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Table of Contents

Articles

Reviews

Articles

Emphasis, glottalization and pharyngealization in Semitic and Afroasiatic

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This paper investigates the phenomenon of emphasis in Semitic from a phonological perspective. It is well known that Semitic emphatics can be realized either as ejectives (Ethiosemitic) or as pharyngealized consonants (Arabic). Recent interest in the Modern South Arabian languages revealed that the emphatics in this group can be realized through an interaction of glottalization and pharyngealization. Starting from a general assessment of glottalization from a cross–linguistic perspective, a focus on Semitic emphatics will be given by using data from the endangered Modern South Arabian language, Baṭḥari. Our goal is to provide a feature analysis of emphasis in Baṭḥari and to correlate it with the rest of Semitic, with special attention to the peculiar phonological patterning of the emphatic /ṭ/. This consonant appears to pattern in Baṭḥari together with the class of breathed consonants (Heselwood and Maghrabi 2015), probably due to its peculiar features. It will be shown that, by adopting Duanmu's (2016) framework of phonological features, it is possible to provide a coherent model for the patterning of Baṭḥari and Modern South Arabian emphatics within Semitic. Furthermore, this paper will provide some tentative parallels between Semitic emphatics and glottalized segments found in the rest of Afroasiatic.

Keywords: Emphatics, Ejectives, Afroasiatic, Pharyngealization, Modern South Arabian

1. Introduction[1]

Much has been written concerning the phonological and phonetic status of emphatics in Semitic languages. Dolgopolsky (1977) already noticed the phonological opposition of Semitic emphatics according to the so–called 'triads' voiceless/voiced/emphatic, interpreted as 'opposition of the three main positions of the glottis: open glottis/vibrating vocal cords/closed glottis' (Dolgopolsky 1977: 3). Emphatics can be realized through different strategies in those Semitic languages where the merging with the plain series did not happen – as happened in Maltese, for example (Borg 1997) – ranging from

the 'backed' (pharyngealized/uvularized)[2] realization of Arabic varieties to ejectiveness in Ethiosemitic emphatics. Bellem (2014: 13) demonstrates that 'ejectiveness patterns as a laryngeal (phonatory) contrast [and that] the laryngeal parameter involves laryngeal action in general, so not just voicing.' In fact, glottalized emphatics do not necessarily require opposition in voicing, since this feature is neutralized by glottal closure, whereas backed emphatics allow for such opposition – as it is the case for Arabic and Berber. There is no obvious connection between backed and glottalized realizations from a historical perspective, because they do not always pattern together phonologically: thus, the term 'emphatic' can be understood either as a resonance contrast (as happens in Arabic) or as a laryngeal contrast (as is the case of Ethiosemitic). Furthermore, groups such as North–Eastern Neo–Aramaic and Modern South Arabian languages (henceforth MSAL) appear to have 'hybrid' systems, where both pharyngealization and glottalization may take place (Dolgopolsky 1977; Watson and Bellem 2010). For this reason, great debate has been conducted over the years as to what might have been the identity of early Semitic emphatics. The most widely accepted theory is the so–called 'ejectives hypothesis,' according to which earlier emphatics were ejectives while pharyngealization developed as a secondary process in a part of Semitic; however, many scholars in the past argued the exact opposite, as to say that early Semitic featured a backed realization – see for example Moscati (1964).

Afroasiatic languages do 'share, minimally, triadic sets of obstruents in their consonant inventories' (Meyer and Wolff 2019: 264), based on the alternation of voiced/voiceless/glottalized. Some of these languages are devoid of glottalized phonemes: among these, we find Ancient Egyptian[3], various Cushitic languages such as Awngi and Galab and some Semitic languages – where the emphatics either merged with the voiceless unaspirated consonants with /k'/ optionally becoming /q/ (Bomhard 2014: 18), or display backed emphatics – and Berber – where emphatics underwent a process of backing similar to that of Arabic (Cohen 1968: 1302). Many processes of deglottalization have taken place across Afroasiatic, such as the diffusion of ejective stop/plain stop alternation in Ethiosemitic (Fallon 2002: 186-187).

According to Clements and Rialland's (2007) subdivision of the African linguistic landscape into six different phonological macro–areas, Afroasiatic languages fall into two of them, namely the Horn

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[2] Pharyngealization is a kind of secondary articulation involving a constriction of the pharynx usually realized through tongue root retraction, while uvularization requires a constriction of the back of the tongue toward the uvula and upper pharynx (Ladefoged and Maddieson 1996). We will adopt the term 'backing' to refer to the general articulatory process typical of these realizations.

[3] Although Loprieno (1995:33-34) proposes the reconstruction of Egyptian emphatics as glottalized through comparative evidence.

of Africa – with Ethiosemitic in the north, Cushitic in the east and south, and Omotic in the west – and the Sudanic belt area (with Chadic languages), which includes the vast area of Subsaharan Africa bounded by the Sahel on the north, the Atlantic Ocean on the west, Ethiopia on the east and lake Albert on the south. The extensive presence of ejectives in the Horn of Africa has often been seen as one of the main features of the Macroethiopian language area (Zaborski 2010), as already postulated by Ferguson (1970: 69–70). This is indeed one of the best-known traits of Afroasiatic as a whole, and in fact glottalized sounds are reconstructed for the alleged protolanguage (Wedekind 1994). The very existence of a true language area in the Horn of Africa is still a subject of debate, though: the common Afroasiatic heritage together with prolonged contact may have allowed for the spreading and/or retention of many traits such as the one under scrutiny. In fact, scholars have been discussing extensively 'as to whether the presence of ejectives in Ethiosemitic languages is original or imported from Cushitic' (Kogan 2011: 59), and similarly Tosco (2000: 342). However, the works from Martinet (1953), Cantineau (1960) and Steiner's (1982) work on the affricated /ṣ/ provide valid proof for the ejective hypothesis. The latter work is of particular importance since the affricate realization of the ejective fricatives – demonstrated for Tigrinya (Shosted and Rose 2011; Moeng and Carter 2019) as well as for Mehri (Ridouane and Gendrot 2017) – cannot be proven to have developed from earlier pharyngealization or uvularization. Bellem (2014: 36) argues that 'these ejectives are often not phonemically, or at least systemically, affricates, but that affrication is a phonetic effect resulting from the need to maintain enough intra–oral air pressure to produce a salient glottalic release.' Indeed, this is not the only possible phonetic realization for ejective fricatives as found in the languages of the world: narrowing of the oral constriction, separation between frication and glottal constriction into a sequence and backing of the place of articulation are other articulatory strategies commonly found (Moeng and Carter 2019). The fact that the latter mechanism, according to which speakers decrease the supralaryngeal volume to produce ejective fricatives (Demolin 2002), is found in certain intervocalic environments in Tigrinya may point towards the hypothesis that languages with backed realization of emphatics may have started from this exact stage, followed by a further backing process which eventually led to pharyanglealized/uvularized realization (see below).

A final clue in favour of the ejective hypothesis can be found by examining one segment – the labial ejective /p'/, commonly found in Ethiosemitic but not in the rest of Semitic. This element is crucial since it cannot be reliably reconstructed as /ṗ/ for the whole Semitic family, according to Cantineau (1952) and Moscati (1964) *contra* Diakonoff (1965). A clear set of correspondences between Ethiosemitic /p'/ and labials in the rest of Semitic has not been established yet (cf. Kogan 2011: 80–81); however, it should be safe to consider it either as an earlier retention from Afroasiatic which was later

lost in the rest of the family outside Ethiosemitic, or a consequence of (rather unclear) contact (Ullendorff 1951: 208-209). This early phonological change agrees with the cross–linguistic rarity of the glottalized bilabial stop (Martinet 1953: 69–70; Bomhard 1988: 116), since 'bilabial ejective stops are disfavoured over dental/alveolar or velar ones' (Maddieson 1984: 107 and already Javkin 1977). The shift to a pharyngealized realization in Central Semitic is thus considered an innovation (Huehnergard 2005: 165–166); besides, the extensive presence of relatable /p'/ (and, indirectly, /ɓ/) in Afroasiatic may be a proof for this reconstruction.

Having agreed on the ejective nature of early Semitic emphatics, it might be convenient to explore in more detail what glottalization refers to, with special attention to ejectiveness.

2. Glottalization

Glottalization refers to a kind of secondary phonetic articulation where a tight constriction of the vocal folds and/or an upward or downward movement of the larynx can be witnessed. It is possible to distinguish three classes of glottalized elements according to how these movements pattern. Following Maddieson (2013), the first class is that of *ejectives*. It features a complete closure of the vocal folds followed by an upward movement of the larynx. When this movement is simultaneous to a moment of closure in the mouth as in the case of the articulation of a stop, the air in the mouth is compressed. At the moment of release, the characteristic explosive burst noise typical of this class is produced. The ejective mechanism can be used to produce a variety of sounds: most commonly stops and affricates, and more rarely fricatives.

The second class is that of *implosives*, a kind of stop usually featuring a downward rather than an upward movement of the larynx. According to the typical textbook definition, this movement leads air to briefly flow into the mouth at the time of closure release, hence the voiced ingressive nature of this sound. However, 'implosives cannot be neatly distinguished from non–implosive sounds in terms of an alleged glottalic airstream mechanism' (Clements and Rialland 2007: 55–56) cross–linguistically. Moreover, 'implosives' do not always entail inward oral air flow upon release as already noted by Ladefoged (1968). Clements and Osu (2002) define them as non–obstruents. Implosives have a narrower distribution when compared to that of ejectives: they are a feature characteristic of Nilo–Saharan languages and of a cluster of languages mainly belonging to the Austroasiatic and Kra–Dai families spoken in the Southeast of Asia, while they appear only sporadically among Native American languages (Maddieson 2013).

Finally, the third class is made of *glottalized resonants* or, more properly, *sonorants* (nasals, liquids and semivowels). This kind of articulation adds a glottal constriction during the production of plain

sonorants, thus modifying normal voicing. Glottalized sonorants will not be considered further in the following discussion since they involve a completely different class of phonemes, while ejectives and implosives involve the same places and manners of articulation (at least theoretically).

From a phonological perspective, these three groups share the privative feature [+ constricted glottis] (Halle and Stevens 1971; Fallon 2002) or Glottis-[+stop] (Duanmu 2016:120), hence their being grouped under the same label. In the following section a cross–linguistic overview on ejective segments will be proposed. This section will inform our further discussion on Semitic emphatics.

2.1 Ejectives in the world's languages

According to Henton, Ladefoged and Maddieson (1992), ejective stops are the fourth most common type of stop in the world's languages, after voiceless unaspirated stops, voiced stops, and voiceless aspirated stops. Estimates across the literature of their occurrence in the world's languages range around 18% (Maddieson 1984). Languages with ejectives are clearly concentrated in specific areas of the world: the Ethiopian Highlands in the Horn of Africa and the African Rift Valley, the Caucasus, the North American Cordillera, the Colorado Plateau and the Andes. Ejectives are found in Afroasiatic and Khoisan languages, across many American language families such as Mayan, Quechuan, Na–Dene, Wakashan and Salishan, and in the North Caucasian and Kartvelian languages (Maddieson 2013). Everett (2013) tentatively relates this peculiar distribution to geographic factors: according to this hypothesis, ejectives are more likely to occur in areas of high elevation, due to minor atmospheric pressure facilitating the articulation of ejective tokens. The paper raised considerable discussion immediately after its publication. A recent article by Urban and Moran (2021) eventually proves that such correlation does not exist, though. Phylogenetic factors (Clements and Rialland 2007) and areal contact are to be held responsible for this distribution. The latter is likely the case for languages with ejectives but belonging to other families: Koma (Niger–Kordofanian), various Nilo–Saharan languages, Sandawe and Hadza, Eastern Armenian (Indoeuropean), Kumyk (Altaic), Quileute (Amerind) (Fallon 2002). Yapese and possibly Waima'a (Austronesian) are the only ones displaying ejective consonants, independently from one another, among the languages of the Pacific area. Several other languages contain ejectives at the phonetic level – e.g. from synchronic fusion with glottal stops, allophony with voiceless stops or pre–pausal phonotactic phenomena: see Fallon (2002) – but they are not included in this count.

If, on the one hand, Fallon (2002) dealt exhaustively with the theoretical patterning of ejectives from a phonological perspective, on the other hand, it is possible to rely only on a very broad typology concerning the exact phonetic realization of such segments. Scholars may not agree on the description

of the same tokens for a single language and provide divergent analyses, occasionally showing lack of comprehension about the very nature of ejective consonants – as is the case of Bleek's (1962: 15) misleading description of Quiche's (Mayan) ejective stops and affricates as click consonants (Miller 2020: 439). Other times the phonetic description is purely tautological and of no real use whatsoever to the interested scholar.

Let us take as an example the case of Yuchi, an extremely endangered language isolate spoken in Oklahoma. Reportedly, Yuchi has a set of ejective stops and affricates [p'], [t'], [k'], [ts'] and [tɕ'], together with ejective fricatives [f'], [s'], [ɕ'] and [ɬ']. Despite the rather unique richness of Yuchi ejective class, there are no thorough phonetic descriptions: Crawford's (1973) first account only states that '[g]lottalized obstruents are [lenis and] postglottalized [while] [g]lottalized resonants are preglottalized' (Crawford 1973: 175). Ballard (1975: 164) describes the obstruent set as a sequence of stop followed by glottal stop rather than a single phoneme; finally, according to Linn (2000: 37) '[s]peakers maintain their oral closures while the glottis is raised [, while t]he oral closure is released when the glottal closure is released.' The author concludes that these are 'true ejective stops.' Unfortunately, no articulatory nor acoustic detail is provided in relation to the series of Yuchi ejective fricatives. This is particularly regretful given the extreme crosslinguistic rarity of these sounds: in fact, only ten languages in Maddieson's (1984) corpus are said to possess ejective fricatives (about 2.22% of the entire corpus), to which few others can be added: Hausa (only as a dialectal allophone of [ts']), Dime, Lagwan, Tigrinya and MSAL (Afroasiatic), Koma and Berta (Nilo–Saharan), Ubykh and Kabardian (Caucasian), Tlingit (Na–dene), Lakota (Siouan), Totonac, Yuchi, Mazahua (Oto–Manguean) and various Keresiouan languages.

3. Addressing emphasis in Semitic

It is now time to investigate the change trajectory which can be traced in the phonological patterning of the emphatics in Semitic. According to Bellem (2014: 29) – after Dolgopolsky (1977) – a few stages can be identified:

- early Semitic had a contrast between glottalized emphatics and aspirated non–emphatics. This is the starting stage at which Ethiosemitic languages can still be found (i.e. ṭ [t'] vs. t [tʰ]);
- as a consequence of a process of recession, the glottalic emphatics assume a secondary backed articulation, while the non–emphatics are distinguished by the additional trait of lack of backing (Stage 1);

- due to lenition, the emphatics progressively lose their glottalic feature (Stage 2), to the point that emphatics become defined by backing and lack of aspiration, opposite to their non–emphatic counterparts (Stage 3);

- because of the loss of aspiration contrast, emphatic and non–emphatic consonants are distinguished only through backing (stage 4). The last two stages are represented by most Arabic varieties spoken today (i.e. ṭ [tˤ] vs. t [t]), and of Berber languages outside of Semitic as well.

To sum up, Arabic backed emphatics developed through a process of relaxation of glottal adductive tension (Martinet 1959: 93–96). This model allows for a better comprehension of the peculiar variation found among the Semitic languages. Of peculiar interest is the case of MSAL, since their role in this context is crucial in that they constitute the missing link between early Semitic and Stage 4 (together with North–Eastern Neo–Aramaic varieties): in fact, they appear to cover Stages from 1 to 3.

As correctly summarized by Ridouane and Gendrot (2017: 144), understanding the real nature of MSAL emphatics was made hard by imprecise early reports, which partially failed to understand their phonetic realization and phonological patterning (Jahn 1902, 1905). Johnstone (1970, 1975) believed that the emphatic set of MSAL was post–glottalized and partially voiced – which, if it were correct, would have been a unicum in the languages of the world –, leaving to ambiguity whether he intended either weakly voiced or voiced for only a part of the sound. Johnstone inspired a considerable amount of phonetic and phonological work. Later authors agree in assigning large variability to the realization of MSAL emphatics: both glottalization and backing do take part into the realization of emphatics according to the phonetic environment of the segment and dialectal variation (Lonnet 1993; Lonnet and Simeone–Senelle 1997; Simeone–Senelle 2011; Watson and Bellem 2010; Watson 2012; Gasparini 2017; Watson, Heselwood et al. 2020).

Watson and Heselwood (2016: 7) state that 'authors to date describe voiced and emphatic (or glottalized/ejective) consonants contrasting with voiceless non–emphatic (or non–glottalized/non–ejective) consonants but fail to explain why voiced and emphatic consonants should form a natural class:' they argue that the major phonation distinction is between presence and absence of voiceless breath rather than voicing, proposing a contrast between constricted vs. unconstricted glottis. Ridouane and Gendrot (2017: 142) report that '[e]jectives were shown to pattern together with uvulars and pharyngeals as a natural class defined by the feature [+ low],' evidencing the fact that in MSAL ejectiveness and backing interact within the same phonological class (see also Watson and Bellem 2010: 346–347). This situation reflects that of states 1 to 3 described earlier, where a certain degree of backed articulation together with glottalization is implied. MSAL emphatics can be considered in transition

from a phonological system not far from Ethiosemitic towards an Arabic–like system. Since this is an ongoing process, each MSAL (or even each dialectal sub-variety) may be found at different stages with fuzzy boundaries: it is the case of Mehri, for example, where the voiceless stops *t* and *k* are usually aspirated, while the voiceless emphatic stops *ṭ* and *ḳ* are not; a backing effect on the surrounding vowels is triggered by the emphatics, which show considerable allophony: they may display a backed articulation, with optional ejective realization according to the environment, favoured in initial and pre-tonic position (Bellem 2014: 23). Emphatic (ejective) fricatives are way less widespread if compared to ejective stops, as expected by cross–linguistic comparison (Maddieson 2013). According to Maddieson (1998), ejective fricatives are 'disfavoured segments' from an articulatory and phonological perspective, due to the opposing properties of frication and glottal constriction. Within Afroasiatic, they are to be found only in MSAL and Tigrinya (Semitic), Xamtanga – Cushitic: see Fallon (2015) for an insight on the reconstruction of proto–Agaw ejectives – and Lagwan (Chadic) (Bouny 1977). Interest in MSAL fricative ejectives has been growing during the last decade (Watson and Heselwood 2016; Ridouane and Gendrot 2017; Gasparini 2017), while Shosted and Rose (2011) dealt with Tigrinya. Emphatic fricatives in MSAL show great variation both in acoustic and articulatory terms: for example, /ṣ/ 'exhibits significant VOT accompanied by no breath, which is typical of ejective stops and fricatives, in strong prosodic positions – i.e. usually at the onset of a stressed syllable; it frequently shows negative VOT in weak prosodic positions' (Watson and Heselwood 2016: 32), suggesting allophonic variation according to position, later confirmed by Ridouane and Gendrot (2017), who interpret dorsopharyngealization as a strategy to marginalize ejectiveness in fricatives, and Watson, Heselwood et al. (2020). It is thus possible to ascribe Mehri to Stages 1-3.

Baṭḥari, which is closely related to Mehri, shows a similar situation and allows for an acoustic investigation on the realization of emphatics. It also provides support for proposing a more detailed scale in the scale of phonological changes proposed by Bellem (2014) after Dolgopolsky (1977).

3.1 The phonology of emphatics in Baṭḥari

Table 1. shows the consonantal phonological inventory of Baṭḥari (adapted from Gasparini 2018):

			Labial	Interdental	Alveolar	Lateral	Palatal	Velar	Pharyngeal	Laryngeal
Obstruents	Stops	Voiceless			t			k		ʔ
		Voiced	b		d			g		
		Emphatic			ṭ			ḳ		
	Fricatives	Voiceless	f	ṯ	s	ś	š	x	ḥ	h
		Voiced		ð				ġ	ʕ	
		Emphatic		ð̣	ṣ	ś	š			
Sonorants		Nasal	m		n					
		Liquids			r	l				
		Glide					y	w		

Table 1. Triads in Baṭḥari

As expected, there is a three-way contrast between voiced, voiceless and emphatic elements at the velar and alveolar places of articulation (stops) and at the interdental and alveolar places of articulation (fricatives), whereas the palatal emphatic is only marginal and reconstructable only diachronically, since by all means it has merged with the lateral emphatic.

Emphatics pattern together with voiced obstruents and the glottal stop against voiceless, non-ejective (or breathed, Watson and Heselwood 2016) obstruents *f, h, ḥ, k, s, š, ś, t, ṯ, x*, similarly to what happens in Mehri: compare with Bendjaballah and Ségéral (2014), who describe this set of consonants through the term 'idle-glottis.' 'Breathed' consonants involve aspiration or the release of audible breath vs. 'unbreathed' consonants which do not involve aspiration on their release (Heselwood and Maghrabi 2015). This distinction treats the larynx as breath-regulator. The breathed phoneme class is active also in Baṭḥari and can be distinguished by the feature [+idle glottis] since the glottal area is not involved in the articulatory process. In Duanmu's (2016) terms, this would be Glottis-[+stiff]; we will use the [+ breathed] label as a cover term.

The effects of this patterning can be verified by observing the allomorphy of the definite article and verbal patterns. The prefixation of the definite article (which most often has an *e-* form) to a #C_ noun has different results, depending on the class to which C belongs:

a) e- + #C_ → əCC_ \ C[+ breathed] (as in Mehri – Watson , Heselwood *et al.* 2020a)

kədōt → *əkkədōt* 'the dwelling'

téṯ → *əttéṯ* 'the woman'

śedḳ → *əśśedḳ* 'the corner of the mouth'

vs.

b) e- + #C_ → eC \ C[- breathed]

ḳáṭaʕ → *eḳáṭaʕ* 'the shared fishing area'

ṣálaʕ → *eṣálaʕ* 'the ribs'

ġayg → *aġayg* 'the man'

Two breathed consonants found in sequence within a verb root do not allow a short unstressed vowel (either *ə* or a) to appear between them (compare with Bendjaballah and Ségéral 2017). Below some verbs at the 3s.M of the Gb-stem[4] perfective, which follow the pattern $C_1v(v)C_2(v)C_3$:

fesḥ 'he permitted'

nifx 'he blowed'

niṯk 'he bit'

vs.

ġērəḳ 'he drowned'

ġēləṭ 'he made a mistake at speaking'

wēṣaʕ 'he ignited'

The Ḥ-Stem derivational stem features the prefixation of a *h- morpheme throughout the whole conjugation, according to the scheme *hv-C_1ēC$_2$əC$_3$ or *hv-C_1əC$_2$ēC$_3$, according to the type of Ḥ-Stem considered[5]. This *h- is normally realized as e-, but with a verb #C[breathed]_ *h- is first assimilated and then elided due to syllabic structure constraint (as in *fēšər* < *ffēšər* < *h-fēšər*) – to be compared again with Mehri (Bendjaballah and Ségéral 2017). Some examples of this are:

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[4] Gb-stem stands for Grundstamm (basic pattern) of the second type, as opposed to Ga-stems (see Dufour 2016).

[5] Five subtypes of Ḥ-Stems can be found in the language. They are distinguished according to stress position and presence or absence of a -*ən* suffix in the imperfective form. Only the perfective form is reported here.

fōrək 'he was angry with'

kōməl 'he finished'

tōgər 'he sold'

kḥēl 'to paint the rims of so.'s eyes with antimony'

vs.

aḳātəl 'he fished with hook and line'

aṣ̌āməd 'he used as bait'

edḥēl 'he pestered'

Now, we can focus our attention on the behaviour of /ṭ/. It must be pointed out that /ṭ/ can pattern phonologically both with the other voiced and emphatic consonants, as expected, and with breathed consonants, as in the following cases:

a. *optional* gemination caused by definite article prefixation[6]

ṭádaʕ ➔ *aṭṭádaʕ* 'the back'

ṭāsət ➔ *aṭṭāsət* 'the tin bowl'

b. assimilation and elision of *h-

ṭārəb 'he accepted so. under protection'

ṭēbəḳ 'he adhered to st.'

ṭfēġ 'he rinsed out the mouth'

instead of the expected forms **eṭádaʕ, *eṭāsət, *aṭārəb, *aṭēbəḳ, *aṭfēġ*. It needs to be remarked that the examples reported in (a) are in apparent free variation with non-geminated forms, and no apparent rationale behind this phenomenon has been individuated yet. The cases in (b) are probably due to /h/ clinging to C_1.

Occasionally, the constraint to the insertion of *ə* between C_1 and C_2 can be observed with the Ga-stem perfective form of roots having the phoneme *ḳ* in C_1 or C_2 due to the presence of a front-back C sequence, which deters the intrusive vowel:

ḳḥēb 'he was at midday'

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[6] Compare with Mahriyot, where emphatic /ṭ/ behaves like breathed consonants in gemination (Sima 2009:2). Compare also with Watson and Heselwood (2016: 13-14) and Watson, al-Mahri *et al.* (2020: 34-35).

fḵād 'he lost'

Regular forms occur with more frequency; furthermore, Ḥ-Stem verbs behave as expected:

ḳəfō 'he finished st.'
səḵōf 'he roofed over'
aḵābəl 'he kept an eye on'
aḵātəl 'he fished with hook and line'

If we now compare with what we find in Mehri (Watson, al-Mahri *et al.* 2020), a closely related MSAL variety, we can see that *ṭ* always behaves as an unbreathed emphatic:

əṭayla 'the going up'
əṯ̣ām 'the taste' (lack of doubling of *ṭ* after the article)
aṭōbəḵ 'he brought alongside'
aṭyīn 'he plastered with mud'
həṭfūs 'he made so. dirty' (maintaining of the h- prefix or its *a-* reflex)

However, in Baṭḥari *ṭ* can also pattern together with the other emphatics in that they trigger the lowering of the thematic vowel in II-emphatic Ga-stem verbs (i. e. *fḵād yəfaḵəd yəfḵād* 'to lose, mislay; to discover st. to be missing;' *bəṣār yəbaṣər yəbṣ̌ēr* 'to tear, rip'). Below are reported some sample paradigms with perfective, imperfective and subjunctive 3s.m forms:

ḥekāf yəḥéḵəf yəḥḵāf '(mother) to try and deflect (usually) a father's anger'
xaṭāf yəxaṭəf yəxṭāf 'to pass by, go along'
xaṭām yəxaṭəm yəxṭām 'to tie up'
xaṭār yəxaṭər yəxṭār 'to travel'
bəṣāḵ yəbeṣəḵ yəbṣ̌ēḵ 'to break st.'
bəṣār yəbaṣər yəbṣ̌ēr 'to tear'

whereas the expected vowel for these verb forms would be *ō*:

ḥəmōś yəḥimś yəḥmēś 'to stir up trouble, spread dissension'
kəlōṯ yəkilṯ yəklēṯ 'to tell; to speak'
gəsōr yəgísər yəgsēr 'to feel at ease, feel relaxed with so.'
rəgōz yərigəz yərgēz 'to sing, sing and dance'

stōl yəsitl yəstēl 'to dismember, cut off, away'

Now, one may wonder what triggers the partial alignment of *ṭ* with breathed consonants. The fact that *ḳ* can sporadically behave in a similar fashion (with Ga-stem perfective forms) may suggest that emphatic stops may share some properties with breathed consonants, with *ṭ* being at a more advanced stage than *ḳ* in the process of assimilation. The reason behind this process needs then to be clarified.

It is safe to assume that the phonetic realization of the emphatics may be of relevance in this context. Gasparini's (2017: 82-83) preliminary observations on the emphatics in pre-tonic *ā* position reported that

> the only segment which regularly shows a fully ejective realization is /ḳ/ [...while] /ṭ/ occasionally shows ejective realization (concurrent with pharyngealization), but with a higher degree of variation than for /ḳ/. In intervocalic position only pharyngealization takes place.

The realization of the emphatic stops varies idiolectally between what Lindau (1984) and Kingston (2005) call 'stiff' vs. 'slack' ejectives (cf. also Wright *et al.* 2002), with the addition of evident pharyngealization at least in the case of *ṭ*. The status of the emphatic fricatives remained less clear, especially because of idiolectal variation and scarcity of material. After the examination of a wider amount of material, it can be said that these segments are generally realized as pharyngealized voiced fricatives: this feature causes the emphatic fricatives to always pattern with unbreathed consonants. The only position where a glottalized (in fact, pre-glottalized) realization is consistently found for the whole set of emphatics is in pre-pausal position. However, pre-pausal glottalization involves the whole class of unbreathed consonants and therefore it must be understood as a phonotactic rule of no interest for the current discussion.

The representation of the phonological features of Baṭḥari emphatics needs to consider both the phonological patterning of these segments and their phonetic realization; however, the ambiguous status of *ṭ* requires special treatment in order to fit it into a feature model.

3.2 Features of emphasis

We consider features to be articulatory gestures, 'where an articulator is a moveable part in the vocal tract whose gesture(s) can distinguish sounds' (Duanmu 2016: 103). The feature representation of non-pulmonic sounds such as ejectives and implosives is problematic, since they could be read as 'contour segments,' which are segments containing opposite values of the same feature (called 'contour

feature') (Sagey 1986). Furthermore, one may be left to wonder how complex segments such as Baṭḥari (or, more broadly, MSAL) emphatics may be rendered in a feature model.

For the definition of ejective segment, a feature [+ejection] was proposed by various scholars (Chomsky and Halle 1968: 323; Lloret 1988; Ladefoged 2007); however, such a choice still requires contour features. Indeed, ejectives apparently are complex sounds since they apparently involve a secondary articulation; however, they can still be represented as single sounds, since they usually occur 'with other sounds that provide some relevant features to complete the full ejective event' (Duanmu 2016: 139). Choosing to apply the 'one-sound' solution allows to take into consideration the phonological context in which emphatics are usually found and their phonetic properties. If we agree in defining a linguistic sound as 'a set of compatible feature values in one time unit' (Duanmu 2016: 122), as a consequence we should adopt Duanmu's (1994) No Contour Principle, a constraint according to which a sound cannot contain contour feature values (or sequential feature values): 'an articulator cannot act fast enough to perform two opposite gestures in one unit of time (and the ear probably cannot process two opposite values of the same feature in one unit of time either)' (Duanmu 2016: 125). Therefore, simplifying McCarthy's (1989) proposal and following Duanmu's (2016: 139) one–sound representation, one may analyse a sequence like [t'] as follows.

An ejective is produced through three sequential steps:

Steps in producing the ejective [t'] (adapted from Duanmu 2016:139)

Step 1: preliminary step, where Larynx is not raised (possibly realized in the preceding segment); the status of Tip and Glottis are determined by the preceding segment, if any.

Step 2: simultaneous closure of Tip and Glottis and raising of Larynx.

Step 3: release of Tip and optional release of Glottis (i.e. when a vowel follows).

To clarify, the three steps composing an ejective do not need to be realized in the ejective itself, but the first step can be realized in the preceding sound and the third one in the following sound. The closure of the tongue body and glottis and the raising of Larynx can occur at the same time, the opening of Glottis is optional and when it occurs together with body release (for example with a following vowel), they can occur in the same step. We can thus consider the raising or lowering of the larynx as a measurable part of the phonetic system. These steps can be represented graphically according to the following feature representation scheme:

	[1	2	3]
Tip-[stop]		+	–
Larynx-[raised]	–	+	
Glottis-[stop]		+	(–)

According to the proposed representation, ejectives can be represented as single sounds if we accept the assumption that they always occur together with other sounds, which contribute with their own relevant features to the completion of the ejective event.

As for pharyngealized emphatics, we may propose to introduce the addition of the [–ATR] feature, which portrays the retraction of the tongue root typical of 'backed' articulations (Ladefoged and Maddieson 1996: 365), to the features of their plain counterparts. An emphatic like [tˤ] may be described as follows:

[tˤ]
Tip-[+stop]
Glottis-[+stiff]
Root-[–advanced]

If we consider again Baṭḥari emphatics, according to what we reported earlier emphatic fricatives adhere to the latter characterization, with the Glottis feature being [–stiff] (which corresponds to [+voiced]) and with varying [location] values. In fact, Baṭḥari fricative emphatics cannot be considered proper ejectives and should be understood as pharyngealized segments instead.

The whole class of the unbreathed consonants thus becomes defined by the common feature [–stiff]. As for breathed consonants, Glottis-[+stiff] defines the unity of this class. We may now need to find a way to define ṭ in a way that may account for its patterning with both classes, and by doing so we shall deal with its mixed phonetic nature. A model as the following can serve our purpose:

	[ṭ]		
	[1	2	3]
Tip-[stop]		+	–
Larynx-[raised]	–	+	
Glottis-[stop, stiff]		+	(–)
Root-[advanced]		(–)	(–)

That is, we have introduced the Root-[–advanced] feature which accounts for an optional phonetic process of pharyngealization of the consonant and which is allowed from an articulatory point of view as a secondary gesture. Tongue root retraction may spread to the following vowel and be released after the vowel onset, as exemplified in step 3. The glottis is specified also for the [+stiff] feature which parallels the [+stop] one, since they co-occur at the same time, and unites *ṭ* with the class of breathed consonants, thus providing a valid reason for the peculiar patterning of *ṭ*. A similar view could be held for *ḳ,* with Body-[+stop] as place feature and a less frequent pharyngealization process.

McCarthy (1989) refers to the Pharyngeal place of articulation as the unifying feature of guttural consonants, and further specifies it with the dependent feature [±glottal] so to restrict the scope of Pharyngeal to true laryngeals, marking these as [+glottal] and true pharyngeals as [–glottal]. McCarthy (1989) considers Semitic emphatics to be complex segments redundantly marked [–glottal] when pharyngealized, and as [+glottal] when glottalized since they appear as true laryngeal sounds (see Lloret 1994: 127–128):

<pre>
a. Emphatics: /ṭ/   b. Ejectives: /t'/
                      | |
                      PL   PL
                     / \   / \
                  Cor   Phar   Cor   Phar
                          | |
                      ([-glottal])   ([+glottal])
</pre>
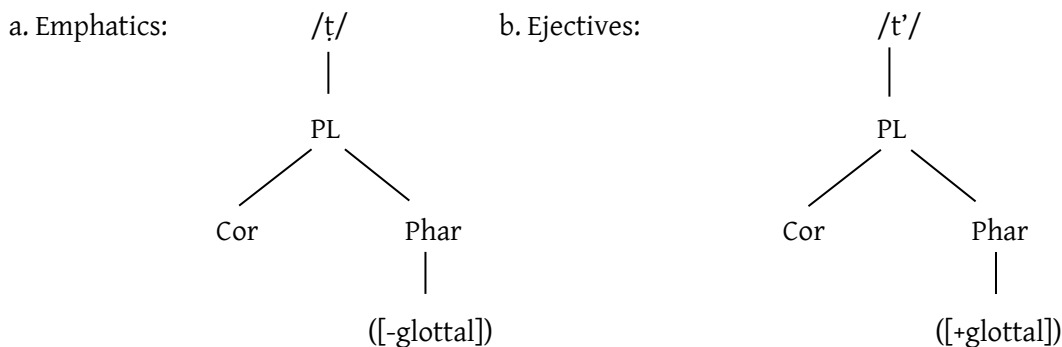
Our proposal deviates from McCarthy's characterization of Semitic emphatics in that it allows for the simultaneous qualification of Semitic emphatics as ejectives *and* pharyngealized. This way, there is not a dichotomic contrast between the two kinds of realization and the compresence of the two phenomena is allowed by the two independent features Larynx-[raised] and Root-[advanced]. The ambiguity of MSAL emphatics is thus solved, while at the same time the ejective realization of Ethiosemitic and the pharyngealized realization of Arabic, for example, can be considered harmoniously.

