded the DSO in that inferno of death and destruction—what is she thinking now? She hasn't, I notice, offered advice, either to Pam or to Jim, or attempted to dissuade them from their chosen paths. What could she say (Smith, 2013: 110)?

Has not offered advice.

Ellie's 1940 understanding about 1914 or 1915 articulated in 2013 can comport with a real-life Janet declining to bless Will's enlistment (as suggested by Mack's paraphrase of Mrs. Hallsmith). For one weighs whether in 1940 a teenaged history-twistorian fictionalized Janet's performance. Thereby, the adolescent stiffened her own resolve to return to Egham from Crapstone. Melodramatic young Ellie is drawn with retrospective compassion by herself: Emma Smith, memoirist and repeatedly-popular professional novelist.

Returning to Will: Ellie's future mother might have mentioned to Will the 1914
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gorged enlistment centers. They overflowed with volunteers. Thereby must Will's 1913-1915 India-mission detract nowise from British military manpower. If Janet ever did declare 1914's surplus volunteers justified Will's adherence to India, Janet Laurie's helpfulness never rose to Ellie Hallsmith's guilt-ridden 1940 consciousness (as reconstructed by her 2013 Emma Smith-self).

C. August 4, 1914-January 21, 1915

However short a war was foreseen, any engagement-postponement suggested by Will to Janet might melt her patience. For theirs was a **United Kingdom sans conscription**. It was to have none before 1916. Moreover, surrounding Janet thundered that just-mentioned instantaneous stampede to enlist. Thereby "even in August there was such a rush that some units could do no more than take the particulars of many volunteers" (Aldington, 1955: 123). Weeks following the conflict's eruption the enlistee height requirement was *steepened* temporarily (Aldington, 1955: 123 n.). By September 1914 "the glut of volunteers had become so great that men under six feet tall were being refused" (Wilson, 1990: 151).

Such information was denied neither Janet nor Will if anyone across the planet could see their 1914 U.K. knew no need for him. Not secret was widespread anticipation that the war so speedily conclude that the armed forcers scarcely would want Will by the time he could be trained in 1915. So a husband-inclined, unwed lady 23 months shy of her own decade-four reasonably could ascertain how--or naturally would worry whether--Will Lawrence hungered *insufficiently* for Janet Laurie.

As indicated hereinabove, Will posted Sir Thomas on January 21, 1915:

Well, today I've taken an important step which had to come sooner or later, in writing to apply for a commission,....

...I'm sorry to have had to act without taking your advice. Yet what else could I do?

And as it seems the only course before me you won't be opposed really though I daresay you'll feel sorry that I'm committed now to a definite course of action. But it had to come sooner or later, and sooner was better than later (Lawrence, M., 1954: 585).

If the year *before* conscription Will felt turning soldier his *only* course, then judge the impact of anything Janet could communicate, pro-or-con.

However, suppose his enlistment indeed were morally imperative. Furthermore, consider Will completely comprehending as much. If Will saw of his enlistment that "sooner was better than later," then ponder whether Janet reasonably discerned Will desired her *insufficiently* anyway. As related hereinabove, Jolley offers: "Interestingly, having now seen the letter written by Frank to Janet's mother at the start of 1915...it occurs to me that...the last line might be taken to refer to Janet's happiness over her coming marriage" (Jolley, 2021: 80-81) to Bazin not Will.

Review the 2008 and 2013 versions of Emma Smith's reconstructions of young Ellie's notion that Janet was behind, or at least that Sarah believed Janet behind, Will's Royal Flying Corps career. If Janet had broken an engagement in August or September 1914 and cut communication with Will, then consider whether she never knew he had been willing to assume a post "in any regiment, in Special Reserve or K's army." *Any* posting. Consider whether Janet never even knew Will actually joined the Army before entering the Royal Flying Corps. Any never knew-chance

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is improbable given continuing contacts between the Lawrence and Laurie families (e.g., 1915 contact of Frank with the Laurie family) and of longterm contacts of T.E. and Bob with Janet herself. Yet such hypothesis does ease explaining these 2008 and 2013 versions of Will's move into the military. Suppose Janet's ignorance meant young Ellie's ignorance which became elderly Emma Smith's ignorance of Will's Army-enlistment.

IX. COULD WILL RETURN ASPIRING TO WIN JANET?

Even if Janet broke their engagement by September 1914 and become engaged anew by early March 1915, Jolley's proposition that "Will could not have returned from India with any thoughts of being her beau" (Jolley, 2021: 81) might falter. Observe that on September 23, 1914, Will wrote Thomas: "There seems little chance to my mind of peace before the winter of 1915, by which time the misery of the continent will be intense" (Lawrence, M., 1954: 573). Will's continent tasting misery as of "the winter of 1915" could cry for an April 1915 ceasefire. Peace might mean the chance to peel Janet from Bazin, were Will becoming an officer as handsomely attired as Geoffrey. Too, Geoffrey himself might realize he now suddenly has time for other fish in the sea.

Concededly, in his letter to Sir Thomas of January 21, 1915, Will looks towards "October, when perhaps the war will be over though that's optimistic" (Lawrence, M., 1954: 584). But was Will no optimist? As late as June 3, 1915, he held of the war: "I'm hoping it will all be over by October" (Jolley, 2021: 86, quoting Jimmy [Will] Lawrence to Rabindra Tagore, 3 June 1915, Rabindra-Bhavana archive, Visva-Bharati University, accessed through the Cultural Informatics Laboratory, Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts, Delhi, Acc. No. 204, DVD no. RBVB_059).

Moreover, Korda asserts that “it certainly seems possible that although Janet became engaged to another man after Will went to war, he may still have believed she would marry him eventually, despite Sarah’s opposition” (Korda, 2010: 503). Korda accepts the possibility this brideless Lawrence brother—But when had there ever been another kind of Lawrence brother?--dared to play the long game. First, therefore, weigh whether on January 21, 1915, Will still might have hoped for an abbreviated conflict, e.g., one of six more months (not six weeks more) from January 1, 1915, to conclude before July 1, 1915. After all, Janet’s wedding-day with Geoffrey Martyn Bazin actually was to be scheduled for the final third of September 1915. In peacetime, no longer-absent Will again might appear her best option. Second, in perspective of Maid Laurie’s shared history with Will since 1894 (Mack, 1976: 20), practically anyone else but T.E. Lawrence could be discarded by her (upon her last-minute, second thought) as a tardy interloper compared with Will. Third, war being infernal, any uniformed rival of Will instantly could become ineligible for Janet’s hand: Will inevitably remembered Clarence Basil McNeile’s 1911 unfortunate fate.

Will would remain reminded of Clarence’s fate by keeping abreast of McNeile clan developments from his Delhi mission. He seems to have done so in context of Janet’s family. At any rate, in his October 21, 1913, letter to Thomas one discovers: “I’m sorry about Mrs. Lawrie and Mrs. McNeile” (Lawrence, M., 1955: 457). Jolley correctly cites this letter as among those from Will or T.E. to mention McNeiles (Jolley, 2021: 78-79 and 79 n. 376), but does not quote it. It need not be strange if news of any of the three families floated between the other two. For the Lawrences at least knew of the McNeiles, and had known James Laurie’s clan well through many years.

But who is Mrs. Lawrie? A slip of the pen of a correspondent whose own last name began (as Will believed of himself) with ‘Law’ is easily excused, ordinarily. On the other hand, if Will on that day were resolved to marry Janet, then her family name might number among words less-expectably misspelled by him. Alternatively yet, even today’s dependable Neale has declared of two persons bearing these names: “Mack interviewed Janet Laurie in March 1965, and gained much insight into the proposal of marriage and subsequent rejection by Lawrence” (Neale, 2021: 98 n. 4). Notwithstanding his words, Neale knew the contrary true. Neale actually meant “subsequent rejection by” Janet *Laurie* of Ned *Lawrence*. So Will too might have slipped.

In any case, “Mrs. Lawrie” understandably pricks curiosity. Oddly, the five-page index of T.E.’s letters, the three-page index of Will’s letters, and one-page index of Frank’s letters in *The Home Letters of T. E. Lawrence and His Brothers* (edited by Bob) lack listing for ‘Lawrie.’ Also omitted are the words ‘Lauries’ and ‘Laurie’ (Lawrence, M., 1954: 723-731). But ‘Lauries’ appears in the volume (Lawrence, M., 1954: 630). Likewise, albeit in brackets, does ‘Laurie’ (Lawrence, M., 1954: 523). Had Sarah insisted inquiry concerning Janet Laurie remain as impractical as Mrs. Lawrence could arrange? If so, then would editor Bob have resisted her?

If William’s 1915 aspiration to reinstatement as Janet’s beau were astronomically unrealistic, then it could be whole-hearted anyway. He made his will on October 11, 1915, naming Ned his sole beneficiary (Jolley, 2021: 81). These two brothers agreed the proceeds all reach Janet instead (Mack, 1976: 480 n. 41, citing personal communication from Arnold Lawrence). This proves Will’s lifelong fealty to the Maid of Oxfordshire.

Distant from India but proximate to her fourth decade, Janet by 1915 had allied with the marriageable Geoffrey Martyn Bazin. The mother of the erstwhile London Stock Exchange Clerk Geoffrey (Jolley, 2021: 79; Redbridge and the First World War) was the wealthy (Smith, 2008: 158 and 191) Mrs. Martha Whicher Bazin (Redbridge and the First World War). She showed herself warm to her fatherless, prospective daughter-in-law with four sisters and a brother all reared by a widow. Through the years, Ellie viewed her mother Janet “wrapped up to the eyes in the luxurious full-length red-squirrel fur coat that had been Mrs Bazin’s wedding present to her; the present for a wedding that never happened” (Smith, 2008: 288). Mrs. Bazin continued to feel highly fond of Janet and annually sent her a pair of gloves for her birthday present, obviously gloves extraordinarily costly (Smith, 2008: 158; Smith, 2013: 24).

When Janet’s elder daughter Pamela required hospitalization (Smith, 2008: 159 and 191) for surgery by Dr. Twistleton-Higgins of Harley Street (Smith, 2008: 158-159), Janet and Pamela stayed in Finchley, North London (Jolley, 2021: 79) with Mrs. Bazin (Smith, 2008: 158), presumably in Geoffrey’s own home: “Elmstead,” Herdon, Finchley (Redbridge and the First World War). Janet and twelve year-old Ellie (Smith, 2013: 116) herself were to stay with Mrs. Bazin in Finchley, when Ellie became bridesmaid for Mrs. Bazin’s grand-daughter Mildred (Smith, 2013: 24 and 116). Mrs. Bazin’s extent of receptivity to Janet becoming Geoffrey’s spouse starkly contrasts with Mrs. Lawrence’s level of receptivity to Janet becoming Will’s wife.

On July 2, 1915, Geoffrey had written a will witnessed by his sisters Elsie and Winifred. Therein, Bazin made his beneficiaries Miss Laurie and his mother (Jolley, 2021: 79). Lieutenant Bazin was killed in action on September 19, 1915 (Jolley, 2021: 79). He died at the beginning of the week (Smith, 2008: 158) he was to return

from France to marry Janet (Smith, 2008: 158; Smith, 2013: 24).

Recall that Will had been en route toward St. Stephen's College in early September 1913 for his two-years of teaching. Thus Janet's miscarried wedding-day with Geoffrey seems on its face to coincide approximately or perfectly with the date of Will's originally-anticipated homecoming from two years abroad as a Professor of History (Jolley, 2021: 28) in Delhi. Will and Janet both became free to marry on September 19, 1915. And on October 11, will-writing William evidenced himself still game! Does God write straight, with crooked lines?

When would Will learn of Janet's restored marriage-market availability? Upon his October 23, 1915, second active flight as a Number 13 Squadron, Royal Flying Corps observer (Jolley, 2023: 69), Second Lieutenant William George Lawrence (Jolley, 2023: 70) lost his life behind enemy lines. German forces brought down his aircraft (Jolley, 2023: 69). He had arrived in France less than one week previously (Tabachnick, 2004: 110). Will was 25 (Mack, 1976: 6; Jolley, 2018: 12).

On December 13, 1915, grieving Sarah Lawrence wrote of Will:

Last Friday was his 26th birthday. How my mind goes over all the little things, the baby sayings & doings. I think there is no loss like a mother's. Her memory goes back over these early days & all the sweet little actions long since forgotten by every one (Jolley, 2023: 81, citing Noel Alexander Gillespie papers, 1899-1955, 1970-1972, Wisconsin Historical Society).

Safely esconced in Cairo was older brother Ned (Wilson, 1990: 227). T.E became the one beneficiary of the Second Lieutenant's estate (Wilson, 1990: 637) and sole executor thereof (Mack, 1965: 480 n. 41). Ned passed along the entirety of funds

(Wilson, 1990: 637) in Will's small estate (Wilson, 1990: 227 and 637) to Miss Laurie (Wilson, 1990: 637). As seen hereinabove, T.E. thereby honored the arrangement (of which their parents were ignorant) he had reached with Will (Mack, 1976: 480 n. 41, citing personal communication from Arnold Lawrence). At least insofar as has been evidenced, T.E. seems never to have told Sarah (Mack, 1976: 480-481 n. 41).

Clutching proof of Will's undying devotion to Janet, was Lawrence of Arabia too timid to face his mother?

X. AFTERMATH, UNFINISHED TODAY

A. Correspondence Will Carried until He Died

The invaluable Alison Jolley confirms that two letters belonging to Will and borne by him at his death were sent from a German woman to Thomas and Sarah by 1916 (Jolley, 2023: 82, citing Noel Alexander Gillespie papers, 199-1955, 1970-1972, Wisconsin Historical Society). Jolley submits:

It is tempting to wonder if this might have been the cause of the estrangement between Sarah Lawrence and Janet Laurie....According to Janet, it was after Will was killed that Sarah learned of the letter she had written to Will in India giving encouragement to his wish to join the army. Might it have been in one of the letters returned from Germany that Sarah made this discovery, leading to the rift between the two women that lasted the next seventeen years? I will have to leave readers to make up their own minds (Jolley, 2023: 82 n. 12, citing John Mack, *A Prince of Our Disorder* [London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1976, footnote 41, pp. 480-481]).

Suppose Sarah weeded through her family-circle's correspondence to burn anything touching upon Janet Laurie. A letter owned by Will would be T.E.'s by inheritance in 2 Polstead Road, whether or not T.E. knew his document existed. A letter from Laurie to Will and reaching Sarah probably could not survive for perusal by Will's heir or anyone else. As late as 1916, T.E. was not to see Polstead Road for years to come. Whereas, within, an incendiary Sarah enjoyed all the time in the world.

B. Did Janet Urge Will (Whom She Loved) to March to War?

As seen immediately hereinabove, William George Lawrence left his entire estate to Janet (through his sole beneficiary, Ned) by his will of October 11, 1915. It thereby becomes credible that, during October, Will sentimentally might bear a reminder of her. The passage to which Ms. Jolley hearkens derives from a March 25, 1965, Mack-Janet Hallsmith interview (Mack, 1976: 481 n. 41). Probably she likewise recalled Emma Smith's emphatic memoir that Sarah Lawrence "blamed *our* mother for having encouraged Will to join the Royal Flying Corps" (Smith, 2008: 243 [Smith's emphasis]).

However, Mack never says Janet wrote Will "giving encouragement to his wish to join the army." As seen hereinabove, Mack says she remembered her message instead as "that it might trouble him later if he did not return" to England to enlist. Name any army in history trumpeting a wartime recruitment-slogan this unfiery: "It might trouble you later if you do not volunteer." If Mack's phrasing accurately communicates the substance of Janet's letter to Will *circa* 1914 and recollected in 1965, then decide whether by any stretch of the imagination a letter so watery excited either: (1) Sarah's rage upon reading it; or (2) Will's wish to carry it into combat.

C. Did Janet Urge Andrew (Whom She Loved) to March to War?

On March 26, Mack interviewed Andrew Laurie (Mack, 1976: 473 n. 26). Andrew had been the sole son his widowed mother Mary raised with her five daughters-strong sorority (Smith, 2008: 243 and 280) in their 57 Victoria Road, Summertown, Oxford, sorority house (Smith, 2008: 47 (59 Victoria Road); Smith, 2013: 150-151 and 158). Andrew's interviewer was researching an illustrious war hero. That hero, T.E., had two brothers who perished in the war (Will, and Frank Helier Lawrence) before Ned ever saw combat. Dr. Mack, one physician writing of another in T.E.'s biography, also confirmed of fourth brother Montagu Robert Lawrence: "Bob studied medicine under the famous British physician Sir William Osler, and served with great courage as a doctor on the front lines in France during World War I" (Mack, 1976: 14). Thereby, through March 25-26, 1965, Harvard's Mack might have been unusually conscious of wartime's men in combat.

Did said awareness press Mack on March 26 to ask Andrew about his sisters' encouragement of Andrew to join the military? Or, whatever the exact words Mrs. Hallsmith had uttered to Mack 24 hours previously, did Janet's interview inspire Mack on March 26 to question Andrew concerning enlistment pressures? Andrew's reply might provide perspective on Janet's mindset underlying any communications to Will. Whereas absence of such March 26 questioning of Andrew might hint that on the previous day Mack learned from Janet about no missive to India touting enlistment.

D. Might Will Carry any Janet Letter into Combat?

Ponder a possible letter he more credibly could carry into combat than one to encourage Will's enlistment. It would have arrived from the woman who rapidly replaced him with Geoffrey to become little man atop her wedding-cake. As seen immediately
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hereinabove, Will went aloft aware of this thanks to T.E. Maybe more plausible than an enlistment letter is that Will bore a wartime Janet-letter breaking-up with him (because he solicited concurrence in postponing a contemplated wedding).

If Janet jilted him, then why would Will remind himself of her? As seen immediately hereinabove, Korda opines that despite Miss Laurie's acceptance of Bazin's proposal of matrimony, Will could envision reinstatement into Janet's dearest favor (Korda 2010: 503). The breakup letter could inspire him to linger among her potential suitors, to await another chance to share with Janer their happy last laugh. What imaginable evidence could justify so astronomically unlikely an aspiration on Will's part?

August 15, 1915, fell fewer than seven weeks before the scheduled Bazin-Laurie wedding. As seen hereinabove, as part of Janet's accession to the ranks of British Red Cross Society Volunteers, someone that August 15 recorded her birth year imprecisely as "Circa 1887" and her "Age at engagement" is misrecorded as "28" (*Janet Elspeth Laurie*, British Red Cross Society Volunteers, 1914-1918, MyHeritage) not 29. The betrothed Maid Laurie seems prudently whittling-down her age against the risk of re-entry into the marriage market. It came to pass that Lieutenant Bazin fell on September 19, 1915: Will waited in the wings.

If Sarah were to preserve even a single Janet letter to Will, then would it be a 1914 breakup-letter gratifying Sarah? It could gratify his mother if certifying Janet's break from Will, plus evidencing Janet's breakup-rationale: Will loved Janet *insufficiently!* If so, then perhaps a rounded-out record of Will-Janet romance remains unwritten. For somewhere its *circa* autumn 1914 turn of events-evidence awaits discovery.

Something happened.

XI. CONCLUSION

Consider whether Ned (to Hogarth) and Will (to Barker) each might have confided in his respective Oxonian father-figure. Ned could confide about his 1910 rejected marriage proposal. Will could confide about his frustrated, or else frustratingly secret, engagement. If so, then Ned's abortive marriage proposal (according to Janet) and Will's abortive marriage engagement (according to Janet's daughter Ellie, as Emma Smith) were *both to Janet Laurie*.

Who **was** this woman?

Some, abstractly, might discount this as conceivable coincidence but gross improbability. But this coincidence's superficial unlikelihood shrinks upon perusing the ectoplasmic platoon of ingenues who obtained ingress at 2 Polstead Road. Laurentian biographer Lawrence James determined: "Flirtation was impossible. Girls were kept at a distance" (James, 1993: 10). Each successive authority-figure (first Hogarth, Barker later) carried confidences of the respective Lawrence brother (Ned, then Will) to his grave.

Why did T.E. Lawrence after October 23, 1910, speed from England on short notice? Why did D. G. Hogarth then pull strings to accommodate his latecomer? Orlans thought: "Impressed by Lawrence's bravura [1909] hike across Syria and his thesis, Hogarth arranged a four-year fellowship for him to join the Carchemish dig in 1911" (Orlans, 2002: 167). *Quaere*, whether Orlans thought exactly what Colonel Lawrence had wanted the world to think, because more was obscured than clarified for his biographers by the Colonel.

Quaere, whether three members of Will's immediate family among whom Will had dwelt (Mrs. Lawrence, Bob Lawrence, and Professor Lawrence) or also a fourth

(Colonel Lawrence) shared knowledge of what lay behind Will's final sentence quoted by Barker: "I could never doubt love having known what beauty can be in a human being." Each among the prior three, at least, manifestly trusted Sir Ernest. Therefore, each respected Barker's discretion. Even so had Will himself.

Cherchez la femme.

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Analyses of Accessibility and Utilisation of Aquatic Facilities in Benin Metropolis, Nigeria

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Abstract

Recreational aquatic facilities play a crucial role in enhancing the physical and psychological well-being of people through the promotion of physical activities and relaxation. This study investigates the accessibility of recreational aquatic facilities in Benin Metropolis. A total of 420 copies of questionnaire were distributed on-site to facility users. A combination of non-inferential, inferential, and spatial statistics was employed. The result of the Nearest neighbour analysis ($Rn= 7.330560$) showed

that the recreational aquatic facilities displayed a dispersed pattern. Also, there was poor accessibility judging by the 400m maximum travel distance even though the respondents perceived accessibility to be high. The cluster and outlier analysis showed that cost of utilising recreational aquatic facilities was influenced by the cost of other proximal recreational aquatic facilities. The multiple linear regression model demonstrated that gender, age, and education explained 9.2% of the variability in the recreational aquatic facilities utilisation cost. The Moran Index Value of 0.0428, $z=2.0899$ and $p=0.0366$ showed that the recreational aquatic facilities utilisation cost at specific location is influenced by the utilisation cost of other co-located recreational aquatic facilities. This paper recommends that government should play an interventionist role in the provision and maintenance of recreational aquatic facilities in neighbourhoods without economic attractiveness to attract private investors.

Keywords: Neighbourhoods, Utilisation, Swimming Pool, Distance and Wellbeing

Introduction

The interaction and relationship between human beings and aquatic ecosystems is highly emotional and complex. This interaction can be experienced in the vigor and regeneration of people on a physical and a spiritual level which is the crux of recreation (Duman & Cengizler, 2018). Recreational aquatic facilities are complexes that consists of water parks, lap pools, swimming pools, etcetera that are vital in maintaining and promoting active lifestyles for better health and wellbeing (See Cohen et al., 2007). They are significant neighbourhood amenities (Duverge et al.

2017). They are considered social facilities when they are provided by government agencies or non-governmental organisations (NGOs) (Song et. al., 2010). They can also be owned by private individuals and organisations. Privatized, recreational aquatic facilities for the public are tilted towards profit, while those that are provided by governmental agencies and NGOs are not profit-oriented. The latter are run solely for the improvement of the health and social wellbeing of the general public.

Swimming is one of the most common exercise in the world because of its numerous health advantages. It is a non-weight-bearing sport that has been linked to the prevention of illnesses and health and well-being enhancement (Tanaka, 2009). It is also a type of exercise for those who are older or have physical limitations. Most research on recreational aquatic facilities focuses mostly on swimming in indoor aquatic facilities and discusses the health and wellbeing advantages of swimming from a sports science perspective. Research suggests that swimming in open, blue spaces often referred to as wild swimming may have special health and wellbeing benefits (Foley, 2015; Denton & Aranda, 2020) that are spiritual and psychological.

In many locations, the types, patterns, and intensity of recreational usage have historically been influenced by the presence of bodies of water. Studies of historical patterns of recreational usage and anticipated changes in recreational use show a persistently strong relationship between water resources and human behaviour (Kakoyannis & Stankey). According to Karusisi et al. (2013) swimming and other aquatic activities benefit from the spatial accessibility of swimming pools. Consequently, the quantity, distribution, and geographical accessibility of swimming pools significantly affect the likelihood that urban dwellers will exercise, relax, and engage in water recreational activities. The use and accessibility of swimming pools

in sub-Saharan Africa have not received much attention in literature. However, a number of studies have looked into related subjects like having access to clean water and the water quality of aquatic recreational facilities (Ferguson, 2013; Armah et al., 2018; Eberhard, 2019; Wash, 2020; Egharevba & Edohen, 2023).

This study aimed at analysing the accessibility and utilisation behaviour of aquatic recreational facility users in Benin Metropolis. Accessibility is a crucial determinant of use, which in turn improves the mental and physical wellness of users. It was hypothesised that the distribution pattern of urban facilities in the study area is random, that the cost of utilisation of arecreational aquatic facility is not influenced by the agglomeration of other recreational aquatic facilities in its location, and there is no relationship between the predictor variables (locational and socio-economic attributes) and cost of utilising recreational aquatic facilities.

Assessing the accessibility of water-based recreation facilities is useful in determining if residents' recreational demands are satisfied. According to Boone et al. (2009), a recreational facility should be located not more than 400 meters (or a quarter mile) from each resident in a city. Kruszynska and Poczta (2020), in the course of developing a management strategy for proper functioning of sport and recreational infrastructure, observed that their respondents identified high costs of utilisation and long distance between their houses and the sports and recreation water facility as factors militating against the accessibility of recreational aquatic centres.

Xiao and Wang (2022) studied the accessibility of community sports facilities in Fuzhou, China. Their results revealed that residents residing within the third ring road were living with the ten minutes walking radius, from their home to recreational facilities. Although it was observed that the residents had good accessibility to

recreational facility within third ring road, the distribution of facilities within the zone were uneven and as such, there was inequity in their accessibility. The data also revealed the absence of spatial concordance between the population and facility counts. Also, the old urban area has few facilities for community sports, which also made access difficult.

Types of Recreational Aquatic Facilities

An aquatic recreation facility (RAF) is designed for aquatic recreation. It includes wave or surf action pools, leisure rivers, sand bottom pools, vortex pools, activity pools, inner tube rides and body slides, interactive play attractions, water parks, spray parks, and water amusement rides. According to the Mingo County Health Department (MCHD), a recreational water facility is a body of water that is controlled by a person and has been upgraded, built, or installed for the purpose of public swimming or bathing. Bathing beaches, swimming, wading, and diving pools, water slides, lazy rivers, and wave pools, spas, hot tubs, therapeutic pools, hydrotherapy pools, and whirlpools are all recreational water facilities. They may be established and managed by communities, subdivisions, apartment buildings, condos, clubs, camps, schools, institutions, parks, mobile home parks, and hotels. In this study, a recreational aquatic facility does not include private residential swimming pools. Recreational aquatic is considered to include all aquatic facilities that are opened for public utilisation either through direct payment for use (paying for the utilisation of the swimming pool only) or by paying for a package of services and amenities that include an aquatic facility as well as natural open aquatic bodies that cost nothing to utilise. They can be rivers, natural ponds, swimming pools facilities installed in hotels, schools and recreational centres such as stadiums. These recreational aquatic facilities can be

publicly or privately owned.

Linkages Between Accessibility and Utilisation of Recreational Aquatic Facilities

Accessibility is the ease of reach to a facility. Utilisation on the other hand, is a measuring parameter of accessibility because it is a realised accessibility (see Donabedian, 1973; Lin et al., 2024). To understand the linkages between accessibility and the utilisation of RAF in Benin metropolis, it is essential to consider how easy it is for individuals to reach these facilities and how this impacts their usage. Accessibility plays a crucial role in determining the utilisation of aquatic recreational facilities. Facilities that are easily accessible to residents are more likely to be used frequently. Factors such as proximity to residential areas, availability of transportation infrastructure like roads and parking facilities significantly influence the utilisation of recreational aquatic facilities through their influence on accessibility.

Improved accessibility can lead to increased utilisation of facilities, thereby benefiting the community by promoting physical activity, social interaction, and overall well-being. When aquatic recreational facilities are within easy reach, residents are more inclined to visit regularly, enhancing their physical health and fostering a sense of community. Conversely, poor accessibility may deter individuals from visiting RAF, resulting in underutilisation and limited community social interaction. When facilities are difficult to reach due to inadequate transportation options or poor infrastructure, residents are less likely to make the effort to use them. This underutilisation can diminish the potential benefits these facilities offer to the communities.

Physical accessibility is the ease of reaching aquatic recreational facilities. This

is crucial for their frequent utilisation. Facilities that are conveniently located near residential areas and are well-served by public transportation tend to attract more visitors. A study by Oduwaye (2013) on urban green parks in Lagos, which can be extrapolated to other Nigerian cities including Benin metropolis, demonstrated that proximity and ease of access were primary determinants of park utilisation. Similarly, better transport links and closer proximity to residential areas could boost the usage of aquatic facilities.

The socio-economic status of residents also affects their ability to afford entry fees, equipment rentals, and other costs associated with using aquatic facilities. Making these facilities affordable, and offering subsidies or free access on certain days, can increase utilisation. According to Olorunfemi and Fashuyi (2018), socio-economic barriers often limit access to recreational facilities in Nigerian cities. Addressing these barriers is essential for enhancing utilisation.

The quality and maintenance of aquatic recreational facilities play a significant role in user satisfaction and repeat visits. Facilities that are clean, safe, and well-maintained tend to attract more users. Regular maintenance and continuous improvements can ensure that these facilities remain appealing to the public. Research by Nwosu and Onwudinjo (2019) highlighted that well-maintained recreational facilities in Nigerian cities generally have higher utilisation rates. Therefore, investing in the infrastructure of aquatic facilities in cities could lead to increased patronage.

Raising awareness about the availability and benefits of aquatic recreational facilities through community engagement and marketing can drive higher utilisation. Organising events and establishing partnerships with schools and community groups

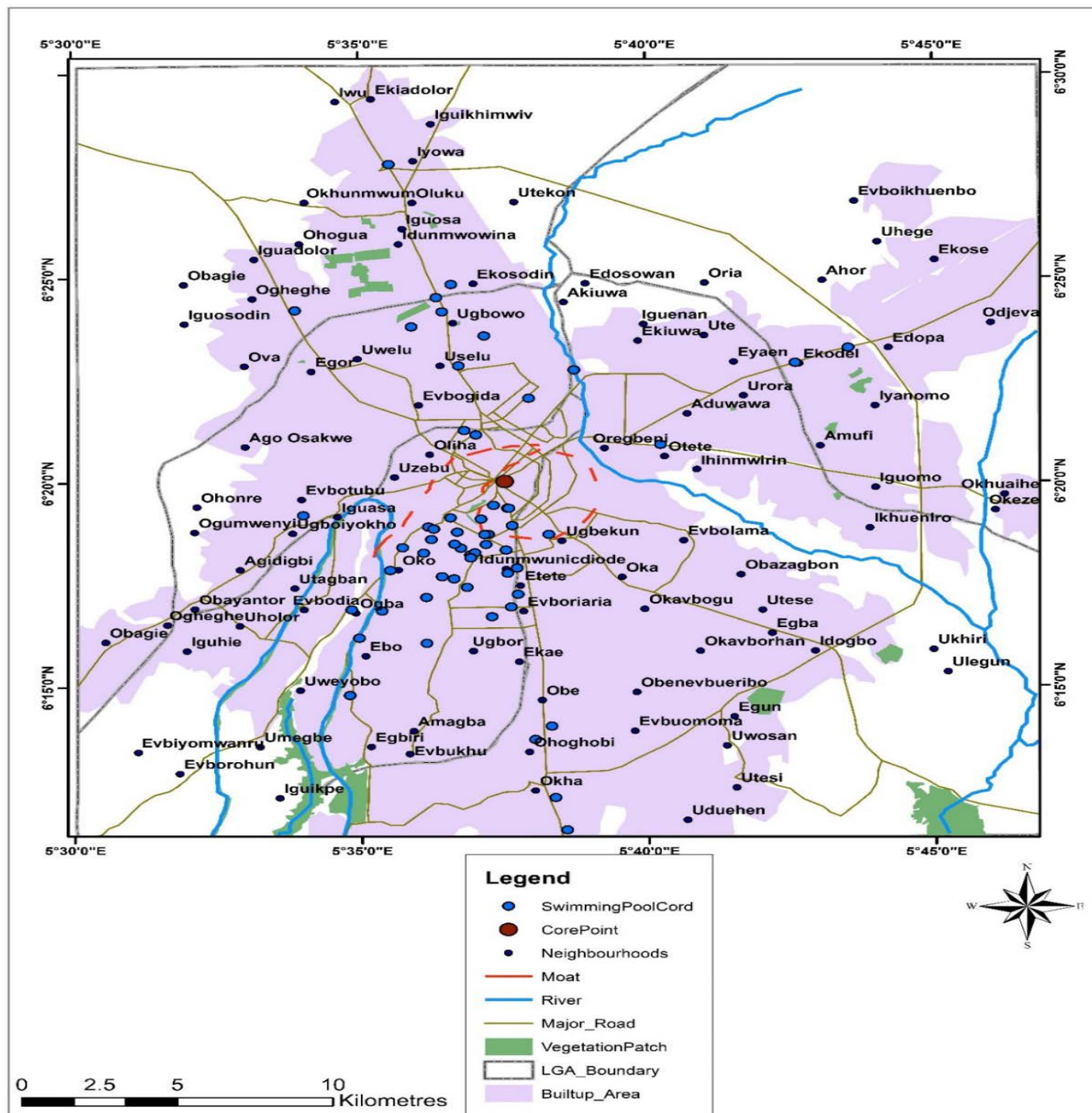
can further promote these facilities. The study by Adewale et al. (2015) on community parks in Ibadan found that awareness campaigns significantly increased public engagement. The extent to which these identified factors affect or could influence the utilisation of aquatic recreational facilities in Benin metropolis is not known.

Materials and Method

Description of the Study Area

Benin City the capital of Edo State, is situated in the Mid-western part of southern Nigeria. The city's population was 1.3 million by the 2006 National Population Census (NPC) (NPC, 2006). With the headquarters of Oredo and Egor Local Government Areas nested within it, the city has expanded to become a metropolis covering the urbanised neighbourhoods of five local government areas namely; Oredo, Egor, Ovia North-East, Uhumwunode, and Ikpoba-Okha (Egharevba & Asikha, 2018; Egharevba & Iyobosa, 2020). Its residential areas were autonomous rural settlements that have been absorbed into the complex expanding city. As the metropolis grew past the old city's outer moat (ditch) which served as its external boundary (see Fig. 1), it engulfed and absorbed these surrounding neighbourhoods. The zone outside the moat is made up of the newly urbanised neighbourhoods with a gradation of housing density and age of structures from the city center, while the central portion of the city with the oldest neighbourhoods forms the core with a high residential density. These urbanised settlements are distinguished by their informal design and home building, which frequently occurs outside of the legal and regulatory frameworks for land and urban development (Agheyisi, 2015; Agheyisi, 2016).

Figure 1: Benin Metropolis Neighbourhoods and Recreational Aquatic Facilities



Sources: Agheyisi, (2016); Jolly and Iyobosa, (2020); Open Street Map, (2023).

Research has shown that the Benin metropolis is continuing to expand along the eight major routes that transverse the metropolis (Agheyisi, 2015; Balogun and Odujgo, 2020). Currently, the spatial extent of the metropolis is at the Okha neighbourhood which is located along Benin-Sapele Road (Southern axis), the Iguadolor

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neighbourhood which is along Upper-Siluko Road (North-Western axis), the Obagie which is along Upper-Ekewan Road (South-Western axis), the Idogbo neighbourhood which is along Benin-Abraka Road (South-Eastern axis), the Okeze neighbourhood which is along Benin-Agbor Road (Eastern axis), the Odjeva neighbourhood which is along Benin-Auchi Road (North-Eastern axis), the Evborohun neighbourhood which is along Benin Ogba Road (South-Western axis) and the Iwu neighbourhood which is along Benin-Lagos Road (Northern axis).

Benin City's expansion has been primarily fueled by the development of residential land uses (Ikhuoria, 1984; Onokerhoray, 1995). Other factors responsible for the city's spatial expansion include the siting of public infrastructures and facilities (Ogunbodede & Balogun, 2013; Odjugo et al., 2015). The metropolis' geographic growth rate is 5.5 km² per year (Ogunbodede & Balogun, 2013). According to a different estimate, the city's yearly growth rate is 1.5% (Odjugo et al., 2015).

The unplanned and haphazard growth of communities causes a loss of community identity and sense of place in this African city in transition. Over the years, the public owned RAF in Benin metropolis have been disused due to neglect and/or poor maintenance. From the early 1980s to the 2000s, the four publicly provided facilities were located in Ugbowo (the University of Benin swimming pool), Stadium Road (the Samuel Ogbemudia Stadium swimming pool), Ring Road (the Ring Road Amusement Park swimming pool), and Aduwawa (the Ramat Amusement Park swimming pool). Of these four swimming pools, two (Ring Road and Ramat Amusement Park swimming pools) have been decommissioned, as the result of the absence of maintenance. They became death traps for children who dared to use them and were subsequently drained and converted to waste dump sites. The Samuel

Ogbemudia Stadium swimming pool is no longer opened for public use, except for athletes. The only functional public owned swimming pool still open for public use is the one located within the premises of the University of Benin.

The study area was demarcated into three zones (high-density, medium-density and low-density) using population density of the neighbourhoods as its criterium for classification. Neighbourhoods of similar population density were joined using isopleths. Sixty (60) registered institutions and hotels that owned a recreational aquatic facility open for public use were selected as the population of the study. A global positioning system (GPS) was used to record the point coordinates of these institutions and hotels. Then, a sample of twenty-one (21) RAF were randomly selected using the lucky dip method. A total of four hundred and twenty copies of questionnaire were administered to onsite users. Twenty copies of questionnaire were administered to users in each of the sampled recreational aquatic facilities. (See Table 1 for the list of the facilities and the breakdown of copies of questionnaire administered in each selected facility.)

Table 1: Recreational Aquatic Facility , Copies of Questionnaire Distributed and Neighbourhood of Respondents

| Spatial Unit of Analysis | Name of Aquatic Recreational Facility | Copies of Questionnaire Distributed | Respondents Neighbourhood of Residence |
|---------------------------------|--|--|---|
| High Density Zone | Naomi Garden Pool | 20 | Ogbe |
| | Randeki Pool | 20 | Ikpokpan |
| | Protea Pool | 20 | Ikpokpan |
| | Oti Pool | 20 | Uhunmuidumwun |
| | Foxtonn Pool | 20 | Alaka |
| | | | Ogboka |

| | | | |
|---------------------|---------------------------|------------|-----------|
| Medium Density Zone | Ogba River | 20 | Okhoro |
| | Play House Pool | 20 | Evian |
| | Ohonba Pool | 20 | Ogba |
| | Ikpoba River | 20 | Ugbor |
| | Soft Touch Pool | 20 | Uselu |
| | Deutschmann Pool | 20 | Aduwawa |
| | | | Evbotubu |
| | | Ogbesun | |
| Low Density Zone | Luciano Pool | 20 | Okha |
| | Deepend Pool | 20 | Uwelu |
| | Delano Hotel Pool | 20 | Amufi |
| | Water Phase Pool | 20 | Oluku |
| | Cavalli Pool | 20 | Ekae |
| | Care Luxury Pool | 20 | Egor |
| | Prescious Palm Hotel Pool | 20 | Urora |
| | Terminal Pool | 20 | Egbaen |
| | Rialto | 20 | Ekosodin |
| | Zafike | 20 | |
| Total | 21 | 420 | 23 |

Source: Authors' Fieldwork, 2024

The respondents were asked to identify their neighbourhoods of residence. Twenty-three (23) neighbourhoods were identified, and they were organised into their respective population density zones (see Table 1). It should be noted that the respondents' neighbourhoods of residence do not translate as the neighbourhood location of their aquatic recreational facility.

Methodology

Spatial autocorrelation was employed to ascertain the effect of the respondents' proximity to related recreational facilities on the cost of utilisation. Spatial autocorrelation is a measure of spatial distribution pattern of a phenomenon being the

linear relationship between the value of a specific variable and other observations of the same variable within a given neighbourhood (Dubé & Legros, 2014). Geolocated variables are characterised by a spatial relationship that gets stronger as the sites become closer. As Wald Tobler’s first law of geography states, “everything is related to everything else but near things are more related than distant things” (Tobler, 1970). Because of increased access to geographical data, it is now feasible to better account for interactions and spatial externalities when studying economic decisions made by individuals. Research has shown that economic variables such as rental value are affected by the agglomeration of similar phenomenon in the same location (see Basu & Thibodeau, 1998; Suriatini, 2006; Usman, et al., 2021; Lo, et al., 2022). In this study, spatial autocorrelation was used to determine if there is homogeneity in RAF utilisation costs in different locations.

Data Presentation

In Table 2, the data shows the location and utilisation cost of each RAF as of December 2023 sourced from the hotel managers, demonstrating the interplay between location, respondents’ proximities to similar facilities, and RAF utilisation cost in Benin Metropolis.

Table 2: Location and Cost of Utilisation of Aquatic Recreational Facilities

| Name of Pool | Location | | Cost of Utilisation |
|----------------------|-----------------|---------------|----------------------------|
| | X Cord | Y Cord | |
| UNIBEN Pool | 789783.37 | 707395.31 | 1000 |
| Ohonba Hotel Pool | 788961.85 | 706039.28 | 1500 |
| Randekhi Royal Hotel | 789154.87 | 703120.8 | 3000 |
| Victoria Hotel | 788448.43 | 696520.69 | 1500 |
| Precious Palm Royal | 788242.75 | 709122.28 | 1500 |
| Deutschmann Hotel | 787445.11 | 707801.77 | 1500 |

| | | | |
|---------------------------------|-----------|-----------|-------------|
| Water Phase Hotel | 788721.03 | 709715.19 | 1500 |
| De Brit Hotel | 789856.98 | 697972.63 | 3000 |
| Protea Hotel | 790548.84 | 699617.94 | 10000 |
| Oti Hotel | 790697.4 | 698828.91 | 2000 |
| Terminal Resort and Park | 786715.92 | 715133.94 | 1500 |
| Play House Hotel | 791221.68 | 704579.62 | 1500 |
| Luciano Hotel | 783981.94 | 699269.82 | 2000 |
| Delano Hotel and Suites | 787943.7 | 695579.29 | 2000 |
| Soft Touch Hotel | 788430.07 | 708476.64 | 1500 |
| Deepend Hotel and Suites | 789530.05 | 702920.22 | 1500 |
| Uyi Grand Hotel | 789356.47 | 697501.29 | 3000 |
| Koose Hotel and Suites | 789693.55 | 699124.84 | 1500 |
| SoLigit Hotel and Suites | 790671.11 | 695155.07 | 1500 |
| Cavalli Hotel and Suites | 790890.39 | 695729.85 | 2000 |
| Ilanga Suites | 789501.7 | 697596.36 | 2000 |
| Lushville Hotel and Suites | 787853.94 | 697582.51 | 2000 |
| Deryl Hotel and Suites | 791977.51 | 689776.37 | 2000 |
| Cares Luxury Suites | 785786.45 | 693742.21 | 2000 |
| View Point Hotel and Suites | 789935.02 | 698430.07 | 3000 |
| Absel Paradise Hotel and Suites | 791876.73 | 698430.07 | 1500 |
| Ashland Hotel | 785488.47 | 691152.32 | 2000 |
| Foxtonn Hotel Benin | 789050.47 | 697807.3 | 3000 |
| Best Western Homeville Hotel | 790860.62 | 696922.36 | 3000 |
| Deroj Western Hotel | 787957.99 | 693514.32 | 3000 |
| Zafike Pool | 801492.83 | 706891.09 | 1500 |
| Rialto Resort Pool | 799787.27 | 706205.55 | 1500 |
| Ogba River | 785546.09 | 695022.04 | Open Access |
| Naomi's Garden Pool | 789367.19 | 697381.12 | 2000 |

| | | | |
|------------------------------|-----------|-----------|-------------|
| Ikpoba River | 792680.66 | 705860.93 | Open Access |
| Poshlux Executive Hotel | 790053.29 | 694713.39 | 2000 |
| Victoria Inn Hotel and Suite | 788448.43 | 69652.69 | 3000 |
| Eterno Hotels | 789812.76 | 698423.1 | 3000 |
| Royal Marble Hotel | 788926.26 | 698531.68 | 3000 |
| De'Bliss Gold Hotel & Suite | 790585.76 | 699612.07 | 3000 |
| Limoh Suites | 790502.21 | 697720.46 | 2000 |
| Hale Manor Exquisite | 788103.49 | 698199.72 | 3000 |
| Constantial Hotel | 788004.65 | 698763.81 | 3000 |
| Excalibur Benin Hotel | 790558.51 | 696676.29 | 3000 |
| The Sage Hotel | 788717.38 | 699175.97 | 3000 |
| Prenox Hotel and Suites | 787174.59 | 697825.56 | 3000 |
| Choice Gate Hotel and Suites | 789254.21 | 696042.11 | 2000 |
| The Urban Oasis Hotel | 790096.66 | 699746.69 | 2000 |
| Sun-ray Hotel and Suites | 791452.03 | 689173.04 | 1500 |
| Doris Dey Hotel | 795461.38 | 702500.01 | 2000 |
| Homeville Plus Hotel | 790860.04 | 696912.82 | 2000 |
| Motel Bellisima | 792104.54 | 686551.88 | 2000 |
| Freetown Hotel and Suites | 792480.27 | 685090.36 | 2000 |
| Swiss33 Hotel and Suites | 786778.41 | 696800.14 | 1500 |
| Brentwood Hotel Limeted | 786517.31 | 694970.6 | 1500 |
| Regis Hotels and Resorts | 789363.56 | 697368.85 | 2000 |
| Govic Hotel and Suites | 783703.64 | 708523.88 | 1500 |
| Edo Heritage Hotel | 788834.44 | 696421.56 | 2000 |
| Duoban Hotel and Suites | 788175.1 | 698667.05 | 3000 |
| Wesley Hotel | 788844.42 | 697992.07 | 3000 |

Source: Authors' Fieldwork (2024)

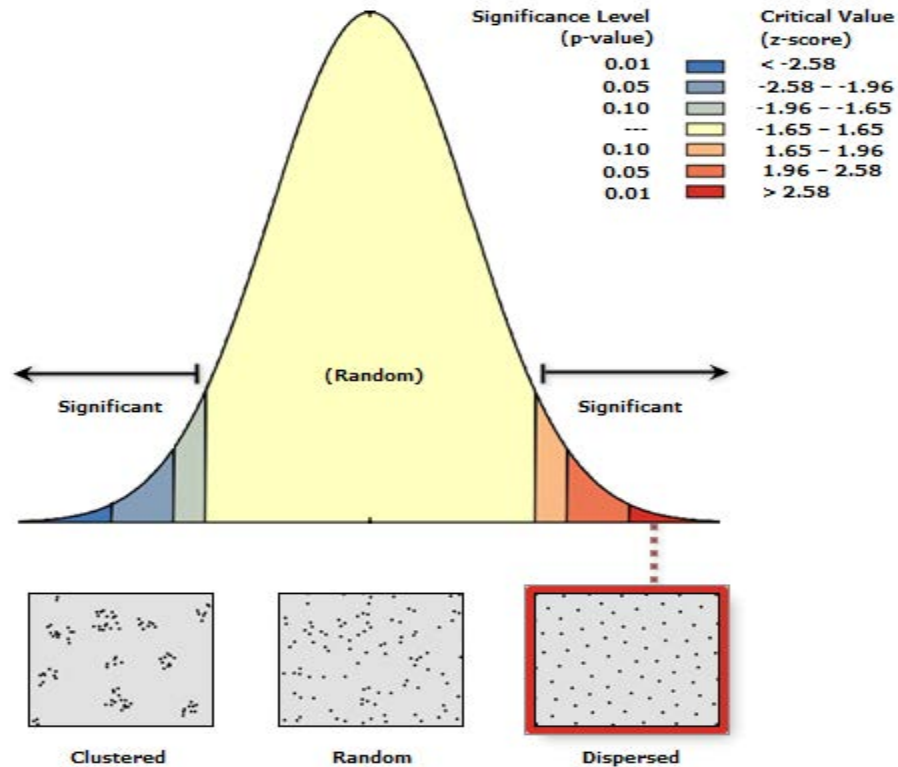
Results and Discussion

Distribution of Recreational Aquatic Facilities in Benin Metropolis

The location and distribution of facilities have been established by authors as the factor that influences accessibility and utilisation behaviour of users (Egharevba & Asikhia, 2018; Egharevba & Edohen, 2020; Tanou et al., 2021; Atewe & Egharevba, 2022). Figure 1 shows the location of the recreational aquatic facilities in the study area. To ascertain the distribution pattern of the recreational aquatic facilities, the locational data of the RAFs in the study area were fed into ArcGIS 10.8 for computation of the Nearest Neighbour Analysis (NNA) ratio. The computed NNA ratio for recreational water facilities was 7.330560 which exceeds one (1) (see Figure 2.). Further study ascertained the significance of the dispersal showed a p-value of 0.000001, which is lower than the α -value of 0.05. Also, the z-score of 93.809891 that was obtained fell outside the critical z-score values of (1.96 - 2.58) at a significant level of 0.05. Given the z-score of 93.809891, there is a less than 1% likelihood that this dispersal pattern is the result of random chance. It is a result of the spatial distribution of hotels to which these recreational water facilities are attached. This result contrasts with the findings of other studies carried out in other cities in Nigeria which found the distribution of hotels to be clustered (Eneyo & Ekong, 2018; Kika & Ikezam, 2022). Another factor responsible for this dispersal pattern is the location of the metropolis acting as the intersection of the major arterial routes, such as Benin-Lagos, Benin-Abuja, Benin-Onitsha, and Benin-Warri. The hotels are scattered around the city to meet the needs of passengers in transit.