3.3. Back to Semitic emphasis and beyond

According to the evidence hereby portrayed, it seems necessary to posit a further stage between Bellem's (2014) stages 3 and 4 as reported earlier. Such a hypothetical stage would require a split in the

emphatic system, according to which only the ejective stops *k' and *t' maintain a proper laryngeal (ejective) quality, whereas the fricatives acquire a completely backed feature. Of the ejective stops, *t' is the first to undergo backing because the velar place of articulation is favoured for ejectives. This would explain both the case of Baṭḥari within the Semitic picture and the favoured retention of the ejective *k' versus the phonological patterning of *ṭ with breathed consonants. *k' is of peculiar relevance since across Afroasiatic and especially in Semitic it has undergone voicing in many cases (Fallon 2002: 369). It is tempting to see this process as the basis of the distinction between *qāl* vs. *gāl* dialects of Arabic, demonstrating that Arabic emphatics were ejectives in its early stages – but such research has yet to be performed and thus has not been proved yet. Interestingly, no possible comparison was found with any Ethiosemitic language, which makes the case of MSAL and Baṭḥari even more peculiar.

To re-assess the topic of emphasis in Semitic from an Afroasiatic perspective, we may need to take into consideration the class of implosives, which is well-represented in the Chadic and, partially, in the Cushitic branch.

3.3.1 Implosives in Afroasiatic

Most feature theories – except for Clements and Osu (2002) – analyse implosives as obstruents, which are distinguished by an extra laryngeal feature. We will follow again Duanmu (2016:139) by saying that implosives are characterized by the Larynx-[–raised] feature. The high presence of bilabial and alveolar implosives was invoked as one of the distinguishing features of Greenberg's tentative 'Nuclear African area' (Greenberg 1959, 1983), and later of the 'Sudanic belt' by Clements and Rialland (2007: 40-41). According to them, these segments are twelve times commoner in the Sudanic belt than elsewhere in the world. Implosives are a feature peculiar to Chadic and, to a certain extent, to Cushitic. Generalizing over the data we examined, Chadic languages tend to contrast three series of stops (voiced, voiceless and implosive) at up to four places of articulation. Nearly all Chadic language have the implosives /ɓ/ and /ɗ/ (which are reconstructed for Chadic (Haruna 1995: 138) – while seldomly they have an additional palatal /ʄ/ or, in only one case (Tera: see Tench 2007) velar /ɠ/ implosive. The latter has most often developed as an ejective /k'/ or /q/ in Cushitic. See for example:

> Proto-East Cushitic *k'andʒ- 'udder' > Burji *k'ánʔ-i, k'ánɗ-i* 'clitoris;' Somali *qanj-iḍ* 'lymphatic gland;' Daasanach *ɠan-* 'udder;' Konso *qanɗ-itta* 'udder; swollen or abnormally big gland;' Hadiyya *gan-ce* 'udder;' Gollango *ɠan-te* 'udder.' East Cushitic: Kambata *k'an-* 'to

suck (tr.), to nurse (intr.),' *k'an-s-* 'to nurse (tr.);' Sidamo *k'an-* 'to suck (tr.), to nurse (intr.),'
k'an-s- 'to nurse (tr.)' (Bomhard 2014: 206)*.*

A common feature of Chadic implosives is that voicing is not distinctive (Ladefoged 1968: 6). As for Semitic, there is the sole occurrence of the alveolar implosive /ɗ/ segment in Zay. However, it is a marginal phoneme appearing only in loanwords from Cushitic languages, especially from Oromo (Meyer 2005), due to the speakers' high rate of multilingualism. Furthermore, implosives in the non–basic lexicon of peripheral varieties of Arabic, such as Nigerian and Chadian Arabic (Owens 1985) and Djogari, a sub–dialect of the Bukharan area in Uzbekistan (Tsereteli 1939), and in Eastern Libyan Arabic as realizations of emphatic /ṭ/ (Rakas 1981) can be found. These occurrences were not considered since they undoubtedly are the consequence of extensive contact with other local languages and, in the case of Eastern Libyan, a specific local development. Notwithstanding these cases, the basic assumption that Semitic languages do not have implosives can be held true.

According to Bomhard (2008:83) – and already Martinet (1975) – the implosives extensively found in Chadic languages 'can be seen as having developed from earlier ejectives at the Proto–Chadic level' through a process of 'anticipation of the voice of the following vowel,' giving p' t' k' > ɓ ɗ ɠ. For this reason, it is possible to posit another typological trajectory of development of segments comparable to Semitic emphatics in the rest of Afroasiatic parallel to Dolgopolsky's model – discussion over this aspect is left to the Conclusions.

Ejectives and implosives often co-occur in Cushitic and Omotic. In the languages belonging to these groups which do not have glottalic consonants, the implosives are usually realized as retroflex /ɖ/ and uvular /q/ instead, such as in Somali and Afar (Sasse 1992: 326). It is argued that ejectives were lost diachronically in certain branches of Cushitic, and especially Agaw, but reintroduced through contact with Ethiosemitic (Crass 2002; Fallon 2015), and in fact ejectives apart from /k'/ occur predominantly in loanwords from Amharic and Tigrinya leaving their phonemic status problematic. Furthermore, it must be added that some languages of the Goemai West Chadic group have developed an ejective consonant series /p'/, /t'/ which contrast with the implosive series, but this is said to be a recent innovation with no historical relevance (Newman 2006: 192).

Ejective and implosive consonants appear to be in complementary distribution in some of these languages, while in others they don't. One may wonder about the possibility that the occurrence of both ejectives and implosives could be a hint of their patterning as a single class of glottalic elements. There seems to be language–specific variation on this matter: as an example, in a language such as Ts'amakko (Cushitic) ejectives and implosives clearly pattern together in a glottalic class. Let us examine its inventory of glottalic sounds and their plain counterparts as reported in Savà (2005: 19):

	Bilabial		Alveolar		Palatal		Velar		Uvular	
	v−	v+	v−	v+	v−	v+	v−	v+	v−	v+
Stops	p	b	t	d	c		k	g		
Fricatives			s	z	š	ž			x	
Glottalics		ɓ	ts'	ɗ	c'			ʄ	q'	

Table 2. Phonetic inventory of Ts'amakko

Savà puts both implosives and ejective segments under the generic label 'glottalic,' suggesting their patterning in the same phonological class – with good reason: in fact, various allophonic processes result in free alternation between ejectives and implosives. As an example, 'the articulation of the uvular ejective /q'/ may be implosive. There are two implosive realisations, […] voiced uvular implosive [ɠ] ~ voiceless uvular implosive [ʛ̥], as in /q'eed/ [ʛ̥eːd ˺] lick!' (Savà 2005:32). Furthermore, 'when /ɗ/ is geminated one clearly perceives a glottal stricture before the release of the stop, which is postalveolar and apical' (Savà 2005: 32), according to the rule /ɗɗ/ > [ˀḏ:][+postalveolar], as in /mudɗe/ [muˀḏːe] 'handle of a headrest.' The implosive /ʄ/ can have a devoiced realization and '[a] preceding /l/ may cause reduction of /ɗ/ to glottal stop' (Savà 2005: 32). Therefore, we may portray Ts'amakko glottalics as being distinguished as a phonological class by an unspecified active larynx-[raised] feature.

Another example is Hausa (Cushitic). Hausa has a set of glottalized phonemes contrasting with voiced and voiceless plosives (Newman 2000: 392). Glottalized phonemes appear to pattern together with obstruents in that they can co-occur within the same word and trigger gemination in CC clusters, while sonorants do not.

A further example is Aari (Omotic) with the following inventory of glottalics (Hayward 1990: 429):

Plosive/ Affricate		Labial	Dental	Alveolar	Palatal
	voiced	b	d		
	voiceless	p	t	ts	tʃ
	glottalic	p'	d'	ts'	tʃ'

Table 3. Glottalized consonants in Aari

Hayward uses the ejective spelling for the whole set of glottalics, but he also notes that /p'/ has a partially–devoiced implosive [ɓ] realization and that /d'/ is a fully voiced implosive [ɗ]. Ejectives and implosives in Aari can be said to pattern under a generic 'glottalic' class.

As we have seen, it is far from uncommon to encounter oscillation between implosive and ejective realizations of the same segment at the phonetic level. An interesting case is that of Wellegga Oromo (Cushitic). Lloret (1995:261) reports a case of implosivization of the coronal ejective when it comes in contact with a following nasal, undergoing methatesis and implosivization: fit'–na > finɗa 'we finish,' lit'–na > linɗa 'we enter.' Another instance of a phonotactic process involving glottalics is found in Dime (Omotic), where /ɗ/ appears in alternation with /t'/ (Seyoum 2008: 12), a common feature of the Aaroid languages (Bender 1988: 124).

On the other hand, some languages can contrast an ejective with an implosive at the same place of articulation. We can have a closer look at the inventory of Dahalo (Cushitic). Dahalo has an apparently extraordinary wide set of phonemes– 65 phonemes in Maddieson *et al.* (1993), 50 in Tosco (1991) – but this complicated system seems caused mainly by allophonic and contact phenomena. If, following Tosco (1991: 8-9), we take in consideration only the consonants which can appear in stem-final position, and that therefore we can consider as part of the 'core-system' of the language, we find out that only 27 consonants can occur. Of these, we show the series showing a laryngeal contrast which involves glottalic consonants:

		Bilabial	Dental	alveolar	Velar	
					plain	round
Stop	voiceless	p	t		k	kʷ
	voiced	b	d		g	
	ejective	p'	t'		k'	
	implosive		ɗ			
Lateral	voiceless			ɬ		
	voiced			l		
	ejective			tɬ'		

Table 4. Glottalized consonants in Dahalo

One should look at the other phonemic distinctions as peripheral and not pertaining to the core phonological system of the language. The apparently striking simultaneous presence of dental and alveolar obstruents is the consequence of language contact: in fact, the set of alveolars is seen by Tosco

(1992: 145) as a borrowing from Bantu languages, since Cushitic languages usually have dental rather than alveolar stops and alveolars are found mainly in loanwords (and therefore they are excluded in table 4). Notably, Dahalo contrasts between ejective /p'/ and implosive /ɓ/, and between ejective alveolar /t'/ and implosive alveolar /ɗ/. This means that the patterning of implosives and ejectives under the same phonological class is not a linguistic universal.

This situation recalls the one described by Lloret (1997) for Oromo. She reports that

> [t]he fact that Oromo has /t'/ as well as /d'/ is another rarity, because if a language displays an ejective series it usually does not have implosives at the same point of articulation. In fact, most other Cushitic languages only present either the implosive/retroflex segment (e.g. Saho-Afar, Somali, Konso) or the ejective one (e.g. Hadiyya). Only one other Cushitic language presents both segments, namely Dullay (Gawwada and Gollango) (Lloret 1997: 501)

According to Lloret, it is difficult to group the glottalic sounds of Oromo as required by the phonology of the language. The activation of McCarthy's Pharyngeal articulator in ejectives and implosives 'depends on specific contrasts that languages make within the guttural series' (Lloret 1997: 132). However, these last remarks do not subtract validity to the general statement that the activation of the Larynx-[raised] feature characterizes Afroasiatic in general, notwithstanding the direction of this process: implosives can thus be understood as another diachronic manifestation of emphasis.

4. Conclusions

Re-introducing Afroasiatic in the picture, we can now re-work Dolgopolsky's (1977) and Bellem's (2014) typological scale as follows:

- Afroasiatic has a former contrast between glottalized and plain segments (Stage Ø). The Larynx-[raised] feature, where maintained, can either keep its positive [+raised] value or be activated in the opposite direction [–raised], as happened in Chadic;
- early Semitic had a contrast between glottalized emphatics and aspirated non–emphatics;
- because of a process of recession, the glottalic emphatics activate the [–ATR] feature as a secondary articulation. The non–emphatics are distinguished by the lack of this feature (Stage 1). This stage is not necessarily clear-cut, however, and can cause a split in the phonological behavior of the emphatics, leading to a progressive loss of the glottalic feature due to lenition (Stage 2), to the point that emphatics become defined by backing and lack of aspiration, opposite to their non–emphatic

counterparts (Stage 3). Baṭḥari (together with the rest of MSAL, tentatively) is found between stage 1 and stage 3 (see also Bellem 2014);

- because of the loss of aspiration contrast, emphatic and non–emphatic are distinguished only through backing (Stage 4).

To conclude, this study aimed to give a portrait of the development of emphasis in Semitic by using original data from one MSAL language, Baṭḥari, and adopting a broad phonological perspective. Furthermore, we tried to put in relation the Semitic process to the rest of Afroasiatic, individuating a phonological explanation for the development of implosives in other branches. MSAL emphatics surely are of extreme importance for the reconstruction of the historical development of Semitic emphatics and we hope that this paper showed how working on under-represented languages may lead to new perspectives and findings within the field.

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T'ambaaro phonology

Ongaye Oda Orkaydo

This article describes the phonology of T'ambaaro, a Highland East Cushitic language of the Afro-asiatic phylum spoken in southwest Ethiopia. The language has twenty-four consonant phonemes, and five oral vowels and one nasal vowel whose phonemic status is not safely established. The oral vowels are typical Cushitic vowels occurring short and long. In T'ambaaro, except the phonemes/h/ and /f/ which never occur geminate, the rest of the consonant phonemes appear geminate, but that is only in word medial position. The palatal nasal and the voiceless, alveo-palatal affricate never occur as a single consonant, but only as a geminate consonant. Gemination and vowel length are phonemic in the language. Consonant cluster are allowed only in word medial position with a maximum of two consonants. Some consonants and vowels appear in free variation, but it is very difficult to formulate a systematic rule that captures the phenomenon. The phonology has phonological processes such as assimilation, epenthesis, deletion, and metathesis. T'ambaaro is not a tonal language, but seems a pitch accent language which is difficult to establish a rule for at this stage.

Keywords: T'ambaaro, phonology, Highland East Cushitic, Ethiopia

1. Introduction

The T'ambaaro mainly live in Kambata-Tambaro Administrative Zone, particularly in the Tambaaro *woreda* (district) in the Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples' Regional State (SNNPRS). Durame is the main town of the Kambata-Tambaro Zone while Mudula is the main town of the Tambaro *woreda.*

The main economic source and means of livelihood strategy in T'ambaaro is farming. They produce various types of crops such as sorghum, maize, wheat and teff, among others. They also grow enset 'false banana,' coffee as well as various spices such as ginger, mace, etc. They also practice cattle rearing in the lowlands mainly along the Gibe River. Bilingualism and multilingualism are common phenomena due to contact with neighboring ethnic groups such as Kambaata, Hadiyya and Wolayta. Genetic relationship also plays a crucial role in the bilingual phenomenon. For instance, for the most part, Kambaata and T'ambaaro speakers do not have any difficulties in understanding each other due to genetic relationship between the two languages. Even some scholars write about T'ambaaro being a slightly divergent dialect of Kambaata (Treis 2008; Korhonen *et al.* 1986). Treis (2008: 4) writes about

the high degree of mutual intelligibility between the two languages saying that "[T]he differences between Kambaata and T'ambaaro are marginal and they do not impose any difficulties for communication between the two groups." During fieldwork periods, the key language consultants were asked if their language was similar to or different from Kambaata, and that they have any communication barrier. Their response was that "our language is quite different from Kambaata even if we do not have any difficulty understanding each other." Other languages spoken in the wereda are Amharic and English. During the data collection, Amharic was serving as a medium of instruction in the primary school. It was also the language of administration though code mixing in Amharic and T'ambaaro, and a tendency to overwhelmingly use T'ambaaro is observed when only the native members in the administration hold meetings. Amharic is also widely used in Mudula. English is used as a medium of instruction from grade five (the beginning of the second cycle of the primary school) onwards. In the lower grades, it is used as a school subject, and spoken to varying degrees. Highly educated members of the community speak it fluently.

The T'ambaaro language belongs to the Highland East Cushitic (HEC) languages of the Afro-asiatic phylum. According to Hudson (1981: 120) and Tosco (2000: 89), the genetic classification of the HEC languages subsumes such languages as Hadiyya, Kambaata, Sidama, Gedeo and Burji. The classification of these scholars (see Hudson 1981: 120; Tosco 2000: 89) does not include Halaba, K'abeena, Libido/Marek'o and T'ambaaro. The exclusion of these varieties in the genetic classification of the HEC seems to stem from the assumption that they are dialects (Kambaata has close relation with Halaba, T'ambaaro and K'abeena, and Hadiyya has close links with Libido/Marek'o on both phonological and lexical aspects) rather than independent languages (see Eba 2016; Treis 2008; Fekede 2012). Of course, the key language consultants with whom I worked during the field visits on T'ambaaro informed me that their language is closely related to such HEC languages as Kambaata, Sidama and Hadiyya.

According to the key language consultants, the word *T'ambaaro* is used with reference to the people as well as to their land. When reference to the language is intended, the derivational suffix *-sa* is added to the nominal root *t'ambaar-* so that we get *T'ambaarsa* as the name of the language. Based on the official orthography of T'ambaaro, the alveolar, voiceless ejective /t'/ is written as <x>. As a result, we have *Xambaro* and *Xambarsa* as the spelling for the self-name and the language, respectively. According to the Central Statistical Agency (2007) report, the Tambaro number around 98,600. The local official figures on the Tambaro population show that the number of population of the Tambaro people is much higher than the figures of the Central Statistical Agency (2007).

According to the information obtained from the Finance and Economic Office of the Tambaro district, the total population of the Tambaro is about 137,000.

The T'ambaaro language has received very little attention. So far, there is only one unpublished sociolinguistic survey report for SIL by Hussein (2012). In this survey report, Hussein discusses about language attitude, language vitality and community desire to develop their language. Hussein states that despite reports (e.g., Korhonen *et al.* 1986) that there is a high level of mutual intelligibility between T'ambaaro and Kambaata, the T'ambaro perceive themselves and their language as different from Kambaata. This strong self-esteem and language identity has also been observed during the data collection for this paper. The majority of the T'ambaaro people are monolinguals though bilingualism in Amharic and T'ambaaro is on the rise, particularly in the urban areas. With regard to language vitality, Hussein (2012) also reports that the T'ambaaro language is actively used in everyday life in the rural areas. Indeed, in recent years, attempts have been made to promote the language as a medium of instruction in the lower levels of primary education. Like many Cushitic language speakers, the T'ambaaro community has adopted the Latin script to write their language with. During the data collection, I checked the T'ambaaro alphabet, and found out that it contains extra two symbols **v** and **zh** that represent the English voiced, labio-dental fricative, and voiced, alveo-palatal fricative, respectively. Members of the orthography committee for the promotion of the T'ambaaro language informed me that the extra graphemes are included in order to support children during their transition from T'ambaaro to English. My position in this regard is that the inclusion of foreign sounds and graphemes into the native sound inventory and alphabet when these sounds are not significantly incorporated into the native language contradicts with the notion of mother tongue education, and, therefore, should not be included in the name of easing the transfer from native language to a foreign language.

The main purpose of this article is to account for the phonological aspects of the T'ambaaro language. It is organized as follows: after the introduction, I discuss the sound inventory in Section two. Section three presents the phonotactic constraints of the T'ambaaro language. Sections four and five treat free variation and phonological processes, respectively. Data for this article were collected during field visits made to T'ambaaro district in 2013, 2015 and 2018.

2. Sound inventory

The inventory of consonant phonemes in T'ambaaro involves seven manners of articulation (namely, plosive, nasal, fricative, affricate, liquid, ejective, and glide) and six places of articulation (namely, labial, alveolar, (alveo)-palatal, palatal, velar and glottal). Along these places and manners of

articulation, we identify 24 consonant phonemes (Ongaye and Samson 2018). The consonant phonemes are presented in Table 1. Among the consonant phonemes, voice opposition is found between alveolar and velar plosives, alveolar fricatives and alveo-palatal affricates. Treis (2008: 22) in her Kambaata consonant inventory includes the glottalized liquids /r'/ and /l'/, that are not attested in T'ambaaro nor in other genetically related languages such as Hadiyya (Tadesse 2015: 20), Halaba (Fekede 2012: 34), Gedeo (Eyob 2015: 25), K'abeena (Ongaye 2014: 23) and Sidama (Kawachi 2007: 28).

	Labial	Alveolar		Alveo-palatal		Palatal	Velar		Glottal
Plosives		b	t	d			k	g	ʔ
Nasals		m	n			ɲ			
Fricatives	f		s	z	ʃ				h
Affricates				tʃ	dʒ				
Liquids			l, r						
Ejectives	p'		t'	tʃ'			k'		
Glides		w				y			

Table 1. Consonant phonemes[1]

In order to describe all the consonant phonemes of T'ambaaro, I use three parameters: *place of articulation, manner of articulation* and *condition of vocal cords.* Based on these parameters, I provide the description of each of the consonant phonemes presented in Table 1. After the description, I give illustrative example words.

2.1. Plosives

T'ambaaro has six plosives, viz, /b, t, d, k, g, ʔ/. All the six plosives are also found in the genetically related languages such as Hadiyya (Tadesse 2015: 20), Halaba (Fekede 2012: 40), K'abeena (Ongaye 2014: 23) and Sidama (Kawachi 2007: 23). The description and illustrative examples of the plosives are presented in 1.

1. /b/ bilabial, voiced, plosive

    badala 'maize'

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[1] In the table, when two symbols occur in a pair in a column, the one to the left represents a voiceless sound and the one to the right represents a voiced counterpart. Except the symbol *<y>* which is used to represent the palatal glide /j/, I have adhered to the IPA conventions.

baʤita	'cheek'	
beeze	'star'	
buula	'mule'	
arrabi	'tongue'	
dabaak'ula	'pumpkin'	

/t/   alveolar, voiceless, plosive

kota	'small'
tumaa	'garlic'
hizoota	'sister'
toʃa	'ant'
taʔiʧʧu	'fly'

/d/   alveolar, voiced, plosive

darga	'forest'
donikka	'potato'
duunna	'hill'

/k/   velar, voiceless, plosive

kaazu	'ice, snow'
kinu	'stone'
koru	'flea'
kuʧʼaami	'stomach'

/g/   velar, voiced, plosive

gaameela	'camel'
geeggi	'tortoise'
giira	'fire'
godu	'hut'
gula	'testicle'

/ʔ/   voiceless, glottal, stop

saʔa	'cow'
woʔaa	'water'
zuruʔma	'finger'

2.2. Nasals

There are three nasal phonemes in T'ambaaro. These are /m, n, ɲ/. The first two nasal consonants are well established in the language as we can find them in word initial and medial positions. However, the last phoneme /ɲ/ is very doubtful as it exists only in one instance. Indeed, the fact that its phonemic status is doubtful is also observed in Kambaata (Treis 2008: 33). In Hadiyya (Tadesse 2015: 20) and Gedeo (Eyob 2015: 27), it is not present at all. On the other hand, it is present in such Highland East Cushitic languages as Halaba (Fekede 2012: 40) and Sidama (Kawachi 2007: 28). In 2., I describe the nasal phonemes and provide illustrative examples of T'ambaaro.

2. /m/ bilabial, nasal, voiced

malabu	'honey'
mat'ini	'salt'
mini	'house'
muli	'kidney'
muummi	'head'

/n/ alveolar, nasal, voiced

nubaaʧʧu	'old man'
unuuna	'breast (woman's)'
wozanaa	'heart'
t'eena	'rain'

/ɲ/ palatal, nasal, voiced

haɲɲ asse	'to bite'

2.3. Fricatives

T'ambaaro has five fricatives. These are /f, s, z, ʃ, h/. As can be seen from the list, T'ambaaro makes voice distinction only in the alveolar fricatives. This is also attested in Hadiyya (Tadesse 2015: 20), Gedeo (Eyob 2015: 27) and Sidama (Kawachi 2007: 28). In 3., I provide the description and example words for the fricatives in T'ambaaro.

3. /f/ labio-dental, voiceless, fricative

feeru	'garden'
fuutta	'cotton'

	fink'illu	'porridge'
	fellaa	'goat'
/s/	alveolar, voiceless, fricative	
	samaa	'sky'
	sanu	'nose'
	sarbaa	'calf (of leg)'
	saʔa	'cow'
	waasa	'food'
/z/	alveolar, voiced, fricative	
	zaraaru	'flower'
	ziiʃu	'bee'
	azu	'milk'
	bagazu	'spear'
	ozi	'dinner'
/ʃ/	alveo-palatal, voiceless, fricative	
	faaʃʃu	'horse'
	iʃima	'maternal uncle'
	ʃuma	'urine'
	ʃaafa	'sand'
/h/	glottal, voiceless, fricative	
	bahaara	'sea, ocean'
	haamu	'chest'
	hizoo	'bother'
	hulla	'hump'

2.4. Affricates

There are two affricates in T'ambaaro. These are /ʧ, ʤ/. Both of the affricates are found in all the other Highland East Cushitic languages. The description and illustrative examples are given in 4.

4.	/ʧ/	palato-alveolar, voiceless, affricate	
		mik'iʧʧu	'bone'
		k'amalʧu	'monkey'
	/ʤ/	alveo-palatal, voiced, affricate	

ʤaala	'friend'
anʤa	'saliva'
baʤi	'cheek'
guʤʤu	'back'

2.5. Liquids

There are two liquids in T'ambaaro, namely, /l, r/. Both are voiced. In 6., I give the description and illustrative examples for the liquids in T'ambaaro.

6. /l/   alveolar, voiced, lateral liquid

gulubi	'knee'
maalaa	'meat'
laalu	'fruit, seed'
laga	'river'

/r/   alveolar, voiced, liquid

t'ork'ee	'whip'
ʃarafa	''weed'
ortʃ'a	'mud'
ari	'wife'

As mentioned earlier, Treis (2008) reports that Kambaata has glottalized liquids /l', r'/ in addition to the plain liquids /l, r/. She argues that the presence and phonemic status of these liquids eluded the attention of linguists who worked on the Kambaata language before. She provides ample examples for each of these sounds (Treis 2008: 35-36), some of which are presented in 7. It is not yet clear how Kambaata happened to get these glottalized liquids, as such liquids are not attested in T'ambaaro, nor in the other Highland East Cushitic languages.

7. a.   *gal'á*   'shard'

ʤal'íta	'lotion'
ʤal'á	'sloppy (e.g. of bean or pea pods that are not fresh any more)'

b.   *fur'á*   'agent for fermentation, yeast'

gor'ú	'to be(come) green, unripe (of coffee, beans, oranges, lemons)'
hur'á	'protruding navel'

sur'á	'umbilical cord'
ʃur'á	'tuft of hair in the middle of the belly (of bulls, goat rams)'

2.6. Ejectives

There are four voiceless ejectives in T'ambaaro. These are /p', t', ʧ', k'/. The other Highland East Cushitic languages also have the four voiceless ejectives in their inventory. In 8., I describe the ejective phonemes, and provide illustrative examples.

8.   /p'/   bilabial, voiceless, ejective

t'ap'a	'root'
k'up'p'a	'egg'

/t'/   alveolar, voiceless, ejective

siint'a	'heel'
t'abaroo	'ash'
t'eema	'fresh milk'
mat'ini	'salt'

/ʧ'/   alveo-palatal, voiceless, ejective

orʧ'a	'mud'
ʧ'ii?a	'bird'
ʧ'amba	'soup'
ʧ'inu	'faeces'

/k'/   velar, voiceless, ejective

hark'oota	'yoke'
mik'iʧʧu	'bone'
k'eessa	'cheese'
k'egi	'blood'

2.7. Glides

There are two glides in T'ambaaro, namely, /w, y/. These phonemes are also found in the other Highland East Cushitic languages. The descriptions and illustrative examples are given in 9.

9.   /w/   labio-velar, voiced, glide

         waasa   'food'

         weesi   'false banana'

         wodaru   'rope'

         awuriʧʧu   'cock'

  /y/   palatal, voiced, glide

         yemazu   'waist'

         yaburu   'lip'

         yemeʧʧu   'rat'

Minimal pairs are quite rare in the language. No example of minimal pairs is found for consonant sounds that differ only in one parameter. The few available examples show that the contrasting phonemes differ in more than one parameter. These minimal pairs are given in 10.

10.   /f/ and /r/

         kofu   'upper arm'

         koru   'flea'

  /b/ and /ʧ'/

         goobaa   'neck'

         gooʧ'aa   'entrance'

  /d/ and /m/

         adataa   'paternal aunt'

         amataa   'mother'

  /ʤ/ and /m/

         ʤaalaa   'friend'

         maalaa   'meat'

3. Gemination

In T'ambaaro, consonant phonemes occur geminate, but that is only in word medial position. Moreover, gemination is not only of lexical but also of morphological and grammatical importance in T'ambaaro. This is also true in the other Cushitic language such as Kambaata (Treis 2008), Halaba (Fekede 2012), K'abeena (Ongaye 2014), Hadiyya (Tadesse 2015), Konso (Ongaye 2013). Among the twenty-four consonant phonemes in T'ambaaro consonant inventory, only two consonant phonemes

(i.e., /h/ and /f/) do not occur as geminate consonants. The palatal nasal and the voiceless, alveo-palatal affricate never occurs as a single consonant, but only as a geminate consonant. Below, I give illustrative examples in which we have the geminate consonants. It is, indeed, important to point out that where we have only one or two examples, this means that these are the only lexical items in which the geminate consonant in question is attested in the language.

11.	bb	*zoobbeeʧʧu*	'lion'
		oobbaa	'foot'
	tt	*attaba*	'chicken'
		tittiraa	'nose cancer'
		fuutta	'cotton'
	dd	*diddibbaa*	'fatness below the calf (of leg)'
		maaddaa	'meal' (cf. Amharic *ma'ɨd*)
		met't'edda	'together, with'
	kk	*lokka*	'leg'
		makkaa	'comfort'
		donikka	'potato'
	gg	*geeggi*	'tortoise'
		gaggarra	'plain area'
		aagga	'introduction'
	mm	*muummi*	'head'
		undulumma	'mortar'
		billamma	'knife'
	nn	*duunna*	'hill'
		binni	'gnat'
		lankaanna	'uncle (paternal)'
	ɲɲ	*haɲɲ asse*	'to bite'
	ss	*k'eessa*	'cheese'
		maassa	'blessing'
	zz	*beezzee*	'star'
		yamezzu	'waist'
	ʧʧ	*irriʧʧu*	'sun'
		buʧʧaa	'soil'

	maatʃʃa	'ear'
ʤʤ	*guʤʤu*	'back'
	kobboʤʤu	'seedling'
ʃʃ	*hallaaʃʃa*	'crocodile'
	hooʃʃu	'lunch'
	faaʃʃu	'horse'
p'p'	*k'up'p'a*	'egg'
	tuup'p'a	name of a historical place
t't'	*hit't'i*	'grass'
	t'at't'i	'be ready (SG addressee)!'
	met't'e	'once'
k'k'	*wok'k'a*	'road'
	hak'k'a	'wood'
tʃ'tʃ'	*matʃ'tʃ'aa*	'ear, leaf'
	gootʃ'tʃ'a	'door'
ll	*iilli*	'eye'
	fellaa	'goat'
	olla	'village, neighborhood'
rr	*arrabi*	'tongue'
	arriitʃʃu	'sun'
	harruutʃʃu	'donkey'
	gootʃ'tʃ'aa	'door'
ww	*billawwaa*	'knife'
	gawwaa	'foolish, hard of hearing'
	hawwarru	'evening'
yy	*ayyaano*	name of a person
	ayyamo	name of a person
	waalayyoom	'I am coming'
ʔʔ	*ãʔʔãʔ*	'no'
	kaʔʔudin	'there (towards the speaker)'

In T'ambaaro, gemination is phonemic. Indeed, not all consonant phonemes show the contrast between a single consonant and its geminate counterpart as shown in 12. The attested examples for

the phonemic status of gemination are found only in ten of the twenty-four consonant phonemes. The contrast between the single and its geminate counterpart among some phonemes is also reported in such genetically related languages as Hadiyya (Tadesse 2015) and Gedeo (Eyob 2015). The work of Tadesse (2015) on Hadiyya also contains the contrast between single and their counter geminate consonants in about ten consonants, namely, /b vs. bb; d vs. dd; f vs. ff; g vs. gg; l vs. ll; n vs. nn; s vs. ss; t vs. tt; t' vs. t't'; p' vs. p'p'/. For Gedeo, Eyob (2015: 58) also provides minimal pairs for single-geminate consonants only for six consonants, viz. /d vs. dd; b vs. bb; l vs. ll; n vs. nn; t' vs. t't'; ɗ vs. ɗɗ/.

12.   /b/ and /bb/

dubuu	'frying something on the fire (e.g. potato)'
dubbuu	'false banana seedling'

/l/ and /ll/

leluu	a collective name for animals such as a cow, sheep, etc.
lelluu	'being visible'
woluu	'another'
wolluu	'number'

/t'/ and /t't'/

t'aat'i	'coil it (SG addressee)!'
t'aat't'i	'be ready (SG addressee)!'

/t/ and /tt/

kotaa	'small'
kottaa	'someone who lost fingers'

/f/ and /ff/

ʧ'efuu	'brewing'
ʧ'effuu	'renovating'

/m/ and /mm/

t'umaa	'generous'
t'ummaa	'peace'

/s/ and /ss/

basuu	'hitting, beating'
bassuu	'food prepared from barley flour'

/d/ and /dd/

badaa	'fallow land'
baddaa	'highland'

/k'/ and /k'k'/

mik'aa	'never, not at all'
mik'k'aa	'bone'

/g/ and /gg/

toguu	'demonstrating'
togguu	'make someone stressed'

2.3. Vowel phonemes

In T'ambaaro, there are five short vowels, each of them with a long counterpart. This five-vowel system is a typical characteristic feature of the Cushitic five-vowel system. In this article, vowel length is shown by doubling the first letter rather than using a colon after the first letter. There is one marginal nasal vowel in T'ambaaro. That is the low, mid, unrounded nasal vowel /ã/. As discussed below, it appears only in two instances. Hence, its status is unclear yet. The short and their counterpart long vowels are given in Table 2. Treis (2008: 21) reports the marginal presence of nasal vowels in the genetically related Kambaata language. In fact, unlike T'ambaaro which seems to have only one nasal vowel, Kambaata has three nasal vowels: /ã, ũ, ĩ/ (Treis 2008: 21). The presence of nasal vowels in the other Highland East Cushitic languages has not been attested (see Kawachi 2007 for Sidama; Fekede 2012 for Halaba; Ongaye 2014 for K'abeena; Tadesse 2015 for Hadiyya; Eyob 2015 for Gedeo).

	Front	Centre	Back
High	i, ii		u, uu
Mid	e, ee		o, oo
Low		a, aa	
		(ã), (ãã)	

Table 2. Vowel phonemes

Using four parameters such as height of the tongue, part of the tongue involved, condition of lips, and orality/nasality, I provide the description of each of the short vowel phonemes in T'ambaaro. After the descriptions, I give some illustrative examples.