To reinforce the findings of the dispersal pattern of the recreational water facilities studied, directional distribution analysis was carried out using Standard

Figure 2: Spatial Distribution of Recreational Aquatic Facilities in Benin Metropolis



Source: Authors' Computation, 2024.

Nearest Neighbour Ratio: 7.330560
 z-score: 93.809891
 p-value: 0.000000

Average Nearest Neighbor Summary

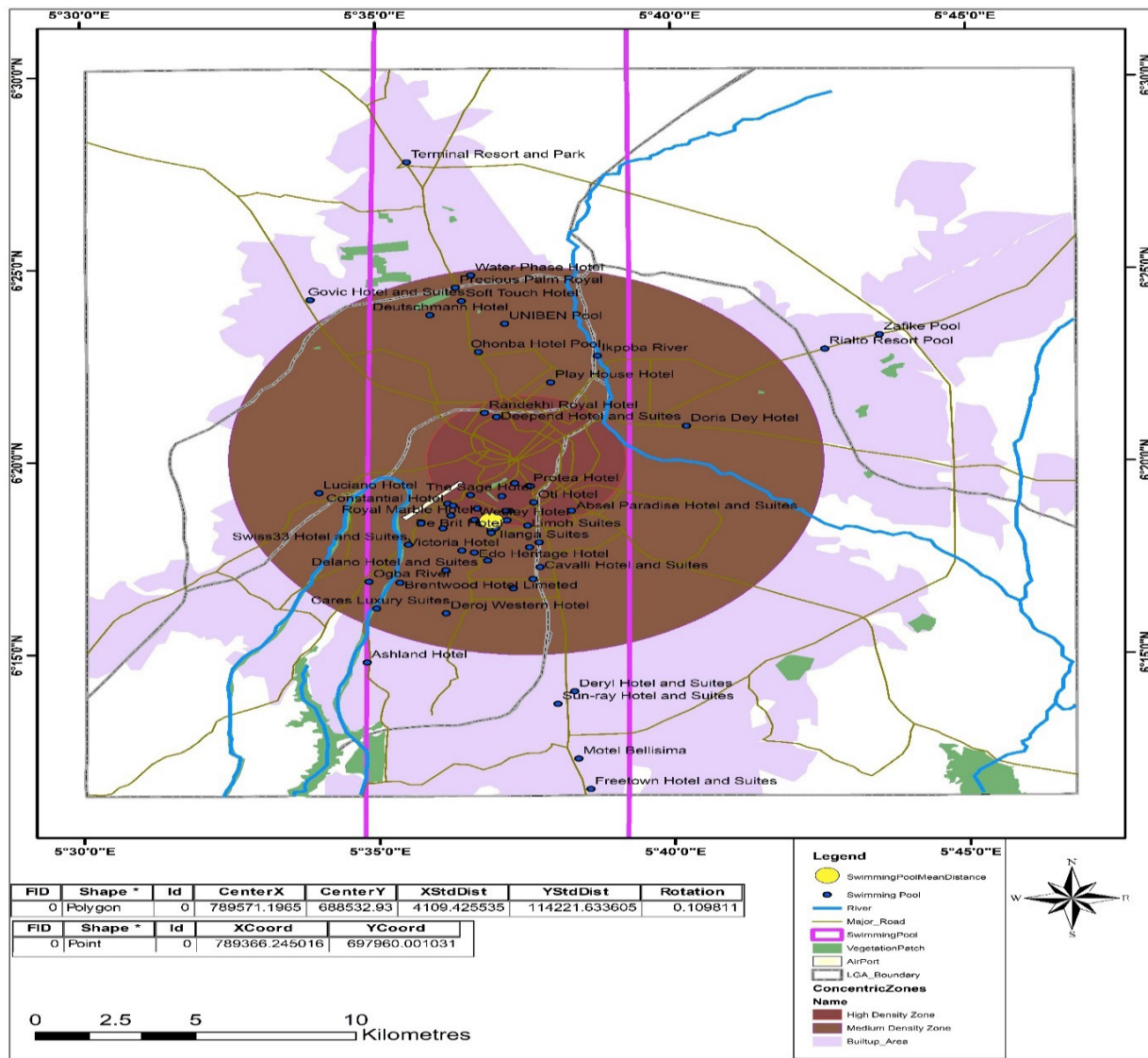
Observed Mean Distance: 11254.3767 Meters

Expected Mean Distance: 1535.2684 Meters

Ellipse (SDE) to determine the factor acting as a determinant in the siting of these hospitality facilities housing RAFs (see Figure 3). From the SDE analysis

for recreational aquatic facilities in the study area, the results showed that the directional distribution of facilities in the study area was influenced by the arterial roads that are entering and exiting routes of the metropolis. Longitude 789571.20 and Latitude 688532.93 were the average centres of gravity for the dispersion of the aquatic facilities.

Figure 3: Directional Ellipse and Mean Distance of Hotels in Benin Metropolis



Source: Authors' Computation, 2024

Recreational aquatic facility sites were spread apart, which suggests that facilities were dispersed as shown by the distribution pattern. SDE had a rotation angle of 0.109811
the quint: an interdisciplinary quarterly from the north 133

degrees clockwise. The standard deviation distance of the X axis was 4109.43m and the standard deviation distance of the Y axis was 114221.63m. The standard deviation ellipse's axis seems to be tilted toward the North to South direction which are Benin-Lagos and Benin-Sapele Roads. The mean center analysis in Figure 3 placed the centre of the location of the recreational water facility very close to the Government Reserved Area (GRA) which cuts across both the high-density and medium-density population zones. Despite the dispersal pattern in the distribution of hostels shown by the results of the NNA, there are more hotels located around GRA, Ikpokpan, Uhunmwuidumwun, and Oko neighbourhoods than the others. These are located in the most affluent part of the metropolis and enjoy the highest-level of access to urban services, such as security, power supply and urban aesthetics. They are the most desirable areas for residential housing, hospitality/tourism, and recreational services.

Accessibility of Recreational Aquatic Facilities in Benin Metropolis

Accessibility is the ease of reaching a phenomenon and can be measured from a perspective or group of perspectives that includes geographical, economic and psychological perspectives. In this study, the location of a facility and the location of one's residence, the distance to the RAF, the frictional distance, and the psychological (perceptual) distance were used to evaluate and assess the accessibility of respondents to recreational aquatic facilities using the population density zone as the spatial unit of analysis. Table 3 shows the interaction between the respondents' location of residence and location of recreational aquatic facility. Because the purpose of this analysis is to establish the pattern of the accessibility behaviour of the respondents, it is essential to describe the location of the Zones in which this interaction takes place. The High-density zone is located within the inner moat of the metropolis and

is the innermost part of the metropolis. The Medium-density zone is the intermediate zone next to High-density zone and the Low-density zone is the on outermost part of the metropolis. In terms of proximity, the low-density zone is closer to the medium density-zone than the high-density zone. Although, the low-density zone is closer to the medium-density zone, the proximity of a neighbourhood within the medium density zone to either high density zone or low-density zone is determined by the location of the neighbourhood with the medium-density zone. For instance, Evian, Uselu, and Ogba are significantly closer to the high-density zone than to the low-density zone. Okhoro, Aduwawa, Ugbor, Evbotubu, and Ogbesun are nearer to the low-density zone than to the high-density zone. (See Table 1 for the location of the neighbourhoods within each Zone.)

Table 3: Interaction between Recreational Aquatic Facility and Users' Residential Location

| RAF Location | Residents' Location | | | Total |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|------------------|------------|
| | High Density Zone | Medium Density Zone | Low Density Zone | |
| High Density Zone | 75 | 48 | 7 | 130 |
| Medium Density Zone | 34 | 89 | 42 | 165 |
| Low Density Zone | 3 | 56 | 66 | 125 |
| Total | 112 | 193 | 115 | 420 |

Source: Authors' Computation, 2024

From Table 3, the table matrix showed the accessibility of residents to aquatic recreational facilities across different population density zones based on their locations. It showed that a significant number of residents tend utilise the RAF within their

zones of residence, indicating a preference for facility within their zone of residence. Residents of High-density zones mostly utilised RAF within other High-density areas, with fewer utilising the RAF in the medium or Low-density zones. Similarly, those from Medium-density areas predominantly utilised RAF within Medium-density zones, though some also utilised RAF in High or Low-density zones. In contrast, residents from Low-density zones show a stronger inclination towards utilising RAF in the same zone, with minimal movement to Higher-density areas. This was due to high number of neighbourhoods (5) that are located closer to the Low-density compare to the High-density zone. Overall, the data suggest that individuals generally prefer utilising proximal RAF their location, with Medium-density zones being the most balanced in terms of respondents' accessibility distribution to RAF in the different density zones. The low interaction between the High-density and Low-density zone was due to longer distance and intervening opportunity between both zones.

People tend to prefer utilising RAF within their immediate environment due to convenience and ease of access. Proximity reduces travel time and effort, making it more practical to incorporate the use of these facilities into their routines. Additionally, familiar surroundings create a sense of comfort and security, encouraging regular use. The immediate availability of RAF also fosters a stronger connection to the local community, reinforcing the preference for nearby options over more distant alternatives. These findings indicate that location plays a significant role in the accessibility of RAF in the study area and this finding is in accord with the findings of Boone *et al.*, 2009 and Kruszynska and Poczta, 2020 who found that distance plays a pivotal role in the accessibility of recreation facilities. To substantiate this, it was hypothesised that there is no significant difference in the accessibility of respondents

to these facilities. Table 4 shows the Chi-square statistics.

Table 4: Chi-Square Tests

| | Value | df | Asymp. Sig. (2-sided) |
|---|---------------------|----|-----------------------|
| Pearson Chi-Square | 66.511 ^a | 8 | .000 |
| Likelihood Ratio | 74.348 | 8 | .000 |
| Linear-by-Linear Association | 1.249 | 1 | .264 |
| N of Valid Cases | 420 | | |
| a. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 5.95 | | | |

Source: Authors' Computation, 2024

Table 4 is the result of the Pearson' Chi-square value of 293.930 at a degree of freedom of 16 and with $p=0.000$. Since the $p < 0.05$, the null-hypothesis is rejected and the alternate hypothesis accepted. Therefore, it is concluded that there is a significant difference in the accessibility of recreational water facility due to the influence of the distance between the location of residency of the users and the location of recreational water facilities. This simply means that there is an inverse relationship between distance and the accessibility of recreational water facilities.

Using the maximum 400m distance from place of residence standard as stated by Boone et al., (2009), it was observed that the users had accessibility challenges judging by the fact that, on the average, they had to travel nearly four times (1596.19m) the maximum allowable distance to access a recreational aquatic facility. The median distance travelled by users to access the facilities was more than three times (1300m) the allowable distance to recreational water facilities. This finding was at variance

with the standard stated in Boone et al. (20009). See Appendix 1 for the result of the mean, median and mode.

Perception of Users to Accessibility of Recreational Water Facilities in Benin Metropolis

Psychological accessibility is as important as physical accessibility. The perception of people towards the ease to reach and utilise a facility is an important determinant in understanding the accessibility behaviour of the people towards the facility under study. To this end, the perception of the respondents towards accessibility of recreational water facility in the study area was analysed by estimating the median and frequency of respondents' opinion in deciding their accessibility level to recreational water facility. Table 5 showed the perception of respondents' level of accessibility to recreational aquatic facility in the study area. While Table 6 showed the mean, median, mode, and standard deviation statistics table for the perception of respondents' level of accessibility to recreational aquatic facility in the study area.

Table 5: Perception of Respondents' Level of Accessibility to Recreational Aquatic Facilities in Benin Metropolis

| Level of Accessibility | Frequency | Percentage |
|-------------------------------|------------------|-------------------|
| Very Low | 9 | 2.1 |
| Low | 40 | 9.5 |
| Moderate | 157 | 37.4 |
| High | 125 | 29.8 |
| Very High | 89 | 21.2 |
| Total | 420 | 100.0 |

Source: Authors' Computation, 2024

The majority of respondents stated that the accessibility level to recreational water

facilities in the study area was moderate. A significant portion believed their level of accessibility was high, with some indicating it was very high. However, a smaller number noted that the accessibility was low or very low. These results summarise the psychological perception of accessibility to recreational water facilities. Table 6 was used to make a conclusive statement about the users' psychological perception of accessibility levels.

Table 6: Statistics for the Perception of Respondents' Level of Accessibility to Recreational Aquatic Facility in Benin Metropolis

| N | Value |
|----------------|-------|
| Valid | 420 |
| Mean | 3.58 |
| Median | 4.00 |
| Mode | 3 |
| Std. Deviation | .994 |
| Minimum | 1 |
| Maximum | 5 |

Source: Authors' Computation, 2024

Key: 1- Very Low, 2- Low, 3-Moderate, 4-High, and 5-Very High

Using the Median value of 4 in Table 6 as the basis for analysis, it is demonstrated that the perception of residents to the level of accessibility to recreational aquatic facility in the study area is high. Their perception may have been influenced by the median distance (1300m), frictional cost (₦1000), and utilisation cost (₦2000) of the recreational water facility (see Appendix 1).

Factors that Influences Recreational Aquatic Facility Utilisation

Multiple linear regression analysis was employed in order to determine factors that

influenced the utilisation pattern of recreational aquatic facilities. Frequency for utilisation of recreational water facility was used as the dependent variable while cost of utilisation, distance to facility, location of facility, location of respondents, religious beliefs, education, means of transportation, age, frictional distance, and marital status were the explanatory variables. Table 7 shows the model summary of analysis.

Table 7: Model Summary

| Model | R | R. Square | Adjusted R. Squared | Std Error of the Estimate |
|---|--------------------|-----------|---------------------|---------------------------|
| 1 | 0.030 ^a | 0.092 | 0.061 | 0.826 |
| a. Predictors: (Constant) cost of utilisation, distance to facility, location of facility, location of respondents, religious believe, education, means of transportation, age, frictional distance, marital status | | | | |

Source: Authors' Computation, 2024

Table 7 demonstrates that the results from the regression model are significant. R^2 has been reported by researchers to be low when conducting a cross-sectional survey or predicting human behaviour (Brennan, 2014; Paetzold, 2016). The adjusted R^2 was used to measure the fit of the regression model, given the independent variables. The adjusted R^2 was 0.092 ($13, 386$) = 2.993, $p < 0.05$, indicating that 9.2% of the variation in the dependent variable was explained by the independent variables in the model.

Although the adjusted R^2 in the model is very low, it shows that the model is very

good.

The ANOVA result in Table 8 shows the cumulative contribution of the predictors, explaining their relationship to the dependent variable. The dependent variable (cost of utilisation) was regressed on the predicting of variables of distance to a facility, the location of the facility, the location of respondents, their religious beliefs, education, means of transportation, age, frictional distance, and marital status. The independent variable significantly predicts the facility provision, $F(3, 386) = 2.993$, with $p=0.000$ which is lesser than the alpha value of 0.05, which indicates that the predictors under study have a significant influence on recreational facility cost of utilisation provision. As such, the non-hypothesis is rejected and the alternate hypothesis is accepted which states that “there is a relationship between the predictor variables and cost of utilising recreational aquatic facilities.”

Table 8: ANOVA

| Model | Sum of Squares | df | Mean Square | F | Sig. |
|---|----------------|-----|-------------|-------|-------------------|
| 1 Regression | 27.193 | 13 | 2.092 | 2.993 | .000 ^b |
| Residual | 269.744 | 386 | .699 | | |
| Total | 296.938 | 399 | | | |
| a. Dependent Variable: cost of utilisation b. Predictors: (Constant), distance to facility, location of facility, location of respondents, religious believe, education, means of transportation, age, frictional distance, marital status | | | | | |

Source: Author’s Computation, 2024

Table 9 shows the variables that contributed significantly to the model. It shows that three predictors (gender, age, and educational status) were statistically significant. It demonstrates the independent variables that contributed significantly to predicting

the cost of utilising recreational aquatic facilities.

Table 9: Regression Coefficients^a Table

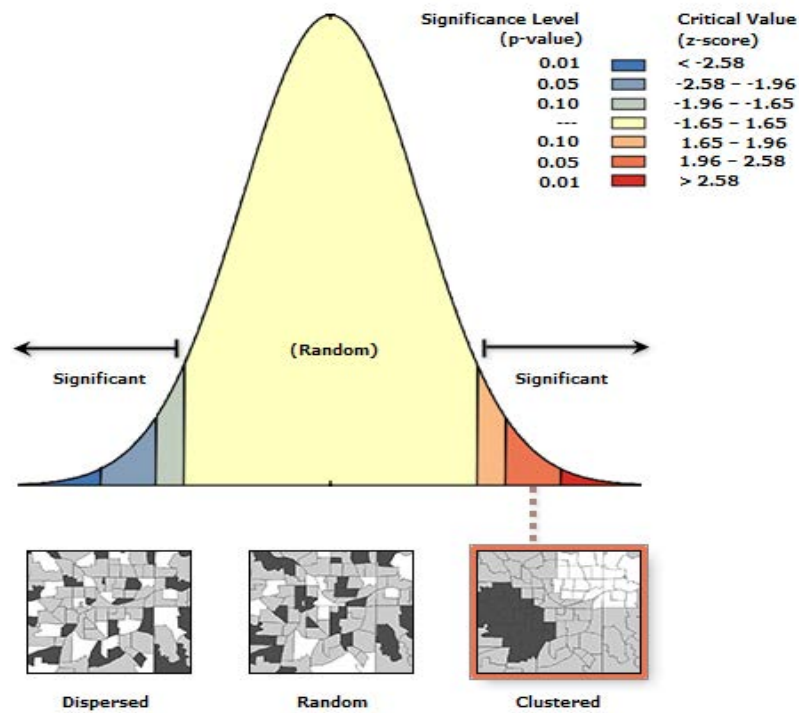
| Model | Unstandardised Coefficients | | Beta | t | Sig |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------|-------|--------|------|
| | B | Std Error | | | |
| Constant | 1.463 | .542 | | 2.697 | .007 |
| Facility Location | .027 | .031 | .047 | .859 | .391 |
| Resident Location | -.006 | .032 | -.009 | -.174 | .862 |
| Gender | -.190 | .086 | -.110 | -2.207 | .028 |
| Age | .018 | .006 | .202 | 3.006 | .003 |
| Marital Status | .114 | .115 | .073 | .984 | .326 |
| Educational status | .203 | .086 | .130 | 2.364 | .019 |
| Religious status | .103 | .090 | .057 | 1.147 | .252 |
| Occupational status | .011 | .066 | .010 | .159 | .874 |
| Income | -1.720E-7 | .000 | -.013 | -.247 | .805 |
| Distance | -5.136E-5 | .000 | -.056 | -.973 | .331 |
| Trip Amount | .000 | .000 | .095 | 1.497 | .135 |
| Means of transport | .169 | .092 | .118 | 1.831 | .068 |
| Amount spent on facility use | -.037 | .043 | -.044 | -.851 | .395 |

Source: Authors' Computation, 2024

Influence of Location on the Cost of Utilising Recreational Aquatic Facilities

To determine whether the utilisation cost of RAF at any given location is influenced by the cost of using co-located RAFs in the study area, spatial autocorrelations were carried out (see Figure 4).

Figure 4: Spatial Distribution Pattern in the Cost of Utilising Recreational Aquatic Facilities in Benin Metropolis



Source: Authors' Computation, 2024

Moran's Index:

z-score:

p-value:



Global Moran's I Summary

Expected Index: -0.029412

Variance: 0.001194

Positive spatial autocorrelation indicates that similar values of a variable on a map tend to be agglomerated: high values tend to be placed near high values, medium values near medium values, and low values near low values. A positive Morans' index value (0.0428) was discovered, as well as a high z-score ($z = 2.0899$) and a low

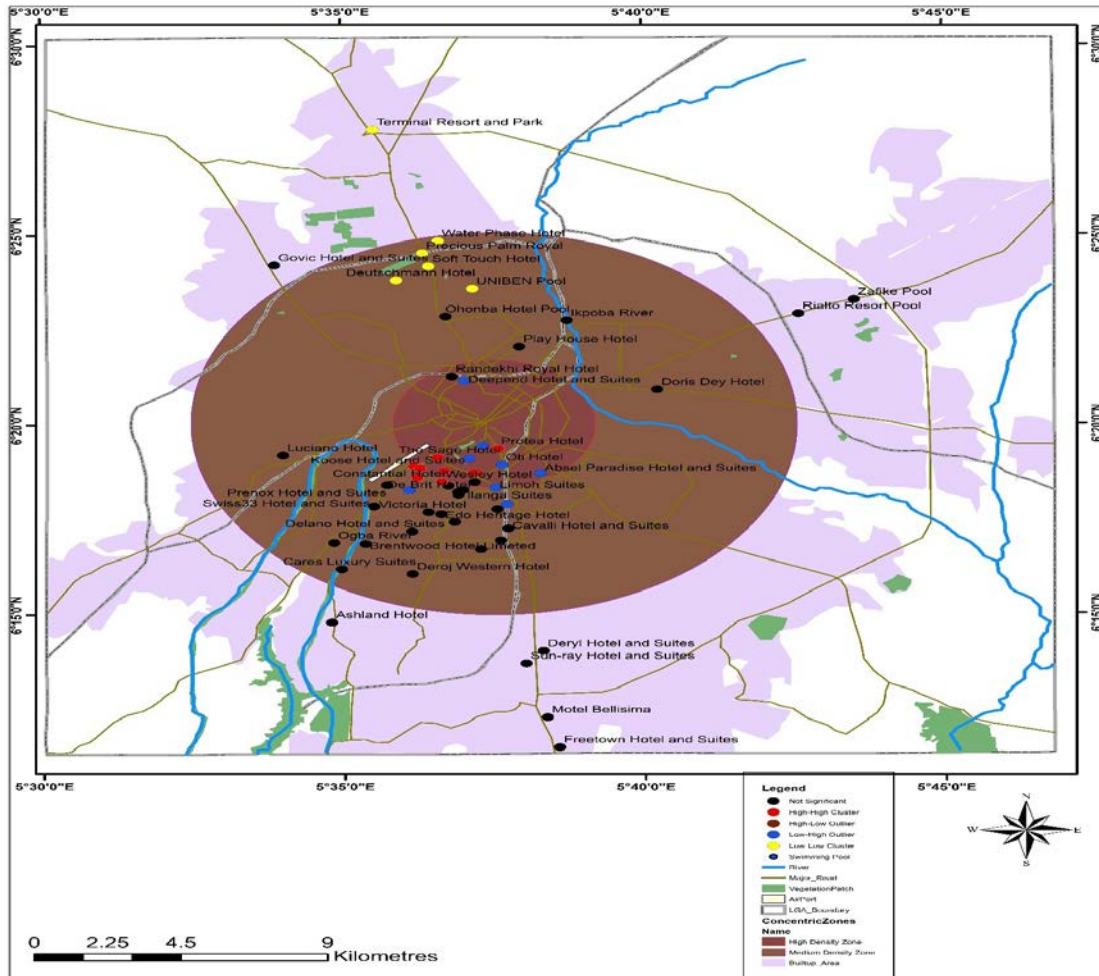
p-value ($p = 0.0366$), which indicate a cluster in the cost of the utilisation of RAF and positive spatial autocorrelation between them. Given the z-score of 2.08993980245, there is a less than 5% likelihood that this clustered pattern could be the result of random chance. Since $p < 0.05$, the null-hypothesis is rejected and the alternate hypothesis accepted which states that cost of utilisation of RAFs is influenced by the agglomeration in the cost of utilising co-located RAFs.

Furthermore, the cluster and outlier analyses were carried out to determine whether the clustering of the cost of utilisation of recreational water facilities to validate the finding of the autocorrelation analysis (see Figure 5). First, the point locations of each recreational facilities were grouped into points of statistical significance and points that were not statistically significant using Local Moran I Pseudo Value (LMiPValue) (see Appendix 2). Locations that were statically significant were depicted in red, brown, blue, and yellow dots. While locations that were not statistically significant were depicted in black dots. A second grouping was carried out demarcating the area into clusters and outliers. The red dots represented the high-high cluster (recreational water facilities with a high cost of utilisation), the brown dots represented locations with high-low outliers (recreational aquatic facilities with high cost of utilisation but surrounded by recreational aquatic facility with low cost of utilisation), the blue dots represented locations with low-high outliers (recreational aquatic facilities with low cost of utilisation but surrounded by recreational aquatic facilities with high cost of utilisation.), and the yellow dots represented the low-low cluster (recreational facilities with low cost of utilisation).