13.   /i/   high, front, unrounded, oral vowel

            ʤibbaa   'mat'

            mat'ini   'salt'

            inku   'tooth, end point'

            illi   'eye'

       /e/   mid, front, unrounded, oral vowel

            gennenu   'nape'

            eloo   'ditch'

            k'egi   'blood'

       /a/   low, centre, unrounded vowel

            angeta   'hand'

            arrabi   'tongue'

            ginata   'second wife'

            darga   'forest'

       /u/   high, back, rounded, oral vowel

            unuuna   'breast (of a woman)'

            undulumma   'mortar'

            koru   'flea'

            tuma   'garlic'

       /o/   mid, back, rounded, oral vowel

            bokku   'house'

            olla   'village, neighbourhood'

            ozi   'dinner'

            koru   'flea'

       /ã/   low, central, unrounded, nasal vowel

            ãã   'yes'

            ãʔʔãʔ   'no'

As shown in Table 13., T'ambaaro has one nasal vowel in its inventory. What is more, this vowel has been found only in the positive and negative responses of polar questions as illustrated in the following examples. Again, no example is found with regard to lexical distinctions between a short nasal vowel and its long counterpart. Indeed, the presence of the nasal vowel in the positive and

negative responses of the polar questions is also attested in Kambaata (Treis 2008: 21). So, it is not clear yet whether T'ambaaro has borrowed the vowel and the lexical items in which it occurs from Kambaata through language contact or that it has retained only these materials from a common ancestral language.

14a. *kuun*   *mini-yaa-n*

      this   house-COP-Q

      'is this a house?'

  b. *ãã*

      yes

      'yes'

  c. *ãʔʔãʔ*

      no

      'no'

As shown in Table 2., all the short oral vowels have their counter long vowels. The following are illustrative words with the long vowels:

15. /uu/   *muummi*   'head'

            buuda   'horn'

            fuutu   'fart'

            guundʒu   'cloud'

     /aa/   *gimbaara*   'forehead'

            laalu   'fruit, seed'

            bargaara   'enemy'

            haamu   'chest'

     /oo/   *oobbaa*   'foot'

            ooloo   'termite'

            afoo   'mouth'

            booraa   'ox'

     /ii/   *iinku*   'tooth'

            iilli   'eye'

            wiliili   'smoke'

	ʧ'iiʔa	'bird'
/ee/	*eelaa*	'pond'
	weessi	'false banana'
	adabeeʧʧu	'boy'
	geeggi	'tortoise'

Short vowels may occur in a contrastive distribution. The minimal pairs with short vowel contrast are not widely available. The attested minimal pairs are given in 16.

16.	/i/ and /o/	*ʃikkaa*	'walking stick'
		ʃokkaa	'twisted thing'
	/i/ and /a/	*birraa*	'dry season; Ethiopian currency (Birr)'
		barraa	'day time'
	/e/ and /o/	*bellaa*	'V-shaped branch'
		bollaa	'shoot (of plant)'

In T'ambaaro, the substitution of a long oral vowel for another long oral vowel may result in a lexical distinction. The substitution of a long oral vowel for a long nasal vowel has not been attested in the language. This may be due to the fact that the nasal vowel is quite restricted in its distribution in the vocabulary of the language. In 17., I provide minimal pairs in which long oral vowels contrast.

17.	/aa/ and /oo/	*baatuu*	'paying'
		bootuu	'bull'
	/uu/ and /oo/	*buuttaa*	'wind instrument'
		boottaa	'bulls'
	/ii/ and /uu/	*giira*	'fire'
		guura	'morning'
	/aa/ and /uu/	*faatta*	'false banana leaf'
		fuutta	'cotton'
	/ee/ and /oo/	*heellaa*	'comfort, safety'
		hoollaa	'sheep (PL)'

Vowel length is phonemic in T'ambaaro. The phonemic behavior of vowel length in the language is observed in oral vowels. In other words, the marginal nasal vowel does not make length difference. The contrast between the short and their long counterparts among the five oral vowels is shown in 18.

18.	/a/ and /aa/	*assuu*	'work'
		aassuu	'gift'
		laluu	'cattle'
		laaluu	'fruit'
	/i/ and /ii/	*ituu*	'eating'
		iittuu	'liking, loving'
	/u/ and /uu/	*t'urii*	'victory'
		t'uurii	'dirt'
	/e/ and /ee/	*eluu*	'old wound inside the body'
		eeluu	'stagnant water, harvested water'
	/o/ and /oo/	*obba*	'valley'
		oobba	'sole'

3. Phonotactic constraints

This section presents the phonotactic constraints of the T'ambaaro language. I first treat consonant occurrences in word initial, word medial and word final positions. Then, I discuss about consonant clusters in the language. With regard to consonant distribution, we find out that T'ambaaro allows consonant phonemes in word initial position. However, not all consonant phonemes appear in this position. Among the twenty-four consonant phonemes of T'ambaaro, five phonemes are disallowed to occur in word initial position. These are:/ʧ, ɲ, p', r and ʔ/. In word medial position, all consonant phonemes occur. In word final position, only two consonant phonemes occur: /ʔ/ and /n/. In the following table, I present the positions in which each consonant phoneme is allowed or disallowed using a plus (+) sign for the presence of the consonant phoneme in the given position, and a minus (-) sign for the absence of the consonant phoneme in the given position.

Consonant phoneme	Word initial	Word medial	Word final
/b/	+	+	-
/t/	+	+	-
/d/	+	+	-
/k/	+	+	-
/g/	+	+	-
/ʔ/	-	+	+
/m/	+	+	-
/n/	+	+	+
/ɲ/	-	+	-
/f/	+	+	-
/s/	+	+	-
/z/	+	+	-
/h/	+	+	-
/ʃ/	+	+	-
/ʧ/	-	+	-
/ʤ/	+	+	-
/l/	+	+	-
/r/	-	+	-
/p'/	-	+	-
/t'/	+	+	-
/ʧ'/	+	+	-
/k'/	+	+	-
/w/	+	+	-
/y/	+	+	

Table 3. Consonant distributions

For the phonemes marked with the plus sign in Table 3, it is important to provide illustrative examples. In 22., I provide illustrative words which allow the occurrence of consonant phonemes in word initial position.

22.	/b/	*badalaa*	'maize'
		baʤi	'cheek'
		buulataa	'mule'
	/m/	*moomme*	'head'
		miini	'forehead'
		malabu	'honey'
	/n/	*nubaaʧʧuta*	'old woman'
		nubaaʧʧu	'old man'
	/f/	*feerutaa*	'garden'
		fagaaraa	'buttock'
		fuutu	'fart'
	/h/	*hullaa*	'hump'
		hoollataa	'sheep'
		haamuta	'chest'
	/t/	*toʃaa*	'ant'
		tumaa	'garlic'
		taʔiʧʧu	'fly (insect)'
	/d/	*dabaak'ulaa*	'pumpkin'
		dargaa	'forest'
		donikka	'potato'
	/k/	*kaazu*	'ice, snow'
		kuʧʼaami	'stomach'
		kofu	'upper arm'
	/g/	*geeggi*	'tortoise'
		giira	'fire'
		godebaa	'belly'
	/s/	*saarbata*	'calf (of leg)'
		sagadaa	'downhill'
		soha	'barley'
	/z/	*zaraaru*	'flower'
		zoofu	'flood'
		ziiʃu	'bee'
	/l/	*laalu*	'fruit'

	laga	'river'
	leʔa	'nape'
/ʃ/	*ʃafaa*	'sand'
	ʃarafa	'weed'
	ʃeerimaa	'tail'
/ʤ/	*ʤaala*	'friend'
	ʤibbaa	'mat'
/t'/	*t'abaroo*	'ash'
	t'ap'aa	'root'
	t'eena	'rain'
	t'ufa	'door, gate'
/k'/	*k'adafaraa*	'lung'
	k'amalchu	'monkey'
	k'ota	'mountain'
	k'urt'ummee	'fish'
/ʧ'/	*ʧ'aʔmaa*	'shoe'
	ʧ'iiʔa	'bird'
	ʧ'iila	'male child'
/w/	*waaʃaa*	'food'
	weesi	'false banana'
	wok'k'aa	'road'
	worakana	'fox'
/y/	*yemeʧʧu*	'rat'
	yaamazu	'waist'
	yaburu	'lip'

Consonant clusters exist in T'ambaaro, but only in word medial position. This means that the language does not allow consonant clusters either in word initial position or in word final position. Moreover, consonant clusters contain a maximum of two consonants.This is not, of course, unique to T'ambaaro, but rather a phonological feature shared by a number of Cushitic languages (Ongaye 2013 for Konso; Treis 2008 for Kambaata; Kiwachi 2007 for Sidama) as well as Omotic languages of Ethiopia (for Maale, see Azeb (2001); for Haro, see Hirut (2004); for Dime, see Mulugeta (2008)). Below, I provide illustrative words for which consonant clusters are attested. Except the palatal nasal, the rest of the

consonant phonemes are allowed to occur in word medial position in consonant clusters as illustrated in 23.[2]

23. /bs/   *biddilibsa*   'blanket'

     /mb/   *ʃumbuu*   'lung'

            k'ombata   'testicle'

     /nd/   *undulummaa*   'mortar'

            ʃenderaa   'porridge'

     /nt/   *siint'a*   'heel'

            mentiʧʧuta   'woman'

     /nk/   *inku*   'tooth'

            ʃinkurta   'onion'

            lankaamataa   'maternal aunt'

     /ng/   *anga*   'hand'

            t'ulunga   'fingernail'

     /nt'/ *siint'a*   'heel'

            hint'a   'breast (animal's)'

            bont'a   'leaf'

     /nz/   *maganzeebu*   'rainbow'

     /nʃ/   *hanʃu*   'bed'

            anʃebo   name of a person

     /ns/   *ansoola*   'bed sheets'

     /nʧ/   *adanʧu*   'cat'

            ilanʧu   'relative (male)'

            manʧu   'man, person'

     /nʤ/   *anʤaa*   'saliva'

            guunʤu   'cloud'

            gunʤireeta   'machete'

     /lb/   *gulbi*   'knee'

            gilbota   'May'

---

[2] Two instances of consonant clusters attested in the data seem to have been borrowed from Amharic: *biddilibsa* 'blanket' and *ansoola* 'bed sheets,' from *birdlibs* and *ansola* (the latter originally from Italian *lenzuola*), respectively.

/lt/	*wolta*	'shield'
	waalte	'she/they came'
/ld/	*baaldita*[3]	'bucket'
	bolda	'top of cane, stalk'
/lk/	*ʃolkiya*	'fourth'
	lemalkiya	'seventh'
/lg/	*balgaara*	'enemy'
/lk'/	*t'ulk'aketa*	'thumb'
/ltʃ/	*k'amaltʃu*	'monkey'
	hooltʃuta	'ewe'
/rb/	*saarba*	'calf (of leg)'
	barbaritaa	'pepper'
/rg/	*dargaa*	'forest'
	bargaaraa	'enemy'
	durgii	name of an administrative division (*kebele*)
/rk'/	*t'ork'ee*	'whip'
	hark'oota	'yoke'
/rtʃ'/	*ortʃ'a*	'mud'
	burtʃuk'k'o	'glass (to drink from)'
/rm/	*zurmitʃ'tʃ'e*	'finger'
/rz/	*orza*	'hair'
/rt/	*ʃinkurta*	'onion'
	burtukkaana	'orange'
	ari	'wife'
/rt'/	*k'urt'ummi*	'fish'
/rb/	*horbaa*	'dinner'
	ʃorbaa	'soup'
	harba	'Friday'
/rf/	*arfiindʒaa*	'pepper'

---

[3] The word *baaldita* is borrowed from Amharic *baldi* 'bucket.' The same is true for the words *burtʃuk'k'o* and *burtukkaana*, which are adapted from the Amharic words *birtʃ'ik'k'o* 'glass' and *birtukkan* 'orange,' respectively.

	marfa[4]	'needle'
	arfiʧʧo	name of a person
/rʧ/	*burʧuk'k'uta*[5]	'glass (for drinking)'
	orʧa	'mud'
/rk'/	*t'ork'ee*	'whip'
	hark'oota	'yoke'
/ʔl/	*maaʃuʔlaa*	'sorghum'
	feʔloma	'frog'
/ʔm/	*ʧaʔma*	'shoe'
/ʔt/	*ʧiʔti*	'buttock'
/sl/	*meslaakkata*	'girls'

The other dimension of phonotactic constraint is intervocality. In this respect, we find that all consonant phonemes occur intervocalically. Of course, a few remarks are important to mention. For example, the voiceless alveo-palatal affricate /ʧ/ and voiced palatal nasal /ɲ/ never occur as single sounds intervocalically. Moreover, the voiceless, bilabial ejective /p'/ was attested only in one instance as a single consonant between two vowels, and instances of geminate /p'/ are very rare, too. In 24., I provide illustrative examples with consonant phonemes occurring intervocalically.

24.	/b/	*arrabi*	'tongue'
		dabaak'ula	'pumpkin'
		ibiibi	'louse'
	/t/	*beetu*	'son'
		fuutu	'fart'
		k'ota	'mountain'
	/d/	*adata*	'aunt (paternal)'
		godu	'hut'
		gidaanʧu	'baboon'
	/k/	*worakana*	'fox'
		mikiʧʧu	'bone'

---

[4] The word *marfa* 'needle' is borrowed from Amharic *mərfə*.

[5] The word *burʧuk'k'uta* 'cup' is borrowed from Amharic *birʧ'ik'k'o*.

	burtukaana	'orange'
/g/	*agantʃu*	'moon'
	goga	'skin, hide'
	k'egi	'blood'
/ʔ/	*tʃ'iiʔa*	'bird'
	leʔa	'nape'
	baʔeelaa	'beans'
/m/	*amataa*	'mother'
	ʃuma	'urine'
	k'oomu	'gourd, calabash'
/n/	*wozana*	'heart'
	ana	'father'
	sanu	'nose'
/ɲ/	*haɲɲiassé*	'to bite'
/f/	*t'ufaa*	'door'
	ʃafaa	'sand'
	afeli	'liver'
/s/	*kasaraa*	'walking stick'
	misaani	'axe'
	bisa	'sword'
/z/	*hizootaa*	'sister'
	ozi	'dinner'
	beeze	'star'
/ʃ/	*miʃira*	'lentil'
	iʃimaa	'maternal uncle'
	toʃa	'ant'
/h/	*bahaara*	'sea, ocean'
	lankiihu	'the second'
	soha	'barley'
/dʒ/	*badʒi*	'cheek'
	hudʒa	'work'
/p'/	*t'ap'a*	'root'
/t'/	*hit'itaa*	'grass'

	mat'ini	'salt'
/k'/	*marak'i*	'soup'
	dabak'ula	'pumpkin'
/tʃ'/	*gootʃ'aa*	'entrance'
	kutʃ'aami	'stomach'
/l/	*eelaa*	'pond'
	tʃ'iilaa	'male child'
/r/	*zoobira*	'vulture'
	ʃeerima	'tail'
	giira	'fire'
/y/	*k'egiyaa*	'it is blood'
	miniyaa	'it is a house'
/w/	*awuritʃtʃu*	'cock'

When we look at the distribution of vowels, we find out that all the five oral vowel phonemes occur in word initial, medial and final positions. For Kambaata, Halaba and Hadiyya, Treis (2008), Fekede (2012) and Tadesse (2015), respectively, report that no word begins with a vowel. I do not know what their ground is because in T'ambaaro, all oral vowels occur in the word initial position. These linguists add the voiceless glottal stop for words that begin with vowels. The presence of vowels in the word initial position in other Highland East Cushitic languages has also been reported by other linguists such as Eyob (2015) for Gedeo, and Kawachi (2007) for Sidama. In Table 4., I present the distribution of the oral vowels in the three positions.

Vowel	Word initial position		Word medial position		Word final position	
/i/	*ibiibi*	'louse'	*mini*	'house'	*afeli*	'liver'
	illi	'eye'	*gina*	'second wife'	*ari*	'wife'
	iʃima	'maternal uncle'	*birra*	'dry season'	*baʤi*	'cheek'
/u/	*unuuna*	'breast'	*fuutta*	'cotton'	*kofu*	'upper arm'
	undulumma	'mortar'	*hulla*	'hump'	*kinu*	'nose'
			muli	'kidney'	*tunsu*	'dark'
/e/	*eela*	'pond'	*geeggi*	'tortoise'	*beeze*	'star'
	eloo	'ditch'	*k'eessa*	'cheese'	*tork'ee*	'whip'
			feeru	'garden		
/o/	*ozi*	'dinner'	*godu*	'hut'	*eloo*	'ditch'
	ortʃ'a	'mud'	*koru*	'flea'	*ooloo*	'termite'
	omolu	'bark (of tree)'	*goga*	'skin, hide'	*afoo*	'mouth'
/a/	*anna*	'father'	*hama*	'branch, stem'	*ada*	'paternal aunt'
	azu	'milk'	*sagada*	'downhill'	*ama*	'mother'
	alasu	'wheat'	*t'abaroo*	'ash'	*maala*	'meat'

Table 4. Distribution of short vowel phonemes

4. Free variation

Free variation is not common in T'ambaaro. Attested examples show that both consonants (25a.) and vowels (25b.) may occur in free variation. There is also an example of free variation in which a single consonant and its geminate substitute as in 25c. Indeed, it is very difficult to formulate a systematic rule that captures the phenomenon of free variation.

25a.	/m/ and /n/	*saymitaa*	~	*saynitaa*	'plate'
	/l/ and /r/	*balgaaraa*	~	*bargaaraa*	'enemy'
	/ʃ/ and /ʧ/	*aʃʃi*	~	*aʧʧi*	'tick (parasite)'
	/h/ and /ʔ/	*kohaa*	~	*koʔaa*	'guest'
	/w/ and /b/	*hawaankaannee*	~	*habaankannee*	'how much'
b.	/aa/ and /ii/	*araagaa*	~	*araagii*	'penis'
	/i/ and /u/	*fank'alimbaʔ*	~	*fank'alumbaʔ*	'he has not returned yet'
c.	/a/ and /aa/	*yamezu*	~	*yaamezu*	'waist'

5. Phonological processes

Phonological processes such as assimilation, epenthesis, deletion, and metathesis have been discovered in the language. Below, I describe each of the phonological processes in the language briefly.

Assimilation is among the phonological processes of T'ambaaro. Partial and complete assimilations have been discovered. Partial assimilation occurs when, for example, the alveolar nasal occurs before the palatal affricates and becomes a palatal nasal (26a.). The case of complete assimilation occurs when the first person plural suffix –n follows a root final bilabial nasal and copies all its features as shown in 26b.

26a.   *maɲʧus*

          manʧu-s

          man-DEM.M

          'the man'

  b.   *naʔodak'k'ammeem*

          naʔo   dak'k'm-n-eem

          we   meet-1PL-1PF

          'we met each other'

Epenthesis is another phonological process in T'ambaaro. T'ambaaro verb roots contain a maximum of two consonants on the coda; when a suffix that begins with a consonant is added to the root, the vowel /i/ is inserted between the verb root and the suffix in order to avoid impermissible sequence of sounds. This is shown in 27.

27.   *gagaʔne muʔrineem*

      gaga-ʔne   muʔr-n-eem

      skin-1PL   cut-1PL-1PF

      'we cut ourselves'

Deletion is still another phonological process. One instance of deletion is the case of optionally deleting the final consonant of the verb root orook'- 'to go.' The phenomenon happens when this verb root is followed by person and aspect marking suffixes as in (28a.-b.).

28a.   *naʔo orooneem*

            naʔo   orook'-n-eem

            we   go-1PL-1PF

            'we went'

  b.   *anʔo orooteenta*

            anʔo   orook'-teenta

            you (PL)go-2PL.PF

            'you went'

Again, metathesis is another phonological process considered for T'ambaaro. During the data collection, only one instance of metathesis has been observed. This particular case involves the exchange of the consonant/g/ in verb roots with the alveolar nasal /n/ that marks first person plural. This process is, indeed, a result of phonological restriction in that T'ambaaro does not allow a cluster of /gn/, but rather the /ng/ cluster. An illustrative example is given in 29.

29.   *angaam*

           ag-n-aam

           drink-1PL-OPT

           'let us drink'

6. Tone and pitch-accent

I tried to find out whether T'ambaaro is a tonal language or not, but could not find any lexical or grammatical distinctions made based on tone. In fact, several Cushitic languages are characterized by not having tone distinctions, or if there is any, that is only to a limited level. From the conversation of the study participants, it seems that the language is a pitch-accent language although I could not figure that out very well. This obviously calls for further research to determine if the language is a pitch-accent language or not.

Acknowledgments

Abbreviation and symbols

COP	copula
M	masculine
OPT	optative
PF	perfective
PL	plural
Q	question
SG	singular
SIL	Summer Institute of Linguistics
SNNPRS	Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples' Regional State
1	first person
2	second person
3	third person

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From *VVU/UKIMWI* (HIV/AIDS) to *UVIKO-19* (COVID-19)

An epistemological analysis of pandemics in Tanzania through Swahili literature

Cristina Nicolini

This paper deals with a theme that has been a topical issue since the beginning of 2020, the outbreak of coronavirus, by comparison with the philosophical and epistemological aspects of HIV/AIDS as they are reflected in different genres of Swahili literature. I will illustrate findings obtained through my analysis of William Mkufya's novels dealing with HIV/AIDS in a prospective way with the upcoming literature dealing with the Covid-19 pandemic. The conclusions I have drawn from the analysis of the philosophical novels, by the Tanzanian intellectual William Mkufya, will be the departure point for my follow-up research on the epistemological, ontological and phenomenological aspects of Covid-19 in Tanzania through different genres of Swahili literature. The potential objectives of this forthcoming research will be the following: firstly, to establish a fictional genre that articulates knowledge about Covid-19; secondly, to explore the evolution of Swahili language used to communicate messages on Covid-19; thirdly, to illustrate the changes undergone by literature after the impact of the Covid-19 outbreak; and finally, to investigate the philosophical perspectives characterising this literary stream: Humanist or post-humanist?

Keywords: HIV/AIDS, Covid-19, Swahili literature, genre, Afrophone philosophies, epistemologies, Tanzania

1. Introduction

I have been investigating Swahili literature on HIV/AIDS from multiple perspectives and through interdisciplinary research since 2011, and more recently, I have focused on the philosophical and epistemological aspects of HIV/AIDS through different genres of Swahili literature, namely plays and novels (Nicolini 2021). The importance of this research, which analyses an illness as a philosophical topic, has been emphasised by the current coronavirus outbreak, for literature on HIV/AIDS illustrates how to deal with the collateral aspects of an epidemic. In fact, the HIV/AIDS epidemic is well-digested and not alive any longer; thus, not only are there substantial data available by comparison with the data about the novel coronavirus pandemic, which is still in progress, but also, since HIV/AIDS is not

an emergency issue anymore, the floor is open for other discourses such as philosophical speculations and debates about knowledge.

The major finding of my current research was to establish the coexistence of plural epistemologies in the philosophical dissertations, concealed in the shape of novels dealing with HIV/AIDS, written in Swahili, by the Tanzanian intellectual William Mkufya, one of the major participants in my research project. My conclusions will be the departure point for my follow-up research on the epistemological, ontological and phenomenological aspects of Covid-19 in Tanzania through different genres of Swahili literature.[1]

2. Possible Comparisons between the Two Viral Outbreaks in Tanzania: A Phenomenological Pathway

The starting point of this paper implies drawing a possible comparison between the two viral outbreaks in Tanzania. On the one hand, HIV/AIDS, in Swahili named *VVU/UKIMWI* (*Ukosefu wa Kinga Mwilini*[2] 'the lack of body defences;' BAKITA 2004), of which the first reported case dates back in 1983 in the Kagera region; and, on the other hand, the novel coronavirus, SARS-CoV-2, in Swahili named *UVIKO-19* (*Umoja wa Virusi vya Korona* 'the cluster of coronaviruses;' BAKITA 2020), of which the first imported case has been identified at Kilimanjaro International Airport (KIA) on 16 March 2020 (Tarimu and Wu 2020).

Professor Aldin Mutembei, who is an expert on the socio-linguistic aspects of HIV/AIDS in the country, has been studying the impact of HIV/AIDS in Tanzanian oral literature since his PhD thesis (2001) in which he conducted an in-depth analysis of metaphors and metonymies in a corpus of oral literature in the Luhaya language (1985 - 1998) in relation to socio-behavioural aspects of AIDS, particularly in connection with gender relations. Afterwards, Mutembei (2009a) examined myths and metaphors in a corpus of Swahili poetry published in several national newspapers (1982 – 2006). According to Mutembei's thorough studies on HIV/AIDS (2001; 2005a, b; 2007; 2009a, b; Mutembei *et al.* 2002; see also Lugalla *et al.* 2004), the metaphorical expressions illustrate how local people's reactions followed a pathway from denial and uncertainty about the "unknown disease," via realisation, fear and despair, to understanding, comprehension, reaction and prevention.

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[1] I presented this paper "From VVU/UKIMWI (HIV/AIDS) to UVIKO-19 (Covid-19): An Epistemological Analysis of Pandemics in Tanzania through Swahili Literature," at the *8th* Asixoxe *(Let's Talk!) Conference on African Philosophy*: *"The Genre of Reality: African Philosophy in the Covid-19 Crisis"*. Online conferences, 15th – 16th June 2021, organized by the Centre of Global Studies, Institute of Philosophy of the Czech Academy of Sciences- Prague (Czech Republic), and the Centre of African Philosophy, University of Bayreuth (Germany).

[2] Another acronym for AIDS that was popular in the Eighties is *MAHABUSI: Matokeo ya Hali ya Burungiko la Silaha za mwili* ('the result of the upsetting state of body defences;' EMAU 1987).

This phenomenological evolution was accompanied by artistic expressions engendering the "Culture of AIDS" (Barz and Cohen 2011) through multiple genres, starting from oral poetry, "African orature" (Mugo 1991), verbal arts, via proverbs and myths to theatre and performance (Mutembei 2011a,b; Askew 2015), which particularly demonstrates the clashes between western epistemological paradigms regarding AIDS and local ideologies and worldviews. Finally, the HIV/AIDS theme spread in novels (Mutembei 2013; 2015; 2016).

A similar phenomenological pathway can be detected in contemporary Tanzania concerning the coronavirus pandemic (*utandavu wa virusi vya korona*).[3] In fact, the former president John Pombe Magufuli, after questioning the accuracy of the coronavirus testing kits (*kivunge cha vipimo vya virusi ya korona*), because Tanzanian laboratories obtained positive responses from tests on papayas, jackfruits, paw paws, sheep and goats, declared the country virus free in May 2020.[4]

This first denialist phase, which was characterised by the rhetoric of "Self against the Other" (Mbembe 2001; Santos 2009), or the myth of *umetoka kwao si kwenu* ('it is coming from them (the strangers) not from us;' Mutembei 2009a: 15f.), perceived the virus as an imported threat coming from abroad to be denied and concealed. For instance, in the Eighties it was believed that black-market dealers, commonly known as *Abekikomela,* who dealt at the Tanzania-Ugandan borders, or *Vijana wa Juliana* ('the young of Juliana'), who smuggled the American brand textile "Eagle" into the country (Mutembei 2009a), and those who sold Euro-American second-hand clothes in Tanzania, were indeed the ones to blame for spreading the HIV virus.

This phase was followed by understanding and the adoption of preventive measures. In fact, in February 2021, the government started officially encouraging the wearing of face masks (*barakoa*), hand sanitisers distribution (*dawa ya kutakasa mikono*), social distancing (*kuepuka msongamano*), and the closure of churches, mosques, schools and other places of social aggregation (*mikusanyiko ya watu*).

The approach of Prevention and Awareness Campaigns pinpoints that being a viral disease, only its symptoms can effectively be treated, and not the virus itself as shown in this poster of public health announcement:

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[3] Baraza la Kiswahili la Taifa – BAKITA. 2020. *ISTILAHI ZA KORONA*.

[4] Sources:
https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2020/5/3/tanzania-president-questions-coronavirus-kits-after-animal-test;
https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-52966016;
https://www.reuters.com/article/us-health-coronavirus-tanzania-idUSKBN22F0KF;
https://www.africanews.com/2020/05/06/tanzania-how-can-goat-papaya-pawpaw-test-positive-to-corona-morning-call/

> *Ugonjwa wa homa ya kirusi cha Corona unatibika? Ugonjwa huu hauna chanjo wala tiba ya moja kwa moja, hivyo kama yalivyo magonjwa mengine yanayosababishwa na virusi, matibabu hufanyika kwa kuzingatia dalili zilizopo na ufuatiliajiwa karibu* (Source: *Elimu ya Afya* No: 659)

> Can the fever caused by coronavirus be treated? This disease has neither direct prevention nor specific treatment, as for other diseases caused by a virus, treatment consists in curing symptoms and clinical observation[5].

Thus, exactly as it happened for HIV/AIDS, this is the phase in which prevention and awareness campaigns are conducted to stop the transmission of an incurable and dangerous disease caused by a virus that can have mortal effects. In fact, the importance of not underestimating the corona disease is stressed: it is dangerous and can kill: *Tusipuuze Watanzania Corona ni Hatari na Inaua* ('Tanzanians, do not ignore coronavirus; it is dangerous and can kill'); protect yourself right now: *Jikinge Sasa* (Source: WHO on Facebook). The importance of preventive measures is also emphasised. A TADB (Tanzania Agricultural Development Bank) advert also reminds people the importance of good nutrition to boost the immune system, among other measures to protect oneself from the virus: *kumbuka lishe bora ni kinga muhimu dhidhi ya virusi vya korona* ('remember, good nutrition is an important protection against coronavirus'). This important point is also supported by traditional healers and local medicinal plant dealers. Particularly after the election of the first ever female Tanzanian president, Samia Suluhu Hassan, on 19 March 2021, further preventive measures against Covid-19 were implemented in the country. However, it seems that there has not been any attempt to procure vaccines in the meantime.

Indeed, during the third phase of uncertainty and fear, the coronavirus vaccination is at the centre of an ongoing debate:

"I know a vaccine is a game-changer in fighting an incurable disease. But the science behind this Covid-19 vaccine is incomplete," said the director of NIMR, Tanzania's National Institute for Medical Research, during a symposium on African awareness and Covid-19 attended by university students and streamed live on 7 March 2021 on Azam.tv Tanzania[6]

The director of NIMR maintains that the Covid-19 vaccines are still experimental: *chanjo ya majaribio*, and that they were "rushed" by pharmaceutical companies for commercial interests.[7]

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[5] All the translations from Swahili to English are mine, unless otherwise indicated. All emphasis mine.

[6] Source: https://z-p4-upload.facebook.com/azamtvtz/posts/1957665954399636

[7]Source:
https://www.scidev.net/sub-saharan-africa/news/top-tanzania-scientist-says-Covid-19-vaccine-experimental/3May 21

The NIMR's director statement: *Chanjo za magharibi zinazotumika sasa huko duniani hazijathibitisha kukinga Covid-19!* ('western vaccines currently used in the world have not proven to protect against Covid-19')[8] ignited an animated discussion which is available on the Web.

For instance, here are three selected reactions retrieved from the Azam TV page on Facebook of 7 March 2021:

The first person (*1)[9] is optimistic about the vaccine and maintains that the debate about it demonstrates that the government has started accepting the virus's existence and taking important measures to fight against it.

The others are sceptical about the vaccine and have more confidence in traditional healers and diviners. One of the two (*2) complains that 'desk research' has not obtained any valuable results and suggests entrusting traditional healers to find an effective vaccination against coronavirus by 'bird divining.'

The third person (*3) simply discourages Tanzanian people from using the imported vaccines and supports local laboratories and national experts instead, reminding people how many times local herbal remedies have been proven to be effective in treating diseases for which European medicine failed. In the end they encourage Tanzanian people to trust African resources and experts.[10]

I also want to draw attention to one particular reaction to the discussion rising from the NIMR's director statement, which expresses doubts about the effectiveness of vaccination, retrieved from *Jamii Forums*, the most popular Tanzanian social forum webpage, on 31 March 2021:

Blogger 1[11] seems to be sceptical about herbal remedies. This blogger argues that it is dangerous to encourage people to use the herbal medicine called *nyungu* by telling them European immunity is not guaranteed, and to discourage them from being vaccinated, because if something goes wrong, they will not be compensated. In fact, the blogger reminds people they will not be compensated for the harm caused by *nyungu* treatment either.[12]

Nevertheless, even European themselves do not trust vaccine as it is confirmed by the discussion arisen about AstraZeneca Vaccine and the danger of unusual blood clots as a side effect[13].

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[8] Source: https://z-p4-upload.facebook.com/azamtvtz/posts/1957665954399636
[9] Names and pseudonyms of all the people and bloggers have been anonymized for data protection.
[10] Source: https://z-p4-upload.facebook.com/azamtvtz/posts/1957665954399636
[11] Names and pseudonyms of all the people and bloggers have been anonymized for data protection.
[12] Source:
https://www.jamiiforums.com/threads/nimr-tunafanyia-utafiti-dawa-7-za-kitanzania-kama-zinatibu-Covid-19-chanjo-za-magharibi-bado-hazijathibitika-kukinga.1844325/).
[13] For example, look at: https://www.bbc.com/news/health-56674796; https://www.france24.com/en/tv-shows/the-debate/20210316-risky-precaution-will-eu-astrazeneca-suspension-do-more-harm-than-good.

The fourth phase of understanding and awareness, in these globalised and technological times, suggests spreading awareness is a much faster process than in the Tanzania of the eighties. In fact, awareness of Covid-19 has been reported very high at 93% among the national population (Ipsos Survey April 2020).

The poems written in Swahili and Luhaya and published in all the main national newspapers to convey messages on HIV/AIDS during the eighties and nineties, nowadays have been substituted by local television (58%), local radio (52%) (Ipsos Survey April 2020), but above all by the Web.

The main media used to communicate about Covid-19 seem to be, firstly, leaflets, booklets, and billboards, sponsored by International Health Organisations and NGOs, even though they did not have an effective impact on the local population in the campaigns against HIV/AIDS because they were considered to pertain to an exogenous cultural and epistemological framework (Mutembei 2014; Beck 2006; Offe 2001).

For instance, the leaflets by *Elimu ya Afya*[14] (No: 644; No: 2092) give clear advice on how to recognise the symptoms of, and how to avoid the virus transmission responsible for *homa kali ya mapafu unaosababishwa na virusi vya corona* ('the acute respiratory syndrome (pneumonia) caused by coronavirus,' @elimuyaafya na: 644), encourage the use of preventive devices such as *barakoa* (the face mask): *Najikinga na Corona...huku nikipendeza na barakoa yangu* ('I protect myself from coronavirus while I am lovable wearing my face mask,' @elimuyaafya na: 2092), and foster the importance of implementing socio-behavioural changes such as social distancing, personal hygiene and sanitation of the environment (cdc.gov/coronavirus). Finally, according to the latest news, the Tanzanian government does seem to have started moving towards taking part in the COVAX vaccination campaign.[15] Indeed, during summer 2021, a few people have voluntarily received vaccine jabs distributed even from government hospitals such as *Bunju* Hospital in Dar es Salaam (p.c.[16]).