From Figure 5, it can be observed that agglomeration of similar recreational aquatic facilities in cluster, influences the cost of utilisation. A cluster of high cost of

recreational aquatic facility utilisation is situated in the South-Western part of high-density and the fringe of medium-density zone of Benin Metropolis, including

Figure 5: Cluster and Outlier Analysis of Cost of Utilisation of Recreational Aquatic Facilities



Source: Agheyisi (2016); Jolly and Iyobosa (2020); Open Street Map (2023).

recreational aquatic facilities such as Constantial, Sage, Duoban, Royal Marble, Hale Manor Exquisite, Wesley, Enterno, and Protea. The majority of these RAF are located in the Government Reserved Area which is the zone of the affluent sector of the metropolis' population, explaining the high cost in the utilisation of RAFs in the Zone. A cluster of the low cost of utilisation of RAFs is found in the Northern direction of the medium-density and low-density zones of the study area, including

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recreational aquatic facilities such as, UNIBEN, Deutschmann, Soft Touch, Precious Palm, Water Phase, and Terminal. The majority of these RAFs are located towards the fringe of medium-density zone and the area, and stretching from this fringe area to the low-density area is the sector of the newly-rich. This population is responsible for the cost of utilisation of RAFs in their zone. However, an outlier of recreational aquatic facilities with low-cost of utilisation is located in the Southern part of high-density and medium-density zone of the area of study, including recreational facilities such as Deepend, Urban Oasis, Koos, Oti, Absel Paradise, Limoh, Lushville, and Homeville. Most of these RAFs are located in the medium density zone as are a few in the fringes of the high-density zone. This zone is occupied by the low-income earners responsible for influencing the low-cost of utilising RAFs, because if the cost is high, it will be beyond the affordability of the proximal users. This finding demonstrates how RAF utilisation costs are linked to agglomerations of recreational aquatic facilities even though there are some outliers.

Conclusion

This study has shown that there is a relationship between accessibility (physical distance and socio-economic) and the utilisation of RAFs. Analysing the accessibility and utilisation of aquatic recreational facilities in cities is important for several reasons. These facilities play a significant role in promoting public health and wellness. Access to swimming pools, water parks, and other aquatic centers encourages physical activity, which can help combat obesity, heart disease, and other lifestyle-related health issues. Additionally, swimming is a low-impact exercise suitable for all age groups, making it an inclusive option for community members to stay active.

Understanding accessibility and utilisation helps in urban planning and resource

allocation. By analysing data on how different demographics use aquatic facilities, city planners can identify areas with underserved populations and plan for the construction of new facilities or the improvements of existing ones. This ensures an equitable distribution of recreational resources and can enhance the overall quality of life in the city. Furthermore, it supports the efficient use of public funds by prioritising projects that will have the most significant impacts.

These analyses can also inform policies aimed at reducing social inequalities. Accessibility encompasses not only the physical location of aquatic recreational facilities but also the economic and social barriers that might prevent certain groups from using them. By identifying these barriers, city officials can implement measures such as subsidised entry fees, transportation options, and targeted outreach programs to increase participation among low-income families, the elderly, and other marginalised groups.

The utilisation of aquatic recreational facilities contributes to community cohesion and social interaction. These spaces provide opportunities for people from diverse backgrounds to engage with one other in a relaxed and enjoyable environment and can foster a sense of community, reduce social isolation, and promote inclusivity. Analysing utilisation patterns can help ensure these spaces are welcoming and accessible to all, thereby strengthening the social fabric of the city.

It is recommended that government should play an interventionist role in the provision and maintenance of recreational aquatic facilities in neighbourhoods without economic attractiveness to arouse private investors.

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Appendix 1

Statistics Table

| | Distance to Facility | Amount Spent On Facility Use | Amount Spent On Trips |
|--------|----------------------|------------------------------|-----------------------|
| N | 420 | 420 | 420 |
| Mean | 1596.19 | 2275.86 | 1142.38 |
| Median | 1300.00 | 2000.00 | 1000.00 |
| Mode | 1000 | 2000.00 | 400.00 |

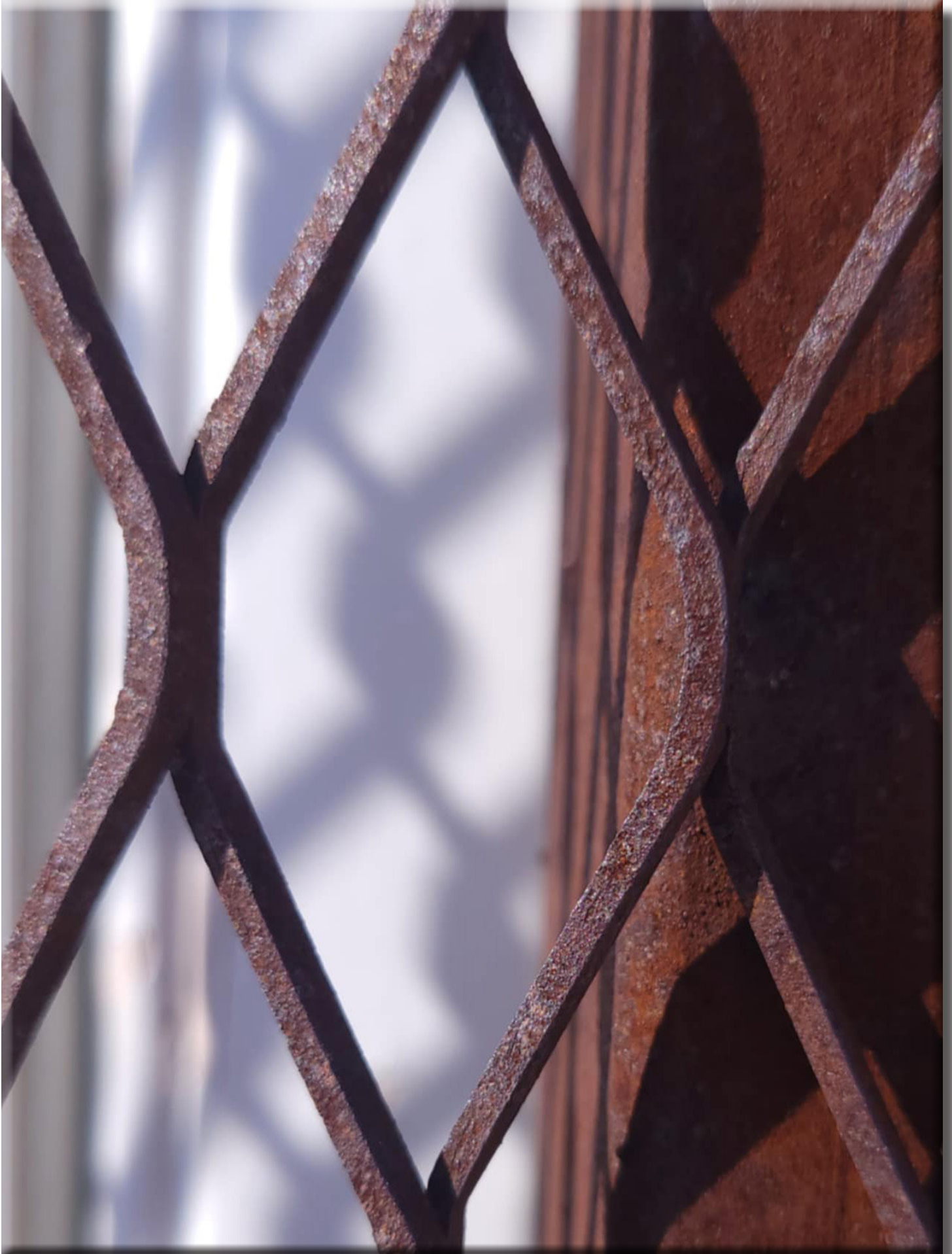
Appendix 2

Field Table for Cluster and Outlier Analysis

| FID | Shape * | SOURCE _ID | Cost_ of_ _Ut | LMi Index | LMiZ Score | LMiP Value | CO Type | N |
|-----|------------|---------------|---------------------|--------------|---------------|---------------|------------|----|
| 0 | Point | 0 | 1000 | 0.13892 | 1.415264 | 0.028 | LL | 58 |
| 1 | Point | 1 | 1500 | 0.06033 | 1.232253 | 0.07 | | 58 |
| 2 | Point | 2 | 3000 | -0.02807 | -0.15593 | 0.492 | | 58 |
| 3 | Point | 3 | 1500 | -0.06153 | -0.96514 | 0.114 | | 58 |
| 4 | Point | 4 | 1500 | 0.14309 | 1.176039 | 0.034 | LL | 58 |
| 5 | Point | 5 | 1500 | 0.09731 | 1.425266 | 0.028 | LL | 58 |
| 6 | Point | 6 | 1500 | 0.12705 | 1.376698 | 0.042 | LL | 58 |
| 7 | Point | 7 | 3000 | 0.1607 | 1.904817 | 0.062 | | 58 |
| 8 | Point | 8 | 10000 | 2.35142 | 1.471338 | 0.012 | HH | 58 |
| 9 | Point | 9 | 2000 | -0.07232 | -3.77471 | 0.002 | LH | 58 |
| 10 | Point | 10 | 1500 | 0.04903 | 1.577868 | 0.038 | LL | 58 |
| 11 | Point | 11 | 1500 | 0.02082 | 0.648818 | 0.246 | | 58 |
| 12 | Point | 12 | 2000 | -0.01236 | -1.58472 | 0.062 | | 58 |
| 13 | Point | 13 | 2000 | -0.00663 | -0.4635 | 0.29 | | 58 |
| 14 | Point | 14 | 1500 | 0.13822 | 1.417683 | 0.024 | LL | 58 |
| 15 | Point | 15 | 1500 | -0.11192 | -1.27399 | 0.032 | LH | 58 |
| 16 | Point | 16 | 3000 | 0.04746 | 0.168684 | 0.31 | | 58 |
| 17 | Point | 17 | 1500 | -0.24104 | -4.00069 | 0.002 | LH | 58 |
| 18 | Point | 18 | 1500 | -0.05043 | -0.752 | 0.166 | | 58 |
| 19 | Point | 19 | 2000 | -0.01464 | -0.71486 | 0.158 | | 58 |
| 20 | Point | 20 | 2000 | -0.04062 | -1.26887 | 0.07 | | 58 |
| 21 | Point | 21 | 2000 | -0.03456 | -2.05686 | 0.038 | LH | 58 |
| 22 | Point | 22 | 2000 | 0.00827 | 0.364011 | 0.326 | | 58 |
| 23 | Point | 23 | 2000 | 0.01054 | 0.692888 | 0.22 | | 58 |
| 24 | Point | 24 | 3000 | 0.22837 | 2.039653 | 0.008 | HH | 58 |
| 25 | Point | 25 | 1500 | -0.15689 | -3.13728 | 0.008 | LH | 58 |
| 26 | Point | 26 | 2000 | -0.00073 | -0.01262 | 0.452 | | 58 |
| 27 | Point | 27 | 3000 | 0.15663 | 1.634273 | 0.066 | | 58 |
| 28 | Point | 28 | 3000 | -0.06451 | -0.12639 | 0.356 | | 58 |
| 29 | Point | 29 | 3000 | -0.00741 | -0.04515 | 0.484 | | 58 |
| 30 | Point | 30 | 1500 | 0.03742 | 0.668393 | 0.176 | | 58 |
| 31 | Point | 31 | 1500 | 0.03433 | 0.722159 | 0.136 | | 58 |
| 32 | Point | 32 | 0 | -0.07 | -0.08235 | 0.368 | | 58 |

| | | | | | | | | |
|----|-------|----|------|----------|----------|-------|----|----|
| 33 | Point | 33 | 2000 | 0.00245 | 0.016319 | 0.33 | | 58 |
| 34 | Point | 34 | 0 | 0.0237 | 0.523445 | 0.3 | | 58 |
| 35 | Point | 35 | 2000 | -0.00738 | -0.37838 | 0.3 | | 58 |
| 36 | Point | 36 | 3000 | -0.1014 | -0.08739 | 0.384 | | 1 |
| 37 | Point | 37 | 3000 | 0.22711 | 1.525778 | 0.026 | HH | 58 |
| 38 | Point | 38 | 3000 | 0.1899 | 2.466824 | 0.018 | HH | 58 |
| 39 | Point | 39 | 3000 | 2.32895 | 6.060304 | 0.002 | HH | 58 |
| 40 | Point | 40 | 2000 | -0.04143 | -2.28473 | 0.012 | LH | 58 |
| 41 | Point | 41 | 3000 | 0.16248 | 2.034499 | 0.044 | HH | 58 |
| 42 | Point | 42 | 3000 | 0.20429 | 1.712228 | 0.028 | HH | 58 |
| 43 | Point | 43 | 3000 | 0.08856 | 1.021913 | 0.074 | | 58 |
| 44 | Point | 44 | 3000 | 0.18699 | 2.781048 | 0.018 | HH | 58 |
| 45 | Point | 45 | 3000 | 0.08313 | 1.242326 | 0.106 | | 58 |
| 46 | Point | 46 | 2000 | -0.01393 | -0.82783 | 0.14 | | 58 |
| 47 | Point | 47 | 2000 | -0.11386 | -5.01601 | 0.002 | LH | 58 |
| 48 | Point | 48 | 1500 | -0.0038 | 0.096975 | 0.454 | | 58 |
| 49 | Point | 49 | 2000 | -0.00636 | -0.86105 | 0.182 | | 58 |
| 50 | Point | 50 | 2000 | -0.08977 | -0.6674 | 0.034 | LH | 58 |
| 51 | Point | 51 | 2000 | 0.00334 | 0.231223 | 0.432 | | 58 |
| 52 | Point | 52 | 2000 | 0.00214 | 0.10622 | 0.476 | | 59 |
| 53 | Point | 53 | 1500 | -0.05853 | -0.91001 | 0.168 | | 58 |
| 54 | Point | 54 | 1500 | 0.02379 | 0.557171 | 0.278 | | 58 |
| 55 | Point | 55 | 2000 | 0.00321 | 0.046163 | 0.334 | | 58 |
| 56 | Point | 56 | 1500 | 0.03695 | 1.175458 | 0.084 | | 58 |
| 57 | Point | 57 | 2000 | -0.01036 | -0.41893 | 0.254 | | 58 |
| 58 | Point | 58 | 3000 | 0.21039 | 1.654919 | 0.032 | HH | 58 |
| 59 | Point | 59 | 3000 | 0.17562 | 2.129442 | 0.026 | HH | 58 |

Note: Red Indicates Points that are not Statistically Significant



Rethinking Racial Realism in Selected South African Fiction

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Abstract

Human beings are biologically or genetically grouped into distinct categories called races. Problems of race lead to what is known as racial discrimination or segregation. Grounded in racial realism, Nadine Gordimer's *My Son's Story* (1990), and Pamela Jooste's *Dance with A POOR MAN'S DAUGHTER* (1998) transmit the complexities of the period in which apartheid was practiced in South Africa. Both novels reveal the hopes and challenges of post-apartheid South Africa and critique racism by depicting the pain and trauma of apartheid.

Keywords: Rethinking Racial Realism, Discrimination, Mixed marriages, *kaffir*, Psychological delineation

Introduction

South African novelists like Naidine Gordimer (1990) and Pamela Jooste (1998) have concerned themselves with the socio-political trauma of average South Africans. Their works capture the historical themes, biological and social perspectives, political discourse, and institutional oppressions. As Oliver Tambo, one of the leaders of the African National Congress (ANC) observes, “racism continues to flourish in South Africa because the white lords have commercial interests” as their hidden agenda (Tambo 1965, pp. xi-xii). These novelists record traumatic experiences of the social injustice, de-humanitarian oppression, and psychological delineation meted out on the black and coloured races in the apartheid era and articulate some of the significant changes in South Africa directly after apartheid characterizing this period of “tension between memory and amnesia... of breaking silence necessitated by long years of struggle, the refashioning of identities caught between stasis and change, and the role of culture or representation in limiting or enabling new forms of understanding” (Attwell and Harlow 2000, p. 20).

Attwell and Harlow state that the future in post-apartheid literature has little or no hope (2000, p. 3). This observation is particularly pertinent when one considers literature examining the crinkle effects of the apartheid system of government on the black and coloured populations. It is evident that the “decades of deprivation, torture, delineation and trauma associated with apartheid” (Fugard, 2002, pp. 45-46) have left indelible marks on the psychological and physical worlds of the people. As Gordimer (1990, p. 88) observes, “South Africa is a centripetal force that draws people in the region not only out of economic necessity but also ... [their] commitment to political struggle.” Many writers like Fugard (1979), Mphahlele (1965), Head (1974),

and Wicomb (2001) have based their works on the realities of life in South Africa. Gordimer's and Jooste's fictions not only depict the past's trauma of depravity and harsh sufferings of the blacks; they also demonstrate what needs to be done for the common good of the nation.

Examining racial profiling ingrained in the personal and collective tendencies, Ezeliora (2011, p. 24) classifies works like Gordimer's and Jooste's attempts "to define humanity on the base of pigmentation." According to Ezeliora, South African writers are of the view that "institutionalised racism is founded on the basis of separatism and sustained over the years through coercion and with all the arsenals of the state," indicating that racism is an ideology which operates on what Essien-Udom (1971, p. 236) says is

a system of stratification by which the 'human race' and their civilizations and cultures are hierarchically arranged, each race occupying a fixed position from the bottom to the apex of the pyramid...In this system of stratification some races are supposed to be innately and permanently superior, others are similarly inferior. In terms of physical criteria some races are aesthetically beautiful while others are ugly, and their superior civilizations derive from their physical attributes.

This study probes the use of racial realism that permeates the socio-political and moral lifestyles of South Africans in literary history. The two prolific South African writers selected for this study, Gordimer and Jooste, are whites. This selection is based on two reasons. First, the novelists are liberal in their reasoning and in their commitment to fighting the course of humanitarian rights. They do not want the

privileges attached to their race to skew their sense of what is proper and just for human existence. Second, the experiences described in their works are recounted exactly as they were told to them.

Theoretical Framework

The term “racial realism” refers to the evolution of its twin doctrines of racialism and realism (Williams 1977) over the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Duffield (1984, p. 5) points out that when realism is associated with racism, the result establishes the differences of a shared set of premises. Racism is the “perpetuation of a belief that human races have distinctive characteristics that determine their respective cultures, usually involving the idea that one race is superior and has the right to dominate others, together with a policy of enforcing such asserted right and system of government and society based upon such a policy” (Twitchin 1988, p. 32). According to Wallace (2009, p. 462), racism is the ranking of human beings on the grounds of alleged biological differences, such as skin colour, hair texture and features, that are then stigmatised as marks of social, intellectual and cultural inferiorities. Racism in South Africa, known as apartheid, started with the earliest contact between the whites and black races in South Africa with what has been referred to as the missionary evangelisation. It is also ascertained that, the “natural mineral resources buried in the country’s earth crust” (Amadi 2012, p. 40), attracted countries like America, Britain, West Germany, and Japan to look for gold and other rich resources, not evangelism. These highly industrialised nations “boosted South African economy ad technology, and France comfortably made herself pre-eminent in the supply of fire arms” (Carter and Meara 1979, p. 94), creating a “marriage of inconvenience” which resulted in what Sargent describes as “devastation and mass murder of the indigenous population” (Sargent *the quint: an interdisciplinary quarterly from the north* 161

2009, p. 17).

In this inconvenient marriage, the colonies lived at the mercy of the colonial system. They could not make decisions or formulate laws of their own, because all decisions were invariably made for their so-called benefit. Many major decisions that affected the running of the colonies were made in Europe, the colonial seat of power, were made for the economic purpose of supplying raw materials for the “home country, [for whom the colony was] a place to offload its population, a market for its goods, and cheap labour” (Sargent, 2009, p. 17). The thoughtful exclusion of the blacks from such progress incited early agitation, what Amadi says was a “violent and difficult resistance because of the swiftness applied in the extermination of the uprising” (2012, p. 41). Africans in South Africa were the first to discover the enormous wealth—for example, the gold in Johannesburg, and were the last to be remunerated politically (Sargent, 2009, p. 34). When other nations in Africa were busy achieving political independence, blacks in South Africa were restricted educationally, politically, economically, and socially.

Jarrett (2015, p. 20) points out that

[r]epresentations of the world in written discourse participate in the construction of shaping modalities of social reality in accommodating their writers, readers and audience to multiple and shifting subject positions within the world that they themselves constitute and inhabit.

As Jarrett says, codified spoken and oral gestures, systems of narratives, beliefs, practices, traditions and power relations associated with the social groups moderate how literary discourse “engages” “accommodates” and “shapes” the world through

various organised and thematic strategies. According to Williams (1977), realism is generally considered “a pseudo-objective version of reality, a version that is found to depend on a particular phase of history or a particular set of relationships.” In art, realism “is the precise, detailed and accurate representation...of the visual appearance of scenes and object.” It is thought a “faithful representation of reality” (Campbell, 2014). As a literary movement, realism depicts “objective reality,” showing everyday life primarily among the middle and lower class members of the society without “romantic idealisation or dramatisation” (Free Online Encyclopaedia, 2014, Retrieved July 15, 2014). Literary realism, which followed the Romantic movement in art that favours both subject and scenery in order to explain the emotional depth of the artist’s mind, Lodge (1977, p. 22) posits, is a “naturally descriptive and evaluative term.” Like Lodge, Auerbach also finds realism to be the mimetic tendency in literature visible from Antiquity through present (Wallace 2009, p. 482). Exploring racial experiences believed to be “true to life” (Goring *et al.*, 2013, p. 414), racial realism in literature conveys the brutality and injustices the blacks suffered at the hands of the Boers during apartheid (Wicomb, 2001, pp. 9, 93).

Textual Analysis

In Gordimer’s *My Son’s Story* (1990), Will, an innocent narrator, critiques the illegal relationship that exists between his father, Sonny, and Hannah. Sonny refuses to recognise the racial laws outlaw any union between privileged whites and minority blacks and ventures into an incompatible association with Hannah Plowman, a white woman. A traumatic experience, Sonny and Hannah’s affiliation results in the loss of his biological family. Yet, Will explains: “[H]e did not leave her, he did not say you have destroyed my family” (*My Son’s Story*, 29). As he reflects: “Sonny had no
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choice. Needing Hannah” (*My Son’s Story*, 3-4). Will confirms before his father met Hannah, the “blonde, my father’s woman” (*My Son’s Story*, 13), at a cinema, they had “moved to the city my father had bought that house in what later was called a ‘grey area’ where people of our kind defied the law and settled in among whites” (*My Son’s Story*, 14). According to Will, his family was comfortable and secure, because they were already located in the privileged white quarters. There was no need for Sonny to associate himself with Hannah, “a representative of an international human rights organisation sent to monitor political detentions and trials, and to assist people like my father and their families” (*My Son’s Story*, 14). Will’s family history, the story of Sonny and Aila, his beautiful mother and Baby, his younger sister, emphasizes the fact that they were living happily together peacefully with little or no problems (except those of apartheid’s political instability) As he points out, Sonny meeting Hannah ends in a marriage-of-inconvenience between the two.

Gordimer is “a leading South African novelist [and an activist] living today, apart from the fact that she has both won the Nobel Prize for literature, she has consistently shown in her writings that she is an opponent of apartheid policy” (Amadi 2012:37). A humanitarian, she calls on the South African government to re-examine its long-held policy on apartheid to be able to checkmate its excessive acts of racial fierceness. As far as she is concerned, the blacks are more in number than the whites and she does not see any real need for such inequality existing between the races. Being a white woman, she refuses to allow the “pigment darkened blood” (*My Son’s Story*, 22) to discourage her from fighting for oppressed groups who are still experiencing psychological trauma in post-apartheid South Africa today. She conscientiously treats very sensitive issues like brutality, injustice, adultery, infidelity, class segregation,

and rape as original evils contributing to the problems of racialism. Accordingly, Will recognises infidelity as an original evil when when he refers to Hannah as his

“father’s woman”... The first time he had to make love to his wife (Aila) after he had begun to make love to Hannah – ... Sometimes oh my god – the act drained him, in shame he felt a final spurt of anger, towards Aila, sperm turned to *venom*... (italics mine; *My Son’s Story* 15).

After he witnesses raw sexual acts between his father and Hannah, he sees his father as a lewd figure without sexual control. He acts out his hatred for his father’s betrayal of his mother and his distrust of Hannah Plowman. He states:

I got my parents to pay me to go away for a week as the celebration of my success in matric. I went down to Durban on the motorbike and pick up a girl on the beach the first day it was so easy. Some of the beaches are open to all of us now. So I’ve lived with a woman for six days, *fucked her* and slept in the same bed with her, and don’t want ever to see her again... (italics mine; *My Son’s Story*, 136).