In addition to this, social initiatives to educate and prevent coronavirus have been implemented in the country. For instance, a "Covid-19 Information Desk & Resources" has been established at the University of Dar es Salaam (www.udsm.ac.tz), and among the "University of Dar Es Salaam Initiatives Against Covid-19 Pandemic" prototypes of different hand washing machines have been experimented by students in the faculty of Science and Technology.[17]

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[14] Source: https://www.facebook.com/Elimu-Ya-Afya-180970129181238/; https://elimuyaafya.co.tz.

[15] Source: https://www.dw.com/sw/who-tanzania-kuomba-kujiunga-na-mpango-wa-covax/a-57940795.

[16] Personal communication; the informant's name will not be disclosed for data protection.

[17] Source: 20200717_082856_UNIT_75_CUSTOM_PAGE_UDSM%20INITIATIVES%20to%20COVID%2019.pdf.

It is important to note the contribution of the *Soma Book Café* (www.somabookcafe.com), founded in 2008 in Dar es Salaam, to promote reading through multi-media literary expression and storytelling, and to be a hub for storytellers and children. Here, booklets for both adults and children on Covid-19 can be found, distributed by means of initiatives such as the *Children Corona Virus Writing Challenge!!!*[18]

Secondly, those booklets and posters spread alongside locally produced murals, for instance, the wonderful eye-catching and multi-coloured murals designed by the young street artists of VAS (Visual Aided Stories) in Kigogo, Dar es Salaam. One of the posters delivers the message: *Zingatia huku Maisha yanaendelea* ('observe (the rules) as life goes on') – respect the rules (showing people washing their hands with either soap and tap water or sanitisers) so that life can continue. In addition, pungent vignettes of political satire circulate widely on the Web, such as posters on Facebook which criticise the Tanzanian phase of Covid-19 denialism (https://thisisafrica.me @Facebook; DW Kiswahili @Facebook). For example, there is a poster that illustrates politicians declaring the country virus free, while the government was not testing people, or another poster which shows government members criticising the effectiveness of face masks, while the politicians themselves are wearing masks on their eyes, instead of covering their nose and mouth.

Local discourses about coronavirus are conveyed through multi-media channels such as posts on Twitter and Facebook, videos on YouTube and Instagram, as well as in virtual forums such as *Jamii Forums* and the *Tanzania Higher Learning Institutions Students Organization* (TAHLISO) forum online and BlogSpot.

I would like to highlight the public health campaign managed by *Jukwaa La Kidijitali La Elimu Ya Afya Kwa Umma – Digital Forum for Public Health Education* (https://elimuyaafya.co.tz/), whose slogan is: *Afya Yangu, Mtaji Wangu* ('My Health, My Capital;' @elimuyaafya). This multi-media website offers online educational courses, tv and radio podcasts; and it relates to Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and YouTube channels.

I was particularly impressed by the Tweet, on the page of *Elimu ya Afya kwa Umma*, showing the metaphor: *watu wanapukutika*: "people are falling off," which metaphorically means perishing quickly and in great numbers. This metaphor has also been one of the most common images used to represent the mortal effect of HIV/AIDS, as shown in the play for teenagers *Kilio Chetu* 'Our Lament;' MAF 1996): *Watu walipukutika, wakapukutika kama majani ya kiangazi* ('People were falling off, falling off like summer leaves;' KC 1). This published play, which taught on the secondary school syllabus, aims to educate

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[18] See: https://www.somabookcafe.com/soma-presents-children-corona-virus-writing-challenge/.

school age children and teenagers on the risks they could encounter when they become sexually active, such as sexually transmitted infections and unplanned pregnancy.

Finally, there are also examples of live performances, such as the videos about the "Tanzanian Joker" raising awareness about the virus in night burials which have been circulating on social media in Tanzania[19] In addition to this, poetries and songs circulating in the social media have their role to play, such as in the song: *Shairi linalotoa tahadhari juu ya Ugonjwa hatari wa Corona* ('The Poetry that warns about the dangerous disease of Corona') available on *KIZARO TV* YouTube page;[20] the wonderful melody of *Washairi Wa Tanzania – Shairi La Corona* ('Corona Poetry') by the band "Tanzanian Poets" of Dar es Salaam, available on *Life Vibes* YouTube page,[21] which describes Corona as a foreign calamity worse than HIV/AIDS; and, *Ushairi Kuhusu Korona* ('Corona Poetry'), posted on the UMATI[22] blog:[23]

Korona ugonjwa gani, umezua taharuki	Corona, what kind of disease is that? It has start triggering anxiety
Chanjo haipatikani, Ulaya hakukaliki	A vaccination is not available yet, Europe is uninhabitable
Tiba haijulikani, Dunia haifurukuti	The cure is unknown, the World is wiggling out of it
Korona ina maafa, Kujikinga ni LAZIMA [...]	Corona is a Calamity, protecting us is a MUST [...]
(Dr Himidi Mwaitele and Dr Lugano Daimon, 07.04.2020*)*	

In Tanzania, the literary expressions dealing with Covid-19, which consists of songs, poems and performance, demonstrate once again, as it was for HIV/AIDS, that the genre determines the contents, or *vice versa*, the authors choose the genre according to the specific message they want to express. During epidemics in particular, genres reflect the phase of the epidemic, articulating different related messages also according to the historical period. For instance, in the first phase of the crisis, theatre and poetry expose the health issue and its socio-political implications, prioritising distribution of

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[19] Source: https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-52505375.

[20] Source: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pqBYUdk4Ufc

[21] Source: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B57a0TdOqbk

[22] UMATI is a national NGO that provides sexual and reproductive health education and support in Tanzania. See: https://www.umati.or.tz/.

[23] Source: https://www.umati.or.tz/index.php/umati-media/blog/95-announcements/145-ushairi-kuhusu-korona-covid-19

educational messages and preventive measures; whereas novels seem to be the medium for much broader philosophical speculation, usually developed at a later stage of the epidemic when the illness is not an emergency any longer. The illness becomes a metaphor for social issues and prompts contemporary reflection.

3. A Tanzanian intellectual's communication and the theory of *UKIMWI wa Kijamii* (Social AIDS) in relation to Covid-19

At this point in the discussion, I would like to introduce a Tanzanian intellectual, one of the most prominent novelists dealing with HIV/AIDS, William Mkufya, and his viewpoint on an "Epistemology of Epidemiology in Tanzania" (document emailed on 2 May 2021). I am grateful to him for having shared his opinions for the purpose of this paper.[24] The main points raised by Mkufya are as follows:

> Covid-19 is a new disease which has foreign origin, and which was brought to Tanzania by human mobility. Since Covid-19 has symptoms that resemble the common influenza, pneumonia, and other respiratory diseases, which people in Tanzania have been experiencing for ages, there have been local therapies in use since even before the introduction of western medicine. For instance, the herbal remedies administered for melting mucus clogging in patients' throat called *Kufukiza nyungu,* which is a medical treatment that works by steaming herbal concoction extracted from Tanzanian medicinal plants, and that it is administered to patients via steam inhalations so as to unclog lungs.
>
> The Tanzanian psycho-social approach to the Corona disease is cautious to avoid creating social panic and fear of the rapid killer virus of Covid-19. Therefore, a national declaration to depend on faith, 'God would intervene and save the Nation', has been made.

Mkufya refers to Magufuli's call for collective prayers against the Corona disease (source: TAHLISO):

> Furthermore, the Tanzanian government declared that there are not satisfactory statistics about the progression of the disease (numbers of infections and deaths) in contrast with the data gathered by International Health Organizations. This results in a political controversy raised both in East Africa and globally, which tends to blame Tanzania as a nation that is not inclined to observe the international efforts to control Covid-19. The first consequence has been sanctioning local and international travellers and tourism. Moreover, Tanzania considers the early administration of vaccines to its people as unsafe and as a National Health security risk, until when much more evidence of its medical

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[24] I am also grateful to William Mkufya for having been the *mhusika mkuu-* main participant in my research for the last three years.

effectiveness will be available, attempting to protect people from being used as guinea pigs. Finally, the Tanzania refusal to lock down (*zuio la kutotoka nyumbani,* BAKITA 2020), which would have resulted into serious socio-economic consequences, was based on defending the economic progress of the country.

In fact, Mkufya supports Tanzania's prudence in implementing measures against coronavirus, which he defines as "the audacity of rejecting medication" (Mkufya p.c., 09-08-2021).

In conclusion, according to Mkufya, the debate raised by the corona epidemic is rooted in neo-colonial implications as he discussed in his first novel on HIV/AIDS, *Ua La Faraja* ('The Flower of Consolation,' Mkufya 2004), through the concept of *UKIMWI wa kijamii* ('the acquired immunodeficiency syndrome of society;' Mkufya 2004: 357).

UKIMWI wa kijamii ('social AIDS') explains metaphorically how all the traumatic events endured historically by African societies made them fragile, vulnerable to any external aggression and catastrophic event. This is a collective problem, because "the humanity of African people" (*utu wa mwafrika)* assaulted by the collective African history of slavery, colonisation, and neo-colonialism (Mkufya 2004: 361; Rettovà 2007b: 116), has lost its integrity as well as the traditional values connected to the concept of *utu,* which Mkufya translates as humanity, identity and human dignity (Mkufya's email 08-2020).

> *Huu ugonjwa wa UKIMWI usababishwao na virusi umetukuta tayari tunaugua UKIMWI wa kijamii. Umekuta jamii yetu haina kinga ya lolote linalotuvamia iwe njaa, vita, ukame, madawa ya kulevya au migogoro ya kisiasa. UKIMWI wa kijamii umeshakula utu wetu, uzalendo wetu, busara zetu na Imani zetu. Sasa tumebaki ndani ya mataifa tuliyoundiwa na Wazungu, kisha tukasadikishwa Imani zao, mila zao, na tafsiri yao ya utu na utaifa* (Mkufya 2004: 357).

This illness of AIDS, caused by a virus, encountered us at a time when already we were suffering from social AIDS. It found our society already affected by a social immune deficiency syndrome which rendered our society unable to protect itself from everything that could assault us, such as famine, drought, drug abuse and political struggles. This social AIDS had already eaten our human dignity, our patriotism, our wisdom and our traditional beliefs. Now we find ourselves within national boundaries created by Europeans, and we accept as truthful their beliefs, their culture, and their interpretation of humanity and nationalism.[25]

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[25] My translation edited by Mkufya. Emphasis mine.

In this novel, AIDS is not only a medical condition, but also a metaphor for socio-political and economic issues in contemporary African societies (*UKIMWI wa kijamii*), and thus for establishing a philosophy of medicine through literature. In fact, the use of viruses as metaphors reflects the postmodern and postcolonial reality in Tanzania, where people have lost their cultural and societal immune systems, suffering as they are from *UKIMWI wa Kijamii*. Indeed, viruses can infect bodies, but cultural customs can also be infected by the global transmission of cultural replications (Samuels 2021), because according to Baudrillard (1993) modern people have been liberating themselves from all past constraints, so they have lost the capacity to prevent new and/or foreign ideas and images from infecting their own cultural purity (Baudrillard quoted in Samuels 2021: 7-23). As this was the cause of a cultural form of acquired immune deficiency syndrome in the eighties, nowadays viral infiltrations in African literature seem to continue through the ongoing SARS-CoV-2 pandemic.

4. A Philosophy of Medicine in William Mkufya's *Diwani ya Maua* (The Poetry of Flowers)

My latest fieldwork research, carried out in Dar es Salaam,[26] was focused on the empirical work of participant observation that I conducted in William Mkufya's life and fictions. I spent a period living at Mkufya's place together with his family and the cooperation between me and the author consisted in alternating formal interviews, discussions, and his lectures with countless friendly conversations.

The trilogy *Diwani ya Maua* ('The Poetry of Flowers') is devoted to thorough philosophical reflections on "life and death: the two pillars of philosophy" (Mkufya, p.c.) disguised in the narrative shapes of novels, where the author embarks on an intellectual pursuit of: the meaning of life, death, faith, human sexuality, fears of death, the existence of an afterlife, and existential absurdity in relation to HIV/AIDS[27.]

The flowers (*maua*) are a vivid metaphor that represents both the delicate and fleeting existence of human beings as well the existence of decent and compassionate persons in this world. Human beings' life cycle is like that of flowers: "the flower of humanity is the short period of time when human beings, like flowers, are alive and blossoming" (Mkufya 2019: 448):

> *Watu ni maua, yakiisha ndipo yamechanua [...] Uhai, ndilo ua la kuwa kwetu! Sisi ni maua yake, tumedhihirika kwa kuchanua kwa kila rangi* (Mkufya 2019: 448)

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[26] Six months (2018 – 2019) of fieldwork research conducted as part of my PhD degree approved by the School of Oriental and African Languages of London.

[27] "*A story in three novels about HIV/AIDS, fear of death and existential absurdity,*" Mkufya unpublished (email received in January 2019).

> People are like flowers; they blossom while they are alive. […] Life is indeed the flower of our existence! We are the flowers of life, we become real by blossoming in every colour, giving off every scent, and assuming the most attractive shapes.[28]

The trilogy consists of two published novels: *Ua la Faraja* ('The Flower of Consolation,' 2004); *Kuwa Kwa Maua*[29] ('The Existence of Flowers,' 2019); and a third novel still in progress.

Mkufya through the mouth of Dr Hans, the main character and the real flower of the Maua trilogy, a medical doctor and a philosopher, illustrates the complex encounter between scientific progress and local knowledge and culture. This interaction is explored through a discussion revolving around a hypothetical vaccination against HIV/AIDS in Tanzania:

> Dr Hans: *Ukitaka utamaduni wako ushamiri, ufungulie, uweke wazi na uruhusu unufaike kutoka kwenye tamaduni nyingine ili zineemeshe ule wa kwako. Lakini uchague cha kuiga. Sisi huwa hatuchagui. […] Tukiletewa chanjo na kulazimishwa tuchanje watoto wetu, hatukai chini kwanza na kuchunguza usafi na ubora wa hizo chanjo. Ni rahisi kwa mtu mwovu huko Ulaya kuingiza kitu kibaya cha kuteketeza vizazi vya baadaye. […] Chanjo ni muhimu sana. Mimi ni daktari na ninajua umuhimu wa chanjo. Ninachopinga ni kule kutozikagua kwa makini...* (Mkufya 2004: 358-9)

> Dr Hans: If you want your culture to be spread, be released, be open and allow it to profit from other cultures so as to be more comfortable with your own culture; however, you must choose what to imitate. We are not choosing […] Take as an example the vaccine; if vaccination is imported and we are obliged to vaccinate our children, we are not reflecting and evaluating the security and effectiveness of these vaccinations. Like this it is easy for an evil European man to bring a dangerous mechanism to destroy our future generations. […] Vaccines are really important. I am a doctor and I know the importance of vaccination. The one who opposes, is the one who is not examining carefully...

> Dr Hans: *Kitu ambacho kitamtatiza mwanadamu daima ni kifo […] kutodumu wake. […] teknolojia ya wanadamu itakapofanikiwa kuondoa magonjwa yote duniani, watu watakuwa sasa wanakufa kwa uzee […] hivyo havina dawa.* (Mkufya 2004: 418)

> Dr Hans: What has always been challenging for a human being is death […] transitoriness […] when human beings' technology will succeed in overcoming all the diseases existing in this world, then people will die because of old age […] for this there exists no treatment.

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[28] My translation edited by Mkufya. Emphasis mine.

[29] I thank William Mkufya for having given me the unique opportunity to follow closely the final adjustments of the novel *Uwa wa Maua* ('The Being/Essence of Flowers') for a period of one year, from October 2018, when I was in Tanzania for fieldwork research, to October 2019, when the novel was finally published as *Kuwa Kwa Maua* ('The Existence of Flowers'). Finally, I thank Mkufya for having acknowledged me in the first published edition of this novel (Mkufya 2019: 5). See also Nicolini (2021).

Mkufya is denouncing what he calls *Utu-guni* 'the defective human identity' (Mkufya 2004: 361), which is the result of the troubled history of the African people from slavery to colonialism and neo-colonialism. This concept is similar to the idea of "fragmented-self" introduced by the contemporary and prolific Tanzanian author Said Khamis (2003; 2005; 2007). The "fragmented-self" is a broken or blurred identity, vague, ambiguous, and baffled by the hostile environment which characterises the post-colonial setting and has been exacerbated by globalisation (Khamis 2003: 80-1).

Nonetheless these defective and fragmented identities play the role of "metonymical weapons" (Cooper 2008) or "metonymy of presences" that are "*almost the same but not quite*" (Bhabha 1984: 130), and which by standing metonymically to the hegemonic colonial presences can undermine them from the inside. The result of this subversion is to achieve and promote "*ustaduni – culturally specific civilization*" (Mkufya 2004: 363). Mkufya coined this neologism, *ustaduni*, which I translated as "culturally specific civilization" (Nicolini 2021), by playing with the Swahili language. In fact, he joins the Arabic loan word *ustaarabu* that means civilization, by hinting at the Arabo-Islamic domination on the Swahili coasts, with the word *utamaduni* that means national culture and traditional customs. Therefore, Mkufya's *ustaduni* is a culturally specific counter-epistemology, which aims to countering the hegemonic western episteme.

Swahili literature dealing with HIV/AIDS aims to take care of the future generations who are exposed to multiple dangers. In the play *Kilio Chetu* (1996), children accuse their parents and relatives for not having listened to their cry, making them fall into the trap of HIV/AIDS, hidden as it is by the metaphorical presence of *Dubwana*, the giant phantom, protagonist of the allegorical folktale. According to Igbafen's (2017) notion of "African existentialism," childbearing and procreation are the compulsory requirements to qualify the deceased to become an ancestor, capable of protecting their progeny, and thus, these are the sole prerequisites for a "good death." Conversely, the advent of HIV/AIDS puts the continuation of entire clans and lineages at risk, because either young people die before giving birth, or young people who are HIV-positive cannot procreate (Mutembei 2001; Setel 1999; Dilger 2008; 2009; 2010). The importance of procreation, as the only human strategy for overcoming death, is strongly supported by the character of Dr Hans in *Ua La Faraja* (2004):

> *Anayekufa ni yule ambaye hakuzaa!* (Mkufya 2004: 385)
> "Who actually dies is the one who doesn't give birth!"

On the one hand, in *Ua La Faraja*, Mkufya describes HIV transmission as sexually transmitted, spreading through sexual networks among adult characters, and mortal, unless you have given birth. On the other hand, in *Kuwa Kwa Maua* (2019), a novel that focuses on children, HIV is a "blood borne infection"

(Wilton 1997: 5), which is spread by either mother to child vertical transmission, as in the case of the young character Haji, or by direct contact with infected blood, as in the case of the young heroine of the novel Tumaini (Tuma). It is also a chronic treatable disease. ARV therapies have transformed HIV/AIDS from an incurable disease into a treatable chronic illness. It means that *kuokoa kiasi cha maji ambayo hayajamwagika* (Mkufya 2019: 145) 'to save the amount of water that has not been poured yet' has now become possible by means of therapies.

In conclusion, by means of my empirical research into the life and work of an author, William Mkufya, who is not part of the academia, but a self-trained writer and a philosopher, I demonstrated that Swahili literature is a formal platform for Afrocentric discourses and an expression of Afrophone philosophies (Nicolini 2021).

5. The follow-up research: What's next?

On the wave of what I called elsewhere the current "movement of rise of counter-epistemologies" (Nicolini, *Asixoxe* 2021), which is in progress in multiple disciplines in the forms of a "reconfiguration of the epistemological landscape" (Mbembe 2021),[30] characterised by a shifting (not fixed) centre of gravity, and which is described by the concept of "Epistemologies from the South" (Santos 2007; 2014; 2018; 2020; Mignolo 2009; 2011; 2013), I intend to engage in a "South-South intercultural translation" (Santos 2014), focused on "African-centred Knowledges" (Cooper and Morrel 2014). The Afrocentric counter-epistemological movement is part and parcel of the project led by the 'Global South,' aimed at validating underestimated and concealed knowledge systems "born in the struggle against colonialism, capitalism and patriarchy" (Santos 2014; Santos and Meneses 2020).

Here, I argue that a philosophy of medicine can be established, by investigating philosophical discussions and the epistemological pluralism which can be identified in Swahili literature dealing with modern and contemporary illnesses such as HIV/AIDS and Covid-19. Particularly when viral pandemics and viruses are concerned, it means dealing with the always unknown, because how ever advanced scientific knowledge might be, "viruses endlessly evolve in new forms with ever-growing capacities to transmit and replicate themselves, especially in an open and interconnected world" (Kavey and Kavey 2021). In fact, local responses with traditional beliefs and practices are described in literature, which also illustrates an "evolutionary epistemology" (Mac Cormac 1985): the development of new cognitive

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[30] Mbembe, Achille. "Keynote Conversation on Decolonising Knowledge Production." University of KwaZulu-Natal and SOAS University of London joint webinar on *Contested Spaces: Epistemic (A)Symmetries, Mobilities, Identities,* virtual symposium 25 February 2021.

and physical processes as adaptational strategies to survive according to the ever-changing environment that tends progressively to be even more hostile towards humanity.

Therefore, the inter and trans-disciplinary study that I am introducing will consist in empirical research made up of a combination of ethnographic fieldwork and a thematic and stylistic analysis of language and texts aiming to answer these research questions:

How is the novel coronavirus and its impact described in Swahili literature? Through which genre?

What are the literary streams characterising Swahili literature post the Covid-19 outbreak?

Can a philosophy of medicine be established? What are the epistemologies appearing in the literature dealing with coronavirus and post-pandemic issues?

What is the social impact of this prospective literature? Is it capable of overcoming the new communication issues, created by social distances and face covering, for the readers? Certainly, digital literature such as blogs and posts on social media have already demonstrated how they are fundamental tools to overcome social distancing and to connect people; but, what about the narrative genres?

The research objectives will be the following: firstly, to identify fictional genres that articulate knowledge about Covid-19, since for the time being it seems to be mainly discussed through social media, such as Twitter and Facebook posts, and in social forums such as *Jamii Forums.*

The second objective will be to explore the evolution of Swahili language used to communicate messages on Covid-19. The focus will be not only on the new scientific vocabulary, which has already been collected by BAKITA, the National Council of Swahili Language (2020), but also on the new metaphors, metonymies, myths and proverbs, illustrating and/or concealing the virus, as happened before for HIV/AIDS (Mutembei 2001; 2009a; 2007).

The third objective will be investigating the role played by traditional healing therapies to prevent and heal coronavirus that seem to have been active since the beginning. Nonetheless, local herbal therapies and treatments to be tested and approved would need the investment of a huge amount of money that many African countries cannot afford yet.

Finally, the main objectives will be analysing the changes undergone by literature after the impact of the Covid-19 outbreak, and investigating the philosophical perspectives characterising this literary stream: Humanist or post-humanist?

6. Swahili Literature and Philosophy post the Covid-19 Pandemic

In other words, unexpectedly enough, in this globalised and digital era, we, human beings from all over the world, have been experiencing the surreal situation of coping with a new virus that scientists do seem to believe escaped from a laboratory where experiments on animals (bats) were conducted. Indeed, the ever-increasing mutation capability of RNA-viruses increases the occurrence of spill-over events towards other species (Mori *et al.* 2020; news-medical.net). As a result, the characteristic features of this globalised and interconnected world allow the virus to spread extremely fast, and it turns out to be a human made pandemic.

Therefore, by engaging in a "comparison across culturally distinct philosophical traditions" (Connolly 2015: 24), the objective would be to obtain a "dynamic commingling" of global philosophical interactionism (Connolly 2015: 198) so as to investigate what are the phenomenological reactions of human beings, who seem to have been bitten by their own scientific advancements?

More specifically, how is the phenomenology of Covid-19 portrayed in literary productions in African languages (Swahili)? In which genre? Through which philosophical perspective? Humanist or post-humanist? In other words, do human beings, pushed once again in front of the invincibility of death, realise the fragility and transitoriness of their lives by rediscovering their humanity or humanness? Or, do they try to develop a new "humandroidness" through fostering sci-fi and the Afrofuturism stream?

Therefore, I would like to explore the new characteristic features of what I baptise as 'the post-Covid-19 outbreak, or ultra-modern phase of Swahili literature,' which will probably be digital literature, and which follows the experimentation of the post-real and post-modern "new" Swahili literature (Khamis 2005; 2007; Gromov 2014; 2019; Rettovà 2016; Bertoncini *et al.* 2009; Diegner 2018; Aiello 2015).

The relationships that have been intermingling Swahili literature, philosophy and illnesses since Tanzanian independence can be summarised as follows:

In Swahili realism we have read how Euphrase Kezilahabi (1944 – 2020) in his novel *Kichwamaji* ('Hydrocephalus,' 1974) describes "African communalistic existentialism" (Wiredu 1980, quoted in Rehák 2007: 148-9), where the main character Kazimoto, after the birth of his hydrocephalic son, self-sacrifices for the benefit of the community of which he is part, so as to save the next generations from oppression, misfortune and illness.

In post-realist and post-modern Swahili literature, the canons for experimentation are widely open and the "signs" which determine "the uniqueness of the Swahili new novels" (Khamis 2005; 2003: 90; 2007) are not only the "self-reflexive narrative," which, by shifting narrative person, chronology

and narrative discourse (Khamis 2007: 177), implies that "African writers are writing back to self" through looking inward into their texts (Mwangi 2009: 6 -8), but also "fragmentation" (Khamis 2003). This is crafted through metafictional aesthetic devices such as the insertion of chunks of oral literature, stories within a story, mythologies, intertextuality and the conjuring of magical realist spiritual ontologies (Khamis 2003). Thus, experimental literature operates a dissolution of ontological, epistemological and aesthetic boundaries between realism and marvellous realms (Rettovà 2016).

Swahili neo-realism suggests instead the return to a philosophy of *utu* 'humanity' and humanism that implies being human by showing humanity towards others. An expression of "modern African humanism" (Gordon 2008: 188), which was born in response to racism, the slave trade and colonialism, is described in Mkufya's *Diwani ya Maua.*

Tanzanian bloggers' discussions on social media and online forums about Covid-19 show the epistemological clash between different healing traditions and the philosophical reflections stemming from the coronavirus pandemic. They illustrate how the virus, conversely to HIV/AIDS, lacks the existential aspect of a life-lasting condition, because it can result in either dying or recovering; however, it does have a deep and long-lasting impact on different aspects of human social life, freedom to move, and personal interrelationships. Human beings are forced to keep their distance, yet they are connected through technology. In this sense Mohamed's novel *Dunia Yao* ('Their World,' 2006) was prophetic in predicting an insane character Ndi-Ye, playing with the Swahili pronoun *ndiye* 'he himself,' who splits his own personality in *Ndi* and *Ye* and who self-isolated in his room dialogues with a computer that is then humanised.

I argue that the coronavirus pandemic illustrates how antagonistic strengths compete in the same field: humanity, nature and the non-human others, which are all part of the same circuit of existence. On the one hand, the battle can be interpreted through ecocritical lenses, with the virus representing nature's revolt against humans' claims of superiority over all other living beings, and the pollution they caused. This perspective is indeed the one endorsed by Mkufya both in the *Maua* trilogy and in his ecocritical novel *Face Under the Sea* (2011), where he suggests that: "Nature always works to achieve a balance" (Mkufya 2011: 148) between rights and responsibilities, towards an environment that is inhabited by plural ontologies, which deserve to be recognised as actual existing beings. On the other hand, the human made pandemic can be interpreted as the self-destruction of humanity either reminding us of our fragility and transitoriness, or boosting us through biotechnology, looking towards a future inhabited by cyborgs.

Therefore, the advanced literary choice could be, on the one hand, more prone to describe the existence of human flowers in this world and their humanness (*Ua La Faraja*, Mkufya 2004; *Kuwa Kwa*

Maua, Mkufya 2019). Or, on the other hand, it can choose to describe "their world" (*Dunia Yao*, Muhammed 2006) and the other-worldliness of a futuristic and dystopic world inhabited by posthuman ontologies and humanoid creatures or cyborgs.

In conclusion, the aim of Afrophone literatures should be to enhance a "preemptive style of writing" (*écriture préemptive*, Nganang 2007; Vierke 2019) to overthrow a possible contemporary reconfiguration of both *UKIMWI wa kijamii*, the societal AIDS (Mkufya 2004: 357), and "necropolitics:" "forms of subjugation of life to the power of death," or "necropower:" "forms of social existence in which vast populations are subjected to conditions of life conferring upon them the status of living dead" (Mbembe 2003: 39-40; 2019), caused by the latest socio economic reordering of the world following the new pandemic.

7. In the guise of a conclusion

These conclusions do not aim to be conclusive; on the contrary, the object of this paper is to open up the boundaries of my existing research, which will be a springboard for new discourses to be developed in follow up research involving the novel coronavirus pandemic and its consequences. This paper works as a connector between the solid background upon which my existing research is built and new research questions.

In my current research, by conducting an interconnected study of the medical topic of HIV/AIDS and to the study of language, texts, and philosophy, I was able to demonstrate that Swahili literature is a device for developing Afrophone philosophies.

I have also illustrated how literature and reality are entangled ontologies. In fact, both the genre of reality and the genres of fiction share ontological aspects; they are interconnected, entangled systems, which, fluid and contiguous, inter-act, and thus, cannot be described or studied independently (cfr. quantum entanglement in physics[31]). Swahili literature is not mere representation of reality, yet both fictional works and real-life events influence and reflect each other, "writing beyond representation" (Kezilahabi 2015: 46).

In conclusion, the new research focus will be on exploring new possible ontologies, epistemologies and life philosophies conveyed through thematic and aesthetic forms such as stylistics, narratology, but above all the plural literary genres, which will characterise the prospective multi-generic examples of Swahili literary productions reflecting the phenomenology of the coronavirus outbreak.

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[31] Rozatkar, Gaurav (16 August 2018). "Demonstration of quantum entanglement." OSF. https://osf.io/g8bpj/

Furthermore, I would also like to continue examining William Mkufya's trilogy on HIV/AIDS, which is still in progress. In fact, I have been analysing the first two published volumes, while the third is currently in progress. Since I have established the philosophical potential of this trilogy, which revolves around the theme of HIV/AIDS as a trial to investigate philosophical thought and to engage in philosophical discussions, I would like to continue analysing it in a comparative way with the genres of Swahili literature dealing with the coronavirus pandemic.

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Shakespeare (way down) along the Nile

How a pidgin adaptation of Cymbeline gave South Sudan its theatre

Graziella Acquaviva and *Ilaria Morgani*

Aim of the paper is to analyse the gradual development of Southern Sudanese theatre, focusing on the development of Juba Arabic in the light of the contemporary translation of Shakespeare's Cymbeline by the prominent intellectual Joseph Abuk, who is also the father of the South Sudan national anthem. The paper is divided in two parts: in the first one, the authors investigate the history of theatre in Sudan and South Sudan, considering the historical background that influenced it with a focus on the adaptations of Shakespeare's works in Arab and African countries. The second part is dedicated to the relation between languages and ethnicity in South Sudan, thus offering a brief overview of its socio-linguistic landscape. A major attention is given to Abuk's adaptation of Shakespeare's Cymbeline from English into Juba Arabic (Cymbeline: li katib Shakespeare) for the South Sudan Theatre Organization (SSTO). This second part also comprises an appendix, which provides a brief linguistic analysis of some selected parts from the 2012 adaptation, as part of the recorded play Cymbeline (London, June 2012), performed by the South Sudan Theatre Organization (SSTO). The original Abuk's play script (2012) is yet unpublished, while a full video-recording of the play is available at: https://globeplayer.tv/videos/Cymbeline

Keywords: African theatre, Shakespeare, South Sudan, Juba Arabic, adaptation, translation

1. Journey into the Arab and African World of Shakespeare's translations: An Introductory note[1]

It seems that in the Arab cultural area Shakespeare has been well received: in fact, many examples of Shakespearian works have been re-adapted all around the Arab world.[2]

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[1] The article is the result of a continuous exchange of ideas between its authors. For Italian legal and academic purposes only, the authors hereby state that Sections 1 and 2 are by Graziella Acquaviva and Sections 3, 4 and the Appendix by Ilaria Morgani.

[2] As Hennessey and Litvin (2016:2) state, topical new Shakespeare adaptations have highlighted the US occupation of Iraq (Al-Bassam's *Richard III: An Arab Tragedy*, 2007); Sunni-Shi'a sectarian strife in Iraq and the rise of extremist Sunni movements (Monadhil Daood's *Romeo and Juliet in Baghdad*, 2012); and the threat of recurring tyranny in post-uprising

According to Alghaberi (2018: 8), at first Shakespeare, for some Arabs, appears merely as a foreign literary curiosity, but later the situation has changed, when the Cultural Committee of The Arab League in the mid-1950s commissioned a group of writers and translators to officially translate the complete works of Shakespeare. Tragedies such as "Hamlet," "Macbeth," "Richard III," "King Lear," and "Romeo and Juliet" have frequently appeared in the Arab literary arena and political theatre. In particular, "Hamlet" and "Richard III"[3] have been recreated in the Arab world in numerous adaptations and appropriations, attesting to the multiplicity rather than the uniqueness of a Shakespearean text (Alghaberi 2018).

The first Arabic-language (indirect) translations/adaptations of Shakespeare's plays appeared in the late nineteenth-century in Egypt with the contributions of Syrian-Lebanese immigrants who adapted French translations of Shakespeare's plays (Alghaberi 2018). According to Holderness (2007), "Hamlet" was first performed in Egypt in 1893 in the translated version of 1769 by Tanius Abduh, with whole scenes and characters deleted and with a happy ending. Since audiences expected a play to be more like a revue, with music and songs – "Hamlet" courted Ophelia in the language of Arab love poetry - Shakespeare's masterpiece flourished as a stage show in revised adaptation: the character of Hamlet has always been viewed as a romantic hero who sets off to fight corruption and dies for the cause of justice, or as an Arab intellectual who cannot cope with the reality of his time. In 2002, "Hamlet" was performed in English at the Edinburgh International Fringe Festival with the title of "The Al-Hamlet Summit" by Suleiman Al-Bassam. In the same year, it was also presented at the 14th Cairo International Festival of Experimental Theatre, where it won "Best Performance" and "Best Director Awards." In 2004 it moved into Arabic and played at the Riverside Studios in London; in 2005 at the Singapore Arts Festival, at Elsinore Castle in Denmark, and other festival venues around the globe (Seoul, Tokyo, Warsaw, Tehran) (Holderness 2007: 141-145). Al Bassam's "The Al-Hamlet Summit" and "Richard III: An Arab Tragedy" were also translated into the Arabic language accompanied with a translation – screen subtitles - in the primary language of the audience if different from Arabic. Another adapted play, "Hamlet in Kuwait" was initiated by al-Bassam in 2001 in association with a cultural festival "Kuwait 2001: Cultural Capital of the Arab World." The play

Tunisia (Anissa Daoud and Lofti Achour's *Macbeth – Leila and Ben: A Bloody History*, 2012). Nawar Bulbul's two projects in Jordan's Zaatari refugee camp have cast Syrian children in *King Lear/Hamlet* (2014) and *Romeo and Juliet* (2015).

[3] By 2012, several Arab productions were commissioned as part of the World Shakespeare Festival timed for that summer's Olympic Games in London. At the worldwide festivities marking the quadricentennial of Shakespeare's death this year, for instance, one of the most ambitious events was organized by the Bibliotheca Alexandrina in Alexandria, Egypt (Hennessey and Litvin 2016).

highlights social and political parallels: Claudius is the Arab despot, the young prince suggests a disillusioned younger generation, the ghost symbolizes the Gulf War, a past that still haunts the people of Kuwait. "Richard III: An Arab Tragedy" was performed in 2007, at the Royal Shakespeare Theatre in Stratford. The play was commissioned by the Royal Shakespeare Company (Hennessey and Litvin 2016). The project was initially titled "Baghdad Richard." Al-Bassam changed the title in response to changing events, particularly the trial and execution of Saddam Hussein, but also out of a realisation that in this theatrical medium oversimplification is a constant danger. As Holderness (2008: 73) claims, the new title "An Arab Tragedy" suggests a broader territory, not just Iraq, and broaches wider issues of concern to the Gulf States and the Arab world in general.[4]

In Jordan, in 1918 an Arab Catholic priest named Anton al-Heehi came from Bethlehem and started an "Arab Catholic Youth Society" with as one of its objectives teaching stage acting, and with Father Zakaria al-Shomaly, also from Palestine, offered a number of theatrical performances. In the 1920s they staged a production of "Hamlet" with their students (Ghanma and Omran 1999: 122). From the second half of 1940s, Shakespeare and Molière were the authors who most inspired the local theatrical production. The actors in these performances were only men. In 1982 a new theatre group emerged, the *Fawanees* (*Fawānīs*, "Lanterns") *Theatre* that, in 1984, took an un-orthodox version of Hamlet to the Rabat Theatre Festival. As Ghanma and Omran (1999: 128) claim, the importance of the production is characterized by the search for a new scenographic style utilizing colour, light and silence, and musicians on the stage pushing the flow forward with original theatrical scores, while mocking and commenting on the action through recognizable local tunes.

In Algeria, Shakespeare came in 1922 thanks to the Egyptian Izz ud-Deen Troupe that presented "Julius Caesar" and "Romeo and Juliet" in classical Arabic. According to El Rukaibi (1999: 47), the two performances attracted larger audiences, probably due to the fact that the Egyptian troupe also presented Middle Eastern songs and chants between acts of the play, a feature that was subsequently used by many Algerian groups.

According to Al- Khozai (1999: 60), it was in 1940s that in Bahrein clubs and literary societies began to show interest in theatre and dramatic literature but only in 1970s some theatrical groups became semi-professional producing plays from the world repertoire in translation, and among these were works by Shakespeare.

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[4] All the Christian elements in Shakespeare's work have been uprooted and replaced with Islamic references: the character of Clarence is presented as a devout Muslim who quotes the Holy Quran; conscious of his sin, he prays for forgiveness. His appeal to his murderers is articulated in terms of the Islamic values they share, just as, in Shakespeare, Clarence appeals for mercy through the blood of Christ (Holderness 2008: 73).

It is during the 1960s that in another Arab country, Lebanon, a great renewal takes place. Until that period, the theatre followed the historical and complicated past of the country.[5] In this period the Lebanese theatre was largely inspired by western acting and directing techniques. The two pioneers of this movement were Antoine Multaqa and Mouneer Abu Dibs who, in 1953, both directed and acted in Macbeth at the Jesuit University, and in 1960 they agreed to present it on television in 1960 and in 1962 the same performance has been presented by *Ḥalaqat al-Masraḥ al-Lubnānī* ("Lebanese Theatre Ring"), established in 1961 and headed by A. Multaqa. Most young directors and actors were amazed by the richness of the Shakespearian legacy when they discovered it as their predecessors had done before them (Murad 1999: 144). It is necessary underline that the presence of Shakespeare's work in Lebanon dates back to the first decade of the twentieth century when the American University of Beirut initiated its theatrical activities at Daniel Bliss Hall where presented "Julius Caesar" in 1903, "Hamlet" in 1904 and "Othello" and "Macbeth" in 1905 (Murad 1999: 157).

In Oman, the first and most important group to emerge in the 1980s was the Youth Theatre founded by a number of young people concerned with improving the situation of theatre in the country. A director from the United Arab Emirates, Mustafa Hashish, was recruited, and under his direction the Omani Youth Theatre's first production was Shakespeare's "The Merchant of Venice," a difficult and challenging play theatrically and socially because of its implications with the religious sphere (Jawad 1999: 183-184).

Concerning the African context, there are many critical studies dealing with the presence of Shakespearean translation and adaptations to the African audience (Rosenthal 1964; Wright 1990/91, 2004; Mazrui 1996; Devji 2000; Banham, Mooneeram and Plastow 2002; Ebewo 2009; Caulker 2009; Plastow and Banham 2013; Lebday 2013; Soyinka 2016). Shakespeare's works were translated into many African languages (Lebday 2013: 182): some examples are the Swahili translations of "Julius Caesar" (formerly *Julius Caesar*, 1963, later revised in 1969 with the title *Juliasi Kaizari*) and "The Merchant of Venice" (*Mabepari ya Venisi*, 1969) by the first President of Tanzania Julius K. Nyerere

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[5] Throughout its history, Lebanon has been overrun by larger nations including ancient civilization. The year 1098 marked the start of the Christian Crusades that ended in 1291. Until 1516, the country was ruled by Mamluks, and after them for the country started the Ottoman rule that ended after World War I, when the colonial control passed to the French. In 1943, following rioting and a general strike, the French government, in agreement with Britain, proclaimed Lebanon's complete independence. Murad (1999) states that probably the oldest form of Lebanese performances was connected to Greek mythology and local folk religious celebrations such as some examples found in *khayāl al-ẓill* (shadow theatre), and in the continuing popularity of *al-ḥakawātī* (the storyteller). These two forms inspired many modern directors to experiment with such things as audience participation as they tried to incorporate into their work elements of those celebratory events found in birth rites, weddings and funerals (Murad 1999: 137-138).

(Wright 1990/91; Devji 2000); Thomas Decker's translation of Julius Caesar in Krio with the title of *Juliohs Siza.* According to Caulker (2009: 208), the act of translation and appropriation of Juliohs Siza amounts to an assertion of a sovereign linguistic identity after having gained Independence in 1961 as well as an appropriation of the powerful democratic message carried by the political legacy of Shakespeare's work for a newly independent Sierra Leone. *Shakespeare ƒe Makbet* is Walter Blege's translation of Macbeth into Ewe (Agbozo (2018: 48). It is the only known translation of Shakespeare's work from English into Ewe, and is targeted at the Ewe people in Ghana, mainly students, since the translation is done mainly for the purpose of teaching and learning the Ewe language, especially for what concerns developing reading comprehension skills. Shakespeare is remarkably prominent in Nigeria, probably due to the thematic similarities between Shakespeare's works and the civil war events that occurred in Nigeria in the 1970s. In 1972, the playwright Wale Ogunyemi first staged *Aare Akogun*, a Macbeth adaptation. There is one key difference between the texts: Akogun and his wife Olawumi do not kill the king out of ambition as do Macbeth and Lady Macbeth, but rather under the influence of Yoruba spirits. *Aare Akogun* was performed during the rise of General Gowon, a military general who had also gained power after demonstrated valor in battle. In this sense, Ogunyemi's tale reads as a warning against militaristic assumption of power, made all the more relevant to Nigeria through the inclusion of Yoruba spiritual ideology, and numerous instances of song, chant, and idiom. Femi Osofisan's recent *Wesoo, Hamlet!* is set in Yorubaland in the last half of the 20th century, a period of civil war and the aftermath. As Shakespeare's Hamlet is based in turbulent Denmark, with the outside forces of Norway marshalling against the nation, *Wesoo, Hamlet!* is centered in postcolonial, (mostly) post-civil war, economically troubled Nigeria, with outside Westernizing forces of industry marshalled against the traditional order of the village (Frigyik 2018).

Wright (2004: 66) states that the first recorded performance of Shakespeare in South Africa took place at the opening of the African Theatre in Cape Town in September 1801, with the play of "Henry IV, Part 1." South Africa has a rich heritage of Shakespearean translations into both Afrikaans and African languages. Among the more famous of these are Sol Plaatje's Tswana translations of "A Comedy of Errors" (*Diphosophoso*, 1930) and "Julius Caesar" (*Dintshontsho tsa bo-Juliuse Kesara*,1937); Uys Krige's Afrikaans translations of "Twelfth Night" (*Twaalfdee nag*, 1967) and King Lear (1971), Breyten Breytenbach produced an Afrikaans translation of "Titus Andronicus" in 1970; André Brink did "Richard III" (1969) and "Romeo and Juliet" (1975; Wright 2004: 70).

As Lebday (2013: 182-183) highlights, one of the reasons for the strong expansion of the adaptations of Shakespeare's works into local languages is due to a sort of challenge, namely to demonstrate that African languages possess such a lexical richness that they can compete and thus

translate complex works such as English classics can be. Such a statement may seem limiting with respect to the commitment that any form of adaptation and/or appropriation of a work, and in particular of a classic work, entails. However, adaptation and appropriation are important creative techniques utilized by modern dramatists, not only in Africa or Arab countries. Both the techniques raise questions of originality and imitation on the authenticity of the "new" drama; because of the tug of war-like relationship between the world of the original and the world of the derivation (Nyosu and Uchegbu 2015: 31).

2. The theatre in Sudan and South Sudan between history, tradition and modernity

When we intend to build a significant discourse on the theatre and on the other forms of artistic expression that underlie it, we have to consider what are the relationships between the artistic life and the historical and cultural context of the country.[6] In addition, theatre and culture are two complementary concepts, and the subject becomes even more complex if we refer to forms of communication which, for historical reasons, have been in direct contact with external cultural elements, often undergoing their contamination.

The modern history of Sudan was connected for a long time to the Ottoman Empire; from 1898 until 1956 the whole territory was controlled by Britain through Egypt and was known as the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan. Towards the end of 1898 the whole of Northern Sudan, except Darfur, came under Anglo-Egyptian control and in 1899 an Anglo-Egyptian Condominium was proclaimed over the entire country. The Egyptian presence was nominal, and Great Britain was the effective ruler. The Southern Sudanese region presented the stiffest resistance to the colonial force: in 1901 Nuer and Azande peoples waged armed resistance, followed by the Anuak and the Aliab Dinka. The pattern of Southern Sudanese resistance was dependent upon the organization of each individual society and its relations with neighbouring peoples.

The implementation of the Southern Policy in 1930 was based on the premises that the Negroid Africans of the South were culturally and racially distinct from the Northern Arab Sudanese, and that the Southern provinces would either develop as a separate territorial and political entity or be integrated into what was the British East Africa. The Southern Policy required a number of measures that would eliminate all traces of Arab influences in the South: the government's first step was to

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[6] According to Ebewo (2009: 21), the place of theatre in society can be seen in its role within a culture, not only in terms of its contribution to the entertainment industry, but also in the way it analyses and interrogates moral economic, political, and social issues

institute the use of local languages in primary schools. The Administration financed social service projects (schools and hospitals) throughout the 1930s, and created an Advisory Council in 1943 in response to the upsurge of nationalism in the Northern Sudan (Wai 1980: 375-380; Seri-Hersch 2011: 333- 338). The Southern policy continued to function into the 1940s. The decision to change the Southern Policy was made following a report of Sudan Administration Conference held in Khartoum in April 1946. The recommendations of the Sudan Administrative Conference had led to the new Southern Policy of merging the North and the South into one political and administrative territorial unit: the Sudan.

In May 1952, the Northern political parties submitted proposals for self-government to the Condominium Government. All the Northern political parties were represented in these negotiations, but the South was not invited to participate. The Anglo-Egyptian Agreement of 1953 and the Self-Government Statute did not contain any special safeguards for the Southern Sudan. The Agreement stipulated that the North and South were one united territory and that elections to the first Sudanese Parliament would embrace both regions. Sudan formally attained its independence from Britain and Egypt on January 1, 1956, in the midst of a civil war and economic decay. The substantial differences between Northern and Southern Sudan escalated until full civil war took place. In 1958 General Ibrahim Abboud overthrew the new government in a military coup and declared martial law. Fighting continued until 1969 when Colonel Joafar el-Nemey came to power and brought an end to it in 1972 by granting limited autonomy to the south. A semblance of peace lasted until 1983 when he introduced Islamic rule and religious fundamentalists gained new power. A state of Emergency was called in 1987 and the army took control over the country in 1989. Through the early 1990s the country was ruled by Revolutionary Council, and the south continued to push for full independence remaining a war zone (Mustafa 1999: 223). South Sudan gained Independence in 2011.

What kind of influences has this historical travail had on theatrical expression and communication both in Sudan and in South Sudan?

The first theatrical performance in Sudan took place in Qitaina city in 1902 with a play by an Egyptian magistrate and entitled *Al-Murshid Al-Sūdānī*[7] ('The Sudanese Leader'), written in formal Arabic verse. In the early part of 1920s European style theatre began to be seen with regularity when Shakespearian drama began to be taught and produced by students at Gordon Memorial College –

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[7] The Arabic names and titles are reported in translitteration as well as from reference sources.

University of Khartoum.[8] One of the pioneers of Sudanese drama is Ahmed Altayeb who was the first to translate and present Shakespearian plays adapting "King Lear," "Macbeth," "Hamle"t and "The Tempest" (Dafalla 2015: 89). Hussein Mallasi (1894-1946), in collaboration with Egyptian expatriates, formed a theatre company that was active in Port Sudan from 1910 to 1924 uprising, when the company had to stop because of a colonial backlash that hit all cultural and educational institutions. By 1933 Sudanese were themselves writing plays: Khalid Abdul Rahman Abdul Rus (1908-1985) – known as the father of Sudanese drama - wrote, co-directed an acted *Tajouj*, based on a local legend and written in Sudanese dialect, as opposed to classical Arabic (Dafalla 2015: 90; Mustafa 2004: 81). The legend tells about a poet who gets married to a very beautiful woman. On their wedding night, he asks her to parade in front of him totally naked, approaching him, moving away and then returning to him again. She is shocked by this request but accepts as long as he agrees to a request from her. He accepts. She then parades in front of him, and when he is satisfied, she makes her request to him: the divorce. He must agree and dies in misery; she will die at the hands of a tribal chief when a major conflict is triggered by her beauty. Following the first performance of *Tajouj* in 1933, the playwright had some problems with the religious authorities who disapproved of his including women characters in the play which required male actors to dress as women (Mustafa 1999: 224, 228). Other important dramatists were Ibrahim Al-Abbadi (1890-1981), Sayyid Abdul Aziz and Al-Khalifa Yousuf Al-Hassan whose plays focused on Sudanese themes and were written in colloquial Sudanese Arabic. Their productions were also fundraising efforts for the Ahlia Schools, the alternative educational system set up by National Movement (Mustafa 1999: 224). In 1948 the "Sudanese Company for Acting and Music" or *Al-Sirāj*, was formed in Omdurman, the historical and national city which hosted several social and sports clubs. Here the company produced works in classic Arabic language and it was the first theatrical group to have a woman actress as a member and likewise the first to issue the magazine *Al-Ufuq* ("The Horizon") (Dafalla 2015: 90). Al-Fadhil Saeed played an important role in Sudanese theatre for starting the establishment of a "Youth's Theatrical Group for Comedy" that was formally registered by the Omdurman City Council in 1955. The company reached the most remote regions of the country and probably the strength of Saeed's theatrical group was in its mobility (Dafalla 2015: 90; Mustafa 1999: 227). In 1956, after the Declaration of Independence, Sudan witnessed a great ferment in theatrical activity: in 1959 National Theatre was established and some of the plays

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[8] In Gordon Memorial College, Abdulrahman Ali Taha wrote indigenous Sudanese plays such as *Suaad*, written in verse and performed on Bakht Al-Redda stage in Eldouiem in 1940s (Dafalla 2015: 89).

produced were based on real stories that took place during the colonial period and the early years after Independence (Dafalla 2015: 90). In 1966 the National Folk Dances Troupe was founded: the dancers usually performed pieces from a repertoire of fifteen tribal dances selected from across the country. Among the Troupe's performances there is *Zar* - a dramatic ceremony not specifically Sudanese generally performed for the purpose of healing, that survived despite its non-Islamic roots (Seligman 1914; Natvig 1987; El Guindy and Schmais 1994; Kolk 2006); during the *Zar* the participants, mainly women, dance and go into a trance and are transformed in other characters. In the end, the costumes are removed and the dancers return to their original selves.

Other rituals and ceremonies that have been incorporated into the National Folk Dance Troupe's repertoire were the rain-maker's ritual and the *Baramka*, or tea ceremony. In the first ritual the *kujur*, a combination of rain-maker and medicine man, goes through a series of theatrical ritual dancing in full regalia. The figure of *kujur* is very popular in non-muslim areas of Sudan. For the *Baramka*, people sit in a circle with tea-pots and cups in the centre. The tea is prepared and poured in prescribed ways with the participants singing and offering forms of praise (Mustafa 1999: 231).

As Mustafa (1999: 226) states, when the regime signed an agreement with South Sudan in 1972 several companies were formed and the art was seen as a means of both celebration and dissent, but the 1980s shift towards religious intolerance saw the institution of the Islamic common law – Sharia imposed that involved the destruction of the books in the streets of Omdurman and other atrocities.

It will be necessary to wait until the end of 1980s for the theatre comes back to life. It is in this period that theatre program at University of Khartoum has played an important role in the dissemination of information and awakening of popular consciousness about the reality of social problems that plagued the country, and in particular the urban sites. One of the issues involved the so-called "darker-skinned" refugees and Internal Displaced Populations (IDPs)[9] who remained "missing" from the official narrative. The students at the drama school set up their performances in neighbourhoods[10] across the city, and the neighbourhood-based theatrically performances enabled residents to articulate their exclusions from the material resources of their cities and nation, and to

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[9] Khartoum and Omdurman were the destinations for thousands of IDPs who fled the first and second civil wars in Sudan (1955-1972; 1983-2005). Being of different ethnic groups and/or religion, they were racialized as 'darker-skinned' and were to remain invisible to the official count (Simone and Bou Akar 2014).

[10] As Simone and Bou Akar (2014) state, people called their neighbourhoods using the name of Chicago, Harlem, Bronx, Detroit. In this way people pointed to the urban character of their lives and to their toughness and resistance in a city like Khartoum where many ethnic groups lived, and keep living, in condition of exclusion and marginalization.

expose their racialized and invisible bodies. The performances thus became sites of resistance (Simone and Bou Akar 2014).

According to Miller (2010: 32), in 1980s Juba was considered the most active city of the South Sudan where Juba University was created, and the Nyakuron Cultural Centre that was established by the Ministry of Culture and Information was a multipurpose conference centre including a theatre. The strongest cultural institutional body was the Radio of the National Council of Churches with programs in various Southern languages, southern traditional music and social plays in Juba-Arabic. They were very popular. Years later radio programmes and participatory theatre[11] are playing a strong role in reducing internal conflicts.[12] Participatory theatre involves artists trained to acts as moderators who engage in dialogue the audience in proposing peaceful ways of addressing the conflicts presented in the play. The artists come from diverse communities of South Sudan, and some of them are from the Protection of Civilian Sites (PoCs). As Gotev (2018) claims, discussions in the participatory theatre were often an inspiration for radio programmes, thus the messages could reach a wider audience. Since the level of illiteracy is very high, radio therefore plays a key role in disseminating news and represents a tool for peace-building in the country; the radio network consists of community-based radio stations broadcasting in eighteen different languages.

Another tool or channel for South Sudanese people to speak about human rights and politics is playback theatre. Namubiru (2018) reports a drama performed at the Catholic University of South Sudan: a young actor tells the story of walking for months from South Sudan to refuge in Ethiopia. Behind him a group of five actors dramatize the tale for the audience. The playback theatre technique is an appeal to the audience members to share their stories, whether directly "played" by the actors. The actors thus serve as a mirror of the experiences of the public directly. A facilitator or driver invites a member of the audience on stage to tell a story that has happened. The driver, actors and audience listen attentively. Using the techniques of improvisation, music, song and movement, the

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[11] This form of theatre is also known through other denominations, such as Theatre for Development, Theatre for the Oppressed, Popular theatre, Community theatre, or Theatre for Social Change. These are often used interchangeably and are associated with a transformation of a social reality, by using community and individual participation. Participatory theatre is an approach in which the actors interact with the public, based on a real problem. Throughout the participatory event, the public participates to adapt, change or correct a situation, an attitude or a behaviour that is developed during the show. This form of theatre aims to join entertainment with an exploration of attitudes and to share knowledge in order to stimulate positive social changes (http://dmeforpeace.org).

[12] Many factors undermine South Sudan's prospects for peace and stability: armed groups are fragmenting, criminality in increasing, and violence is infiltrating in everyday life and political actors have built local constituencies based on pre-existing ethnic divisions (Gotev 2018).

actors play the history of the person who remains on stage. In the end, the person is asked to discuss what they think of the 'story' just acted out (https://dmeforpeace.org).

The topics that most interest theatre in South Sudan in the aftermath of Independence mainly concern issues relating to peace-building, war trauma, immigration, emigration, and refugees. The same commitment is carried out by one of the best known and most recognized dramatist Joseph Abuk Dori, known as Joseph Abuk ,[13] whose work will be discussed extensively in Section 4; he runs the South Sudan Theatre Organization whose aim is to stage plays, often in the street, to prompt discussion on sensitive issues. The audience collaborates with the actors in projecting the actual meaning of the play. With this art form, Abuk's Theatre Organization has powered many political campaigns (Namubiru 2018).

3. South Sudan: perspectives and challenges

3.1. Languages versus ethnicities: an overview of the Southern landscape

Since the 19th century, South Sudan and its adjacent regions – northern Uganda, eastern Central African Republic – have underwent a high degree of multilingualism, with groups speaking various languages, mainly from the Nilo-Saharan phylum.[14] Thus, South Sudan constitutes a multilingual context, which is composed by nearly 120 named languages and nearly fifty ethnic groups of various sizes living within its borders. In 2006, the SIL[15] estimated around 65% of the population belongs to the four major ethnic groups: Dinka, Nuer, Zande and Bari.[16] The main Southern Sudanese vernaculars include Juba Arabic (henceforth: JA), Bari, Lotuxo, Moru, Madi, Zande and Nuer (Owens 1996: 134),

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[13] Joseph Abuk is a prominent intellectual in South Sudan; he helped writing the national anthem after independence in 2011 and still represents a remarkable figure. As a young boy in the 1950s, he and his family moved from the countryside to Juba: there, he first came in contact with JA. In the early 1970s, Abuk has been a refugee in Uganda and Kenya during the first civil war. He returned back to Equatoria in 1978: at that time, he started his career as a cultural critic and a playwright, by developing street theatre forms.

 https://www.iwmf.org/reporting/voice-of-a-nation-how-juba-arabic-helps-bridge-a-factious-south-sudan/;
https://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/world/south-sudan-war-disrupts-a-theatre-inspires-a-dramatist/article16760007/

[14] More precisely, the Eastern Sudanic unit (Dimmendaal 2018: 5). The Nilo-Saharan phylum was posited by Greenberg (1963).

[15] An international evangelical institution from Dallas (USA), SIL promotes Bible translations into local languages worldwide and it documents lesser-known languages. SIL has a long-established expertise in South Sudan and nowadays a branch group is still working in Juba (https://www.sil.org).

[16] This percentage has been confirmed by the 2011 survey of Tom Power and John Simpson "Scoping Mission for an ELT Program in South Sudan".

which are widely spoken as home-languages. Along with this, religious practices include Christianity, Islam and animism. English and Arabic are the official national languages, which are used as prestigious languages in the media, education and legal purposes (Nakao 2013: 140).

Sudanese[17] Arabic is widely spoken by people of northern Sudanese descent and by Southerners who were educated in Arabic and/or sought refuge in Sudan before 2011 (Manfredi and Tosco 2016: 2). Furthermore, non-native varieties of Arabic (generally known as *arábi al besít* "simple Arabic") are spoken as interethnic medium in the northern (Malakal area) and western (around Wau) states of South Sudan (Manfredi and Tosco 2016: 2).

During the decade 1920-1930, the British colonial authorities had widely promoted the learning of English and the use of ethnic languages within the Southern educational system (Mugaddam 2006: 123), in order to constrain the spread of Arabic and Islam.[18] However, a variety of "local" pidgin Arabic was already in use throughout the Southern Sudan (Nyombe 1997: 103). Regarding educational matters, from its outset the Condominium allowed educational system into the power of European missionaries and of different Christian churches, in the southern provinces (Miller 2010b: 384).[19]

According to Nyombe (1997: 104), in 1928, the Rejaf language conference – managed and sponsored by the British administration, and attended by missionary groups from Congo and Uganda, and the International Institute of African Languages and Culture (based in London) – selected six vernacular languages as medium of instruction for the Southern primary school. The higher levels, instead, were to be taught in English, and the use of Arabic language was proscribed in any contexts. Consequently, the event officially addressed to the status of indigenous languages in the region and to their future development.

Since 1970s, different language surveys have been launched in Sudan – through questionnaire and/or quantitative methods – in order to assess the degree of multilingualism and the spread of Arabic among the non-Arab migrant community in the North. The Sudanese political milieu has

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[17] The adjective 'Sudanese' refers to the Arabic of the state of Sudan, and contrasts with 'Sudanic Arabic,' i.e., a broadly Arabic-speaking region stretching from Nigeria to the Red Sea (Owens 2014: 237).

[18] The establishment of local missionary schools launched the literacy process in southern Sudan until 1947, under the frame of the so-called "Southern Policy" (Miller 2014: 357), which officially aimed at a strict separation of the South (including the Nuba Mountains in Kordofan) from the North. Consequently, the "Southern Policy" attempted to prevent Southerners from political influences against the Condominium, thus electing English and the vernaculars (Juba Arabic excepted) as the languages of education and administration.

[19] With reference to Seri-Hersch (2017), the Southern provinces were divided into spheres of influence: there were Italian Catholics in Bahr Al-Ghazal, British Anglicans in Mongalla (later renamed Equatoria) and South Upper Nile, American Presbyterians in Central Upper Nile.

debated language issues since the early 20th century (Miller 2006), as the Sudanese multilingualism and cultural diversity have widely been perceived as threats to national unity. Therefore, a severe Arabization process has affected the Sudanese Republic for decades since 1956, whose purpose was to create one united country. As Versteegh (1984: 7) states, like other Arab states, Sudanese policies focused mainly on the recognition of local languages than the diffusion of foreign ones, on behalf of national policies on Arabic language in spite of English. The pro-Arabization phase underlay a greater "Sudanization" discourse, i.e., the assimilation of non-Arab groups into a greater "core" Sudanese Culture with one language, one religion and one culture (Miller 2002: 117). Thus, the Southern administration was forced to replace English and the local languages with Arabic (Nyombe 1997: 114) within formal contexts, at least. In spite of these policies, since the 1960s, JA has established itself as a distinctive language-system, while the new influx of urban population widened its speech community.

In 1972, the Regional Assembly of Juba reintroduced indigenous languages (in the Primary schools) and English (in all higher levels) as medium of instruction in the Southern Sudan, thus curbing the role of Arabic as a national language although Juba Arabic was amply spreading as a lingua franca in multilingual zones (Nyombe 1997: 116).[20] In 2004, the Naivasha Peace Agreement officially recognised all Sudanese vernaculars – the Southern ones were included – as potential national languages (Miller 2006). As a result, the question on whether to teach indigenous languages and/or Arabic has been a main "national" issue since the 19th century: political boundaries scarcely accord with linguistic ones. Nowadays, South Sudan is a "vertical multilingual society," wherein individual multilingualism adheres to hierarchical relationships (Nakao 2013: 140). Hence, Arabic and English are the prestigious languages: more precisely, the 2011 Constitution appointed English as the "official working language."

3.2. Juba Arabic: an introductory note

Juba Arabic[21] is an Arabic-based pidgincreole[22] spoken in South Sudan, where it represents the main lingua franca for its multi-ethnic population and, concurrently, the native language of a large part of

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[20] Six languages were selected: Bari, Dinka, Kresh, Lotuho, Moro, Ndogo, Nuer (Nyombe 1997: 116).

[21] The name Juba Arabic is geographically linked to area of Juba, the capital of South Sudan and Central Equatoria State, wherein it represents the main language. Although void of an official standard orthography, Juba Arabic is broadly written in Latin script (Manfredi and Petrollino 2013).

the urban population (Nakao 2018: 275). The exact number of its speakers is difficult to be estimated: according to Manfredi (2017a: 7), JA is spoken as a primary language by 47% of the population of Juba, whereas it is also used as a second or third language by the majority of the population of the country.[23] JA emerged as a military pidgin during the Turkish-Egyptian government around 1820 and later it developed into a creole during the second half of the 20th century, especially in urban areas (Veersteegh 2014: 212). The use of JA increased after the end of the of the first civil war (1956-1972), due to the resulting displacement of South Sudanese refugees (Miller 2014: 355). Nowadays, JA is considered as "the Arabic of the South" by both Southerners and Northerners (Miller 2003: 26). As previously stated, JA emerged from the contact between Sudanese Arabic and local languages in the second half of 19th century (Manfredi and Tosco 2013a: 798). Prior to this, a military variety of Egyptian-Sudanese Arabic – later called Bimbashi Arabic[24] – was spoken in Anglo-Egyptian camps between Upper Egypt and Sudan during the 19th century, by Arabic-speaking officers and local recruits.[25]

JA displays the general structural features of creole, such as the semi-complete avoidance of morphology, the absence of gender as a morphological category, the relexification of uninflected verbal forms, the presence of invariable preverbal markers and basic SVO order (Manfredi and Tosco 2013b).[26] New speakers of JA are tempted to modify their own realization, thus resembling a more prestigious way of speaking: in this context, "decreolization" – the result of continued exposure to the superstrate language – may occur. Furthermore, JA has been largely exposed to contact with Sudanese Arabic, the dominant language of the former unified Sudan (Manfredi 2017). Hence,

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[22] Language contact may produce different linguistic outcomes, such as pidgins, creoles and trade jargons (Thomason and Kaufman 1988). A "pidgincreole" is defined as an intermediate category, in which an earlier pidgin becomes the first language for a part of its speakers (Bakker 2008: 139). Along with this, a pidgin is characterized by a limited vocabulary and it is classified as a "contact vernacular", i.e., an intermediate variety (Romaine 1988; Manfredi and Tosco 2013a). Nowadays, JA can be described as an example of stable pidgin (Tosco 1995), since its use is not discontinued and it shows an own linguistic distinctiveness.

[23] Juba Arabic is also the idiom of Nilotic mother-tongue speakers, such as Bari or Dinka. Moreover, diaspora speakers were reported in Sudan, Egypt, Britain, United States, Canada and Australia (Manfredi and Petrollino 2013).

[24] The variety of Arabic spoken by early Anglo-Egyptian troops (Tucker 1934). From the Ottoman noun *bimbaši* "officer", it referred to the lowest military rank. Kaye and Tosco (1993) introduced the name of Early East African Pidgin Arabic with reference to this variety.

[25] I.e., from Nilotic tribes such as Mundu, Dinka, Shilluk, Bari, Lugbara (Owens 1985).

[26] Broadly speaking, creole languages share the following features (Bakker 2014: 445): the lexicon is mainly from a lexifier (superstrate); the grammar system partially derives from the lexifier (some superstrate traits); partial grammaticalization of lexical items.

speakers of JA are currently part of a socio-linguistic continuum[27] with its main lexifier, Northern Sudanese Arabic (also called Sudanese Arabic).[28] Therefore, JA no longer represents an "isolated variety" (Miller 2003: 26): its relation with Sudanese Arabic implies a high degree of phono-morphological variation within the idiolects, whose differences reflect different "shades" of proficiency in the language, according to a number of descriptive categories, such as the speakers' residence and their educational curriculum (Tosco 1995: 424). Additionally, the main factors of JA creolization can be observed *in situ* (Miller 2003: 2).

Generally speaking, pidgins and creoles have always been denigrated by users of dominant language, sometimes by their own speech community too (Jourdan 2003: 201). The external definition of a language takes into consideration the speakers' perception and judgements, according to "what they perceive as the same language" (Tosco 2017: 237). A favourable perception generally combines with the identity of specific ethnolinguistic groups, since speakers can be linguistically dominant in a socially subordinate language (Winford 2005: 376).

The linguistic environment in Juba town was investigated for the first time by Mahmud (1983), although studies and descriptions of the Southern indigenous languages – especially on Dinka and Shilluk – had already been completed by missionaries, traders and explorers in the 19th century (Nyombe 1997: 103).

Prior to its foundation around 1927, the original area of Juba emerged from an indigenous nucleus of Bari villages (Nakao 2013: 142). Nowadays, the population of Juba includes mainly new South Sudanese citizens, who reached the city during and/or after the civil wars, and migrant workers from East Africa (Nakao 2013: 142). According to Nakao (2013: 139), the residential area of Malakia (Juba) displays some peculiar socio-linguistic features. Specifically, Malakian inhabitants represent the "old" urban nucleus: i.e. groups of ex slaves from Southern Sudan, which were described as "negroid but detribalized" (Nakao 2013: 145) by the British officers, since they were distant from ethnic other groups at that time. The Malakian community is closed "related" both to the diaspora South Sudanese communities in Northern Sudan and to the Nubi groups in East Africa (Uganda *in primis*). Hence, Malakians were deemed as the "native" South Sudanese (Nakao 2013: 139, 148) and, interestingly, they spoke Juba Arabic as their mother tongue. In some features, this

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[27] This structural relation has been labeled as "Arabic interference" in the APICS online dataset (Manfredi and Petrollino 2013).

[28] However, Versteegh (2017: 17) argued the original lexifier of JA may have been a Bedouin eastern dialect, such as Šukriyya Arabic, formerly recorded by Reichmut in 1983.

"variety" of Juba Arabic resembles Ugandan Ki-nubi. In fact, Ki-Nubi and Turku,[29] two Arabic-based contact languages, are related with JA (Manfredi and Petrollino 2013). Ki-Nubi and JA are mutually intelligible, since they both exhibit the same substratum interference[30] from the local language spoken in Equatoria in the mid-19th century (Nakao 2018: 278), and a more complex structural development (unknown in Turku) (Miller 2003: 22).[31] They had separate development since 1888 (Miller 2000: 5): hence, Ki-Nubi and JA "are autonomous and specific varieties, which cannot be confused with any other Arabic vernaculars" (Miller 2007: 607). JA is expanding its domain from a main oral dimension towards a contemporary "written" status. As a corollary to this, a number of grammars and dictionaries have been published since the 1970s[32] and JA was the most common language spoken in Juba chiefs' courts[33] in the early 1980s, as recorded by Miller (2007). Eventually, JA speakers display a clear metalinguistic awareness of their language, which they deem quite distinctive from Standard Arabic and Northern Sudanese Arabic, because of its own morphology. Accordingly, Juba's citizens generally appreciate the use of "indigenous" languages and of English in formal and semi-formal settings (Manfredi and Tosco 2016: 2), since Arabic and English have largely co-existed as medium of instructions since 2011.