Will uses crude language about his father’s infidelity to drive home the level of promiscuity his father and the effect it has had on him. He says, “Just like Dad. My sex life has no home” (*My Son’s Story*, 185). Unlike Will, Sonny is very happy to display to the world his adulterous waywardness and morally decayed life, when he refuses to set good examples for his innocent children. Sonny claims: “That’s what I feel. Now. That’s what making love with you has told me” (*My Son’s Story*, 68).

Moral depravity in South Africa is a well-known issue. Aligned with Kaplan’s *the quint: an interdisciplinary quarterly from the north* 165

claims that realism is a continuum of possibilities rather than a fixed category (1988, p. 23), the men in *My Son's Story* objectify women to suit their whims and caprice. Sonny is a shameless, selfish man who refuses to look at the consequences his behaviour has on his children. Baby, Sonny's daughter on her own, begins to sleep with a man at Lusaka until she becomes pregnant at eighteen years of age. Her immoral behaviour evidences the contagious nature of her father's unwholesome practices which affect the innocent in his family. Here, Gordimer suggests that once the foundation of the family is destroyed, the core values of society itself are damaged. Gordimer also posits that racialism destroys negatively affected groups and their families in apartheid South Africa, showing how the affected individuals accept brutality as a normal way of life. When Sonny walks away from what was once once peaceful and lovely home, Will ponders:

I don't understand how Baby doesn't know. Of course, the fact that my father is away at all hours and sometimes for several days in itself doesn't mean anything. Long before he went to prison, he had to get used to leaving us alone a lot. We had to get used to it (*My Son's Story*, p. 43).

Although Hannah is disparaged by Will for depriving his family of their father, she supports Sonny and his family while monitoring his trial. Will reveals to the reader that "[t]he young woman had kindly come to the house once, while Sonny was still a detainee to offer organisation's help" (*My Son's Story*, pp.14, 51). It is possible that Hannah's connections with her white colleagues and representatives from the churches and from the foreign embassies are what bring about Sonny's release from the prison. Such immense support from Hannah could also be said to be responsible

for the love affair existing between the two, after Sonny gains his freedom (*My Son's Story*, p. 53), because it is her kindness that is “the creation myth of their beginning” (*My Son's Story*, 54). Ironically, this “kindness” finally leads to Sonny’s destruction. Gordimer states: “Sonny did not go so far to believe, with Kafka that the power in which people are held powerless exists only in their submission” (*My Son's Story*, pp. 17).

Recounting his experience of racialism, Will, in *My Son's Story* (1990) explains that his family’s misfortunes began when they moved away from the Reef Street to live in Benoni which Will calls a “son of sorrow.” “I think now that this sorrow began when we left it...Perhaps if we had never left our area outside the small town it would never have happened” (*My Son's Story*, p. 35). The question one may ask is “Where have they packed to? Will confirms that off to Johannesburg, “we are going to move in among the whites. It’s a tactic decided upon and I am one who volunteered” (*My Son's Story*, pp. 40-41).

One must also ask why the family made such a decision. Will laments: “perhaps if we had never left our area outside the small town it would never have happened.” First, Sonny would not have fallen in love with “that woman he admires so much... She would never have found him, us – his blonde woman...I’ve thought of all the things that would have had to be avoided if I were not to have met my father at that cinema on an afternoon before the exams” (*My Son's Story*, p. 35). Sonny and his beloved family also would not have transgressed the law of racial separatism, which earns them series of trouble with the police in the apartheid South Africa. Sonny associating with Hannah results in adultery that truncates Aila’s once ideal marriage, happiness, and aspirations. And the frustration which comes with her husband’s –

Sonny's unfaithfulness, further launches her into an illegal relationship with "A man." Will laments: "No! It's not possible that now my mother as well — my mother has a lover somewhere... two calls which a man's voice asked to speak to my mother, the lady of the house" (*My Son's Story*, pp. 196-197).

As Ojukwu (2013, p.151) points out, racial laws in South Africa prohibit love relationships or marriages of mixed races, especially those between black and white people. Gordimer is not the only writer who castigates the harshness of racial laws. In *Dance with A POOR MAN'S DAUGHTER* (1998), Jooste also examines the extent to which innocent people are punished for offences they did not commit. For example, James is being taken to jail because

he can't mind his business... he's never any trouble to anyone but this was what happened to him in Rosedale Gardens. I don't know what it's like in Rosedale Gardens but here you don't have to kill anyone or steal. When they take you away, the police don't even have to tell you or your family what you have done. You can end up at Caledon Square anyway (Jooste 1998, p. 44).

Why should the blacks and coloured people always be the victims of injustices in an apartheid environment? Gordimer answers this question by pointing to the political machine that punishes innocent blacks at the expense of the whites. She points out why Sonny is incarcerated several times, because

[h]e was a political activist on trial for promotion of boycotts and participation in illegal gatherings. Police videos were shown by the state

prosecutor, where the accused was speaking on the platform... Sonny was sentenced to five years. On appeal, before another judge, sentence was reduced to two (Gordimer 1990, p.54).

The evils of apartheid are also demonstrated in situations in which all kinds of menial jobs are associated with the blacks. In *My Son's Story*, whites mistreat the blacks. After the blacks have laboured for them, they are pushed back to the suburbs and the slum areas. She states: "They will never walk on [their] land, [their] land restored to the people, instead of being sent away after the day's work to urban rubbish heaps like rural resettlement slums in areas of our country given tribal names and called 'foreign state'" (*My Son Story*, p. 113). She observes that "[t]he blacks appeared in the community hawking tomatoes and onions, putting up a fence, digging a trench, even hanging out the washing in those households a rung more affluent than that of the schoolteacher" (*My Son Story*, p. 22). The blacks are also sent after each day's work to the upper urban rubbish heaps where they pick rotten cabbages, tomatoes, and stale rice for survival. They later retire to the rural resettlement slums to rest (Gordimer 1990, pp. 22;113). There the blacks are given

the neat segregated suburbia of Bosmont and Lenasia...women who didn't know how they were going to keep up payments on the glossy furniture...the squatter camps where the addresses didn't exist and the only routes marked in the summer muck of mud and rot were those rutted by the wheelbarrows of people fetching their supplies of beer from the liquor store on the main road (*My Son Story*, p. 90).

Jooste examines other cases of physical and psychological separation of the blacks, as her innocent narrator, Lily Daniels states:

The native girls are maids mostly and some of them have little babies tied to their backs with blankets and they talk to each other and shout right across the back of the bus to show it's a free for all and anyone who can understand can join in and no-one minds (Jooste, 81).

Lily also observes that there are some places where the blacks and coloured people are not just accepted. The City Hall is a kind of place that is too grand for a Methodist dance, she says, and even if they should come all the way from Pretoria the government Security "would never let us use it and it was 'Right of Admission Reserved' at all the smart places which was just another way of telling us it was no Coloureds allowed and we weren't welcome there, even if we had money to go" But the Methodist Mission Hall is one of the places "which were still willing to take us" (Jooste 1998, p. 53). The apartheid government also orders policemen to watch the *kaffirs* and *natives*. Lily finds:

[n]atives are getting very full of themselves these days, thinking they can do just what they please and live wherever [it] suits them and come and go where they fancy takes them and this old man is just like the rest of them and that's what we're here for (Jooste1998, p. 102).

According to Lily, black and coloured people are seen as both unnatural and crazy. They are accused of indulging in crimes, theft, murder, and all sorts of unwholesome practices of a morally depraved lifestyle, so they can be classified as

deranged human beings. The blacks are said to be disloyal and dangerous to their kind, being capable of plunging themselves into deplorable crimes. One policeman, arguing with Stella, states derogatively:

‘Excuse me’, the first policeman says, ‘and who exactly do you think you are to tell us what we should and shouldn’t be calling people? We’re talking about a Native here and when he comes into your house to steal your things or tells you to pull your pants off for him so he can have a good time, you’ll be the first one to come screaming for police to help you. So don’t come here on your high horse and tell us what we must and mustn’t call him. (Jooste 1998, p. 103).

Lily thinks insults like these, made to discredit black people by presenting them as being drunk or crazy are psychological crimes. When Stella asks if such behavior did happen, why is it that it is being reported by the white policemen alone and blacks are not allowed to speak for themselves, Lily remarks that the other policeman indicates with a move of his head that his friend must get rid of Stella, because she has too much to say for herself and people are beginning to look at them. Accordingly, Stella is told

‘Don’t you know the law? ‘...You can’t have Natives parking themselves wherever they like. It’s not allowed. They’ve got their own place, the same as we all have, the same as God intended in the first place. Lions go with lions and monkeys go with monkeys’ (Jooste 1998, p. 104).

Here, it is hardly possible that Lily is recommending Stella as the prototype of
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the new South African woman. Apart from her open confrontation that annoys the policemen and her unpredictable attitude, which is public knowledge, some of her actions defy rational analysis. Innocently commenting on the whites' laws. Lily says,

I know about Natives because if we get on the bus these days, even though it's mixed and not the 'Whites Only' bus, we can't pick and choose where we sit any more. We have to sit in the back with the native girls because we don't mind the law now, but I don't mind and it doesn't matter if the front of the bus is empty and the back is very full because then we stand pushed up against one another and hold on wherever we can so we don't get thrown over and if the bus goes mad tips when we go around corners we all scream together and hold onto each other. (Jooste 1998, pp. 80-81)

Gordimer and Jooste both express their heart-felt concerns about the conditions of social amenities given to the blacks in the apartheid era, especially the substandard education that the blacks receive. The schools run for the blacks do not have standard curriculum like the whites; there are no qualified teachers to really impact the standard training of their children. The black people are underpaid and earn less than the white teachers with whom they share the same level of qualification. In the hospitals, the sick black people lie on the floor for lack of bed space, while there are wards full of empty beds in hospitals for the whites. The aged black men and women are denied their pensions, a mere fraction of what the whites get monthly.

Gordimer's Sonny condemns what the oppressors have done to the blacks in South Africa and names those responsible in the farewell speech he presents at the

funeral of the nine young comrades brutally murdered by “apartheid’s agents, the police, the army, the witdoeke, who have given to the struggle their share of the future the struggle is going to win for us” (*My Son Story*, pp. 112- 113). This emotion-laden incident reveals deeper pains, losses, regrets and allegations, evidencing racial injustices and violence.

As Amadi (2012, p. 171) observes, Gordimer’s writings deal with the issues of love, politics and racial problems as they relate to South Africa. Jooste also depicts the racial realism of her times. *Dance with the Poor Man’s Daughter* (1998) recounts its events in an epistolary form allowing Lily Daniels to unburden her heart. Jooste’s “purpose statement” declares that whatever happens “happened to many black and brown South Africans whose lives were irreparably damaged by the harsh laws put in place to enforce racial segregation” (Jooste 1998, p.16). Lily ushers us into the nocturnal operations of all the men related to her directly (or indirectly). She says, “the men in our family are not worth much... the other men in our family aren’t as bad as Maxi but it’s no secret they’re the cross we have to bear” (Jooste, 1998, pp. 16). For example, Gus-Seep, her uncle, is a law breaker, a gangster, a drunk who comes to his mother whenever “he gets a few down his neck” ((Jooste 1998, p. 17). He lives like this, mimicking the freedom enjoyed by whites because of racial segregation. Lily states that Errol Daniels (her elder uncle) is a kind-hearted man with no troubles. One day, however, he goes on a journey and does not return. His disappearance is one of the mysteries that black or coloured people experience when they go in search of job opportunities, especially if they do not want the apartheid jobs where they have to say say “Yes boss”. “No boss”. “Three bags full, boss” (Jooste 1998, pp. 22--23).

Another stunning incident of racial brutality is depicted in Gordimer’s *My Son’s*

Story, when the whites' policemen with a license to kill the blacks at will, enter into their houses and abuse them. Will envisions the traumas and the ordeals the blacks experience daily.

Violence was so thin an appearance... No, why, you could see the hair on a policeman's forearm... No matter if the person ...shifted again, armoured cars, police guns were there. The steel whips of aerials swung in the sun. Alsatian dogs—once desirable and beautiful pets, now tails down in the cowed and bearing of readiness to attack—were weapons leashed in the fists of police handlers. Everyone has been briefed about how to behave: each combi had its marshal. Accept police provocation calmly, leave the talking to those appointed to do it...That policeman shaking his fist! Can't you see? Next to that Hippo (derogatory word used to refer to the blacks). He hit him, he's hit him! Oh my god... No, no, no... Just look at those brutal clots, that one could press the trigger easily as he's scratching himself...Oh don't worry, they'd think twice before firing at us—we're white... The major or whatever-he-is ---he's walking away...No he isn't, he's just giving some instruction. They're arresting someone! Who? Can't see—oh my god, it's Dave! Dave Seaton. (*My Son's Story*, pp. 104-105)

This true-life account goes beyond the outward relationships that connect people, one to another and delves deeply into the psychology of human nature – pointing out our strengths and weaknesses, our passions, love, hate, anger, sympathy, jealousy, admiration and their fears. At one point, Will, as a little boy, is confused about the

ruthless society he is born into which lacks respect for human lives.

Jooste also critiques the racial law that underpins the personal and collective experiences of her characters. Classifying South Africans, she offers examples of institutionalised racism that has destroyed generations of people over the years. Through Lily's eyes, we are introduced to the "Kimberly Train" which contains the idleness, crime and violence, nocturnal and clandestine activities of the men and women of the underworld (Jooste 1998, p. 34). Lily observes that

[o]n the Kimberly Train, if you know what to look for, we shall find people like us and they have no luggage. All they'll be carrying with them are their hopes and dreams... we don't talk about it except behind our hands and behind people's backs. We never talk out loud about people who leave their families and go to Johannesburg to try... and pass for whites. The 'try-for-Whites' we call them and because of the disgrace is so big we keep what we know about them to ourselves out of respect for the family and the ones who stay behind...so all I tell her is that, the Kimberley train's secret is that it doesn't go to Kimberley at all. It goes all the way to Johannesburg and Johannesburg is where some people want to be but I don't say why. (Jooste 1998, p. 26).

Her phrase "pass for whites" conveys the shame, disgrace, reproach, agonies, promiscuity, disillusionment, and frustration of those surviving in an apartheid system. Lily's "Kimberly Train" is a place of crime and violence for gangsters irrespective of their colour (Jooste 1998, p. 26). She explains that Johannesburg is a no-man's island. It is a city where colour or race does not count and nobody holds "a pass" or "ID" like

a white person would. It is a place in which everybody operates the same way – “even the respectable white men with no money” act like the blacks. Some of the white men woo the black women” and promise that they would marry them even when they are not sure they will (Jooste 1998, p. 26).

Lily also explains that most of the men and women in Johannesburg can forget about their families forever and may never go back to them. She concludes that this may be what happened to a “strange woman like her mother” (Jooste 1998, p. 27). Lily’s mother “could have done this and got away with it and got herself an easy life. Reflecting on what Gus-Seep once told her about her mother, Lily imagines that.

[s]he got up out of her bed one morning, put on her clothes and tidied her room, then said goodbye to everyone as if she was going to work in the jewelry shop in town just like she always did, except this time... she left all her belongings including me, neat and tidy behind her. (Jooste 1998, p. 25)

Johannesburg is a city for “the gangsters and gangsters are the ones who run the show up there” ((Jooste 1998, 27). In Johannesburg, gangsters have one “good-supposed-identity of giving stranded migrants a job on a condition that they must keep their mouth shut as planned” (Jooste 1998, p. 27). Gus-Seep whispers to Lily that

[t]hey do just what suits them because the law makes no difference to them any way... The gangsters aren’t fools... “They like a person with brains and it doesn’t matter to them if that person happens to be a girl,

just as long as she is smart. If she can show them she's got a head on her shoulders and knows how they can make even more money... For every twenty cents extra she can put in their pocket there is ten cents for her to keep for herself to do what she likes with it... with money like that in her pocket a girl can dress like a film star... You've never seen anyone parade around like the girls who work for the gangsters do (Jooste 1998, pp. 27-28).

Johannesburg is also the world of indigenous people who have fallen victims to the corrupting influence of apartheid. It is dominated by a large number of European prostitutes, gangsters, and impoverished Afrikaners tradesmen (Van Onselen, Charles, "New Nineveh and New Babylon" (Retrieved Online, January 8, 2015). Against this background, Lily gives her biographical account of all the bad men in her family who have become or who are deteriorating into gangsters.

Jooste also transmits the conditions of mixed-races and poor people in South Africa, and describes how their lives are determined for them by the government and not as God has planned. As Lily's grandmother explains: "[T]he government have given it upon themselves to give them another one specifically made for them which to be candid is not what everybody likes" (Jooste 1998, p. 24). Her account of the outbreak of uncontrollable heat wave which burns black children and the indifference to their suffering on the part of the government is another prime example of racial realism. She remarks,

We're having heatwave. It's so hot the Government says if it gets any hotter they will close down all the schools in case the children's brain

boil... During the day the water boils in the outside pipes. It comes out of the tap like steams and will burn your hand if you aren't careful.so these days it is my job to see that I'm up before the sun, so I can go into the yard and tap off some water from outside the outside tap and get into buckets while it's still cool and we can keep the buckets under the table in the kitchen, and at least have cool water to drink and wash our faces in. Children without shoes have to run up and down on the white lines in the road because that's the only place they won't get their feet burned off and in the middle of the day, we all look for cool places to sit down or lie down (Jooste 1998, p. 72).

In *The Innocence of a Roast Chicken*, Jo-Anne Richards claims that the apartheid government would have crumbled if only the unity and harmony which Sisulu once preached for whites, blacks and coloured peoples had been adhered to (1996, p. 140). She observes:

We have to persuade our white compatriots that the greatest dangers facing them are not the black people, are not the ANC or the South African communist party, not Archbishop Desmond Tutu or Dr. Allan Boesak. Their greatest enemy is apartheid, the National Party, the Conservative Party and all those who still propagate under different names the policy of the white separateness and white supremacy (Richards 1996, 147).

Condemning apartheid, Richards, who is a white writer, recognises all human beings need to be able to exercise their full rights to be able to survive in this world. At best,

human existence is temporal. As Psalms 8:4 points out, “man’s life is consumed and vanishes away...to the grave. What is man that thou should magnify him?” (Psalms 8:4).

Findings and Conclusions

Revealing the hopes and challenges of the post-apartheid South Africa, Gordimer’s and Joost’s works, grounded in racial realism, demonstrate the pain and trauma of apartheid. Reflecting on the complexities of the period in which apartheid was practiced in South Africa, *My Son’s Story* and *Dance with A POOR MAN’S DAUGHTER* critique racism and its attendant harms, sexual harassment, infidelity, social injustices, the withdrawal of human rights, and hatred among people. Both authors offer characters capable of exhibiting a high degree of community spirit and intelligence. But at the same time, bestial behaviours dominate their reasoning. In these stories, human beings, especially the whites, are inherently violent, cruel, and perverted in their ways. The South African Boers isolate the blacks and the mixed races, and deep psychological trauma is inflicted when the apartheid agents throw individuals into prison on Robben Island. Gordimer’s black protagonists fight earnestly and tirelessly against injustice. Sonny constantly challenges the Boers and instills in the black children the need to confront racialism.

In conclusion, *My Son’s Story* and *Dance with A POOR MAN’S DAUGHTER* are literary humanitarian weapons used to free all mankind from apartheid and post-apartheid experiences. These novels also challenge South Africans’ current xenophobic practices of betraying their fellow black men in and outside South Africa. Gordimer and Joost would agree that individuals, non-governmental organisations, corporate bodies, and the government should unite to re-educate South Africans about the need

to abhor violence and work together in love and peace, the need to bury grudges and bitterness and create room for meaningful development in their society.

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A Discourse on Insurgency: Dialectics of Metaphor and Reality in North-Central Nigeria

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Abstract

This study examines the dialectic between the street and the stage that is taking place as Nigeria's mainstream media continues its "balanced" reporting on insurgency. Theatrical metaphors in Olu Obafemi's *Near and Distant Cries* and Ahmed Yerima's *Pari*, demonstrating the impact that Boko Haram has especially had on North-Central Nigeria, not only deconstruct and reconstruct acts of violence; they also reconstruct Nigeria, showing its future rising from the ashes of hatred to embrace love and unity.

Keywords: Insurgency; Metaphor; Reality; Dialectics and Violence

Introduction

Violence is the second nature of man. Few who consider the “blood-soaked years since the dawn of the twentieth century would deny the truth of the Roman proverb “man is a wolf to man.” International wars, civil wars, genocide, terrorism, and their tragic consequences “have scarred the lives of most living people.”¹ The eruption of violence and insurgency in the Arab world, the aftermath of the Arab Spring, have put the governments of many countries on edge, most notably, the Saudi Arabian monarchy. In Africa, insurgency and violence have also been the bane of socio-political and economic advances, giving rise to the “belief that the continent and its populace is hopelessly imprisoned in its past, trapped a vicious cycle of underdevelopment, and held hostage to corrupt institutions.”² Wars, insurgency, terrorism, and political violence (and their violent crime rates) dominate news reels, print media, and social media. In an interview with Lebohang Mojapelo for *The Johannesburg Review*, Wole Soyinka has observed that

[w]e’ve been dealing with fundamentalists of the murderous kind, a real homicidal nature in which people approach what they see is God through the blood of human being...It would mean where I do go next? Where to? Where is the last rational place left in the world, for heaven’s sake? Especially for those we consider close to us in terms of development, history, culture-certainly closer than let’s say Europe-so where does one go?³

Today, Nigeria is facing a traumatic experience. Previously, economic and social

insurgencies in the Niger-Delta region were caused by land and water degradation, oil spills, gas flaring, and unemployment. There was a series of religious riots, inter-ethnic and intra-ethnic crises, and farmers and herdsman clashes. The region was embroiled in skirmishes, violence, and kidnapping until the government of Sheu Musa Ya'rdua/ Goodluck Jonathan Ebele extended amnesty to insurgent group members and their leaders. Recently, the socio-economic and political climates of North-West, North-East and North-Central have again been unsettled. The conflict and violence in North-East Nigeria is generally attributed to Boko Haram, the terrorist group responsible for human rights abuses across Nigeria and the Sahel region.

The military operations addressing the radicalization of the Boko Haram members have affected nearly fifteen million people since 2009.⁴ And the violence has not been restricted to just a region alone. It is spreading. Every Nigerian, at home or in the diaspora, doubts the nation can be saved from collapse. The ongoing terrorist and violent attacks in the North-East have become a nightmare. Skirmishes in the South-East, South-South regions, the North-West and South-West, their horrendous killings, banditry, and kidnappings, have also spread. North-central Nigeria, in particular, has been a spot of endemic insurgent attacks. There have been many reports of violent attacks from Jos Plateau to Niger State and from Benue State to Kogi and Kwara States. Known as the Middle Belt, North-central Nigeria is home to the FCT-Federal Capital Territory, Nigeria's capital city, Abuja, and six other states—Benue, Jos-Plateau, Kogi, Niger, Nassarawa, and Kwara. The region is volatile, being highly susceptible to violent attacks by insurgent militia groups and sectarian crisis. In December 2023, during the Yuletide season, over two hundred

people were killed and several people were injured in Jos-Plateau. Recently, there have been frequent clashes between pastoralist and sedentary farmers. In “Violence is endemic in north-central Nigeria: what communities are doing?” Ojewole observes there had been 1,412 incidents of insurgent conflicts and the gory deaths of 7,399 people had been reported in the last decade in the North-Central region,⁵ which is notable for its artificial geographic demarcation. The fourth largest geo-political zone in Nigeria, this area is home to 14.5 % of entire Nigeria’s population. Predominantly made up of Christians, it houses a sizeable Muslim population, making it the site of incessant religious and ethnic conflicts. The region is also a meeting place of many minorities and ethnic groups who are mostly farmers

Ojewole (2021) also observes that security agents, particularly the Nigerian Army, have not helped to reduce violent crises in the region, despite the government taking measures to deal with various conflicts. When the army was deployed to help in Benue State the tension between herdsmen and farmers was aggravated.⁶ In 2001, it was reported that the military killed over 200 people. When the former governor of Benue State, Samuel Ortom, went to see President Mahamadu Buhari about the horrific clashes that were taking place between the herdsmen and the farmers, the President’s speech and body language, showing bias in favor of the herdsmen, was thought evidence of complicity.⁷

This study considers dialectics of reality and metaphor depicting the impact Boko Haram has had on North-Central Nigeria in Olu Obafemi’s *Near and Distant Cries* and Ahmed Yerima’s *Pari*. Demonstrating the extent of the damage done to our social fabric when lives and communities are brought to abrupt ends, both plays

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evidence the drive shared by our journalists to change Nigeria for the better. Olu Obafemi's *Near and Distant Cries* is a dark satire that "links between power, politics, betrayal and opportunism by mirroring the horrific historic experiences of the mass massacre between sub-nationalities of a state in the quest for space and dominance" (from *Near, Blur*).⁸ Ahmed Yerima's *Pari* dramatizes the experiences of a family caught in the wake of the constant kidnapping of girls and women in the northern region, Nigeria. In *Pari*, one hardly can know what will happen next as insurgents "kidnapped innocent daughters": there were "people, dressed for church or parties... whose bodies were suddenly found laid still, and charred... people utterly unprepared for death" (Author's Note 6).⁹

Violence and Insurgency

Examining what Yerima terms "tremendous socio-political, psychological, and biological importance of aggression and violence in individual and family relations, crime, and war,"¹⁰ this study foregrounds the work of James Gilligan's *Violence: Reflections on a National Epidemic*. As Jennifer Lawson and Bryn King point out, integrated individual, social, political, religious, and cultural factors that cause violence,¹¹ Gilligan observes violence is

a term that refers to an enormously complex, multi-determined range of phenomena. Some of the data concerning violence can only be explained in biological terms, some in psychological ones, and some in social, cultural, historical, and socioeconomic terms.