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[29] Ki-nubi, or East African Nubi, is an Arabic-based creole, today mainly spoken in Uganda and Kenya (concentrating in Kibera of Nairobi, and Bombo and Kampala, in Uganda) (Luffin 2013). The name comes from the union of Arabic *nūbi* "black slave" with Kiswahili nominal prefix ki- (Luffin 2005: 15). Its origin lies in the period of the Anglo-Egyptian conquest of Sudan in the 19th century (Wellens 2005). Turku (Arabic *turk, turūk* for "Turkish"), a pidgin variety, was brought to the Chari river area in Chad, present-day, around 1879, by defiant soldiers from southern Sudan (Tosco and Owens 1993). The term Turku was used by Chadian people with reference to the newcomers, in spite of their different ethnic origin (Tosco and Owens 1993: 183). As far as we know, Turku does not show the grammatical expansion of Nubi and Juba Arabic (Miller 2003: 23).

[30] Type elements from the speaker's native language are assimilated into the foreign language (Thomason and Kaufman 1988).

[31] The homogenous group of Sudanic historical pidgins can be divided into two subgroups (on structural grounds): an eastern branch (Juba Arabic and (Ki-) Nubi) and a western one (Turku and Bongor Arabic). Their shared ancestor, traditionally referred to as "Common Sudanic Pidgin Creole Arabic" (Tosco and Manfredi 2013b: 253), emerged in the late 19th century (c. 1855-1880) in the southern Sudan, within an Arabic dominant but multilingual context (Owens 1996: 159). According to Owens (1996), East African Nubi and Juba Arabic equally arose as a result of the same historical circumstances from a shared precursor, which also fostered the development of Turku. Miller (2004), instead, argues that similarities between Ki-Nubi and JA arose later, in the second half of XX century.

[32] The early published material in Southern Sudanese vernaculars, mainly of a religious nature, were written in Latin script, although unified rules of writing were missing (Miller 2010b: 387).

[33] The earlier formal chiefs' courts (*lukikos*) were established in the 1920s, under the control of British officials (Leonardi 2013: 15).

3.3. The post 2011 society: (new) opportunities?

The latest "legitimacy" pact on multilingualism refers to the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA), signed in 2005 by the government of South Sudan and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement/Army (Power and Simpson 2011). The CPA accredited Arabic and English as official languages in Sudan, whereas so-called "indigenous" languages acquired the status of national languages. Notwithstanding the CPA's outcome, language is yet a clear badge of ethnicity among Sudanese people, in the broad sense (Miller 2006: 2). After the signing of the CPA provisions in 2005, the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (South Sudan), addressed for a revised "Language and Education Policy," in order to ensure the learners' mother tongue as a medium of instruction in the primary level (Grade 1 to 3) by law, with English taught as a subject (Spronk 2014: 5). In Grade 4, English represents the medium of instructions, while mother tongue is learned as a subject until the final year of primary education (Grade 8). In 2011, the Transitional Constitution of South Sudan mentions the "indigenous languages of South Sudan" but does not refer to ethnic groups and/and or specific languages (Manfredi and Tosco 2016: 5). The international "Language and Education Conference,"[34] held in 2012 in Juba, advocated and encouraged the concrete implementation of mother tongues within this linguistic policy, in light of its pedagogical benefits, since the first language is the early medium of socialization for children and it affects the building of their cultural patterns (Nyombe 1997: 120). The conference, also the major international event in South Sudan since independence, gathered different experts from Africa and beyond (Miller 2018: 25).[35] On this occasion, a number of contributors acknowledged the benefit of a multilingual education,[36] which should comprise also JA as a native language (Calderbank 2013). However, the teaching of a selected number of Southern languages, even as a subject, is mainly ideal, due both to financial and political reasons (Miller 2006a: 9). In the last decades, English has not been considered a symbol of domination but rather a useful means to economic mobility and integration within the Sudanese society, since nowadays non-state actors and donors are largely delivering educational programmes, such as British Council. When literacy in English is limited between youngsters, JA can be more easily acquired as a dominant language, especially in small towns. Code switching phenomena are quite common, mainly among youngsters (20s-30s), who have been educated in one or two languages and are keen on the

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[34] 4-7 March 2012, convened by the British Council. https://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/article/multilingual-education-africa-lessons-juba-language-education-conference.

[35] Among them, experts from the African Academy of Languages (ACALAN), UNESCO, UNICEF and SIL.

[36] I.e., the use of at least three languages (Mcllwraith 2013: 59).

cyberspace, on new written systems (emails, chats, SMS) and urban musical practices. To young people, English still represents "a gateway language for entry" into the urban-based community (Kevlihan 2007: 514). However, some websites and blogs are currently written in JA, in particular foreign websites from South Sudanese diaspora members (Miller 2014: 375), such as the Facebook community Arabi Juba, which was opened in 2010, and the website Gurtong Peace Trust Project.[37] However, nowadays it is not still clear which language will be taught where and to who, in the single states of South Sudan (Manfredi and Tosco 2013a: 798). As a result, language pluralism is generally advocated and observed only in the first school years by "trained" teachers, who are not wholly equipped with basic literacy materials.[38] Given the criteria above, the absence of an operative federal system has lacked in the settlement of unified linguistic policy, in favour of local authorities' provisions among the single states (Manfredi and Tosco 2016: 5).

Nowadays, JA embodies the cultural heritage of the "Southern identity," albeit it lacks any special role or status within the 2011 Transitional Constitution (Manfredi and Tosco 2013a: 798). The choice of English, in fact, shows an "exoglossic" language option, i.e., a language outside the nation, as a language-planning strategy (Nyombe 1997: 125). In spite of its unofficial status, a demise of JA seems difficult in South Sudan since JA is not yet functioning as the official language within administration and education; however, its widespread use could act as an appropriate super-tribal membership marker in the foreseeable future. Moreover, the intergenerational language transmission would represent a leading issue for the next generation: the extent of JA acquisition as a formal language is yet uncertain, whereas its acquisition as a L1 or L2, within familiar contexts, is already acknowledged as a communication instrument.

South Sudanese citizens hold very different levels of Arabic proficiency (Miller 2014: 358): a number of Southern intellectuals, who were displaced or exiled abroad during the 1970s-1980s, consider Arabic the "colonial" language of Khartoum, whereas those intellectuals who moved to Northern Sudan or in Arabic countries, can properly speak Sudanese Arabic (henceforth: SA) and/or Northern Sudanese Arabic (henceforth: NSA), thus they are partly affected by an "Arabization" process within their productions and activities. With reference to Miller (2006), the spread of Arabic has increased ethnic consciousness, instead. Hence, mass migration and mobility heightened ethnic awareness and linguistic maintenance, since minorities have to deal with discrimination and/or

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[37] http://www.gurtong.net/AboutGurtong/tabid/146/Default.aspx

[38] The majority of these materials have been edited and/or printed by SIL and other NGOs (Spronk 2014: 16).

marginalization (Versteegh 1984: 9), while the ravaging conflicts of the last decades prevented the emergence of an autonomous Southern culture, hence of a solid artistic environment.[39]

To sum up, a South Sudanese linguistic framework is scarcely to be updated with consistency, due to the contingent politics and safety conditions within conflict-affected areas. Nevertheless, the current language policy does not conform to the political pluralism and the legitimacy of the new state (Tosco 2014: 172). The latest policies, designed to foster an embryonic nationhood, have instead affected the formation of a balanced supra-ethnic identity within South Sudan. As a result, an official endorsement is a priority for a multilingualism project after 2011, although the building of a national system and its related institutions is still challenging. The Southern government should, indeed, recognize and promote national integration by means of an inclusive multilingual linguistic policy, which should consider such domains as education, information and media communication.

4. Cymbeline, a renewed drama through a new language

4.1. The *janúbi* cultural and artistic scene: the XX century beginning

The leading Southern drama troupes comprise the Kwoto Group[40] and the South Sudan Theatre Organization (SSTO). SSTO is a no-profit cultural organization placed in Juba. Since its establishment after 2011, the association promotes local dramatists and engages theatre as a means of expression, by developing educational activities and workshops. The frontmen Joseph Abuk and Derik Uya are also activists and playwriters from Southern groups like the Kwoto Group and the Skylark Dramatist Association,[41] which both supported displaced South Sudanese artists and started to combine traditional heritage with a new-born street one in the Greater Khartoum area (Lorins 2007). Following the 1980s displacement, Khartoum Region gathered together a wide number of Southern intellectuals and students, who established cultural associations and student unions, such as the afore cited Kwoto Group and the Orupaap Group (Miller 2002: 117).[42] These groups began performing during celebrations and/or religious ceremonies, in both vernacular languages and Arabic.

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[39] For almost a half century of civil war, South Sudanese people have witnessed with difficulty the emergence of a solid literary and cultural scenario, except for some popular intellectuals, who have experienced displacement as *Janúbi* people (JA "Southerner") in Khartoum or in Europe.

[40] Kwoto comes from Toposa (Eastern Nilotic language). Kwoto refers to a specific sacred stone, which is a symbol of peace and reconciliation (Miller 2010 a). According to the tradition, any act of violence is prohibited near the stone (Lorins 2007: 257).

[41] Established by Joseph Abuk et al. in 1979 (Lorins 2007: 257).

[42] Musical band founded in 1987 by Stephen Affear Ushal (Miller 2002: 118).

Furthermore, their members managed to merge Southern symbols and figures, such as the rain-maker *(kujur)* and the ancestor's spirit *(junun)*, with social realism. The resettlement of refugees increased notably the plurilingual landscape of Khartoum and its outskirts, since large groups of new inhabitants were bilingual or were speakers of a language different from Arabic or, to use a Sudanese word, a *rutān* (a local language with no written tradition). In the light of this, the choice of Juba Arabic acted as a precocious "sign of pan-Southern identity" (Miller 2010: 37).

Similar to SSTO's background, the Kwoto Centre included forty-five "mixed" actors, from eighteen Southern ethnic groups (Bor, Balanda, Anuak), which were academic students in Khartoum at that time (Miller 2010).[43] Kwoto became rather famous in Khartoum between 1980s and 1990s. Most of these groups performed during private events (mainly marriages, funerals) and religious celebrations, whose audience generally comprised displaced South Sudanese population of Khartoum. Successively, the group started to collaborate with peripheral churches in Khartoum and the Ministry of Social Affairs (Miller 2002: 118). With reference to donor agencies, Kwoto was financially sustained by the Ford Foundation (American private charitable organization) in the 90s (1993-1997) (Miller 2010: 38). Successively, Kwoto activities have been sponsored by the Washington-based National Endowment for Democracy (NED) in promoting seventy multilingual performances (Lorins 2007: 250). In spite of the lack of external funding, the cultural troupe has constantly aimed at its full "self-sufficiency" (Lorins 2007: 252). For the first time, Kwoto's drama comprised Juba Arabic in Arabic script (Miller 2010: 37). As well as drama, traditional South Sudanese songs and dances were involved to convey ethnic unity, opposed to the growing political division between parties. Thus, the group focused its activities on definite discourses, such as Southern displaced people, social cohesion, inter-ethnic dialogue, in a balanced manner. Albeit their experience as displaced or migrant people, Kwoto's members haven't fostered political issues throughout their productions.[44] The inspiration stem from the figure of Amona Kabasi, a World War II soldier who performed scenes and songs in JA as a pioneer (Miller 2010: 38).

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[43] With the outbreak of the second civil war (1982-2005), Khartoum – the capital and the administrative centre of Sudan – affirmed itself as the leading destination of migrants' waves, whose actors were also students, intellectuals and artists. Khartoum's population steadily increased from 250,000 in 1950 to roughly 2,831,000 in 1993, and up to 4.5 million by 2005 (Tamis and Persson 2013: vii).

[44] Kwoto's artworks may be classified as "derivative traditional work", i.e., "any work [...] applied to any form of indigenous knowledge, recognized by an indigenous community as having an indigenous or traditional origin, and a substantial part of which was derived from indigenous cultural expressions or knowledge" (Ncube 2018: 602).

> Kwoto's theater reflects this project of hybridization and is an amalgamation of indigenous performances forms, Arabic language and Western theater [...], including absurdist drama, theater-for-development, theatre of the oppressed [...] (Lorins 2007: 201).

The Kwoto Group thought that the theatre was not only a place for leisure and recreation but a fertile ground for social development (Miller 2002: 118). Hence, Kwoto's creative vision envisaged social realism, absurd and progress, in spite of ethnic boundaries (Miller 2010: 41). Interestingly, in 1908 the Sudan Council of Churches Radio (SCCR) composed a number of short theatrical plays intended to broadcast basic sanitary or moral advices (Miller 2014: 367). Hence, SCCR - the only local radio in Juba, at that time - sustained the valorisation of JA within the community, since it purposely selected a basilectal JA for its social programs. As a matter of fact, the economic situation of Equatoria in the second half of the 20th century was too vulnerable to endorse a sensible cultural environment; hence, the most important Southern intellectuals started their activities largely in Khartoum and in Cairo. For instance, in the mid-1990s, the Akwa group performed songs in Juba Arabic in the Cairene district of Abbasiyya, which was a gathering place for displaced Southerners in Cairo (Miller 2010: 36). Similarly, every Sunday in Juba there were spontaneous groups of Dinka dancers near Hay al-Ghaba (Miller 2010: 33).

Nowadays, SSTO's projects follow the intellectual path of their East African mentors, Taban Lo Liyong and Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o: namely the choice of a vernacular language conveys a socio-political criticism (Wilcox 2012: 2). Despite the international visibility, SSTO official website is no more available from Italy, so the company is solely accessible via Facebook outside Africa. Even within the country itself, means of communication lacks, due the scarcity of internet connection and to the economic struggle, thus updates about their current activity are quite difficult. Hopefully, Internet would become an effective tool of communication and of education in the coming years, providing a real network in and out Africa. Furthermore, the European theatre represents a recent subject within Sudanese educational programme; the teaching of Shakespeare and other dramatists spread thanks to the opening of Bakht Ar-Ruda Teacher Training Institute in 1934 (Matzke 2013: 67). There is no evidence of financial supports from the South Sudan government for the "Globe to Globe" performance, actually most sponsorships seemed to have come from the company's international supporters and individual donations (Matzke 2013: 66).

On July 2012, Juba hosted TEDxJuba, an open conference, sponsored by UNICEF South Sudan, to celebrate the first anniversary of independence. The host speakers were invited to discuss the main theme of the event: "New nation, new ideas." As a speaker, Abuk made his own contribution, which he entitled "The Theatre: an Agent for Consciousness." The director talked about the educational

prospective of drama as a connection between various ethnic groups in the process of nation building. Furthermore, Abuk described their version of "Cymbeline" "an African jewellery" and how his company contributed to the idea of a distinctively South Sudanese nationhood (https://youtu.be/LX7eW-S7MRM). In the absence of larger programs, SSTO has not been producing international projects hitherto. It is hoped that post 2011 government would provide new cultural infrastructures, in order to foster educational and artistic intents on a national scale. Albeit the status of JA is officially moot within South Sudan, nowadays "Cymbeline" represents a landmark event in the development of JA as a written language. The project was a huge adventure for the SSTO: the discipline and the complexity of the Shakespearean drama is very different from the tradition of spontaneous street theatre and experimental Arabic drama they have experienced, although they have learned that the Globe Theatre of Shakespeare's day was highly interactive.

In the light of the above, Abuk specifically chose a lingua franca as a way of artistic expression for this first cultural export. Abuk's "Cymbeline" can be regarded as an enrichment of pidgin, since it has been the first experiment of that time. In spite of the difficulties due to the lexicon's scarcity, when compared to the English source text, Abuk adapted it and chose Arabic words wherein Juba words were missing, in order to convey the same symbolism and metaphors."

The choice of translating Shakespeare into JA is a point of departure: the authorship of Abuk's "Cymbeline" definitely affirmed JA as a cultural heritage, in the light of 2011 after-effects. Furthermore, the match JA-English is symbolic: JA reflects a super-ethnic Southern feeling among its speakers, whereas English is acting a main role in wider (formal) communication. According to Joubin (2020: 25), approaching a foreign reality "is to 'engage' with the notion of 'others within:'" translating a classical canon, moreover, displays inherent complexities and issues, even for Anglophone speakers. Translating and interpreting drama envisages the appropriation of "other" frames through the creation of "images." With reference to Jakobson (1971: 261), translating involves "an interpretation [...] by means of some other language." As a result, every literary translation involves the hurdles of approaching a piece of literature in a global way, which is susceptible to the world of meanings – out of context – of its receivers. Furthermore, we do not know exactly Abuk's proficiency in the two languages. Hence, I decided to consider Abuk's artistic outcome as an adaptation, rather than a translation tout court since I lack information whether the JA playscript has underwent revisions and/or suggestions by third parties.

4.2. An "African Cymbeline:" the point of departure

On May 2nd and 3rd 2012, the newly formed South Sudan Theatre Organization (SSTO) performed Shakespeare's "Cymbeline"[45] at the Globe Theatre (London), according to the original script by Joseph Abuk, adapted and translated from Early Modern English into Juba Arabic.[46]

The Globe to Globe Festival (G2G) took place from April to June 2012, as a part of the World Shakespeare Festival for the London 2012 Festival, namely a set of cultural events related to the London Olympic Games.[47] The 2012 festival, directed by Tom Bird, comprised thirty-seven productions of Shakespeare's plays in thirty-seven different languages, adapted by international companies from English into their native languages; each day a different play was scheduled for six weeks. In detail, Tim Bird asked the applicants for their "native tongue," in order to showcase how "Shakespeare's narratives are capable of resonating with audience across cultures and times" (Joubin 2017: 424). The festival's purpose was to explore the universality of Shakespeare as a source of human values (Mancewicz 2018: 237), in order "to engage the different ethnic communities of London [...] tell these stories using their own performance, culture and style" (Bird 2013).[48]

The festival's directors[49] selected the applicants, whereas only the visiting companies decided which play to perform (Joubin 2014: 199). The companies were also selected to capture viewers from the major ethnic realities in the city, which represent the first or second generation of migrants. "Global Shakespeare is not defined by nation states" (Joubin 2017: 439): Tom Bird aimed at combining, in a contemporary way, unrelated languages and cultures under the dome of Shakespeare's fame:

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[45] Cymbeline," also known as "Cymbeline, king of Britain" or "The tragedy of Cymbeline," is a play by William Shakespeare, supposedly written between 1609 and 1610. The plot is a hybrid set of events, neither a drama or a comedy *de facto*. The play was published posthumously (1616) and then it was included in the First Folio edition (1623) (Boitani 2014). King Cymbeline, the main character, refers to the eponymous Kymbeline who ruled south-eastern Britain in the era of Julius Caesar, roughly during the first century BC. Shakespeare's main source is Holinshed's *First and Second Volumes of Chronichles* (1587), as well as Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Historia Regum Britanniae* (1136) (Wayne 2017). The leading figure of the plot, king Cymbeline, was the first ruler of the Britons to refuse payment of the fees owed to the Roman empire, therefore asserting an early form of British national identity. In addition to the theme of country's affirmation, the main motifs are: feminine innocence, of jealousy and of the calumny plot (Wayne 2017: 7). In five acts, Shakespeare narrates the story of Cymbeline's daughter Innogen, who refused to marry Cloten, the king's step son, favouring the low-born gentleman Posthumus Leonatus instead. The two lovers are initially separated and, after a series of events and misunderstandings, the couple reunites. Eventually, the reign of Cymbeline and the Roman Empire put an end to their hostilities.

[46] Globe to Globe 2012 official website:

https://globetoglobe.shakespearesglobe.com/archive/2012/plays/cymbeline/english-

[47] World Shakespeare Festival official website: https://www.worldshakespearefestival.org.uk/.

[48] For 83% of the applicants it was their first visit to the Globe (Joubin 2014: 200).

[49] Tom Bird, Festival Director, and Dominic Dromgoole, Artistic Director (Bird 2013).

"language was not merely the vehicle for performance, in this production: it was the performance itself" (Kenny 2014). G2G Festival and its new forms of adaptation have renewed the Elizabethan theater as a universal form of culture, which goes beyond colonialism and geopolitical boundaries. The whole event "[...] ushered in a new era of British appreciation of worldwide performances of Shakespeare" (Joubin 2017: 426), void of marker of (socio-ethnic) diversity.[50]

In 2012 Joseph Abuk [MA SE HA UN ALTRO VERO NOME PERCHE' NON E' STATO SCRITTO PRIMA??], and Derik Uya Alfred Ngbangu,[51] known as Derik Uya, were the co-directors and producers of SSTO. In 2011, the application to the Globe's offices was approved and sent by the Ministry of Culture and Education in Juba. Regarding their application to the festival call, they stated *Cymbeline* was chosen because of the similitude with their country's history: the conflict between Britons and Romans, finally signed with a peace agreement, evokes the Sudanese civil war which led to the independence's result in 2011 (Wilcox 2012). At the onset of independence, President Salva Kiir claimed that "you may be a Zande, Kakwa, Lotugo, Nuer, Dinka or Shilluk, but first remember yourself as a South Sudanese" (Frahm 2012: 28). Hence, the SSTO directors chose Shakespeare – a myth within Western culture – to convey the role of their "national" language, i.e. Juba Arabic. SSTO project on *Cymbeline* began in March 2012, under the auspices of the British Council.[52] The company aimed to represent their country in a good form to an international audience and to broad the attention on South Sudan today, in preparation for the foreign press coverage. By performing and participating in each other's culture, the SSTC is embedding a new engagement between citizens and a sort of supra-ethnic storytelling. The SSTO's purposes were to "put on a play that would be easily understood, culturally relevant and aesthetically pleasing both in their home city of Juba and in the host city of London" (Wilcox, 2012: 2), along with the focus on Shakespeare's plot, concerning forgiveness and reconciliation, and the use of an indigenous language. Abuk and Uya decided to adapt the play in a simplified and shorter version: they needed just 10 actors, instead of the 18 characters of the original

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[50] As Litvin, Walkling and Cormak (2015) affirm, G2G also hosted other Arab company: the Ashtar Theatre, which performed Richard II in Palestinian Arabic.

[51] Derik Uya Alfred, a native from Western Bahr al-Ghazal state, started as an actor in 1980, while he was studying at Khartoum University. There, he was member of the Union of South Sudanese Actors. Since his graduation in 1985, he has been supporting performing arts as a means of national building within displaced groups in Khartoum district, while he also worked as a journalist and a political activist. (Lorins 2007).

[52] British Council was established in 1930s by the UK Government. Along with the promotion of education and English language-teaching projects, in the late 1930s the association 's engagement also embraced performing arts and cultural venues under its scope. From the 1960s, British Council has promoted a series of drama tours abroad, including Shakespeare's performance in Africa (Ritter 2015: 31, 48).

work, while the final script was performed in less than two hours. Additionally, Abuk narrowed Act V, thus lessening the last recited part on the stage. As a result, the final production moved beyond the script and the iambic pentameter of Elizabethan English. As distinct from the Shakespearian source, on the stage, the opening (Act I, Scene 1) is introduced by the entire cast, all wearing African traditional dresses, instead of the two Gentlemen (Scene I, Act I): following a collective dance, each character moves forward, to narrate and to announce loudly his playing role (Wilcox 2012).[53] The design has been enriched with traditional costumes, while the performance also included traditional songs and dances as interludes. Thus, the fictitious Southern setting hosted Romans in khaki uniforms – like the British imperial police in the 1930s – while the Britons were dressed in African garments, enriched with Nilotic beads and Bari skirts (Wilcox 2012).[54] According to Kenny (2014), all the companies were asked to accomplish three consecutive tasks:

1. to translate the source text into their own language;

2. to develop a performative language for a non-native audience;

3. to reflect on the spatial language of the Globe, by delivering facial expression and physicality as a complementary visual medium.

The technical support was minimal, as well as the scenery. Furthermore, to avoid distractions from the stage, the audience was given only general surtitles during the scenes to suggest the basic action and to head the attention, without a line by line translation. On the contrary – as Joubin (2017: 424) highlights - the Bard's performances greatly rely on language rather than sheer materiality. The companies were not aware of the heterogenous type of audience they would expect, so they had to masterly merge Shakespeare and their culture into a performative experience. Each day comprised a succession of one play per language: hence, each production occurred for two or three days (afternoon or evening recital) (Joubin 2014: 201). In accordance with these instructions, Abuk partially adheres to Shakespeare's dramatic techniques, for instance soliloquies and asides, although his translation is not in rhyme. The two directors highlighted a physical theatre, which consists of exaggerated gestures, trying to universalize the actions in a balanced way (Wilcox 2012: 5): as a result, the strength of the actors has properly led the audience throughout the performance. At the outset of

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[53] However, Abuk's playscript originally opens with a prologue delivered by the character of the Doctor, who is a traditional medicine-man (Abuk 2012).

[54] "Characters should look like South Sudanese in terms of their costumes, in terms of their movements, in terms of theirs gestures and so on, that it is actually our own story, our experience" stated Uya (May 2012). Dr. Christine Matzke interviewed Abuk and Uya on May 2012 in London (Matzke 2013).

the performance, the actors greeted the public with a high-pitched yell, while at the end, they celebrated their achievement with a powerful final dance. Furthermore, the directors agreed reducing the linguistic distance by adding English exclamations and fillers, such as "My love!" and "Oh my God." In addition, Abuk chose repetition as a key device throughout its script.

The reception, intended to be mainly English-speaking, focused on the actors' abilities, while the viewers were gradually encouraged to understand the meaning of uncommon words through gestures. The translation from English into a native language contributed to the companies' own improvement, thus providing a mutual benefit for actors and audiences, within a "post-national" space such as the Globe playhouse (Kenny 2014: 32). Since some playwrights needed to translate a literary piece into their own language for the first time, they extensively operated to reduce audience's disengagement and apathy. By and large, the Festival achieved a resounding success: more than 100,000 spectators attended the festival, 80% of whom had never previously been to the Globe Theatre.[55] Since 1990s, performing a multilingual Shakespeare has advanced different international companies and groups abroad and it has been the scope of various academic projects (Joubin 2014: 190).[56]

To sum up, this kind of event successfully nurtured a rich fil rouge between the language of the actors and the texts itself, which would prove an effective cross-cultural sharing, in spite of national or ethnic tensions.

5. Final remarks

Abuk's translation displays the complexity of Modern English against the rather "young" lexicon of JA. The writer chose to "lessen" the original source, for the sake of the final performance: the SSTO successfully introduced an original production, which collected the praise of JA's speakers. Abuk adaptation is experimental and it has successfully paved the way for next literary forms in JA.

The large interference from Sudanese Arabic, which it is still deemed a prestigious variety among Southerners, led to the isolating morphology of JA, as compared to its main lexifier (Sudanese Arabic). More precisely, the level of the language within the script comprises a wide "Arabicized" Juba Arabic: this issue may come from the educational background of Mr Abuk and Mr Uya, who both have been lived in Khartoum for many years. Hence, the exposure to Khartoum Arabic has affected

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[55] European Shakespeare Festival Network website: https://esfn.eu/festivals/globe-to-globe-festival.

[56] For instance, the MIT collaborative archive "Global Shakespeare". https://globalshakespeares.mit.edu.

their mother tongue, i.e. a Southern Arabic. Their variety of JA is less basilectal than the rural varieties, which show a stronger Nilotic substratum (Manfredi and Petrollino 2013).[57] At the lexical level, almost 90% of lexical entries are Sudanese Arabic (superstrate language) (Miller 2003: 33). The remaining 20% consists of loanwords from Nilotic languages, mainly from Bari (Eastern Nilotic), which represents the main substrate/adstrate language of JA (Manfredi 2017).

In recent times, English in South Sudan is the modern result of the post-colonial development policies, which were overtly intended to preserve English as the sole official language. Even if it is not a real threat, English is also perceived as the language of Evangelical foreign organizations. In the age of globalisation, the matter of the language is a lively debate in South Sudan: nowadays, educated people can speak Standard Arabic, English, French and/or Kiswahili, whereas the majority of the population is under the literacy rate. Children from different mother tongues come together at schools and they are often educated in a language which is not their mother one: hence, the difficult on establishing a shared national identity.

Nowadays, the evolution of JA is not so defined, due to its continuum towards Sudanese Arabic. The social differences among JA speakers have "shaped" acrolectal and basilectal varieties of JA, which cause a degree of phono-morphological variation (Manfredi and Petrollino 2013). For instance, Abuk's "variety" of JA may be defined an acrolectal type, although it shows a great influence of Bari and of its semantic substrate categories. Furthermore, borrowings from English and Bari, along with code-switching towards English, are quite common in Abuk's adaptation, as shown in appendix through the quotation of some selected lines from the 2012 playscript.

However, innovative features and the "social" engagement of JA as an identity marker, may advance a stronger differentiation from Sudanese Arabic in the near future. As a written language, Juba Arabic is still "in the making": recently, Southerners media have public information and health awareness campaign in non-official languages, while website and social media are both written in English/Sudanese Arabic/Juba Arabic. Hence, a common standard for writing is welcome too. To sum up, the glowing praise of SSTOS's Cymbeline highlighted the public attention on playscripts and songs in JA, whose first attempts date back to Kwoto Theatre Group's performances in the 1980s. After the 2012 performance, importance grew in the country: they began an open civic initiative, by were running drama competitions among schools, to underline the importance of theatre as a civic engagement. Hence, SSTO's project may promote the significance of Juba Arabic as a national lingua franca and it may foster its teaching at the primary level.

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[57] As already stated, acrolectal varieties display a closer relationship with Khartoum Arabic (Manfredi and Petrollino 2013).

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Appendix

The following excerpt is drawn from the video output of the performance (the original playscript of Abuk 2012 is yet unpublished). The live performance in London did not truly follow the original playscript: hence, this analysis refers both to the recorded performance and to Abuk's playscript, since the video has no subtitles in JA.

The interlinear morpheme-by-morpheme glosses aims at analysing the individual morphemes, in order to provide results on linguistic topics, such the level of grammaticalization and the influence of adstrates and/or substrates in Juba Arabic. The interlinear glosses the texts reflect the Leipzig glossing rules and Manfredi (2017a) glosses.

It must be stressed that prolonged exposure to Sudanese Arabic and/or Modern Standard Arabic has yielded mesolectal and acrolectal varieties in Juba Arabic whose use remains largely investigated.

In what follows, the structure of each texts comprises:

1. the text in the translated source (i.e., Abuk 2012).

2. the glosses of the text in 1. Accents have been outlined on all the disyllabic and trisyllabic occurrences according to Manfredi's reference grammar.[58]

3. Shakespeare's original text (Boitani 2014).

Differences between Abuk's script and the video performance are marked by underlining. Slashes enclose codeswitched material; square brackets enclose missing material in Abuk's script played in the video performance, and round brackets scenic indications on the actors' movements.

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58 The positioning of stress accent is etymologically determined by the vowel length: anterior Arabic long vowel usually bear stress in JA.

Act I, scene II

Innogen, the king's only remaining child after her two brothers were kidnapped, has been imprisoned.

Fasil I, mash-had II

Innogen: *La, la istene showoya, kan kan ita bes ge tala le fusa wa langa basiit. Ayinu*

Hini habib tai, katim de kan ta umma tai. Shiilu y agelbi amsuku kweis

Lahadi it aasuma Mutu tai wai ta bi teis umar atani. (Ge wod ikatim)

la	*la*	*isténe[59]*	*showóya*	*Kan*	*kan[60]*	*íta*	*bes*	*ge*	*tála*
no	no	wait	a little	ANT	ANT	2SG	just	PROG	go_out

le	*fúsa[61]*	*wa*	*lánga*	*besít*
to	walk	and	wander	simple

áyinu	*híni*	*Habíb*	*Tay*	*kátim*	*de[62]*	*kan*	*ta*	*úmma*	*Tay*
see	here	Beloved	GEN.1SG	ring	PROX.SG	ANT	GEN	mother	GEN.1SG

shílu[63]	*ya*	*Gélbi*	*Amsúku*	*kwéys*	*lahádi*	*íta*	*ásuma*	*mútu*	*tay*
take	VOC	my_heart	Hold	well	until	2SG	listen	die	GEN.1SG

wa	*íta*	*bi*	*Téysu*	*mára*	*táni[64]*
and	2SG	IRR	Court	woman	another

ge	*wodí*	*kátim*
PROG	give	Ring

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[59] Ki-Nubi *stenu* 'to wait' (Luffin 2005), from Arabic (10th derived stem) *astanna* (Owens 2014: 248), see also SA *isténna* 'to wait' (Tamis and Persson 2013).

[60] Reduplication stresses the intensity of the action/status expressed by the verbal root. It is a common productive process in JA. According to Miller (2003b: 2), within natural speech, reduplication is more productive among native speakers of JA.

[61] Sudanese Arabic *itfassaḥ* 'to walk' (Tamis and Persson 2013).

[62] *De* is progressively losing its deictic value as a demonstrative, since it is replacing the relative pronoun *al*, according to the grammaticalization path deictic demonstrative > anaphoric demonstrative > definite article (Manfredi 2017a: 205). Presumably, *de* would lose cliticize, thus losing its prosodic prominence.

[63] Sudanese Arabic *shāla* (Tamis and Persson 2013).

[64] As in Bari, the adjective *táni* "another" is grammaticalized into a specificity (or indefiniteness) marker (Nakao 2012: 140).

"Nay, stay a little: were you but riding forth to air yourself, such parting were too petty.

Look here, love; this diamond was my mother's; take it, heart, but keep it till you woo

another wife, when Innogen is dead." (Giving the ring) (Boitani 2014:32).

Act II, scene I: Britain, in front of Cymbeline's fortress

Iachimo tells Imogen that Posthumus has been unfaithful while in Italy and suggests she gets revenge

by doing the same with him.

Fasil II, mash-had I: Britania. Giddam kasir Cymbeline

Doctor: *Ita asuma ali gali fi ajnab iwasulu wa fi kasir hassa.*

[seydí]	*íta*	*Ásuma*	*al=i*	*gáli*	*fi*	*ajnábi*	*wásulu*	*wa*
Sir	2SG	Hear	over-1SG	dear	EXS	foreigner	arrive	and

fi	*kasír*	*hássa*
EXS	castle	now

"Sir, listen to me, dear: a foreigner has arrived and he is in the fortress now" (Boitani 2014: 82).

Act III, scene I

Fasil III, mash-had I

Melika:

almélik	*Ali*[65]	*íta*	*zékir*	*ajdád*	*táki*
the_king	REL	2SG	remember	ancestors	POSS.2SG

Al	*kan*	*mulúk*	*kúbra*	*Wa*	*íta*	*fákir*	*tabíya*	*ta*	*jezíra*	*táki*
REL	ANT	kings.PL	eldest	And	2SG	think	role	GEN	island	POSS.2SG

Al	*shúga*	*de*	*wágif*	*fi*	*nus*	*bahár*	*ze*	*jinéna*	*ta*	*ilah*

---

[65] *Al* is an invariable relative pronoun and is derived from the Arabic definite article. JA and also its main substrate language, Bari, lacks a definite article (Manfredi 2017). The Sudanese Arabic article is replaced by a single proximal demonstrative *de*.

REL brave PROX.SG stand EXS half river like garden GEN God

Min háwa jibál ali tála tómon gówi

From wind mountain.PL REL raise POSS.3SG strong

"Remember, sir, my liege,

The kings your ancestors, together with the natural bravery of your isle, which stands

as Neeptune's park, ribb'd and pal'd in [...]." (Boitani 2014: 118).