No theory of violence could be considered adequate except to the

extent that it is capable of integrating all three levels of abstraction.¹²

For Franz Fanon, violence “is an inevitable prelude in the mechanics of political emancipation.”¹³ Gilligan would agree that insurgency, kidnapping, and terrorism have been multi-faceted, integrated phenomena in Nigeria since colonial times. In post-independence political and religious crises, the Nigerian government has always been considered complicit in this violence, especially since the outbreak of Boko Haram, herdsmen and farmers’ crises and incessant kidnappings have attracted the world’s attention. This violence, of course, supports the quest for power and control of it. In Nigeria, government-sponsored youth were encouraged to foment trouble during the election campaigns, as in February, 2023. When later they were abandoned, they created social chaos. As Segun Adekoya remarks, “Boko Haram is an organization of young people living in hopelessness, angry at everything, and forced by government neglect to turn in desperation to violence. A unit of lumpen, it is a product of unconscionable power play by perverse politicians in the north eastern Nigeria, in the same ironic fashion that the American government was implicated in the emergence of the Osama bin Laden phenomenon.”¹⁴

Gbemisola Adeoti observes that the “North is ravaged by Boko Haram insurgents who, in pursuit of religious purism, abhor and violently compel abhorrence of western education and political authorities.”¹⁵ The mentality of religious purity, always incensed with the notion of ‘justice,’ appears as the force that inflames ethno-religious clashes between Christians and Muslims and the clashes between farmers and herders which have increased with the daily reporting from mainstream and social media. Jennifer Lawson and Bryn King observe that Gilligan defines violence a “tragedy for

both victims and victimizers rather than as a moral or legal/rational dilemma.” They find violence, according to Gilligan, is a critical concept that drives the insurgents’ fantasy of power and control resting on perceptions of inferiority inherent in the victimized. As Lawson and King note, Gilligan’s theory of violence has “only one universal cause of violence which is the attempt to achieve or maintain justice (or what the violent person believes is justice).”¹⁶

The tragic notion of Gilligan’s theory is what he conceives of as a “pathology of violence.”¹⁷ Gilligan defines insurgents as people who have become numb, because they have lost their mental and emotional human values to such an extent that they become psychologically distorted. They are individuals for whom the dichotomies between “life and death, this world and the other world, rationality and irrationality, pleasure and pain, reward and punishment, the body and soul, self-preservation and self-destruction” have completely collapsed and are no longer applicable.¹⁸ In this state, the insurgents are delusional and deranged, being what Gilligan calls the “living dead,” because they have already experienced a death of the self. In this state, they become “so intolerable that they begin to hate all forms of life, therefore seek death in revenge (their own or someone else’s).”¹⁹ For the insurgents, death loses its terror. Pushed into a state of ‘equipoise’ they no longer “rationally value others’ lives with the threat of losing their own, rather, they are being pushed to a dream state, when “death is the promise of peace.”²⁰ This is the psychological hiatus that is experienced when fundamentalist suicide bombers dream of a higher form of life in paradise.

The material gains made from this violence also attract foreign and local patrons. It has been reported that the Federal Court of Appeals in the United Arab Emirates

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has sentenced six Nigerians for transferring \$782,000 from Dubai. For violating UAE anti-terrorism laws, two were sentenced to life imprisonment, while four were jailed for ten years each.²¹ Lending credence to the issue of foreign sponsorship, the Governor of Borno State, Professor Babagana Zulum has asserted that foreign interests were revealed sponsoring the Boko Haram terrorist group to recruit children as fighters.²² Apart from unauthorized arms movement through the porous land borders of some countries in the North-east neighboring Nigeria, there is the likelihood of religious terrorist connections with some international terrorist groups like al-Qaida and others in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM), Islamic Jihad Union (IJU), Al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigade (AAMB) and the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU) which may be involved not only in arms dealing and financial support, but also in training and logistics.

Reality and Violence in the Face of Insurgency

Reports from the mainstream media, social media, and NGOs show there is no sign of the violence that has erupted in Nigeria over the past ten years is abating. In Benue State alone, official reports have estimated that 1,878 persons have been killed, 222 have disappeared, and about 750 people have been kidnapped. Those kidnapped include 526 women. Of them 200 (38%) were pregnant, and another 231(44%) were nursing mothers.²³ Viewed with the brutal conflicts ongoing in other parts of Nigeria, this data indicates violence has become a pandemic in the country, aligning it with James Gilligan's reading that violence in the United States is a public health problem.

This pandemic has many dimensions. The victims lack the notion of self-defense to curtail the onslaught of violent attacks from the victimizers as the state adopts

institutional force to protect its people and their properties. However, as Gilligan asserts, “when there is a will to examine address the root causes of violent behavior,” violence can be reduced.²⁴ In some cases, powerful people in government and military have been accused of complicity, bias, and involvement in a crisis, because of ethno-religious differences. While religious fundamentalism has ravaged North-East Nigeria, other parts of the North-West and North-Central have suffered from what has been officially described as “kidnapping,” “armed banditry,” “cattle rustling,” and crises between “herdsmen and farmers.” “Unknown gunmen” characterize the violence in Eastern Nigeria,.

Inter-community violence in Plateau State has resulted in religious and political attacks and counter-attacks without sparing any ethnic group. According to the Human Rights Watch, “[o]n a sunny day in January 2010, in the small town of Kuru Karama, Plateau State, a Muslim mother watched helplessly as some Christians burgeoned and hacked to death her two young children. About the same time, in a nearby village in Fan district, a Fulani pastoralist witnessed farmers from Berom ethnic group—his neighbors—burn his house and kill his uncle. A year later, Berom residents in Fan district witnessed former Fulani neighbors kill Berom women and children in a murderous night raid.²⁵ These ethnics, with their cultural and religious differences, living in peace for years, suddenly engaged in attacks and counter-attacks devoid of logical reason in a climate of hate. Violence in the North-Central Nigeria has become volatile in militia attacks and sectarian crises, banditry, cattle rustling, kidnaping, and constant clashes between pastoralists and sedentary farmers. It is not news that the

Berom people are predominantly Christian and that the clashes between them and the Fulani are fueled by ethno-religious conflicts.

What is news is these crises are not abating. They are becoming more aggravated and assuming more complex dimensions every passing day. In Niger State, Police have arrested about 259 suspects for banditry, kidnapping, culpable homicide, rape, and farmers/herders' conflicts and other crimes on August, 2021. The State Commissioner of Police, Mr. Monday Kuryas claimed that these crimes were committed in 25 local government areas of the state.²⁶ On June 3, 2021 the Niger State government confirmed that 136 students were abducted by the bandits in Niger State from Islamic School in Tegin, Rafi Local Government Area of the State. The safety and the fate of these students did not only worried their parents and the entire nation, but also national lawmakers who was passed a resolution on the floor of the Lower House, a sequel to the adoption of a motion sponsored by Hon. Saidu Abdulahi, on behalf of the Niger State Caucus in the House of Representatives, which called for the deployment of drones and helicopters by security agents to bring about a permanent solution to insecurity in the state.²⁷

What you read on a daily basis in the newspapers and on social media or hear on the air waves is multi-dimensional. Clashes between the Fulani herders and the farmers are ignited by disagreements over the use of farmlands, grazing areas and water; as well, the effects of climate change that are degrading the land with unfavorable conditions for both farmers and herders compounds these conflicts.²⁸ The Fulani are often said to be armed with “dangerous weapons, ostensibly to protect their livestock.”²⁹ They are also alleged to have committed other crimes, apart from

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clashes with farmers—to be involved in kidnapping, armed robberies, and rape. Citing the Global Terrorism Index (GTI), Odunlami reports in 2014 alone, more than 1,200 lives were lost in Nigeria in a crisis involving herders, making the Fulani the world’s fourth deadliest group.”³⁰ Here, it is important to note that the primary intent of the media reporting and the efforts of NGOs is to reduce violent attacks in Nigeria, especially in its North-central region. The mass media’s stories, however, have also aggravated ethno-religious conflicts in Nigeria. Consequently, Communication scholars like Betus et al., (2020) and Ghazi-Tehrani and Keans (2020) have started to question whether the news is too selective, even biased, as to which attacks are called terrorism and banditry and which are not.³¹

No writer, of course, is impervious to the events happening around them. The Yoruba axiom holds that ‘bí etí ò bá gbó, yìngìn, inú ò lè bàjé,’—that is, bad news distends one’s sullen emotional vitiation. Olu Obafemi says, “my sojourn at the National Institute [sic], Kuru, at tail end of the hot rage of conflicts and violence, and the clashes among the Hausa/Fulani and the Beron, impinged on my creative consciousness.”³² Ahmed Yerima admits

I thought I could distance myself from the fear and pain of their helplessness...I was too far away from their story, I kept reassuring myself...until I found out that one of them, was...Awa Yerima...I sighed, and felt a deep compulsion to write this one.³³

Dialectics of Reality and Metaphors of Insurgency

Olu Obafemi’s *Near and Distant Cries* is about ethnocentric conflict and religious
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hatred between the Hausa/Fulani and other groups, especially the Berom people in the North-central region of the Plateau State in Nigeria. A religious implosion sets the dramatic action in motion in a market setting as the villagers are discussing constant insurgent attacks and their consequences, not only on people and communities, but also on the state with ethno-religious sentiment. They talk about recent attacks in Razat, where they rape and kidnap girls and some of their mothers on their way to or from streams. No one is spared: school children, market men and women, even traditional leaders. It is here that we first meet Wang who joins the villagers at the market, feigning innocence and sympathy for the victims of violent attacks long before we know him as an insurgent spy and a virulent weapon of disorder.

Obafemi uses the device of a play-within-a play to construct *Near and Distant Cries*' meta-action. A storyteller, Nenrot is a male victim of the insurgency who stays with Senator Panshuk. Fa'izah, another storyteller, is a female victim whom Panshuk desires. Each has a tale to share with the audience. Gilligan would agree that Obafemi resolves the binary contradictions of victims and their victimizers, achieving "justice" by engaging audiences in a rational investigation of violence. Brechtian alienation draws audience members "into solving conflicts between the oppressor and the oppressed."³⁴ The internecine conflict between two ethno-religious different communities that had been living in peace over the years is witnessed in the gory violence enacted on stage. First, attacks interrupt a festive ceremony for young girls who are experiencing a rite of passage, a traditional coming-of-age ceremony for the Berom in which feminine consciousness transitions to womanhood. Because women are regarded as the mothers of all, it is said, train a woman to have a nation. Not

only does Fa'izah have her dream of going to college truncated, her friends Alheri, Zainabu, Carolina, Remi and Fatimah are also assaulted. Carolina is hacked down before her very eyes, because “ they said she refused to say “Allahu akbar” and she was not found “a virgin.”³⁵ Then, counter-attacks by the Berom people against the Hausa/Fulani community from which Nenrot hails follow. They happen during a busy market day when a bomb is detonated. Many people die. The insurgents “strangle those [sic] still alive and burn down huts with children inside.”³⁶

Reconstructed, these social and ethno-religious realities inform the future, reconfiguring the insurgents in typological sequences that alienate the audience. Watching the play, we note the involvement of politicians who provide political will, funding, and logistics to the insurgents. Alhaji and Senator Ibrahim use Wang to spearhead their nefarious activities. Ama's anger summons Scrama-Uvu, the goddess of womanhood, to place curse on the government officials who enrich themselves at others' expense. She says, “I swear, they will not live to enjoy the blood money that they have made through the false search of our children.”³⁷

Senator Panshuk also is culpable. He does not only offer false promises to the victims of violence; he also turns them into subjects of ridicule. Fa'izah turns into his sexual object, becoming a mere toy. Panshuk pays for his crimes when his daughter, Pang falls victim to violent attacks of cannibalistic insurgents. At the end of the play, Nenrot and Fa'izah address the audience (and the actors who participated in the theatrical performance), calling all the insurgents to surrender their weapons of destruction. Finally embodying the principle of justice, Wang comes on stage to

lead others, turning in his weapon and ammunition to embrace peace and love against hatred and violence to “let humanity triumph.”³⁸

Ahmed Yerima’s *Pari* encapsulates the experience of the Chibok girls who were kidnapped in 2014 as a plague ravaged the North-eastern region of Nigeria. Set in a pandemic, the opening scene introduces an atmosphere of psycho-social and religious confusion in which paranoid individuals and bigoted political powers make claims and counter-claims. This situation is epitomized by Ama throughout the play. Her daughter, Hyelapari whose abbreviation to Pari is the play’s eponymous protagonist who represents the abducted two hundred and seventy-six girls from Government Girls Secondary School, Chibok, in Borno State, by the members of the Jama’atu Ahlis Sunna Lidda’awati wal-Jihad, known as Boko Haram. Ama discards her Christianity, believing that, Jesus and Jehovah have abandoned her by allowing insurgents who are adherents of Prophet Mohammed to deprive her of the only child. In protest, she adopts Islam as her new religion. When Tada, her husband, finds her wearing a black hijab, an Islamic symbol of piety and offering Islamic supplications; he asks, “What if people hear about this? They will jeer!”³⁹ Her response finds his query ridiculous. She does not worry what others think about her actions. She says “I don’t care... I don’t care anymore.”⁴⁰

Ama believes if the God of the insurgents is superior and responsible for helping the abductors keep her only daughter, then she needs to speak the language their God understands, hoping he will help her free her daughter. She is enveloped in fear, anxiety, hope, despair and desperation. Compounding the matter, distorted images in her dreams heighten the already tense atmosphere, driving her to the edge

of psychosis. Tada finds solace in drinking locally brewed liquor and a maid who becomes an expectant mother. This exacerbates Ama's pain and compounds her physical and mental distress.

Contracted by Kwacheche, Shaagu, a traditionalist, helps Ama penetrate her inky darkness. Presented with a burden of faith, Ama is unsure how she will restore her hope but the challenge thrown at her by Shaagu himself, convinces her she must trust him. "Why then has He not listened to your cries?" Shaagu asks her. "Why have you not seen your daughter in two years? Your daughter whom I say shall return soon."⁴¹ Pari's full name, Hyelapari, means "May the gods cover my daughter." In due course, Pari is brought home by the Local Government Chairman, Kalagu, but she is a shadow of a former adorable princess.

Gilligan observes that those who commit acts of brutal violence, like the bandits and terrorists in most countries in Africa, and especially in Nigeria, are the "living dead."⁴² Yerima consigns the "living dead" in *Pari* to a bottomless pit of shame. But, as fate would have it, Ibrahim, the terrorist who married Pari, is redeemed. Looking for his wife, he arrives at the moment Tada is also in need of assistance, because he has used the money to purchase drugs for Pari to pay for his son's grave. Ibrahim, who finds Tada trapped in a deep gutter, is god-sent. He knows the difference between love and hatred and desires to embrace the former. Tada himself has been a victim of poverty and hunger. Unable to provide food and medicine for his mother, he joined a terrorist group. In Tada's story, murder is the ultimate act of self-defense against the total annihilation of the self: in his acts of violence there was a temporary sense of power, potency, independence, and even a shallow esteem. As Wole Soyinka says, *198 Vol. 17.2 (March 2025)*

people who are like Ibrahim “see God through the blood of human beings.”⁴³ Ibrahim, however, wants his wife and his surviving twin son, who love him in return. He calls Tada, father and Ama, mother. Tada, equally shows compassion, not vengeance, unlike his wife who would have stabbed Ibrahim in his sleep, if Tada and Pari had not intervened.

In the end, Ibrahim, a rapist and a terrorist, transforms to better his life and that of his family. To escape the long arm of law, he changes his name to Abraham and his religion to Christianity. When he and his family settle down in Darak, Tada blesses their union and offers them prayers. He tells Ibrahim, “[S]ow love in your heart and your new family. Pray together, even pray for this country you have tried so much to destroy.”⁴⁴ The family’s group hug, a tableau of love and unity, offers its audience living in a country threatened with disintegration a powerful and hopeful metaphor.

Conclusion

Dialectics of reality and theatrical metaphor in Olu Obafemi’s *Near and Distant Cries*, and Ahmed Yerima’s *Pari* consider and critique the insurgency in Nigeria and, by extension, Nigeria itself. Deconstructing and reconstructing acts of violence, conflict in both these dramas demonstrates the damage done to the social fabric. Showing how Boko Haram has affected the entire northern region, and especially, North-central Nigeria, Olu Obafemi and Ahmed Yerima blame the insurgents and the leaders in government at all levels that have been complicit in making insurgency and terrorism possible. They also insist that postcolonial Nigeria’s socio-ethno-religious reconstruction is underway. On stage, their motifs and metaphors reconstruct Nigeria,

showing its future rising from the ashes of hatred to embrace love and unity as in the street, our mainstream media continues its vigorous pursuit of “truth” and “balanced” reporting without slant or bias.

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In Search of the Self: Self-Actualisation in Sudha Murty's *The Mother I Never Knew*

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Abstract

Sudha Murty is an acclaimed contemporary writer known for her realistic novels that deal with the inner emotions of individuals and the socio-psychological problems that modern Indian women face. However, Murty's writing is not limited to the issues of women. In *The Mother I Never Knew*, two stories about mother-son relationships feature male protagonists and explore the complexities of men's self-perception and

belonging, This paper examines Venkatesh's and Mukesh's self-realizations before considering the decisions their mothers made in order to be considered socially acceptable.

Keywords: Self, Identity, Self-actualisation, Sudha Murty, Self-realisation

Introduction

Living, breathing examples of the historical, sociocultural, and political struggles that women have to deal with day-to-day, Indian women writers vividly record traditional influences and their contradictions, shedding light on the complexities of Indian society:

Indians are superstitious, in general. They believe in the caste system, particularly in the fixation of marriages. Horoscopes, propitious dark times, rituals, practices, conventions, and religious beliefs play their part in Indian's everyday lives. Sudha Murty immaculately brings out inconsistencies in the lives of Indians in all her work. (Vaswani, 111)

One of the most prominent and prosperous female writers of the modern age, Sudha Murty specializes in realistically depicting the socio-psychological problems that modern Indian women face. As Nishtha Vaswani says, "Sudha Murty illustrates various kinds of issues in her write-ups, and her writings are not limited to the issues of women alone. Her writing demonstrates a marked change to feminine writing in

the overall viewpoint.” (110). Sandhyasree Murari also observes

Sudha Murty’s work is regarded as a watershed moment in contemporary English literature. Her writing covers various topics, including education, religion, culture, family relationships, societal attitudes, economic situations, feminist issues, and more. Her writing criticises society by depicting Indian women in all phases of life, whether political, social, educational, or home, and as a prolific writer, she links all parts of society. (3977)

For Murty, storytelling is a powerful medium for exploring the complexities of self-perception and belonging. Narrative conflict, of course, is how the self grows and transforms. The underlying forces an individual battles against are shaped by historical, sociopolitical, and psychological factors that take on philosophical forms in the novel. These interactions may be painful or advantageous as the self develops positively or negatively through a series of multi-layered experiences that lead to self-actualisation or self-realisation. As the self becomes a more idealised version of itself, able to lead and find harmony with other selves, situations, and nature, it acquires a new and dynamic vision, a critical grasp of its strengths and limitations, and the ability to adjust itself.

According to Babu,

[s]elf-realization is the highest level of human existence. It involves the supreme development and use of all the qualities and capacities

of the protagonist, as well as the realization of all the potentialities of the protagonist. It is concerned with the ‘self’ and the individual subjective experiences. It deals with the individual’s perception of oneself, immediate experiences, and one’s personal view of the world. Man’s positive nature, his push towards growth, and self-actualization are emphasized. (3775)

Other contemporary Indian writers also explore themes of self-discovery. Upamanyu Chatterjee, for example, introduces the concept of self-correction in his works. His stories rest on a comprehensible narrative pattern in which his heroes recognise their errors. His protagonists behave irrationally and carelessly and ultimately make mistakes. For Chatterjee, Nirvana means Self-actualisation. As Sangeeta points out, “[t]he crux of Upamanyu Chatterjee novels is their heroes’ quest of self-realisation. Self-realisation leads them to choose the right path of self-correction.” (1098). The characters in his novels are also intelligent. They acknowledge and learn from their mistakes. Murty’s characters also embark on journeys of self-realisation that lead them on paths of self-correction to self-knowledge.

In Murty’s *The Mother I Never Knew*, there are two distinct but comparable stories featuring male protagonists. After learning the truth about his family, Venkatesh, the protagonist of the first story, sets out to find his stepmother, whom his father has abandoned. Despite all the obstacles and his family’s opposition, he persists and accomplishes his objective. His willingness to help his stepmother demonstrates his kindness and sense of duty. Both these qualities his father failed to embody:

Appa failed in his duty towards them. We can't undo the past, but maybe we can make their lives a little easier, especially since we have so much wealth. There's no legal proof of their wedding; there's only a newspaper cutting of the accident and Appa's picture, but there is a divine court of law above us where our souls are the witnesses. (Murty, 81-82)

In India, sons and daughters typically shoulder their father's responsibilities. Venkatesh believes that continuing his father's legacy will define him as a person. His search and acts of generosity mark his identity. He is taken aback when his daughter can relate to his journey and offer assistance. He feels delighted when Gauri chooses to donate money. When Anna asks, "Why did you do this, Gauri?", Gauri replies, "That's so easy, Anna. You want to pay back a debt that your father owes somebody. I want to pay back a debt that my father owes too" (86). As Venkatesh comes to terms with the fact that he must care for his mother after his father has abandoned her, he achieves the highest level of self-actualisation possible.

Mukesh, the protagonist of the second story, also embarks on a journey to search for his biological mother to understand who he is. He struggles to define himself, because he needs to strike balance in his relationship with his birth mother with a relationship with the mother who raised him. Encountering the three mothers who shaped his life from his birth to his present highlights the obstacles he encounters in his quest for identity. Meeting his biological mother, Mukesh finds he has a purpose. Acknowledging her uneasiness, he pledges to keep his mother's secret from the public. Recognising his individuality, he achieves self-actualisation when he says, "I

am not upset with you, Ma'am. I am thankful that you gave me away to Rupinder, who gave me to Sumati. My curiosity to see my biological mother brought me here. I promise you that this secret will remain with me" (146). In this moment, Mukesh fully embraces his past and expresses gratitude instead of resentment, demonstrating emotional growth and a deep sense of acceptance. His character also develops when he decides not to search for his father. We are told that "Mukesh never went in search of his biological father. There was no need any more. He must have settled somewhere in India with his children, too. There was no place for Mukesh in his biological parents' lives" (147).

At the end of his quest, Mukesh understands that his biological parents are not in need of him and that searching for them would be an undertaking made in vain. He also understands the significance and importance of his mother who raised him. Murty's narrator points out, "Now Mukesh realised how much he missed his Amma. She knew him and loved him more than anyone else in the world. He was not a Jat or a Sardar. He was a Brahmin from south India. He knew who he was now" (147). Having learned whose son he really is, Mukesh accepts his identity and moves on happily with his family.

Women in *The Mother I Never Knew*

In *The Mother I Never Knew*, Murty also presents two types of modern women. The first is embodied by Nirmala, the wealthy Zamindar's daughter, is taken to a desolate farmhouse where she gives birth to a child conceived during a premarital affair. Keeping her child a secret, she abandons the baby and later marries a wealthy

man. Her life remains easy and pleasant, allowing her to erase the incident from her memory. She hides and makes her past disappear as if it never occurred. After many years, she meets Mukesh, the son whom she abandoned, and is forced to confront the past she chose to forget. The narrator carefully details Nirmala's reaction to their emotional reunion:

Mukesh gathered his courage and finally asked, 'Ma'am, do you remember Rupinder?' Suddenly, Nirmala's eyes widened, and her face became pale. She went out of the room to check if anybody was listening.

Then she came back into the living room and closed the door. (145)

Nirmala takes care that no one nearby can reveal her secret. Her determination to keep the truth hidden signals the importance she ascribes to being the Minister's wife. Mukesh, being an ethical individual, enables Nirmala to maintain her social ambitions.

The second type is represented by Bhagavathi, who was abandoned by her mother-in-law and husband while she was pregnant with Venkatesh. Her mother-in-law believes a neighbour's opinion and leaves her to suffer alone. Bhagavathi lives a poverty-filled life. This is revealed to Murty's readers when Venkatesh says, "I haven't yet told Shankar and Bhagavva about my findings. However, I know that they live in extreme poverty, and I want to help them. That's the least I can do" (80). Unlike Nirmala, Bhagavathi did not abandon her child but raised him without her family's support. To do so, she migrates to a new place where no one knows about her past. As Babu points out, "[w]omen struggle to get their freedom while living along

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with other members of society. They are not directed by others. They themselves struggle hard to lead a life of their own and they are conscious of their themselves. This consciousness leads them towards the realisation of their autonomous selves” (Babu 3777).

Nirmala and Bhagavathi in *The Mother I Never Knew* demonstrate the different the different philosophies of life held by a wealthy woman and a poor woman. Murty’s Anupama, a character from *Mahaswetha*, is also like Bhagavathi. Anupama was also compelled to leave her house—because of her leukoderma, an incurable skin disorder. The social pressure from Bhagavathi’s and Anupama’s mothers-in-laws and their decisions to live without a man in their lives are other similarities. Both characters present a compelling argument for contemporary women, contending it is possible to be capable, strong, and independent while living in a patriarchal society.

Another eminent Indian woman writer, Shashi Deshpande, like Murty, also highlights women’s struggles in contemporary India. Her protagonists too are caught in traditional traps of their culture. They also search for self-actualization and genuine lives. Like Murty’s, Deshpande novels offer a window into Indian women’s minds. In *The Binding Vine*, for example, each character’s path transmits the broader themes of women reclaiming their identities, pursuing their aspirations, and defying conventional norms. Vara Prasad notes

The Binding Vine focuses on the struggle of the inner mind and self of shackled women characters. Urmila, the protagonist and a college lecturer by profession, is a typically feminine voice who struggles through her

gloomy domestic atmosphere, not subduing but voicing and trying to sort out things for herself and for other women also, be they her mother-in-law Mira or the rape victim Kalpana in the novel. (Prasad, 534)

As well as dispelling misconceptions, Murty's depictions of women emphasize the value of education, self-awareness, and pursuing one's goals to achieve genuine empowerment. *The Mother I Never Knew* is a powerful tribute to the resilience and perseverance of women in the face of adversity, inspiring readers to question gender stereotypes and advance equality and promote women's freedom.

People's identities are deeply ingrained in the culture in which they are raised, and any disconnection from this culture can lead to what is known as socio-psychological distress. Identity is, therefore, a fluid concept that is subject to change and capable of balancing several aspects in a harmonious relationship. When individuals struggle to reconcile their sense of self with external influences, they may experience an identity crisis. Joshi explains, "Crises of identity arise when one cannot form positive self-image of oneself either individually or in relation to the society. And this dilemma of search for self and identity has been dealt with assiduously by the contemporary modern writers in their writings" (364).

As Murty knows, literature is a powerful medium for exploring and addressing the complexities of identity and offering insights into men's and women's struggles with self-perception and belonging. Murty examines male and female characters in her novels. It is not just women who suffer in this modern world. Men and women face equal hardships and both sexes struggle throughout their lives. In *The Mother*

I Never Knew, Venkatesh, a banker, and Mukesh, a young man, experience similar situations. For them, the search for identity is a process of discovering past truths. When these characters reach their zeniths, they both experience psycho-social fulfilments. For both, it is evident that literature mirrors life. In their stories, decisions about a character's fate is determined by his or her circumstances, location, and social standing. But from Nirmala and Bhagavathi, we learn that women consistently tend to accept life's realities more quickly than men do.

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FILM REVIEW

Nostalgia Gets the Blues: Walter Hill's *Crossroads* and the Critique of Historical Amnesia

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Many popular films of the 1980s reflected the Reaganite optimism-saturated nostalgia that to “Make America Great Again” required returning to the power politics of the past (Dwyer 1-2).¹ That past, however, had to remain uncomplicated: “With Reagan, the nation settled comfortably into the habit of hearing feel-good speeches, which cast leaders as likeable, homespun Americans, and which avoided confronting directly the nation’s most serious and pervasive problems” (Forster 8). Films like *Back to the Future* (1985) and *Peggy Sue Got Married* (1986) explicitly reinforced this message

1. It was the Reagan-Bush campaign of 1980 that first used the slogan “Make America Great Again” (Coussens 20). Svetlana Boym referred to this sentiment of paving a nation’s future by encouraging a cultural and political turn to the past as “restorative nostalgia,” a collective desire to restore the past in the present, which is “characteristic of the most extreme cases of contemporary nationalism fed on right-wing popular culture” (43).

by transporting their protagonists out of the dirty and complicated 1980s into the cleaner and simpler 1950s before dumping them back in the present, refreshed by their encounter with the past. Other popular productions of the mid-1980s tapped into motifs and themes of American exceptionalism: *Top Gun* (1986) celebrated the return of America's military to global dominance and works like *Romancing the Stone* (1984) offered a form reminiscent of the 1930s serials, which implied frontier capitalism had returned to America. These works, along with others, extended the idea that America's yesterday had returned today, echoing the romantic tones of the pioneer spirit embodied in the American Western. While wagons, six-shooters and the casual genocidal tendencies of a John Ford picture of the 1930s were absent, these features nonetheless reinforced the idea of American exceptionalism while simultaneously discouraging any serious interrogation of the nation's problematic history.²

Walter Hill's *Crossroads* (1986) challenges that nostalgic and imperialist impulse, electing instead to employ popular culture to confront America's deepest problems.³⁴ Rather than ignoring America's contentious past, Hill turns toward it, using a journey into the American South to discover the roots of blues music and save a soul from hell as a vehicle to interrogate the intersectional issues of race and class. Eugene

2. There are notable exceptions such as Stanley Kubrick's *Full Metal Jacket* (1987), which critiques the jingoism of films like *First Blood: Part II* (1985), or Oliver Stone's *Wall Street* (1987), which responds to the capitalism can-do attitude of works like *The Secret of My Success* (1987), another Michael J. Fox vehicle.

3. Walter Hill, director of the critically acclaimed *The Long Riders* (1980) and the commercially successful *48 Hrs.* (1982), has worked on action films for more than fifty years. Though his work has been lauded, most recently for his direction on the HBO series *Deadwood* (2004-06), many of his projects, particularly those of the mid-1980s through the early 2000s "have been dismiss[ed] . . . as mere entertainment," leaving Hill's name largely out of the directorial spotlight (Lacher; Brown). Nonetheless, his screenwriting for the *Alien* franchise and the ubiquity of his life's work position Hill as a significant director who has perhaps been too often forgotten.

4. I do not want to confuse my reference to imperialism with Renato Rosaldo's idea of imperialist nostalgia, which he describes as the imperialist's tendency to romanticize the loss of those whom the imperialist's policies annihilated, as is the case with the idea of the "noble savage" in articulated in American Westerns (107-08).

Martone (Ralph Macchio), a Julliard trained guitar prodigy in the classics, drawn to the mystique of Mississippi blues guitar legend Robert Johnson's work, wants to unearth one of the latter's missing songs and record it. Eugene makes a deal with Willie Brown (Joe Seneca), an old friend of the deceased blues legend, who promises to give him the secret song, if he springs Willie from his New York nursing home and takes him back to Mississippi to settle "some business." Eugene agrees, though he only later discovers that Willie's business involves winning back the soul he sold to the devil in exchange for blues harmonica lessons. Thus, they plot their way toward redemption.

The film had a poor box office performance, and the public largely ignored it because they saw it as derivative of John G. Avildsen's 1984 *The Karate Kid* (Hink). Both films were released by Columbia Pictures, featured a protagonist played by Macchio, and in both cases his character arc follows a path from an arrogant, misguided adolescent to a maturing young man saved by the lessons of an elderly mentor. Roger Ebert's review proclaimed that *Crossroads* "borrows . . . freely . . . [and] obviously, from Macchio's movie 'The Karate Kid'." Jason Hink's review of the film's Blu-Ray release is titled 'Crossroads' (1986): No Karate, Kids—Just the Evil Blues'" reinforced the two films' entanglement thirty years later, suggesting that many people saw no need for a first look, if they had watched *The Karate Kid*.

On second look, however, the genius of *Crossroads* is that what appears as mimicry is in fact a subtle parody that affects an anti-nostalgic turn. The film presents familiar motifs from *The Karate Kid*, and reinforces the link with Macchio's casting, but then

employs a conscious sense of historical problematics.⁵ While *Crossroads* can stand on its own as a “fresh” take on old forms, as Ebert suggested, its force, I contend, lies in its unique dialogue with Avildsen’s movie. This dialogue tacitly critiques the earlier film’s Reaganite nostalgic gloss by offering a new proposition: America’s greatness lies in its ability to engage with and learn from past transgressions, not to ignore or sidestep them. To that end, this relatively obscure film is worth watching as part of a larger conversation concerning history and America’s future during a political period dated forty years ago, a future that bears striking similarities to the present, from the White House to *Cobra Kai* (2018-25), the Netflix reboot of *The Karate Kid*.

Crossroads’ most obvious critique is directed toward the 1980s nostalgia for the American frontier, an idea that permeates *The Karate Kid*.⁶ While Avildsen’s film remains firmly set in the present, it presents the themes of a romanticized past and references to the pioneer spirit. The film opens with broad panoramic shots of an adolescent Daniel LaRusso (Macchio) traveling with his mother (Randee Heller) from New Jersey to Los Angeles as she heads for a career opportunity in computers. This opening sequence, in a nutshell, captures the American expansion Westward, as Daniel’s mother carries them west in a well-worn station wagon and quick shots of the American plains and a lingering pan of Monument Valley, Arizona (a staple in John Ford’s films), reinforces the idea that the film is a new Western. The rest of the film offers numerous images of the Western sun, a boundless ocean, bustling

5. *Crossroads*’ dialogic engagement with *The Karate Kid* is more metafictional and ironic than nostalgic. As Linda Hutcheon points out, postmodern texts often wear a nostalgic mask to critique the past (177-78). For more, see her work “Irony, Nostalgia, and the Postmodern.”

6. As Christopher Lasch points out, “American nostalgia, like the vision of irresistible and unlimited American expansion, centered on the West, the rapid settlement of which appeared to dramatize the march of civilization” (93).

interstates and booming businesses, reminding the audience to be thankful that the manifest destiny is alive and well.

Hill however challenges this Western motif: this is not a journey forward propelled by a romantic vision of the past, but a journey backward into the reality of history. The booming West of Avildsen's work is replaced by a Southern one in Hill's. Vacant houses, rundown bars, pawnshops and a nearly vacant Highway 61, The Blues Highway, contrast sharply with the bustle of California. Mississippi is the place, as Willie tells Eugene, "where it all started." Place matters, but it is not a frontier to be conquered; rather it is a setting that has born witness to those who are conquered. The "where" informs the "it." The cotton fields and ramshackle buildings retain the sin and decay of slavery and a Jim Crow South, a sin that birthed the blues.

Rather than Eugene and Willie putting the past behind therefore, the past surrounds them. The fraught and tragic history of American racism is not dead, but fully alive, as Eugene learns midway through their journey. The film reminds the audience that racism is not some antiquated system expunged from America, but a reality in the present. Shortly after arriving in Mississippi, indeed, Willie and Eugene busk outside a bar and motel to earn money for their travel farther south, when they are approached by Lloyd (Dennis Lipscomb), the establishment's proprietor, who tells them to "get the hell off [his] property" and calls Willie by a racial epithet. As they are walking away Eugene comments: "I didn't know that kind of thing still went on," to which Willie replies "Well, now you are starting to learn some deep blues."

This statement directly challenges *The Karate Kid's* simplified, daresay romantic, approach to racism. Whereas *Crossroads* engages racism as a present problem arising

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from past transgressions, Avildsen's 1984 production dismisses it with one quick swing of Mr. Miyagi's hand (Pat Morita). He can take care of white bigots himself, and bootstrap through the pain. The film, quite literally, buries historical racism in an old shoe box. Along with Miyagi's WWII medals are photos of his wife and newspaper clippings about the Japanese internment camp where she was held while he honorably served in the U.S. Army. Though Daniel briefly acknowledges this past, he moves on. The film thus reinforces the idea that Mr. Miyagi can take care of white privilege himself, and, moreover, that even systematic racism and unjust incarceration can be beneficial. After all, along with the painful memories of his wife, are Miyagi's medals and signs of his valor that made America great.

Unlike Miyagi, Willie confronts the whitewashing of history. Eugene, like many others in Reagan's America, selects the past he wants for his purposes and ignores the rest. He wants to record Robert Johnson's lost song as his "introduction to the blues scene" and has no real awareness of the history of the blues or the systematic repression that grounded the lyrics. Willie identifies this problem and points out Eugene is "just one more white boy ripping off our music." Unlike Miyagi, who never forces Daniel to confront the historical grounds of karate or the real prejudices against Asian Americans, Willie's call-out exposes Eugene's white privilege and signals the historical injustice of cultural appropriation.

Crossroads sends a different message than many films of the Reagan years: the past, as it was and remains, ought not be hidden behind a veil of nostalgia. As Willie says to one corrupt Mississippi sheriff, "Things seem to have changed in this county.

Then again, they kind of seem the same, don't they?." Although *Crossroads*' critical

bite does not rise to the level of *12 Years a Slave* (2013) or *Dear White People* (2017), it does invite questions that can help begin the process of rending America's nostalgic veil to engage with the sins of the past.

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FILM REVIEW

Unveiling the Queer Subtext in the Early Malayalam Movie: *Deshadanakilli Karayarila (Migratory Birds Do Not Cry)*

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The final judgment on the art may be made centuries later; perhaps it demands the birth of a whole new generation to understand and appreciate the complete meaning of the product. (P. Padmarajan)

Deshadanakili Karayarila (Migratory Birds Do Not Cry) is a 1986 Malayalam movie set in Kerala and directed by P. Padmarajan,¹ a renowned filmmaker whose movies are

1. Padmarajan is a well-known Malayalam filmmaker from India who has carved an innovative mode of storytelling with a nuanced indulgence into human emotions. His movies frequently incorporate elements of realism blended with a subjective narrative style. It is said that no two films of Padmarajan are alike. His distinguished oeuvre covers the themes of love, desire, female agency, individualism and social commentary, as seen in films such as *Moonnam Pakkam* (1988), *Kallan Pavithran* (1981), *Thoovanathumbikal* (1987) and *Njan Gandharvan* (1991).

considered cult classics of the Indian film industry and are renowned for their plots exploring unconventional narratives and challenging the status quo. During the first half of the 20th-century, Kerala, a state in India known for its rich cultural heritage and history of social reformation, adhered to a post-colonial wave of modernization.² However, the idea of sexuality and gender was predominantly confined to a nuclear family structure that was coherent in a strict monogamous heterosexual framework.³ When this film featuring homosexual desire was released there, it turned out to be a box-office failure, but it later gained popularity through television broadcasts and is now recognized as one of the first movies dealing with queer themes.

Deshadanakili Karayarila predominantly revolves around four characters and their intricate relationships with each other. Nimmy and Sally (Karthika and Shari) are high school students who have estranged relationships with their parents. The film begins with a distant shot of them stepping down the stairs, hand in hand, directed towards the camera, indicating their deep bond. Devika (Urvashi) is the newly-assigned teacher who arrives in their life and breaches their personal heaven. Harishankar (Mohanlal), the prominent male character, is instead introduced mid-way through the plot only to become the object of Nimmy's infatuation and eventually Devika's fiancé. Among all the relationships portrayed in the film, Nimmy's and Sally's bond remains the strongest as it is based on emotional depth. Throughout *Deshadanakili Karayarila*, the two girls are indeed largely seen together, remain inseparable and guard the safe world built around their relationship. When the latter is scrutinized and negated by societal and institutional norms, Sally assures Nimmy that they will

2. See *There Comes Papa*, by G. Arumina.

3. See *Shifting Paradigms: Gender and Sexuality Debates in Kerala* by Muraleedharan Tharayil.

eventually reach a “safe place,” a promise that provides solace and comfort to the latter. As Sara Ahmed affirms in *The Promise of Happiness* (2010), “happy objects are those objects that affect us in the best way” (23). The possibility of a “safe place” where the two characters are liberated into each other’s company brings them joy and makes them happy objects for each other. Furthermore, the nature of the couple’s relationship in the film reflects Winch’s concept of *womance*,⁴ an affectionate and highly sentimentalized companionship between two or more women—a trope that is frequently appropriated through the queer lens.

On the other hand, Nimmy’s attraction to Harishankar is an explicit portrayal of heterosexual desire that adds complexity to the girl’s identity. The man arrives as an uninvited guest in the couple’s life, and Nimmy develops a sudden infatuation with him, the typical heartthrob obsession of a teenager with an elderly man. Harishankar, at one point, even confronts these dynamics by stating that it is an adolescent fantasy that she will eventually move on.

The film’s portrayal of the relationship between Nimmy and Sally is peculiar, but the embedded homosexual nature of their relationship is not depicted explicitly. A close reading of the film’s multiple layers can however unveil the overt friendship and the embedded queer intimacy between the two girls. As Navaneetha Mookil affirms, indeed, *Deshadanakilli Karayarilla* highlights the spatialization of same-sex desire in the public sphere “by placing them (Nimmy and Sally) in spaces that are often marked cinematically as the space of the couple, like the beach, the park or even

4. The concept of womance is explored also in films such as Curtis Hanson’s *In Her Shoes* (2005), Michael McCullers’ *Baby Mama* (2008), Diane English’s *The Women* (2008) and Gary Winick’s *Bride Wars* (2009).

the merry-go-round and deploying a body language that marks a sense of physical intimacy; this song gives them the position of a couple in the film” (18).

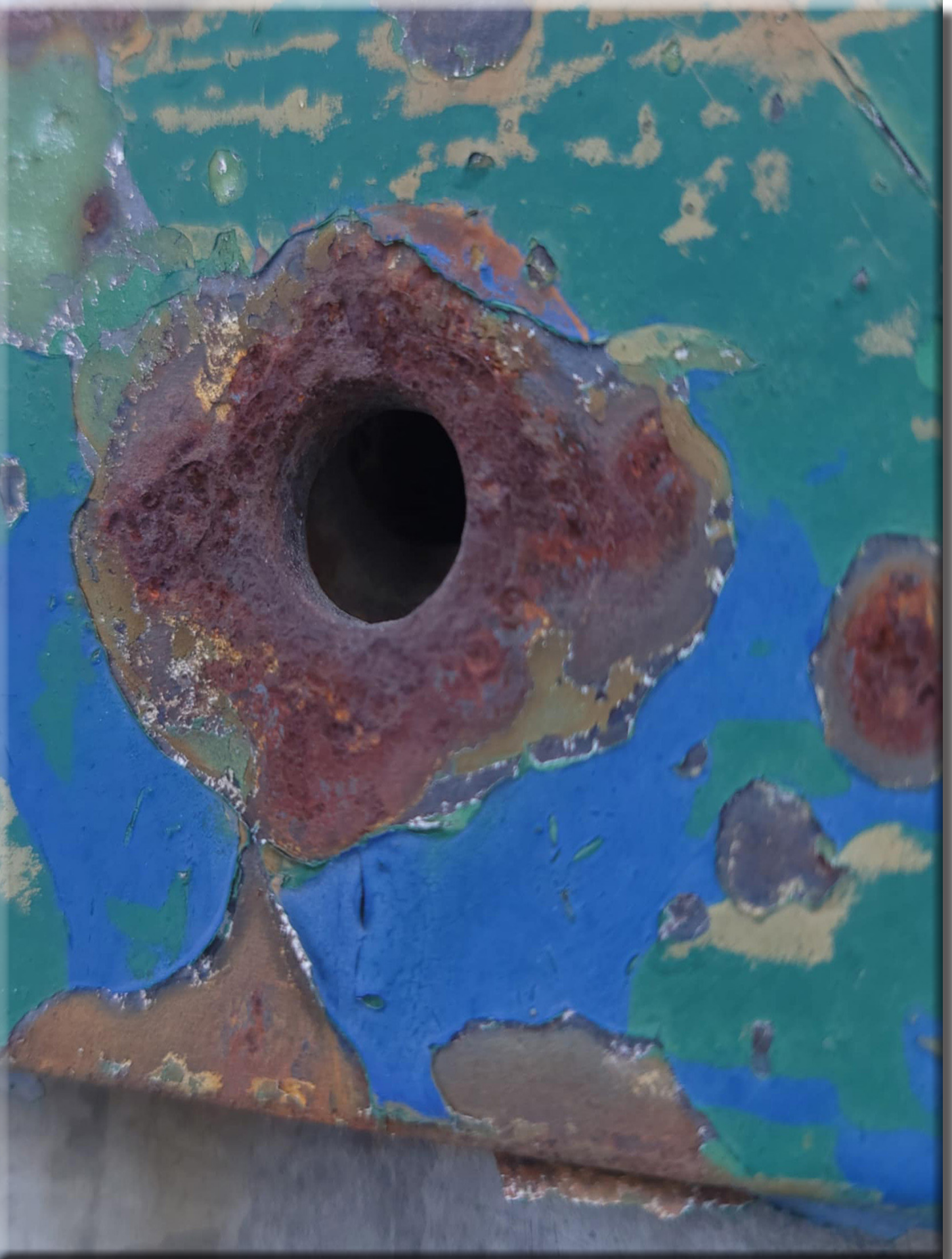
Previously, a similar theme was developed in the 1978 film *Randu Pennugal* (Two Women), which is an adaptation of the novel that depicts a profoundly romantic and sexual relationship between two women. However, as Muraleedharan Tharayil states, “When popular film-maker Mohanan attempted a screen adaptation of the novel *Randu Penkutikal* in 1978, he instructed the script writer Surasu to steer clear of the ‘lesbianism’ of the original work and modify it as the story of a close (asexual?) friendship between two girls” (75). The audience of that period was not yet in a position to accept such a “morally-outrageous” theme: this demanded an ambivalent portrayal of sexuality that could address both the intended viewers (queer individuals) and the majority of the audience. Such a dual approach was also evident in the posters circulated during the promotion of *Deshadanakili Karayarila*, one of which presents Nimmy and Sally (with cropped hair) while the other includes Nimmy, Devika and Harishankar (thus suggesting a possible heterosexual love triangle). Such a mode of storytelling and heterosexualization reflects the societal attitudes towards homosexuality of the time but also intends to strike a unique temporal relationship with a future audience—a tryst with destiny best exemplified in the recurring motif of a “safe place.”

In the film’s climax, Sally’s departure devastates Nimmy and leads to a suicide attempt hindered by Sally. The weight of the night spent together by the two girls, as well as the danger of being separated, looms in their minds. When Sally asks “Didn’t you understand me till now?” while holding Nimmy in her arms, the audience

witnesses an intensification of the emotion between the two of them. This extreme scene is then followed by a shot of their lifeless bodies intertwined on the bed. The crux of the movie lies in its ability to prompt the spectators to imagine what cannot be seen or be shown but can be felt deeply, thereby forcing them to confront their limits of heteronormative imagination. Thus, when the film's postscript states "They flew afar to a safe place," viewers are left to find solace in a transcended hope.

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FILM REVIEW

Memory and its Reenactments: *Akaler Sandhane* (In Search of Famine) by Mrinal Sen

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2023 was the birth centenary of Mrinal Sen, an Indian director who is known for his politically-relevant films, focusing, particularly, on Bengal. He is seen as a master chronicler who revolutionized Indian cinema by making realism his vehicle for discussing oppression, injustice and the human condition. Like Bertolt Brecht, Sen believed that the purpose of a film should not simply be to entertain and regale an audience. Instead, it should provoke and prod his spectators into an awareness of

reality which may often be troubled and uncomfortable. Sen's filmography in Bengali includes famous productions like *Baishe Srabon* (Twenty-Two Sravana, 1960), *Akaler Sandhane* (In Search of Famine, 1980), *Bhuvan Shome* (1969), the *Calcutta* trilogy (*Interview*, *Calcutta'71* and *Padatik* (The Guerilla Fighter), *Ek Din Protidin* (A Day Like any Other, 1979) and *Kharij* (The Case is Closed, 1984) among others. He also made films in different regional languages and settings, such as *Matira Manisha* (Odia, 1966), *Mrigayaa* (Hindi, 1976) and *Oka Oori Katha* (Telugu, 1977).