Abbreviations

-	clitic	POSS	possessive
=	affix	PROG	progressive
ANT	anterior	PROH	prohibitive
ANT	anterior	PROX	proximal
EXS	existential copula	REL	relative pronoun
GEN	genitive	SG	singular
IRR	irrealis	VOC	vocative particle
PL	plural		

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The practices and dynamics of *Baalle*,
an indigenous governance system of Gedeo (Southwest Ethiopia)

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This article comprehensively examines the governance quest of the Gedeo people (a Cushitic-speaking people in southern Ethiopia) and their itineraries in building an egalitarian indigenous governance system locally called Baalle. The Baalle governance system is based on the distribution of political powers and social responsibilities across nine grades, each with a life span of eight years. Our analysis focuses on the practices and dynamics of the Balle system. We have analyzed the roles of the state in the dynamics of the Baalle system by considering the different historical phases of the Ethiopian state: the Imperial regime (1889-1974), the Derg regime (1974-1991), and the EPRDF regime (1991-2018). Data were collected through narrative interviews, observation, and focus group discussions from Baalle leaders and cultural consultants during several fieldworks carried out in 2018, 2019, and 2020. Based on our findings, we argue that Baalle is a complex indigenous governance system of Gedeo's social structure that influenced their economic, social, political and spiritual life. Moreover, given the complexity of the Baalle system, the presence of governance institution (Songo) in all the three autonomous regional territories of the Gedeo, the practices of sustainable economy that combined forestry with agriculture, and the presence of dense population, we argue that the Gedeo qualify for being a state. Since the incorporation of the Gedeo into the Ethiopian state in the late 19th century, Baalle has been structurally subordinated to the central government, and its roles in the day-to-day life of the local community have significantly declined. Although the post-1991 political developments of the EPRDF made attempts to protect Baalle from extinction, its role is still reduced to playing only supplementary roles to state conflict resolution institutions and instruments.

1. Introduction[1]

There have been two kinds of competing arguments in the study of social stratification and state formation in Africa (Diop 1987; Dundas 1915; Fortes and Evans-Pritchard 1940). One argument, guided by colonial anthropology, maintains that African societies in the pre-colonial period were not stratified and organized under a State (Dundas 1915). The other is based on Africanist framework and argues that the African societies whether in the past or at present are stratified like the societies in Europe, and organized under a State. According to these authors, state formation is not foreign to but indigenous to Africa (Chodak 1973; Diop 1987). According to Fortes and Evans-Pritchard (1940), the question of governance and institutionalization of the political system in Africa was different and should be treated differently from that of Europe until at least the post-independence/post-colonial period. The authors go on to classify African societies broadly into two: societies that have States and those which do not. While the former refers to pre-colonial Chiefdoms/Kingdoms like the Zulu, the Ngwato, the Bemba, the Banyankole, and the Kede, and the latter includes societies which lack centralized authorities, administrative machinery, and constitute judicial institutions (Fortes and Evans-Pritchard 1940: 5). African societies with indigenous age-set systems, like that of the Gedeo *Baalle* system, are included in the latter category. The work of these scholars has played a crucial role in shaping the Eurocentric views that perceive state formation as "alien" to African land. Later in this article, with empirical data, we will build on the views of these scholars, and argue that age class systems like that of the Gedeo *Baalle* system should be considered as a State.

Though there are some evidences that show age-set systems are found in some areas outside Africa, Africa is still well known for its rich and diverse age class indigenous governance systems. Age class systems are found in different parts of Africa with a relatively huge concentration in Eastern Africa (Bernardi 1985: 12). All age class systems have three components: the formal institution of class, the configuration of promotional grades, and the succession of classes in the grade. While class refers to a group of people structurally selected and promoted through successive grades, grades refer to temporal social roles, rights and duties associated to a categorized class (Bernardi 1985; Legese 1973). Age class systems take variant forms. Bernard divides them into two: age class systems and generation. The former is based on initiation, and the latter on the main principles of

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institutionalization. In the age class systems where initiation is the main organizing principle, initial class formation is done by the public recognition of the candidates' physiological maturation. In generational class systems, the generational distance between the father and the son is structurally determined. In this case, age is not that much important as it is for initiation in the age class systems. Because of the structural rigidity, Bernard noted that "…[T]he system based on generation classes are always complex because they structurally define the age distance between son and his father which in turn creates huge age gaps within a given class yet performing similar tasks" (Bernardi 1985: 4-6).

From the generational class systems, the peculiar of which are the Gada systems (i.e., proto-Cushitic systems embedded in the cultures of the eastern Cushitic speaking peoples like the Borana, Guji, Konso, Gedeo, Sidama, Hoor (Arboore) and so forth), the members of specific age-sets are no longer coevals; indeed, they may range in age from infants to dotards (Legese 1973). And, at the same time, many of the patterns associated with normal age-sets persist. For instance, the respect that the members of a junior age-set must pay to a senior age-set does not vary. In his outstanding book on the Gada system of the Borana community, Legese (1973: 112) caught his observation beautifully:

> I have witnessed with unending fascination many rituals and ceremonies in which eight-year-olds were dancing, praying, and chanting with middle-aged men, without batting an eyelash. All that matters is that they are members of the luba (i.e. the governing class in the Borana Gada system).

Gada systems have attracted the attention of many scholars (Legese 1973; Bassi 1996, 2005; Alemayehu 2009; Jalata 2010; Dirribi 2011; Fayo 2011; Sirna 2012) because of their interesting features when compared to other African societies governed by age class based political institutions. The Gedeo version of the *Gada* systems is known as the *Baalle* system[2] and it has not been systematically studied so far. Despite the incorporation of the Gedeo into the Ethiopian state and the introduction of a "modern" form of governance, the Gedeo still today practice their *Baalle* system to run their socio-political matters and resolve conflicts (Chodak 1973; Kippie *et al.* 2008). Thus, the main purpose of this article is to delve into the practices and contemporary dynamics associated with the *Baalle* system of Gedeo.

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[2] *Baalle* refers to both a governance system and a name for each of the nine classes in the system. In the case of the former, we write the first letter in capital (i.e., *Baalle*), and the latter case in lower case form (i.e., *baalle*).

2. Methodology

The philosophy, practices and dynamics of the *Baalle* system is embedded in the Gedeo's indigenous ways of life. Such uniqueness can only be best grasped by the interpretive world view (Croswell 2014). Under this paradigm, the main principles that have guided us are the connectedness between the physical and spiritual realms, focus on the uniqueness of the *Baalle* system, and the inseparable relation between us (the researchers) and the Gedeo people (Sherwood 2010; Hart 2010; Smith 2012). Design-wise, we have employed a qualitative research design. While stating the imperative of qualitative research design in understanding the contribution of locally framed institutions like *Baalle*, Croswell states that qualitative designs are best when they are employed for the purpose of understanding how certain social institutions are developed and put into practice (Croswell 2014).

Empirical data were collected from Dilla town (the main administrative center of the Gedeo Zone) and three rural districts, namely, Dilla Zuriya district, Gedeb district and Bule district. The rationale for selecting Dilla town is to examine contemporary dynamics in the *Baalle* system as the town has always served as the seat of administration in all the three regimes. The rural districts are selected to study the essence of indigenous governance because the *Baalle* system is still actively practiced. In both settings, different complementary methodological tools including focus group discussions, narrative interviews, transact walks and observations of public spaces, and storytelling have been employed. The daily practices in *Songo* (the traditional setting where *Baalle* is practiced) have become the center of our observations and transact walks. Moreover, relevant secondary data were consulted particularly through published materials (books, theses, dissertations and articles) and unpublished materials (government offices and minutes).

Field data were collected from three fieldwork visits. The first round was conducted from May to July 2018; the second fieldwork was carried out from January to February 2019; the last fieldwork was a gap filling conducted in November 2020. A total of 51 individuals have participated in the research process. While selecting potential interviewees, we have relied on our already established network with the Gedeo Zone Culture, Tourism and Sports Department. This is because the knowledge of indigenous governance institutions is not democratically distributed, but accumulated in the hands of a handful cultural consultants. Indeed, we have made efforts to incorporate the views of different actors including elders, representatives of the indigenous governance system (*Abba Gada*, *woyo*, *hayyichcha*), women, youths and state officials at different levels of administrative structures. Field data from different sources are cross-checked and triangulated to enhance the validity and trustworthiness of our findings. Throughout the research, due consideration was given to ethical aspects. "At a fundamental level, indigenous research ethics is about establishing, maintaining and

nurturing reciprocal and respectful relationships that pre-exist the researcher" (Smith 2005: 97). Thus, we have tried our level best to leave the field stable after our fieldwork. Moreover, during the data collection, different measures like securing anonymity, taking consent form and ensuring participation of informants during the different stages of our study were taken into account in order to ensure ethical consideration. Finally, we have analyzed the empirical data thematically along with the conceptual framework of our research.

3. Context of the study

Today, the Gedeo people mainly live in the Gedeo Administrative Zone in the Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples' Regional State (SNNPRS), and in neighboring Oromia and Sidama National Regional States in Ethiopia. The Gedeo language, which serves as the mother tongue of the Gedeo people, is a Highland East Cushitic language within the Afro-asiatic phylum (Raymond 2005). Of course, bilingualism, and to some degree, multilingualism, is on the rise. The Gedeo people who live around the borders of the Gedeo Administrative Zone are bilinguals: those bordering with the Sidama National Regional State and Oromia National Regional State speak Sidama and Ormo in addition to the Gedeo language, respectively. Additionally, Amharic, the lingua franca in Ethiopia, and the working language of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, is widely spoken in Dilla and other small towns in the Gedeo Administrative Zone. Schooled people also speak English to varying degrees.

The origin of the Gedeo people is debatable until today. Mainly there are three competing perspectives in this regard. One of these traces the origin of the Gedeo to Harsu, a place currently found in Oromia National Regional State, from where the fathers of Gedeo crossed the Hawatan River and settled in the present day Haro Wolabu, a village currently found in Bule district in Gedeo Administrative Zone. Actually, similar places are also found in neighboring Oromo community that even take Haro Wolabu to the level of mythical place. According to this account, the political, spiritual and social system of the Gedeo people was innovated by the founding fathers in *Oda Ya'a*, a public gathering space, and then disseminated to the other parts of Gedeo (Council of Nationalities 2011: 328). The second account states that the origin of the Gedeo people goes to the aboriginal tribe *Murga-Gosallo* (Kippie *et al.* 2008). The third tradition relates the origin of the Gedeo people with Borana and Guji people. This account states that there was a man with three sons. The eldest was *Deraso*, the father of today's Gedeo people, followed by *Borru*, the father of today's Borana people, and youngest was *Gujo*, the father of today's Guji people. In turn, *Deraso* had seven sons from two wives. These seven children of Deraso are considered today as the base for today's seven clans of the Gedeo

(Kippie 2002: 25; Council of Nationalities 2011; interview with Tilahun, 2020). Furthermore, the seven clans are broadly classified into two houses. The first house is *Sase baxxe;*[3] it includes three clans: *Hemba'a,*[4] *Logoda* and *Bakkaro.* The second house is *Shoole baxxe*; it includes four clans: *Darasha, Gorgorsha, Dobo'a and Hanuma* (Kippie *et al.* 2008; interview with Tilahun, November 2020, Dilla). Other accounts categorize the seven children of Daraso into two groups: *dhalana*[5] (senior)–the first three son's descendants from the senior wife, and *belbana* (junior)–the rest four from the junior wife. Regardless of the variations in the categorization, what makes the Gedeo clans similar is that all are exogamous and political power is vested by the descendants of the senior wife over the descendants of the junior wife. The political roles of the latter are limited to facilitation rather than exercising actual leadership role (field note, February 2018, Dilla Zuriya).

The Gedeo economy is mainly based on their historical heritage of *enset*-based agro-forestry. In his dissertation entitled "*Five thousand years of sustainability? A case study on Gedeo land use,*" Kippie (2002) stated the miraculous nature of the Gedeo agro-forestry system in not only feeding the ever-growing Gedeo people in a very small area but also ensuring sustainable economy for centuries. Part of the agro-forestry is an organic coffee particularly known with its brand name of *Yirga Chaffe* that the Gedeo produce for local, national and international markets. And, the products of *enset* (false banana) like *bulla* and *kocho* are used both for home consumption and national market transaction. During our latest fieldwork in November 2020, we learned the commencement of some activities already put in place to make *enset* products export standard. The Gedeo exchange their production with the neighboring communities like the agro-pastoral Guji and the agrarian Sidama (McClellan 1988; field observation in inter-ethnic market areas around Gololcha and Wonago in June 2016).
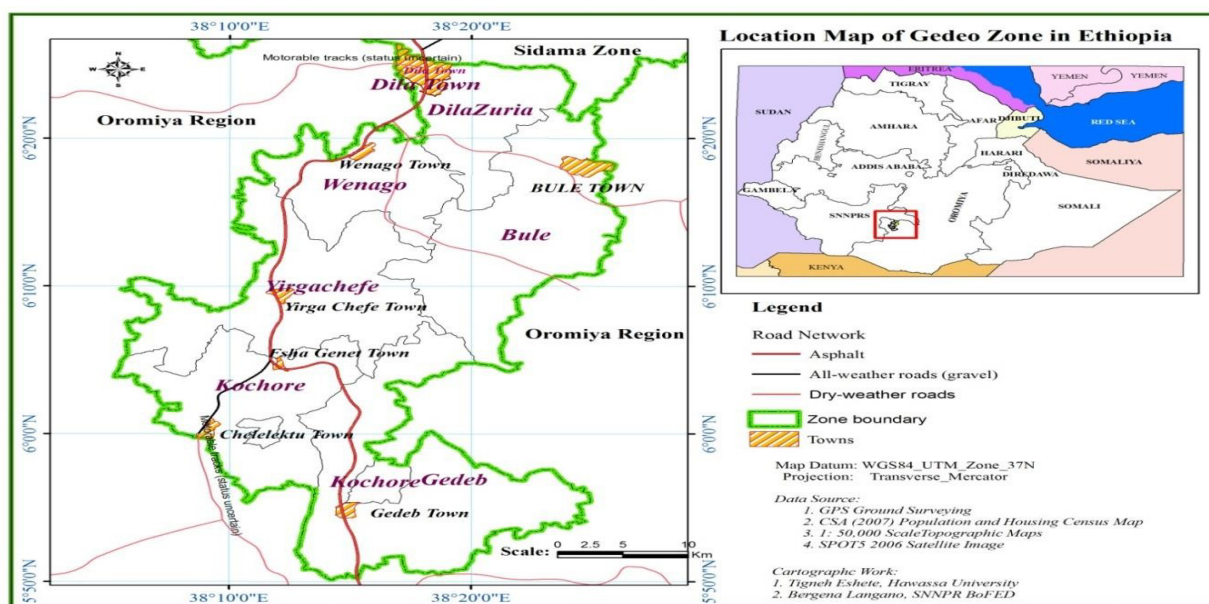
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[3] The letter x in Gedeo alphabet represents the voiceless, alveolar ejective /t'/ consonant.

[4] The apostrophe (i.e., ') in Gedeo alphabet represents the voiceless, glottal stop.

[5] The letters *dh* in Gedeo alphabet represent the voiced, alveolar implosive /ɗ/.

Map 1: Gedeo Administrative Zone (adapted from Tadese 2016)

4. Internal evolution of the Gedeo indigenous governance system: From autocracy to democracy

The Gedeo, like many other communities throughout the world, were hunters (Kippie 2002: 22). Before the expansion of agriculture and the development of agroforestry as the typical form of their livelihood, the Gedeo used to live in natural forests full of wild animals hunted for food. This hunting-based economy, where constant mobility in search of prey was mandatory, determined not only the economy of the Gedeo but also their socio-political system. The mobile economy gave special management and administrative power to elderly men who could not afford hunting, and mothers who stayed at home for a long time with babies when the adult males constantly moved for hunting. The absence of men at home for the most part due to hunting slowly shifted the political landscape at home: the political power of women at the family level gradually expanded to the community level, and finally gave birth to the first matriarchal socio-political system known as the *Aakko Maannooye* system (Kippie *et al.* 2008: 19).

In the *Aakko Maannooye* system, the fact that the political power was vested in the hands of mothers and reflected in the day-to-day life of the Gedeo people amounted to an authoritarian governance system of "queendom" political administration in which the power to make decisions over resources and other public affairs fell totally in the hands of the queen (Tilahun, November 2020, Dilla). What is more, strict obedience to the queen's authority was favored over that of men and other community members. Lineage was matrilineal, and the roles of men were limited to only domestic chores. In the *Aakko Maannooye* governance system, women with dominion personality were valued and became heroine queens. Even though it is hard to state the exact period of *Aakko Maannooye*'s

hegemony, Gedeo elders state that the period would most likely be between 2000 to 1000 BC (Focus group discussion, June 2018, Gedeb). Of course, similar stories exist in neighbor ethnic groups like the Sidama and Guji. However, the *Aakko Maannooye* system has become legendary because of the absence of written evidence. Indeed, the absence of written documents does not necessarily mean the absence of oral history. Part of the evidence comes from the Gedeo oral heritage. There are songs and stories in which the *Aakko Maannooye* system is embedded. For instance, Hayyichcha Worasa Suku and Atara Abira (Kippie *et al.* 2008: 20) recall the song by men after the successful collapse of the *Aakko Maannooye* system as follows:

1. *Tee*[6] *Akkoyyo, maye'a rettette?* (2x)

    'You Akkoyyo, why did you pass away?' (2x)

    Hoo Hoo Siisso!

    Tee Akkoyyo, maye'a rettette? (2x)

    'You Akkoyyo, why did you pass away?' (2x)

    Hoo Hoo Siisso!

    Sha Shanbalaqqi (2x)[7]

    'We rejoice your death' (2x)

During the *Aakko Maannooye* era, the Gedeo started to adopt a settled agriculture life that accumulated adult men around their farm and/or homestead instead of sending them out for hunting. This gradually increased men's political role over that of women. As some oral traditions show, the oppressiveness of *Aakko Maannooye* system, coupled with the innovation of an agricultural economic system, finally resulted in the replacement of the matriarchal system and gave rise to the second patriarchal governance system known as *Gosallo* system (see also Kippie *et al.* 2008). The *Gosallo* system highly resembles a kingdom administrative system in which the words of the king become the law of the entire society. Even though *Gosallo* reversed the nature and practices of the previous system, it still failed to satisfy the Gedeo people's quest for a more egalitarian type of administration. As the grievances of the *Gosallo* system increased, the general public equally increased their discontent with this masculine version of the *Aakko Maannooye* system. This led to the death of the *Gosallo* system around the late 15th century through a popular revolt led by two youngsters, Fiffoo and Dachcho.

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[6] *Tee* is a vocative form of the third person singular feminine.

[7] The letter q in the Gedeo alphabet stands for the voiceless velar ejective /k'/.

This revolt ignited the birth of the new democratic government structure: the *Baalle* system (Council of Nationalities 2011; Kippie *et al.* 2008; Focus group discussion with elders in Bule district, May 2016). The *Baalle* system, like other *Gada* systems of many Cushitic-speaking peoples in southern Ethiopia, is based on a decentralized type of governance in which different parts of the system have their own functions and roles. In this system, the seven clans of the Gedeo participate in administrative, supportive and spiritual duties unlike the *Gosallo* system in which only Darasha clan rules the others (Kippie *et al.* 2008).

5. The *Baalle* system from structural-functionalist perspective

Baalle is a system of classes which succeed each other every eight years and assume economic, political, social and spiritual position. There are nine rotational grades in the *Baalle* system in their bottom to top order:

2.   *qadado* → *siida* → *lumasa* → *raaba* → *luba* → *Yuuba* → *guduro* → *qululo* → *chawaje*

What is further interesting is that newly born male babies automatically join the class of their fathers in order to reduce the passage through all the grades (Kippie *et al.* 2008: 25; interview with Tilahun, Dilla Zuria, November 2020). This makes the Gedeo *Baalle* system different from the *Gada* systems of the neighboring communities. For example, among the Borana, Legese reports that "the newly born infant boy always enters the system of grade exactly forty years behind the father regardless of the age of the father. The father and son are always five grades apart at all times" (Legese 1973: 51). Put differently, the Gedeo *Baalle* system crucially differs from gerontocracy, a political system where the council of elders rules over the younger generations. This is particularly because two generations (i.e., a father and his son) simultaneously are allowed to belong to the same *Baalle,* sharing similar responsibility, honor and respect. The best evidence here is the current *Abba Gada* who assumed the *Baalle* leadership position at his early 30s.

Each grade has rules and responsibilities. However, the fifth age-grade (*luba*) is the most decisive because it is only in this grade that men are assigned for governance positions in the *Baalle* system. The first four grades preceding *luba* are grades preparing themselves for governance, and mainly engaged in activities like facilitating power transition by making sure that the precondition for communal ceremonial events are fulfilled. The other three grades succeeding *luba baalle* are engaged in advising the leaders in *luba baalle.* Members of the last *baalle* (i.e., *chawaje)* are not involved in any

activities. Rather, it is a class of retired members who have 'finished their life cycle, and come back to their childhood' (see also Kippie *et al.* 2008: 25).

In the pre-*luba baalle* classes, the fourth *baalle* (i.e., *raaba*) is a very critical class in the sense that it has many functions in the *Baalle* system. First of all, it is a class where the preparation for the peaceful power transfer takes its full and final shape. Secondly, it is in this class that the leaders who would assume different *luba* structures after eight years are selected. Thirdly, members in this class have the responsibility to protect the society not only from externally induced conflicts but also from natural disasters as well as internal man-made crises. One of the typical features of the Gedeo *Baalle* system, unlike its neighboring *Gada* systems, is that war with external enemies is waged only when it is an existential threat and calls for self defence. Along this, for example, Legese noted the following:

> ...[B]efore assuming a position of leadership, the gada class is required to wage war against a community that none of their ancestors had raided. This particular war is known as butta and is waged on schedule every eight years. It is this event that was most directly connected with the pulsating frontier of their dominions in the sixteenth century leading toward the conquest of nearly half of Ethiopia's land surface" (Legese 1973: 8).

To effectively fulfill their duty of protecting the community, the *raaba baalle* is organized into eight positions, each with its own recruited leader, called *bobbaasa.* The *bobbaasa* has the responsibility to lead the army (*sanachcha*), police force (*mosiisa*) and assembly (*ya'a).* He has two vice officials: the *murte* who is responsible for justice affairs and oversees judges (*dabballichcha*), and the *fatte* who is responsible for administrative issues. Furthermore, in this class, as is in other classes, there is one important institution called *murra.* The role of this institution is to disseminate valid information between authorities and the mass public. It is the survivors of this challenging class who become eligible for the *luba* class.

Luba is organized in a way that the highest power goes to a public assembly called the *ya'a. Ya'a* selects crucial positions including *Abba Gada* (the leader of the *Baalle*), *Ja'laaba* (the vice *Abba Gada*), *Abba Roga* (an administrator for the three administrative regions of Gedeo: *Suubbo, Dhiibata* and *Reqata), Jalqaba, Hulati Hayyichcha* (representatives of the seven Gedeo clans) and *Baxxeti Hayyichcha* (a *Songo* leader). Though the *Abba Gada* institution combines both administrative and spiritual powers, there are specific individuals who, by virtue of vested powers, lead the spiritual aspects of the *Baalle* institution. Such leaders are locally called *Woyyo.* Their main responsibility is conducting blessing and cursing. It is believed that their blessing and cursing always have inevitable consequences.

The classification of responsibilities like head of a state and vice-head should not create a wrong impression that the *Baalle* system is hierarchically organized. Rather, it can be best understood as a system that divides the whole Gedeo society into nine grades with functional differentiation. The fact that *Ya'a* enjoys the highest political power in the indigenous governance system of Gedeo resembles the modern democratic institutions where the houses of peoples' representative exercise the highest power. Regardless of its sophistication in decentralizing power across individuals and generations and local relevance, the *Baalle* system has been denigrated since the integration of Gedeo into the Ethiopian state and the associated waves of "modern" education and religions which are at odds with the indigenous Gedeo cosmology.

Territory-wise, the Gedeo Baalle system had been administered over three autonomous regions (*roga*) before its incorporation into the Ethiopian state during the late 19th century. The three *roga* are the *Subbo roga*, *Dhiibata roga* and the *Riqata roga*. Each *roga* has its clear territorial boundary classified following physical ecological features like mountains, valleys, rivers and so forth, for they solve their own problems. The relationship between the three *rogas* is horizontal; however, often *Subbo roga* is considered elder *roga* but it has no special power over other *roga*. The leaders of each *roga* are called *roga* with its vice structure *jalqaaba*. When the *roga* fails to solve matters, they are referred to as *Abba Gada (Gadicha)*.

It is worth mentioning the governance institution of the Gedeo *Baalle* system. The Gedeo have an institution called *Songo*. This governance institution is a multi-purpose social space in which different activities are carried out: laws (*Seera*) are both enacted and implemented; youths exercise socialization; adults pray to *Mageno* (Sky God), etc. In a nutshell, *Songo* is a political, spiritual and cultural institution (Kippie *et al.* 2008: 42-47). Unlike the *roga* who are organized along physical features, *Songos* are organized along clan bases. Accordingly, in each of the seven clans of the Gedeo, we find 75 *Songo* institutions evenly distributed. Totally, there are 525 *Songo* institutions in Gedeo where *Baalle* is practiced as a system.

6. The notion of power and the practices of power transfer in the *Baalle* system

The Gedeo notion of power is not divided into secular and spiritual domains as it is the case in the western democracies. Power is one, united and holistic form embedded in the *Baalle* system. For example, the literal meaning of the term *Gada* means an office term (i.e., a period of eight years), and *Abba* is father. So, *Abba Gada* literally means "the father of a brief term." The practical implication of this notion is that each *Abba Gada* exercises a holistic power that incorporates political, economic,

social and spiritual domains. *Abba Gada* (and his team) is considered as a father, all-provider and fulfiller of the needs of Gedeo people in the given term.

Among the Gedeo, a father is highly respected. During the fieldwork, the study participants explained that the father should be heard with respect even if mistaken (interview with Abba Jibo, May 2018, Gedeb; Hailu Beyene, Dilla, November 2020). They added that one is not allowed to see their father straight into his eyes. Such realities are embedded in the Gedeo oral heritage such as proverbs as shown in 3.:

3.   *anna uuddoole, ille butti'a uuddaan*

      anna   uuddoole,   ille   butti'a uuddaan

      father look.PRES.COND eye   down look.FUT

      'Youngsters show their respect by avoiding looking into the eyes of the elders'

      (lit.: 'Looking at the father, the eye will bend down')

This paternalistic aspect of the Gedeo people is parallel to the Chinese conception of the state (Jacques 2009). The difference is that the Chinese state is atheist, but the Gedeo indigenous governance system combines both secular and religious power. Though such paternalistic view about the head of the state resembles the eastern, often that of Chinese, governance model, the exercise of holistic power including the spiritual domain by the *Abba Gada*, puts Baalle system at odds with the secular Chinese model (Jacques 2009). On the other hand, exercising time-bounded power in the *Baalle* governance system warmly fits into the context of advanced western electoral democracies. Though the Gedeo did not solely associate themselves with a single *Abba Gada* (as it was the case in southwestern and northern kingdoms in Ethiopia, where the King was the crucial figure of the Kingdom) the Gedeo highly respect their *Abba Gada*. This is partly because the people believe that the will of *Mageno*, the Sky God who is the Creator and owner of the visible and invisible universe, leads their selection to the right person. They believe that since "our selection of a particular *Abba Gada* is led by *Mageno*, we have to obey the *Abba Gada* because the will of *Magano* is upon him" (Interview with Hailu Beyene, Dilla Zuria, November, 2020).

The Gedeo select their seasonal leader based on some complex criteria. The criteria are comprehensive and include physical, social, political, spiritual and personal traits of the candidate. According to the study participants, the candidate should, from the outset, be physically healthy and with no signs of scars on his body. Such physical "pureness" is thoroughly checked by the assembly of elders (*Ya'a*) by making him undress. Socially, a strong socialization into the Gedeo culture and

having blood relationships with previous *Abba Gada* is very essential. Such socialization often takes place at different levels ranging from family up to *Songo* (Kippie 2008; Focus group discussion with elders, January 2019, Bule). Another socially relevant criterion is the absence of criminal records especially murder. Personality-wise, impartiality and integrity during judgment is highly valued among the Gedeo. The Gedeo analogy for the capacity of a good leader to keep his balance between competing interests in the community affairs is "a nose between two eyes." In the words of Hailu Beyene:

4. *hayyichchi sano ken. Middi'anna bita'i'anna gamatabaan*

    hayyichchi sano   ken.   Middi-'a-nna   bita'i-'a-nna   gamata-baan

    leader   nose   is   left-side-and   right-side-and incline-NEG

    'A leader is like a nose. He should not incline to left and right, but remain balanced in the middle'

The study participant adds that "as the nose stands firmly in the middle of two eyes, so should the *Abba Gada* maintain a balance between competing and conflicting interests of the community members. He shouldn't incline to either side, but to the *Seera*, the constitution of *Baalle* system" (Interview with Hailu, Dilla Zuria, November 2020). Spiritually, what is much expected from a good candidate is a strong belief in the mighty power of *Mageno*. This is partly because the Gedeo believe that one who is selected as *Abba Gada* receives an accurate spiritual power to bless and curse. And, finally, politically, the candidate should belong to either of the two political bodies (equivalent to the western conceptualization of parties): *bilbana* and *dhalana*. Moreover, if selected, he should be willing to lick honey harvested from a tree that is locally termed *qumbi* and make an oath to serve his community whole-heartedly. Once selected, the *Abba Gada* and his company enjoy various socio-political and spiritual powers and execute their responsibilities for eight years. Some of the responsibilities of the *Abba Gada* include leading the meetings of *Ya'a*; ensuring peace and security, and law and order of the community; leading ceremonies of power transfer and other spiritual festivities; ordering *bobbaasa* to lead defensive wars during any foreign invasion; and making decisions on any political, social, and spiritual aspects of the Gedeo people. Of course, such decisions demand him of making consultations with his advisors in his class members and people in the immediate senior class (i.e., the *yuuba baalle*).

    The success and failure of a given *Abba Gada* (and his term) is evaluated from multi-dimensional perspectives. In order to evaluate his success or failure, the public asks such questions as those in 5.:

5.   Is the term blessed with good harvest?

Do the planted crops and trees bear abundant fruits?

Are coffee and enset plants productive?

Is there peace and harmony during the given season?

Did the people defeat their enemies during war (if there was any)?

Is there any natural disaster?

Do the youths and children respect the elders and their parents?

Is there continuity in the general cultural values of the Gedeo during a given season?

The answers emerging out of these questions determine the leadership quality of the given *Abba Gada* and his team members. If everything during the term goes smooth and as expected, then, it is believed that the *kaayo* (literally 'fortune') is good. Consequently, the people celebrate *Daraaro* (annual thanksgiving festivity of the Gedeo people) by presenting gifts (locally called *Gumata*) to *Abba Gada*. However, if the eight years of a given *Abba Gada* are full of problems like war, drought, inundation, instability, epidemic, high child mortality, starvation, and so forth, then, the leaders are summoned to *faci'e*[8] (literally 'confession') ritual. During the *fachi'e* ritual, the *Abba Gada* and his team as well as the general public confess their sins in order to purify the people and the season.

We have already mentioned that in the *Baalle* governance system, a very peaceful power transfer takes place every eight years regardless of the success or failure of the *Abba Gada* (Wondimagegnehu 2018). For example, a member in the *Luba baalle* must be promoted to *Yuuba baalle* after serving in *Luba baalle* for eight years. The reasons are mainly threefold. The first is the use of age as a structural tool to organize society. Along this line, Bernardi (1985: 6) noted that "[W]hen age is employed for structural ends, it does not know territorial boundaries or divisions based on kinship. Indeed, paradoxical because its ultimate end is death, age is mystically placed beyond all age, as when it creates a link to the ancestors beyond time." The second is governing the whole process by the unwritten, but firmly obeyed, law of the Gedeo (i.e., *Seera*). And finally, there are only two political bodies (*bilbaana* and *dhalaana*) which take the political power turn by turn (Kippie *et al.* 2008). Indeed, there are certain ceremonies that must be accomplished before conducting the generational power transfer. First of all, the ceremony of *Falo* (literally, 'cultural prayer') takes place in seeking peace

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[8] In the Gedeo alphabet, the letter c stands for the voiceless alveo-palatal ejective /c'/.

throughout the process of power transfer. This is followed by the ceremony of *fachi'e*. In this ceremony, the *Baalle* leaders, the *Woyyo* elders and the whole community members confess their sins before *Mageno*. It is believed that the confession brings mercy from *Mageno*, and prosperity to the society. What follows is *qeexala*, in this ceremony, people gather together in order to worship and give thanks to *Mageno* for the peace and prosperity he gives following the *Faci'e* ceremony. Finally, the *Abba Gada* orders some people to gather all the sins and bury them in a place called *'qarra.'* This process of burying sins is locally called *bita hu'na.*

Based on the above findings, we argue that the nature of the *Baalle* governance system of the Gedeo contradicts with the generic conclusion of Fortes and Evans-Pritchard (1940: 16) that depicts African societies as having a model for violence, oppression, revolt, civil war rather than a system that creates internal harmony. Of course, it is obvious that instability and social unrests are one of the common features of contemporary African political systems. Even though internal conflict and change are common in almost all political systems, conflict with external groups is mainly inherent in kingdoms than decentralized governance systems. From the Kingdom mentality, the economic and political power of the king or kingdom depends on the vastness of its territory as each new territory provides additional source of political power and wealth. For this reason, almost all kingdoms in history go out for war to hunt new territories (Munroe 2006). Kingdoms of the 19th century Europe like France, Germany, United Kingdom, Belgium, and some pre-colonial African kingdoms like the Fulani Kingdom of West Africa, the chiefdom of Nuuni in South Africa, the Abyssinian Kingdom in the Horn of Africa, etc. are good examples in this regard.[9] Decentralized African indigenous governance systems (age class systems as some anthropologists calls them), however, are often known for their internal and external stability mainly because of distributing social roles and political power to all community members across generations. An exception to the latter might be the Oromo Gada system that practices *butta*, a structurally scheduled war every eight years against an outside community by a *gada* class before assuming a position of leadership. Legese noted that "...[I]t is this event (i.e. *butta*) that was most directly connected with pulsating frontier of their dominions in the sixteenth century leading toward the conquest of nearly half of Ethiopian's land surface" (Legese 1973: 8).

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[9] https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PzF88HBlAHY.