The shared strand in most of Sen's films is the perpetual interrogation and depiction of the socio-political circumstances as well as the condition of common people. In *Akaler Sandhane* (1980), the director represents the themes of exploitation and deprivation prevalent in India even after independence.¹ This production, which is also about making a film, begins with scenes of a train passing through the fields (perhaps a visual ode to one of the greatest cinematic shots of Indian film history—Satyajit Ray's *Pather Panchali*, 1955). As cars zoom past, the background track resounds with the “Hei Samalo” song that was germane to the Tebhaga movement (1946-50).² *Akaler Sandhane* depicts a crew arriving at the small, remote fictional village of Hatui to make a film about The Bengal Famine of 1943 (also known in Bengali as the “Ponchasher Monnontor”), which resulted in the deaths of over three million people. The director (played by Dhritiman Chatterjee) is young, full of idealistic

fervor and considers cinema as a tool for societal transformation. The film crew stays
1. The film was well received and won the Silver Bear (Special Jury Prize) at the Berlin International Film Festival in 1981. It also won the National Film Award (India) for Best feature Film, Best Direction, Best Screenplay and Best Editing in 1981.

2. The song was written by the famous poet Sukanta Bhattacharya and composed by Salil Chowdhury; it was a significant composition often associated with the Indian People's Theatre Association (IPTA). However, it is also renowned for feting the peasants' rebellion, in which farmers demanded two-thirds of the grains that they produced.

in a decrepit mansion—which they experience as an exciting adventure—a part of which is still occupied by one of the seventeen owners of the property, a paralyzed old man and his wife (Gita Sen, the director's wife).

The film faultlessly goes back and forth between its contemporary 1980 setting and the depiction of the 1943 Bengal Famine. In a specific scene, during a conversation with the director, the retired village schoolmaster (erstwhile actor Radhamohan Bhattacharya), who is treated as a wise man in the village, expresses his dislike for talkies as, he believes, they cannot make a convincing plot. Later on, however, he visits the set, is captivated by the operations of the film unit and blesses them to carry on with their good work of depiction of reality. Thus, he initially seems to believe that films do not have a captivating power but ironically ends up enamoured with it by watching the film crew at work. The film shooting has then to be suspended due to the incessant rain and the crew pass their time by looking at photographs from 1943, 1959 and 1971 and playing a game of guessing which famine picture belongs to which decade or century. The game also indicates that the director had researched the famines that occurred in both pre- and post-independent India, without realizing that hunger and starvation still exist in postcolonial contemporary Bengal.

Indeed, the villagers are initially fascinated by the film crew and their first-hand encounters with shooting and acting. Subsequently, however, due to the luxurious meals served to the latter, the prices of grains and goods start increasing, making it difficult for the villagers themselves to procure the necessary items. Poignantly, an old farmer blames the film crew for starting a new famine while probing an old one. Matters become complicated therefore for the film crew and soon the supporting actress

Devika (Devika Mukherjee) leaves after a quarrel. Unlike the female protagonist Smita (Smita Patil), who plays the role of an impoverished housewife, Devika has never been much into her role and fails to convince herself and the audience regarding the portrayal of her character. Meanwhile, a local woman, Durga (Sreela Majumdar), who does sundry works for the film crew for some extra money, identifies her present torment by watching Smita while enacting a scene where she is humiliated by her husband who suspects that she has sold herself for a few grains of rice.

This film sets up conflicts at different points of its narrative while negotiating the gap between urban and rural culture, a famine of the past with a potential famine at present, illusion and reality through the cinematic medium. It also questions the artist's role and commitment that inclines towards exploitation often in the guise of creativity. Indeed, the crew soon starts feeling unsafe in the village as they realize they have unleashed harsh resentment among the villagers and they seek police protection. Thus, there is no cathartic release for the audience and Sen does not deliver a happy ending: until inequality and deprivation exist in society the hero and the audience can never be, and should never be, at peace.

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FILM REVIEW

Hologram 1984: Resistance at the End of the World

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The opulent narcissism that characterizes the year 1984 is haunted by a general preoccupation with ‘worlds’ remote to the eras’ ascension of capitalism. For astride ‘84’s conceptualization of culture as a spectacular consumer playground persists a corollary fascination with the *end of culture*, and, in particular, the apocalyptic transpiration of realities antithetical to the neoliberal hedonism of MTV and the ‘free-market’ deterritorializations of Reaganomics/Thatcherism. In such monolithic films as *Terminator* (1984), *Ghostbusters* (1984) and *Gremlins* (1984), the end of culture, and thus the end of the world, is drawn into stark antagonism with 1984’s landscape of material exploitation, masculine egoism and an omnipresent revulsion of nature. From a certain vantage, we see in *Terminator* the revolution of the inhuman from

under the yoke of man and the general overturning of anthropic supremacy by the very technologies used to remake the Real. In *Ghostbusters*, ancient occult orders threaten the normativity of toxic masculinity and conquest, transpiring an alien metaphysics withdrawn from the so-called reign of Man. In *Gremlins*, the ‘demonic’ aspect of the animal overruns the ideals of domestication and the correlative submission of nature under culture. Across these hallmark films, a secretive fantasy persists for the termination of culture through the transpiration of ‘outsider’ forces pregnant with the potential of freeing us from ourselves, or at least, the ecstatic trajectory of vacuous derealization well underway at the time. In the end, *Terminator*, *Ghostbusters* and *Gremlins* ultimately rejoin thought to the symbolic tableaux of Western culture and its birth through tool-mastery, overcoming prior metaphysical orders, and the submission of inhuman wilderness to both anthropic and capitalist determinism.

Spinoza’s ‘monism’ generally posits that there is no ‘other’ world, but only the immanence of a single substance subsequently dubbed the Virtual, the Real, or late-order Simulacrum. (see respectively Spinoza, Deleuze, Deleuze and Guattari, Laruelle and Baudrillard). To rethink the aforementioned films in this way is crucial in coming to understand the particular world induced through the popular culture of 1984. Of course, the threat of AI, the rise of ancient regimes, and demonic allegiances of animals do not constitute aspects of another world. From the vantage of the present, the veracity of such threats are amplified through the real-time unfolding of AI singularity, ‘hauntological’ afflictions of racial capitalism and colonial genocide, and the dominion of microbial animals over the supposed reign of Man or ‘Anthropocene’ more generally. That which was relegated to “another world”

in 1984 has fully transpired as an aspect of our contemporary reality. Following Spinoza's monism, we might deduce two theorems from this phenomenon. The first deduction contends that the collusion of 1984's prognostications on cultural upheaval and transformation fueled a line of molecular revolution that remains an unresolved surplus to the assumed world. These 'other worlds' are ultimately expressions of joy, particularly as they postulate the deficiency of any claim over the actual world or auto-determination of reality. This deficiency might in turn become the ground for an increase in action, particularly so for its liberation of performativity from the 'given' field of the possible. Following, the second deduction posits that those features of *Terminator*, *Ghostbusters* and *Gremlins* that speculate on our liberation from culture have today transpired as resources for unmaking a *particular cultural order*.

We must take care to rebuke the postulation that duality constitutes an essential characteristic of reality, as though there were only 'two' substantial worlds. Instead, we might insist on the expressive potential of the world as it is born through radical immanence cleaved from predetermination by some deeper genetic form. The dual worlds figured in *Terminator*, *Ghostbusters* and *Gremlins* are symptoms of '84's preoccupation with binary thought evidenced at all scales of cultural order and production. Yet, the pedagogy of such apocalyptic speculations squarely pertain to an analogue difference as it performs the full range of worldly expression inclusive of nonhuman and inhuman variance. Such expressivity might become the fulcrum for our own co-becomings, or at least a catalyst upon which we can assail the sedimentation of reality advanced through the idea of a predetermined world in which the future will ostensibly reflect.

The year 1984 is of course pronounced for its antagonistic mindset and intractable drive to resolve difference. The murderous program of the time-jumping T-800 is thwarted, Zuul is banished to the void, and the gremlins are temporarily subdued. Yet it is perhaps no surprise that these very figures have made their timely reappearance and not simply on behalf of courting nostalgia. Spinoza is prescient in his estimation that the reemergence of such figures is squarely linked to their expression of the world's radical immanence and, perhaps more importantly, as a joyous challenge to the postulation of any 'standard' reality. Today, the hologram of '84 is rejoined to cultural thought, but with the distinction of assuming its abjected expressions as a fulcrum for habilitating the conditions of inalienable difference and permanent revolution that are desperately needed today.

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The Christmas Card

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Molly who was eleven and in grade six rocked her feet against the rungs of the bench in front of the thrift store on St. Laurent Boulevard in east-end Montreal. She and her brother Terry had just bought Christmas presents for their mother.

“Mom can’t find out we took the bus all the way out here,” she said.

“Why not?” said Terry, who was nine and in grade four.

“Well, last week I told her Jill took the bus with her sister to see the downtown Christmas decorations, and Mom said, ‘Jill’s sister is eighteen and can take care of her. But you and Terry are too young to take a long bus ride by yourselves. Strange people, some of them homeless and dangerous, travel the bus.’”

“How can a homeless person be dangerous?” Terry asked.

He looked across the street at what he thought might be a homeless man sprawled on the sidewalk in front of a bar with a cup in his hand. Photographs of girls in bright red bathing suits decorated the entrance.

“That man in torn pants with no hat or mitts looks too cold and tired to even

stand up,” said Terry, holding the hotdog he had just bought at the Montreal Pool Room. “There were stranger-looking dudes at the hot dog place than I’ve ever seen on a bus.”

Molly nodded and wiped some mustard off Terry’s chin and then bit into her hotdog. “The guys there gave us funny looks,” she said, adjusting the elastic on her long ponytail. “Maybe kids don’t go there.

“Mom would flip her lid if she knew we were here. I told her we were going to the library down the street. We should give the homeless man over there some coins before we leave,” said Molly, “. . . since it’s Christmas.”

As they ate their steamies, they watched people trekking in and out of the thrift store, all of them buying last minute presents for Christmas, only three days away. Carols from a loud speaker streamed into the street. Molly hummed along to “Away in the Manger.”

Molly’s friend, Miriam, whose father worked at the Raceway, had told her about the “hole in the wall” thrift shop on St. Laurent Boulevard where they could buy cheap presents. “It’s near clubs where my dad takes race track friends to see dancing girls,” she had said.

“I love the pink slippers you got for Mom,” said Molly after the carol finished. “You think she’ll like the quilted apron I bought?”

“Yes, but it’s our homemade cards that she likes best,” he said. For their gifts, each had created a Christmas card they had made in their art class at school.

Terry, in a class for gifted painters, thought of how proud his mother had been when he won a prize around Thanksgiving for a painting of a field full of daisies

swaying in the wind under a blue sky.

“But Dad hates art,” said Terry, biting his lip.

Molly took Terry’s hand. “I know,” she said. When Terry had said he wanted to become an artist when he grew up, their father had said, “An artist? That’s for sissies. Be a man. You should become a businessman, like me.”

“What’s so great about being a businessman?” Terry now asked his sister.

“Well, Dad’s a businessman,” said Molly, “in charge of his auto parts store.”

“Well, who wants to do *that*?” Terry said. “Mom’s smarter. She was a nurse, helping mothers with babies and giving kids their vaccination shots.” He thought about how his mother always stood up for him, no matter what. She was, he believed, the most beautiful mother in the world.

“Molly,” said Terry. “Remember how upset Mom was last Christmas when she opened up her present from Dad?”

“Yes. She cried . . . when she saw it was a whisk.” She squeezed her eyes shut for a second, imagining how her Mom must have felt. “I bet it was because *he* wanted one.”

“We should find a nice present for Dad to give Mom,” he said. “How about a pretty cup and saucer?”

“The Salvation Army store on Sherbrooke Street has cups and saucers,” said Molly. “I saw them last week with Mom when she took clothes there that don’t fit us anymore. It’s right on our bus route.”

“Okay,” he said.

“Let’s go.” Molly took Terry’s hand and they darted across the street. The

homeless man looked up and she dropped three toonie coins into his cup before they hopped on a bus at the corner of Sherbrooke and St. Laurent.

* * *

“Outta sight,” said Terry when they burst into the Salvation Army thrift store. “They’ve got everything here! Almost as good as Dollarama,” he said as he examined the price tag on some jeans. He gazed up with admiration at his big sister who took him to such neat places.

The place was teeming with people looking for presents, but there were no children their age in the store. They undid the buttons on their hand-me-down Red River coats their mother and aunt had worn when they were kids.

“Could I help?” said a saleslady with a smile that reminded Molly of her mother.

“We’re here to buy a cup and saucer for our mother for Christmas,” said Molly, taking charge.

“We have money,” said Terry who had taken several loonie coins that morning out of his piggy bank. “Have you any with daisies?” he asked. “That’s our mom’s favourite flower.”

“Over here,” said the sales lady and she escorted them to a long shelf filled with cups and saucers.

“Super,” said Molly. She picked up one called China Pearl with a blue and white gingham background. Three big daisies with bright yellow centres decorated the cup and ten small ones circled the saucer.

““How much is it?” Terry asked.

“You can have it for fifty cents. We have cards too,” said the saleslady. Terry chose a small card for ten cents. It had a big red poinsettia drawing on it and came with an envelope.

On the bus back home, Molly asked, “How come you know Mom loves daisies?”

“Mom told me about beautiful golden daisies she used to pick in the fields, when she was a nurse, up north, with the Cree,” Terry said. She showed me color photos. That’s before she married Dad.”

The sun was going down when they arrived at their house near the railroad tracks below Sherbrooke Street. They had to climb over a snowbank to reach their walk. “Our street is always the last to be cleared,” said Molly using a finger to flip out the snow that had crept into her boots.

“Terry, you go in the front door and talk to Mom so I can sneak in the back door with the presents,” she said and took off.

“We had a good time at the library, listening to a Christmas story for kids,” Terry lied to his mother when he greeted her in the living room. She was busy choosing decorations for the Christmas tree.

Later, in Molly’s bedroom, they wrapped the box holding the cup and saucer in red paper with gold stripes. The next day, when their mother was out shopping, they approached their father in the living room with the gift and the card. He was reading a sports car magazine.

“Dad . . .” said Terry, with Molly standing next to him.

He looked up. “Yeah?” he frowned. “What *is* it?”

“We have a present for you to give Mom for Christmas. A cup and saucer.”

Terry tried to feel confident, but his father’s eyes flashed with annoyance and Terry stared down at his feet.

“It has daisies on it,” said Molly stepping forward. “Mom’s favorite flower.”

“Oh,” he growled and went back to reading. He had a glass of whisky next to him on the table and took a big gulp of it. Molly seized Terry’s hand, afraid that he might shout at them.

“We have a card for you to sign,” she persisted.

“Okay, okay,” he said. “Gimme it quickly. I’m reading something important.”

Their father signed the card. Terry put it in the envelope and later Molly taped it to the present with a reindeer sticker.

“Good,” Terry whispered to Molly when they were out in the hall. “I know he didn’t buy her anything. Otherwise, he would have said. You know how he hates Christmas.”

“This will be a something unexpected for Mom,” said Molly who was feeling proud of their cleverness.

Later, when the living room was empty, they tucked the present under the Christmas tree.

* * *

On Christmas Day Terry and Molly bolted out of their beds at dawn to find their gifts from Santa.

Terry’s present from Santa was a book about Canadian painters, which he hugged to his chest. “How did Santa know?” he said.

Molly, who was secretly writing stories at night, when she was alone in her room, was excited to receive her gift, Deathly Hallows, the only Harry Potter book she hadn't read.

It had been lightly snowing on Christmas Eve and they looked out into the front yard at the soft, fresh snow on the ground.

"Let's go out and make a snowman," said Terry. "It'll be a surprise for Mom."

"Good idea," said Molly who dragged her brother to the hall closet where they bundled into their snow pants and boots.

"The snow is perfect," said Terry. While they rolled the snow into the body of the snowman, Miriam from the upstairs flat came outside. Molly thought she looked sad. "Hi Miriam," she said. "Merry Christmas."

Miriam stood there silently and then said, "Can I help with the snowman?"

"Yes, yes," said Molly. Miriam's father's big white car wasn't parked on the street, so Molly knew he wasn't home and Miriam was alone with her mother who spent a lot of time in bed.

The three of them worked together, but before they were finished, they went in for breakfast. Later, when she and Terry started to pull out the presents from under the tree, Molly couldn't help thinking about Miriam, who had no brother or sister, and was home alone with her mother.

"Terry," said their mother, affectionately patting his mop of red curly hair, "you're in charge of giving out the gifts."

Their mother looked so happy with the slippers from Terry and the quilted apron from Molly. "And what terrific cards," she said. "Homemade and so artistic,"

and she gave each of them a big hug.

Terry and Molly each received a new smart phone from their mother. “Really nifty,” said Terry to his mother. She could read his mind. He hadn’t asked for it, but she knew exactly what he wanted. Now he could go to the museum and take really good pictures of his favorite paintings.

From their grandmother in Edmonton, Molly and Terry received the Super Mario 3D World Deluxe, the latest new video game.

Their mother stepped into the kitchen to put the turkey in the oven. When she came back, Terry said to his father, “Here Dad, it’s a present for you from Mom.”

Her gift to him was three pairs of hockey tickets so he could go with a friend to games at the Bell Centre. “Very nice,” he said with a blank look on his face, and he rammed them into his back pocket.

Their mother sat down in a chair next to the coffee table by the tree. Molly reached around to the back of the tree and pulled out the beautifully-wrapped cup and saucer for their mother.

“Here,” she said to her mother. “It’s your present from Dad.”

Their mother steadied the box on her lap, dropped her head, and ran her fingers through her wavy blond hair. “I should look at the card first,” she said. “What a beautiful poinsettia,” she exclaimed, removing the card from the envelope.

But when she opened it up, her face went white and she bit the inside of her cheek. She looked around to find her husband, but he was no longer in the room. Molly heard him tramping downstairs to his office in the basement.

Terry wondered what could be wrong. He watched as his mother shoved the

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card under a book on the coffee table and dabbed her eyes with a tissue.

“You have to open the present,” said Terry. With trembling fingers, their mother ripped off the wrapping and peered into the box. Then, with a pained look still on her face, she stood up and carried the cup and saucer into the kitchen.

Feeling confused, Molly and Terry sat quietly on the floor next to the tree. “There musta been something bad on the card,” said Terry. He immediately blamed himself for not looking to see what their father had written, *before* he put the card in the envelope.

Molly pressed her knuckles down hard into the floor. Some kids on their street had dads who took them skiing and sledding. Their dad never did. He always said he was “too busy working like a dog to feed his family.”

Other dads helped the moms carry home food from the grocery shops on Saturdays. Their dad was always at his auto parts store or in the basement. Molly felt ashamed when her friends saw her Mom, with Terry on one side, and her on the other, pulling a heavy sleigh full of groceries six blocks through the snow.

Oh well, she thought, their mother was always there for them, not like Miriam’s mother who sometimes didn’t even prepare supper and Miriam had to make her own.

But why was Mom so upset?

“C’mon,” Molly said to Terry. She took his hand and they went into the kitchen. At the breakfast table a new jigsaw puzzle showing Santa and his reindeers was laid out for them to work on. Their Mom, she thought, always knew how to make them happy. They loved jigsaw puzzles and this one looked easy.

Suddenly, from Miriam's upstairs flat, Molly heard a noise like dishes falling on the floor and she wondered whether her friend was okay.

The turkey was starting to smell marvelous. Working slowly on the puzzle, Molly and Terry sat together at the table and watched their mother peeling potatoes. The Salvation Army cup and saucer covered with daisies sat on the counter next to her. Their Mom was wearing her new pink slippers and her new patchwork quilted apron over a red velvet skirt.

The card, Terry thought, under the book on the coffee table. He took a deep breath. Why did Mom want to hide it away?

Their Mom looked over at them with a loving crinkle in her blue eyes and smiled. "You kids are too much. The daisies are beautiful," she said giving the pair a tender look.

"You little devils," she said and winked. "Who took you shopping?" she asked and Molly looked sheepish.

"Or, did you take the bus? Like I've forbidden?" She frowned but just for a second. Terry knew she'd figured that's exactly what they'd done. But it had all been for a good cause. And they had gone during the day when it was safe. He looked up at Molly and thought about the fun they'd had buying hotdogs at the Montreal Pool Room.

"Oh," said Molly, trying to look innocent while she lied, "nothing like that." She considered making up a bigger lie, saying their dad had found the cup and saucer at a garage sale near school, but she figured that one lie on Christmas Day was enough.

“Well, you know what I think about those crowded busses,” their mother said, but she was smiling and didn’t seem mad at all.

“The slippers, the apron, the cup and saucer. All very special,” she said. “Every morning from now on, I will have daisies with my cup of tea. Thank you.”

Christmas was turning out okay, Terry thought, a lot of it thanks to his older sister who always knew what to do. What would he do without *her*? But, he wondered, why had Mom looked so upset when she read the card.

Their Mom went to the window and looked out at the half-made snowman.

“And now,” she said, “if you like, you can go and play outside. I know you want to finish making that snowman,” and she tossed a small Merry Christmas flag to them. “As a finishing touch for your snowman,” she said. “After we have supper, you can play your new video game.”

As Molly got up from the puzzle, she couldn’t help thinking of Miriam upstairs, lonely and probably having no fun at all. Since Miriam’s mother was French, she knew that if they’d had any Christmas dinner at all, it had been the night before after church. And maybe Miriam had had to make it.

“I was just thinking,” she said to her Mom. “Do you think I could phone Miriam and ask her if she’d like to join us for our Christmas turkey dinner?”

“Good idea,” said her mother.

On the way out of the kitchen, Terry grabbed Molly’s hand. “We’ve gotta see the card,” he whispered to her in the hall. He went into the living room, and whipped out the card from under the book on the coffee table.

He wanted to read, “From your loving husband,” but instead his father had

scribbled: “Yours truly, R.A. McInnis,” the way he would sign a business letter.

Terry ground his teeth with fury and handed the card to Molly. She looked at it and then marched back into the kitchen where she gave her Mom a big hug. “Thanks Mom,” she said, “for giving us such a great Christmas. And tonight, after our turkey dinner, Terry and I will wash-up and dry all the dishes.”



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George Steven Swan is an Associate Professor of Law at North Carolina A&T State University in Greensboro, North Carolina. He earned his S.J.D. and LL.M. degrees from the University of Toronto Faculty of Law; his J.D. from the University of Notre Dame School of Law; and his B.A. from The Ohio State University. Dr. Swan's published scholarship has been cited judicially. His published scholarship also has been required reading for courses at, e.g., Harvard University, the University of North Carolina, and the University of Texas at Dallas. He has been published in, e.g., the: *Alabama Law Review*; *American Bar Association Journal*; *American Political Science Review*; *Boston College Third World Law Review*; *California Western International Law Journal*; *Constitutional Law Journal Explorations in Ethnic Studies*; *The Family in America: A Journal of Public Policy*; *Florida Journal of International Law*; *Hastings Business Law Journal*; *Hastings International and Comparative Law Review*; *Indian Journal of International Law*; *Insurance Counsel Journal*; *Journal of African and Asian Studies*; *Journal of Juvenile Law*; *Journal of Legal Studies in Business*; *Journal of the Legal Profession*; *Journal of Social, Political and Economic Studies*; *Journal of Research on Minority Affairs*; *Law Library Journal*; *Louisiana History*; *McGill Law Journal*; *Natural Resources Lawyer*; *New York University Journal of International Law and Politics*; *Politics and the Life Sciences*; *Phoebe: An Interdisciplinary Journal of Feminist Scholarship, Theory and Aesthetics*; *Population and Development Review*; *St. Louis University Public Law Review*; *Seton Hall Constitutional Law Journal*; *University of Miami Business Law Review*; *University of Mississippi Studies in English*; and the *University of Toronto Faculty of Law Review*.

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call for papers

the quint's sixty sixth issue is issuing a call for theoretically informed and historically grounded submissions of scholarly interest—as well as creative writing, original art, interviews, and reviews of books and films. The deadline for this call is the 15th of May 2025—but please note that we accept manu/digi-scripts at any time.

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All contributions accompanied by a short biography will be forwarded to a member of the editorial board. Manuscripts must not be previously published or submitted for publication elsewhere while being reviewed by *the quint's* editors or outside readers. Hard copies of manuscripts should be sent to Sue Matheson at *the quint*, University College of the North, P.O. Box 3000, The Pas, Manitoba, Canada, R9A 1M7. We are happy to receive your artwork in digital format, JPEG preferred.

Email copies of manuscripts, Word or RTF preferred, should be sent to thequint@ucn.ca. Essays should range between 15 and 25 pages of double-spaced text in Word, and all images (JPEG) and source citations. Longer and shorter submissions also will be considered. Bibliographic citation should be the standard disciplinary format. Copyright is retained by the individual authors of manuscripts and artists of works accepted for publication in *the quint*.

the quint thanks Helga Bryant, Harvey Briggs, and Stuart Matheson for their generous support of this project.

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