7. Were the Gedeo a "State"?

A state is a contested concept. When it comes to state formation in pre-colonial Africa, it is even more contested due to conflicting ideas and theoretical orientation of the political scientists and anthropologists who studied African politics. The core of the debate is often what constitutes a state. After synthesizing studies on the distribution and key features of age-class systems throughout the world, Bernardi (1985: 140) noted that "patrilineal descent, minimal political organization and "acephaloussness" are the common features of all societies governed by age class systems." The word 'acephalous' is derived from Greek ἀκέφαλος literally "headless." From Bernardi's conclusion, all societies governed by the age class systems, including the Gedeo, lack leaders or heads, any institutionalized system of power, authority, and hierarchies. Fortes and Evance-Pritchard (1940) even go further, and divide African polity sharply into two: states (centralized chiefdoms/kingdoms like the Ngwato, the Bemba, and the Ankole in which the chief/king rules over the tribe/society) and "stateless" societies (societies with decentralized and egalitarian institutions like the Nuer, Konso, Gedeo, Borana, Arbore, Arusha, Masai in which institutions maintain social order)."[10] We argue that this generic categorization of African polity into two is only guided by Eurocentric mentality. For example, there is no clear evidence in which Chiefdoms are states while others are not except the similarity of the former to the colonial kingdoms in structure and its easiness for indirect rule. Here it is worth mentioning Bernardi's statements:

> The conquering nations, at the moment of territorial occupation, needed local leaders to serve as a broker in their rule over the populations. In case of centralized kingdoms, this was simply a matter of forcing the king and the other leaders to follow the orders of the conquerors or to substitute them with others, maintaining the ancient structure. However, where there were no heads, the conquerors were faced with an enigma (Bernardi 1985: 24).

Based on our field data, we argue that the Gedeo were a state under the *Baalle* governance system. First, they had a clearly defined territory under three *roga*. Secondly, its dense and relatively large number of population size fits the requirements. Third, their economy produced, and still continues to produce, cash crops particularly *Yirga Chaffe* organic coffee. Fourth, their relationship with the neighboring communities like the Guji and Borana, and, above all, their complex indigenous

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[10] It is nevertheless to be noted that none of these proposals takes into consideration sovereignty of power–according to many the only defining feature of a proper state.

governance system (the *Baalle* system) located at the center of their social fabric qualify the Gedeo for being a State.

It is important to mention that the governance trajectory of the Gedeo shows that during pre-*Baalle* period, the Gedeo used to be ruled by chiefs in the *Gossalo* period. It was the brutality of these chiefs that led the Gedeo people to completely overthrow the Chiefdom system and replace it with the egalitarian *Baalle* system. In other words, *Baalle* is a conscious institutional decision of the Gedeo not only to abolish Chiefdom but also to continually dismantle its rise in their society. Thus, setting chiefdom as a fundamental criterion to define a State is not unacceptable. The focus should rather shift to other parameters like institutional complexity and capacity for maintain social order.

8. The influence of Ethiopian State on the *Baalle* system

Like the internal evolution in the Gedeo indigenous governance system, the Ethiopian state also has undergone trifold re-construction in its governance itinerary. From the outset, Ethiopia took its present geographical shape through the kingdom building project of Emperor Minilik (1866-1913), the King of Shoa, in the second half of the 19th century. Minilik, with his desire to expand his territory, continued to move to the autonomous regions in all directions, becoming *negusänägäst* 'King of Kings' (Aregay 1997)[11] of Ethiopia in 1889, and remaining in power until his death in 1913. Small kingdoms[12] in the southwest like the Wolayta, Kafa, Gofa, and peoples under egalitarian governance systems like the Sidama, Konso, Gedeo, Borana, Guji and so forth did not manage to escape the expansion of the *negusänägäst* (Filippini 2002). Following the incorporation of the Gedeo into the Ethiopian state in 1895 (Kippie 2002), the domination of the northern Kingdom governance system prevailed over the egalitarian *Baalle* system.

According to Kippie (2002), the kingdom building process of the Imperial regime (1889 - 1974) was very painful, in that it took away not only the *Baalle* system but also whatever the Gedeo had: their language, economy, costume, administrative system and even more utterly their history. Debelo

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[11] Negus (King) was the governor of each autonomous region. By using the title *negusänägäst* 'King of kings' the rulers of northern kingdoms, since the Aksumite period (1st to 7th century) up to the Solomonic dynasty which emerged in the late thirteenth century and survived until 1974, could conveniently indicate their supreme rulership over all other *nägäst* 'kings' (see also Aregay 1997).

[12] By kingdom, we mean "the governing influence of a king over his territory, impacting it with his personal will, purpose and intent, producing a cultural values, morals and life style that reflect the king's desires and nature for his citizens" (Munroe 2006: 31).

(2007) provides similar reports saying that the formal state sanctions and assimilation processes changed the egalitarian *Baalle* system to absolute feudal monarchy, on the one hand, and the subsistent agricultural economy to the extractive *balabat-gebar* "landlord-tenant" system. Of course, it is worth mentioning that the imperial regime was also exploiting the northern Christian cultivators, with some authors suggesting as much as 30% of the total annual production going to the feudal lords in the form of rent and tribute (Crummey 1983). The only difference with the south is the level of severity: there, the feudal system was entitled to tax 50% and in some highly resistant cases up to 75% of what was produced (McClellan 1988: 59). This, however, does not mean that there were no positive developments under the imperial system. For example, Woldemariam (2015) mentions some positive developments like the introduction of rail way, vehicles, postal service, public transport, etc. Moreover, the first University College of Emperor Haile Selassie (now Addis Ababa University) was founded in 1950 by Emperor Haile Selassie, the last King of the Imperial regime.

During the third quarter of the 20th century (i.e., 1960s), the imperial system under Emperor Haile Selassie failed to respond to the "nationality" questions raised by Addis Ababa University students and the associated social unrests in the country. Walelign, then student at Haile Selassie University, who is often considered the pioneer of the nationality movement, in a short, but very powerful article, claimed that Ethiopia is not one nation-state but a state of multiple and, except for the Amhara nation and to some extent the Amhara-Tigre front, marginalized nations (Mekonen 1969). The response of the King to the student movement from his own university was arresting and killing students, including Walelign, who were leading the quest for a multi-national state, rather than addressing the nationality questions. Woldemariam (2015) labels such ideologically suppressive behavior of the imperial regime አዳፍነ (*addafnä* 'repressive'). This repressive behavior of the imperial state coupled with social unrest in various parts of the country resulted in self-defeat of the imperial regime. Once the regime began to be weaker and weaker, there was a deluge in opposition movements either in the form of movement or party. The most prominent movements include the Ethiopian Socialist Movement (ESM) mainly composed of Ethiopian scholars returning from Western countries, Ethiopian Peoples' Revolutionary Party (EPRP) mainly composed of Addis Ababa University students and their teachers, Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF), Eritrean People's Liberation Front (EPLF), and the Derg- the military base of the King Haile Selassie. One of the distinguishing features of these movements is that all of them were pegged in socialist ideology. But it is the *Derg* (1974-1991) that eventually managed to take the state power in 1974, and established its own version of socialist government using its military power. Along this line, Alemayehu and Gebru (2005) state

that Debela Dinsa, a top military official of the *Derg* regime and one of the leaders of the revolution movement officers, officially announced the removal of the king from power as follows:

> Your Majesty, King of Kings, you stayed in power for a long period of time. Because you are old enough and incapable of leading the country this time, you are ousted from power since June 29/1966 E.C. From now on, I kindly request you to go to a special place arranged for the King of Kings.

With these sentences of Debela, not only the majesty removed from power, but also the century-old monarchy as a governance system of Ethiopia came to an end. Once the *Derg* regime came to power, the remaining four resistant movements devised their strategies, not ideologies, to deal with the military junta in power. TPLF and EPLF chose to use farmers as their main path towards securing political power. On the contrary, EPRP chose urban terror as a political strategy to defeat the Derg regime. ESM chose a completely different itinerary to power: it inclined to work together with the military regime. The 'urbanite' strategy of movements (EPRP and ESM) resulted in the fight against each other, and later led to their disintegration and demise.

Once the military regime took power from the king, it imported its ideology from abroad instead of revitalizing the denigrated indigenous governance institutions in Ethiopia. Put differently, the *Derg* was inspired by the socialist ideology whose main proponent was the Soviet Union whose communism was built to ensure a total control by the party over the state and by the state over the society via the twin levers of a centrally planned economy and of Marxist–Leninist ideology enforced by a tightly controlled cultural apparatus (Castelles 2010). Following the same footprint, the *Derg* tried to exert a total control over the politics and economy of the country. When the Soviet variant of communism failed to survive the stormy waters of historical transition between industrialism and informationalism during the last quarter of the 19th century, the *Derg* also went to its grave in 1991, and left the country in the hands of TPLF and EPLF, the two survivors among the five socialist movements of the 1960s. The collapse of the Soviet Union and its ideological child, the *Derg* regime, clearly have given a good lesson about the importance of building political project from the specific history of the nation rather than only theoretical blueprint. Castelles, in this regard, contends that "the artificial paradise of theoretically inspired politics was buried forever with the Soviet state" (Castelles 2010: 65).

Once the TPLF and EPLF secured the state power after 17 years of armed struggle, they made a very profound restructuring in the geography, politics and economy of Ethiopia. Geographically, the country was segmented into two independent countries when Eritrea seceded from Ethiopia and

gained de jure independence in 1993. On the part of Ethiopia, TPLF controlled Ethiopia by re-organizing itself as Ethiopian Peoples' Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF). This new front was made up of the surrogate TPLF and three newly cooked-up liberation movements: Amhara National Democratic Movement (ANDM), Oromo People's Democratic Organization (OPDO), and Southern Ethiopia Peoples' Democratic Movement (SEPDM). The EPRDF regime (1991-2018) not only overthrew the Derg regime but also shifted the currency of political power. During and before the Derg regime, for example, Ethiopia was considered and structured as a nation-state even though some primordial group differences were considered by the Derg regime. However, EPRDF propagated identity politics and multi-cultural nation state both as a means to and sustainer of political power. According to the transitional charter and the 1995 Constitution of the FDRE, the political power did not emanate from ideology but rather from nations, nationalities and peoples of Ethiopia. Moreover, the 1995 Constitution grants nations, nationalities and peoples of Ethiopia the right to develop and promote their cultures and languages. Furthermore, the Constitution (Article 39, sub-article 1) grants "Every Nation, Nationality and People in Ethiopia has an unconditional right to self-determination, including the right to secession."

Regardless of the shift from ideology to identity, the accumulation of power at the center has become the central theme of both the pre-1991 nation-state regime, and the post-1991 multi-nation state regime. The accumulation of power even becomes stronger than expected. For example, Abbink (2011: 596) states that "EPRDF was an authoritarian governance regime in which ethnicity becomes the center of national political rhetoric." He even goes to the level of saying that the federal democratic model has not even been put to the test. Our findings warmly fit with Abbink's argument. We have used two indicators to substantiate our argument: power transfer and the method of ensuring public representativeness in the governance system.

Let us begin from how elections were carried out. First, as long as power transfer is considered, the analysis of the political history of Ethiopia under EPRDF for the last three decades shows worst results. During this period, about five very contestable general elections were carried out, and EPRDF was always the sole winner (Gutama 2017: 27). In the 2005 general election, for example, the positive conduct of campaigns and polling initially indicated that a fundamental change was taking place in Ethiopian political culture because, apparently, there was a new acceptance for displaying public political dissent – an observation that led some scholars to label the elections as 'founding,' 'formative' and 'genuine' for true democracy in Ethiopia (Clapham 2004). However, the aftermath of the election, with the excessive crackdown on the political opposition and civil society, coupled with the launch of new and repressive laws and the expansion of local structures of control and coercion,

all demonstrated that the outcome of the 2005 election was not more democracy, but rather more authoritarianism.

Second, concerning representativeness, the 1995 Constitution gives the highest power to the House of People's Representatives in all government structures ranging from village to federal. Article 50 (3) of the constitution states:

> [T]he House of People's Representatives is the highest authority of the Federal Government. The house is responsible to the People. The State Council is the highest organ of State authority. It is responsible to the people of the state.

However, in practice, the front (EPRDF) was the highest authority of the federal government and its member regional parties (i.e., "liberation" movements) are the highest body in their respective regions. This was done in order to enable the front to intentionally manipulate the house for its own purpose. In other words, when the house was (re-)formed every five years, EPRDF made the house in its own image by applying the principle of "tweedism" in Lessig's (2015) words, who coined the term on the basis of the famous sayings of the greatest American political philosopher, Boss Tweed: "I don't care who does the electing as long as I get to do the nominating." Tweedism, according to Lessig, is any two-stage process where the few get the nominating and the rest all elect from the nominees. Tweedism creates a systemic responsive to the few only. In line with this, during the EPRDF era, first the party nominated members of the house, and then the general public elected the party. Even in small rural villages, it was the party that nominated representatives of the people. As the head of Gedeo Zonal People's Council noted, the very criteria for nomination are party loyalty and submissiveness rather than becoming voice to the voiceless (interview with the head of Gedeo zonal People's Council, February 2019, Dilla Zuria). This is how representative democracy was thrashed at its infancy in the Ethiopian polity. Of course, at the face value, party leaders have no voice during the formal meeting of the members of the people's council. However, they (party leaders) were the architects during the pre- and post- formal meetings. Along this line, Negaso, the first and late president of Ethiopia and a prominent actor in the early stages of drafting the constitution, noted in his words "I didn't see when the public depose a member of the parliament when he/she went wrong. It is only the party that nominates and fires members of the house" (Alemayehu and Gebru 2005: 57).

In a nutshell, the bottom line is that though initially ethnic federalism solved some old problems of the county and awarding the right to self-determination including the right to secession for ethnic groups, but later it created new and grave problems: it encouraged the emergency of new minority

groups unknown and unheard of before. In doing so, it consolidated power, centralized every political decision, and established dominant party rules at the expense of genuine federalism, and intensified the feeling of distinctiveness following the colonial print of "divide and rule." Moreover, although the cultural and political space granted in the 1995 constitution has at least rescued the *Baalle* system from complete demise, a long way remains to be done for genuine revitalization.

9. Concluding remarks

Finding efficient and effective government institutions has been at the center of human quest since human beings started to live in larger groups. The Gedeo society is no exception. The quest for an effective and efficient governance system has never been a time, but has been a continuous process involving the shaping and reshaping the system. This way, the Gedeo indigenous governance institutions have evolved from one institution to other. Of all the various stages and forms of governance institutions in Gedeo, the *Baalle* system is by far the most important institution because of its egalitarian nature, effective power management mechanism, and strong implications to the imported and inefficient governance institutions in contemporary Africa in general and in Ethiopia in particular. In a world where governance systems are still not yet fully answered, it is crucial to study the peculiar governance experience of the Gedeo people which is based on the principle of holisticness, consensual decision making, power management, and communal participation in politics.

Using a critical indigenous lens, we have found out that the Gedeo *Baalle* governance institution was, and, to a very weakened level is, a sophisticated egalitarian system before its incorporation into Ethiopia during the late 19th century. Since incorporation in the Ethiopian kingdom, the Gedeo *Baalle* system has been denigrated and replaced by the *neftagna-gabar* (literally 'landlord-tenant') system during the imperial regime and by the Marxist-Leninist ideology during the socialist regime. It is during the EPRDF regime that the peculiar civilization of diverse nations in Ethiopia was recognized, at least in the 1995 Constitution that marked a new trend of revitalization in the Gedeo *Baalle* system through research and piecemeal practices.

Regardless of such positive developments, however, the accumulation of political power at the center in the name of "democratic centralism" coupled with influences from exogenous religions and education system has hampered the full revitalization of the Gedeo *Baalle* system. We believe that a good deal of lessons could be learnt from the indigenous governance institutions of Gedeo as well as other communities for the political hygiene of the contemporary Ethiopian polity that is grappling with more than a hundred ethnic-based parties with no clear political ideology, but fighting to hold public offices, and lead a multi-ethnic country.

List of abbreviation

ANDM   Amhara National Democratic Movement

COND   conditional

EC   Ethiopian calendar

EPLF   Eritrean People's Liberation Front

EPRDF   Ethiopian Peoples' Revolutionary Democratic Front

EPRP   Ethiopian Peoples' Revolutionary Party

ESM   Ethiopian Socialist Movement

FDRE   Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia

FUT   future

NEG   negation

OPDO   Oromo People's Democratic Organization

PRES   present

SNNPRS Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples' Regional State

TPLF   Tigray People's Liberation Front

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Auf der Suche nach Hatra

Einige Voranmerkungen zu Franz Altheims Forschungsreise im Nahen Osten

Marco Moriggi

The German historian Franz Altheim's interest for the Eastern frontier of the Roman Empire is reflected in his scholarly bibliography. This paper aims at providing some hints in order to investigate how this interest could be pursued through a research trip to Mesopotamia this scholar made in 1938 under the auspices of the "Forschungsgemeinschaft Deutsches Ahnenerbe."

Keywords: Altheim, Mesopotamia, Parthian Empire, Hatra, Arab tribes in the Jazirah area

1938 wurde Hatra,[1] die spätantike Stadt im Parthischen Nordmesopotamien zweimal von Sir Aurel Stein besucht. Der berühmte (in Ungarn geborene) britische Archäologe war jedoch nicht der einzige europäische Gelehrte, der in demselben Jahr die Stätte erreichte. Tatsächlich besuchten kurz vor der zweiten Reise Steins (November 1938) im Oktober zwei deutsche Forscher die Stadt des Sonnengottes. Dabei handelte es sich um Franz Altheim und Erika Trautmann-Nehring. Vor ihrer Ankunft in Hatra, hatten sie eine lange Reise von Deutschland über die Balkanhalbinsel, das östliche Mittelmeer, Syrien und den Irak unternommen.[2]

Das Projekt für diese Reise wurde zur finanziellen Unterstützung bei der Forschungsgemeinschaft Deutsches Ahnenerbe e.V. eingereicht, einer Forschungsgesellschaft, die 1935 im Rahmen der Aktivitäten der SS gegründet worden war.

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[2] Zu Stein und seinen Reisen nach Hatra sowie zu einer kurzen Zusammenfassung seiner Arbeit, siehe Foietta (2018: 13) und die zitierte Literatur. Die Reise von Altheim und Trautmann-Nehring im Jahre 1938 auf die Balkanhalbinsel und in den Nahen Osten ist in Pringle (2006: 106-122) zusammengefasst.

In einem Brief an die Gesellschaft erklärten Altheim und Trautmann-Nehring, die bereits in einer Reihe wissenschaftlicher Unternehmen zusammengearbeitet hatten, dass sie „die Darstellung eines der weltgeschichtlichen Kämpfe zwischen indogermanischen Nordvölkern und dem Orient" planten. Die Notwendigkeit einer Reise an die Ostgrenzen des Römischen Reiches ergab sich für die beiden Initiatoren des Projekts aus der Möglichkeit „die Auseinandersetzung der Germanen, Illyrier und der iranischen Reitervölker mit dem semitischen Orient" als „einen Völker- und Rasse[n]kampf zu erkennen", statt „auf wirtschaftlich-soziologische Grundlage zu stellen versucht" zu erklären,[3] womit man sich den Deutungsansätzen der englisch-amerikanischen Geschichtsschreibung entgegenstellen wollte.[4]

Nach den vorherigen Reisen nach Italien, Jugoslawien und Ungarn planten Altheim und Trautmann-Nehring, die Reise von Berlin aus zu beginnen und nach Überquerung der Balkanhalbinsel, Mesopotamien zu erreichen – wo Assur und Hatra eindeutig als Besichtigungsziele aufgeführt werden –, und Syrien, mit einer Inspektion der Reste des römischen Limes, einschließlich der „Kastelle des syrischen Limes, Palmyra, Dura, Emesa, als Ausgangspunkt der syrischen Kaiser und des Sonnengottes". Von den Gesamtkosten von ca. 6.500 Reichsmark beantragte das Forscherpaar bei der Gesellschaft, ca. 4.000 RM zur Verfügung zu stellen.[5]

Da die von Altheim und Trautmann-Nehring betriebenen Forschungsarbeiten sowohl für die Gemeinschaft Ahnenerbe auf höchster Ebene (einschließlich des Reichsführers Himmler) als auch für den Generalfeldmarschall Göring (mit dem Trautmann-Nehring bereits seit einigen Jahren in Kontakt stand) interessant waren, wurde die Summe von 6.000-7.000 Reichsmark von der Gesellschaft in weniger als fünfzehn Tagen bereitgestellt.[6]

Die Reise begann im Spätsommer 1938, um die Sandsturmsaison zu vermeiden, und wurde von Altheim in einem vertraulichen Bericht an die Ahnenerbe-Gesellschaft ordnungsgemäß dokumentiert.[7]

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[3] BA NS 21/896: 74 (Brief von Altheim und Trautmann-Nehring an die Forschungsgemeinschaft "Das Ahnenerbe", 30.06.1938, S. 1).

[4] Siehe auch Losemann (1977: 126, 237).

[5] BA NS 21/896: S. 75 (Brief von Altheim und Trautmann-Nehring an die Forschungsgemeinschaft "Das Ahnenerbe", 30.06.1938, S. 2).

[6] Die Anfrage von Altheim und Trautmann-Nehring ist auf 30. Juni datiert, während die positive Antwort des diensthabenden Ahnenerbe-Offiziers auf 13. Juli datiert ist. Der Briefwechsel zwischen den verschiedenen Ämtern der Gesellschaft, dem preußischen Staatsministerium (dem Göring vorstand) und Altheim und Trautmann-Nehring ist in BA NS 21/896: S. 74-86 enthalten.

[7] BA NS 21/896: S. 90-100. Der Bericht wurde am 14. Januar 1939 an die Gesellschaft übermittelt. Siehe BA NS 21/896: S. 125 (Brief an den Reichsführer SS Himmler vom 13.1.1941).

Der Abschnitt des Berichts über den Irak lautet wie folgt:[8]

In Baghdad haben uns der deutsche Gesandte Dr. F. Grobba und seine Frau herzlich aufgenommen, uns in allem beraten und unterstützt. Das gegenseitige Verhältnis hat sich sehr herzlich gestaltet. Das Gleiche gilt von Dr. J. Jordan, dem bekannten Leiter der deutschen Mustergrabung Uruk-Warka und Führer der Ortsgruppe Baghdad. Herr Dr. Jordan ist aus seiner Stellung als Adviser der Irak-Regierung in archäologischen Angelegenheiten vor kurzem ausgeschieden und steht jetzt zur Verfügung des Deutschen Archäologischen Reichsinstitutes. Bei seinem großen und berechtigen wissenschaftlichen Ruf, seiner jahrzehntelagen Kenntnis des Landes würde sich bei neuen Forschungsreisen eine Fühlungnahme sehr empfehlen. Er selbst wäre glücklich, mit dem „Ahnenerbe" in Fühlung treten zu können.

Unsere Reise nach Hatra brachte uns in Berührung mit dem „Head Sheikh" der Schammar-Beduinen, Adjil-El-Yawar, und seinem Bruder Scheich Meschᶜan. Sie nahmen uns in ihrem Schloss in Schergat auf, stellten uns für die Wüstenreise eine bewaffnete Eskorte, und Scheich Meschᶜan selbst begleitete uns ans Ziel. Scheich Adjil kennt Europa und wurde voriges Jahr in Berlin durch das A.A. [=Auswärtigen Amt] freundlich aufgenommen und betreut.

Er nötigte uns, trotz unserer knappen Zeit, zwei Tage als seine Gäste in Schergat zu bleiben: wir mussten ihm ununterbrochen [im Original unterstrichen] von Deutschland und dem Führer berichten. Für seine persönliche Stellung genüge allein dies, dass er von uns den Schwur verlangte, dass der Führer niemals in die Bildung eines jüdischen Nationalstaates in Palästina einwilligen werde.

Die Stellung des Scheich[s] Adjil in Irak ist sehr bedeutend. Die Schammar nomadisieren von der Steppe nördlich Baghdad bis herauf nach Mossul; im französischen Syrien gehört ihnen ein großer Teil der Dschezireh (Harran und Umgebung). Der Scheich ist halb unabhängig und empfängt von der Irak-Regierung Unterstützungsgelder. Die Kampfkraft der Schammar schätzen wir auf 4-6000 Krieger; sie leiden an veralteter Bewaffnung (deutsche Gewehre aus der Zeit des Weltkrieges) und ungenügender Munition. Das Beispiel Ibn Saud's steht ihm vor Augen; unserer Ansicht nach erhofft er von einem europäischen Krieg die eigene Selbständigkeit. Zu Deutschland bekannte er sich unumwunden und setzt darauf die größten Hoffnungen. Er erbat sich Bilder (er kann nicht lesen und kennt auch keine europäische Sprache) aus dem neuen Deutschland.

Die Reise nach Hatra fand somit Oktober 1938 mit der bewaffneten Eskorte von Shaykh Meschᶜan von den Schammar-Beduinen statt. Die archäologische Stätte wurde von Assur aus erreicht, wo derselbe

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[8] BA NS 21/896: S. 98-100.

Beduinen-Führer zusammen mit seinem Bruder Ajil el-Yawar – dem „Head Scheich" der Schammar-Beduinen –, seinen Wohnsitz hatte.

In einem Brief an ihren Vater beschrieb die berühmte britische Archäologin und Reisende Gertrud Bell den Führer der Schammar-Beduinen, Ajil el-Awar, als:[9]

> He is 6 ft 4 in[ches] odd, a powerful, magnificent creature; not an ounce of spare flesh on him; hands you would like to model, not too small but exquisitely shaped. Under his red kerchief four thick plats [sic] of black hair fall down to his breast. Black beard, trimmed short; white and gold abba, white cotton shirt buttoned to the neck and wrists.

Bevor Altheim und Trautmann-Nehring losfuhren, wurde Altheim der Titel „Ehren-Scheich" des Schammar verliehen, ein Titel, auf den er immer stolz war und der zur gegebenen Zeit in seinem Nekrologium zitiert wurde (Pringle 2006: 111).

Wenn man in dem von Altheim an den Verein Ahnenerbe übermittelten Bericht nach archäologischen und/oder epigraphischen Daten sucht, findet man nichts Relevantes. Der Bericht konzentriert sich stattdessen auf die Menschen, die Altheim und Trautmann-Nehring getroffen haben, und auf die Orte, die sie aus diplomatischer und gesellschaftspolitischer Sicht besucht haben, einschließlich Verweise auf die ideologische Gesinnung der einzelnen angetroffenen Personen allgemein sowie insbesondere jener in Führungspositionen.

Ungeachtet dessen, müssen die Daten und Bilder, die während der Forschungsreisen im Irak gesammelt wurden, umfangreich gewesen sein. Dies wird deutlich, wenn man die Hauptwerke liest, in denen Altheim sich mit der Geschichte der Ostgrenze des Römischen Reiches befasst. Die Reihe begann 1939 mit *Die Soldatenkaiser*, wo Altheim klar erkennt, dass: „Die Reisen, auf denen dieses Buch beruht, erstreckten sich bis in den skandinavischen Norden einerseits, den Balkan, den Vorderen und Mittleren Orient andererseits" (Altheim 1939: 5).

In demselben Buch findet man einen direkten Hinweis auf die Informationen, die Altheim und Trautmann-Nehring in Hatra gefunden haben. Bei der Erörterung der Geschichte der Belagerungen der Stadt durch Trajan (116 n. Chr.) verweist Altheim auf den Wassermangel, für den die Umgebung von Hatra bekannt ist (Altheim 1939: 106-107).

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[9] Brief von Gertrude Bell an ihren Vater, Sir Hugh Bell, 21.08.1921. Siehe http://gertrudebell.ncl.ac.uk/letter_details.php?letter_id=500 und Pringle (2006: 109-110).

Die Beschreibung des Wassermangels in Hatras Umgebung in den ersten Jahren des 20. Jahrhunderts findet sich in einem Brief von Gertrude Bell (Brief von Gertrude Bell an Florence Bell, 16.02.1911. Siehe http://gertrudebell.ncl.ac.uk/letter_details.php?letter_id=1786):

> It is still entirely waterless, so waterless that in the Spring when the grass grows thick the Arabs cannot camp here. All along our way there is proof of former water storage – I should think Early Moslem, marking the Abbasid post road. The pools have been dug out and banked up, but they are now full of earth and there is very little water in them.

In Bezug auf diesen Brief schrieb Altheim: „die Beschreibung ist [...] übertrieben; der Schammar-Scheich Mishan zeigte mir im Oktober 1938 Süßwasserquellen unfern des Wadi Ṭarṭar" (Altheim 1939: 106, Fußnote 3; Altheim 1943: 206, Anm. 150).

Darüber hinaus finden sich in den späteren, zusammen mit Ruth Stiehl verfassten und in den Bänden *Die Araber in der Alten Welt* veröffentlichten Beiträgen von Altheim viele Hinweise auf die Umwelt von Hatra, die ökologische Dynamik, die Stammesstruktur der dortigen Gesellschaft usw (Altheim-Stiehl 1965: 49-63; 191-229; 312-332; 344-356; Altheim-Stiehl 1967: 243-292). Hatra war also nicht nur ein faszinierendes Szenario, in dem Bilder in Beduinenkleidern aufgenommen wurden (Pringle 2006: 111).

In den zitierten Werken ist leicht zu erkennen, dass Altheim und Trautmann-Nehring viele Daten über die archäologische Stätte gesammelt hatten, diese jedoch nicht in einer speziellen Monographie veröffentlicht haben. Tatsächlich finden sich diese Daten in den folgenden Jahren der akademischen Laufbahn Altheims verstreut in verschiedenen Artikeln, Notizen und Buchkapiteln. Es scheint also, dass sich der Bericht an das Ahnenerbe und die wissenschaftlichen Ergebnisse der Forschungsreise nicht überschneiden. Dies scheint Altheims Haltung gegenüber der Gesellschaft Ahnenerbe nicht zu widersprechen.

Altheims Leben spielte sich in der „cornice tradizionale dell'accademia" (dem traditionellen akademischen Umfeld) ab (Mazza 1978: 145).

Altheim widersetze sich der Kulturpolitik des NSDAP nicht, verstand jedoch klar, dass der Verein Ahnenerbe im Vergleich zu einer reinen wissenschaftlichen Gesellschaft etwas anderes war. Der Einfluss des Vereins könnte, wenn er richtig gehandhabt werde, leicht zu einem gewaltigen Werkzeug des „akademischen Drucks" werden. Dies beinhaltete natürlich die Möglichkeit, teure Forschungsreisen zu organisieren, wie bereits erwähnt.[10]

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[10] Siehe auch Rebich (2005: 49) und Kater (2006: 78-79).

In Bezug auf die Ahnenerbe-Zeitschrift Germanien bemerkte Kater außerdem:[11]

> Es ist bezeichnend für den Gehalt dieser Zeitschrift, dass in ihr bis Kriegsausbruch und auch danach vornehmlich die unteren wissenschaftlichen Ränge im „Ahnenerbe" publizierten, die Elite hielt sich abseits. So findet man mehrere Beiträge von Kiss, Weigel, Plaßmann, Ruppel, anfangs natürlich auch von Wirth – Spitzenkräfte wie Jankuhn und Altheim veröffentlichten in Germanien nun hin und wieder, Dirlmeier, Till und Christian überhaupt nicht, aber sie hatten ja ihre Fachjournale. Es dürfte ihnen innerlich schwergefallen sein, für ein Blatt zu schreiben, in dem Plaßmann sich rückhaltlos zur „völkischen Wissenschaft" bekannte, da diese von den besten unter den Gelehrten des „Ahnenerbes" im Kern abgelehnt wurde.

Andere Studien haben die Beziehung zwischen Altheim und dem politischen Umfeld seiner Zeit eingehend analysiert. Bei seiner Reise nach Hatra gilt zu bedenken, dass diese „arabische Hauptstadt" in Altheims Sichtweise eine wichtige Rolle für die Interpretation der Beziehungen des Römisches Reiches zu den östlichen (mesopotamischen und iranischen) Mächten in der Spätantike spielte. Wie Mazza über die Arbeit dieses Historikes schrieb: "ad un filologo del futuro, le varie redazioni, trasposizioni, rimaneggiamenti, riutilizzazioni dei suoi scritti, potrebbero offrire materia ingentissima di lavoro" (Mazza 1978: 146). Wir sollten daher bereit sein, Informationen über die Ostgrenze des Römischen Reiches in Altheims Studien zu finden, in denen die Reise nach Hatra kein einfacher Besuch war.

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[11] Kater (2006: 106). Siehe auch Filiè (2019).

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The historical reality of the plural of paucity and the plural diminutive in Classical Arabic

Evidence from *kalām al-ʿarab*
(Part One)

Francesco Grande

This study investigates the semantics of the plural of paucity and the plural diminutive, based on their attestations in the non-literary source of Classical Arabic traditionally known as *kalām al-ʿarab*. In noun plural marking, the meaning of the diminutive is as elusive as that of the plural of paucity. What is known of both kinds of meanings is mainly derived from the indirect description of early lexicographers and grammarians. To assess the historical reality of this traditional semantic description, attestations from the *kalām al-ʿarab* are collected, then compared to data from Arabic dialects, and finally subjected to a distributional analysis. The grammatical categories of the collective, inherent plural, and the pseudo-dual are also considered in this assessment.

1. Aims and introduction

This study pursues two related aims: on the one hand, a better understanding of the plural of paucity in Classical Arabic and, on the other, a better understanding of its diminutive in noun plural marking.

The two aims are related, in the sense that a better understanding of the plural of paucity leads to a better understanding of the diminutive in noun plural marking, and *vice versa*, as will become clear in due course.

The present study investigates the plural of paucity and the diminutive in noun plural marking based mainly on the description of Classical Arabic provided by early grammarians and lexicographers, who drew their citations not only from well-known primary sources such as the Koran and pre-Islamic poetry, but also from another primary source, namely, the living speech of the Arabs of their time, during the second half of the eighth century and the first half of the ninth century CE.

In grammatical and lexicographical work, this kind of primary source is referred to as *kalām al-ʿarab*[1], and is usually signaled by a textual descriptor alluding to living usage: an ethnonym (e.g., *ahl al-ḥijāz*), a *verbum dicendi* (e.g., *yuqāl* 'it is said'), or a *verbum audiendi* (e.g., *samiʿnā* 'we heard').

The focus here is on attestations of *kalām al-ʿarab* rather than on the theoretical framework in which early grammarians and lexicographers couched them.[2] Likewise, attestations of *kalām al-ʿarab* are given precedence over attestations from Classical Arabic as a whole (*al-ʿarabiyya*). Therefore, in this study, the formal and semantic features of the plural of paucity and the diminutive in noun plural marking will be derived mainly from the description of *kalām al-ʿarab*.

This is the first of two articles. It provides background information concerning the plural of paucity and the diminutive in noun plural marking, collects and describes the available attestations from *kalām al-ʿarab*, and compares such attestations to similar data in modern Arabic dialects. The second installment will offer a distributional study of the plural of paucity and the diminutive in noun plural marking, with special attention to their semantics.

2. The object of study

In the domain of noun plural marking in Classical Arabic, the plural of paucity is usually identified with the *circumfixal* morphemes *ʾa..u., ʾa..ā., ʾa..i.a, .i..a*, as in *ʾaqdām* 'feet'[3] (see, e.g., Ratcliffe 1998: 79-80); the

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[1] Definitions of *kalām al-ʿarab* found in literature and ultimately in the history of western Arabicist scholarship are apparently based on Arabic grammatical tradition, which abstracts linguistic features from the linguistic materials. For instance (see, e.g., Owens 2013), grammarians describe *taltala* (the *i*-vowel in the prefix of an imperfective verb) without reporting a stock of verbs including this feature. An alternative approach is adopted here, which privileges Arabic lexicographers and the linguistic materials of *kalām al-ʿarab* as recorded by them in massive detail. The definition of *kalām al-ʿarab* adopted in this study is therefore based on lexicographers' conception of it. They distinguished *kalām al-ʿarab* from the two other primary sources of Classical Arabic, the Koran and pre-Islamic poetry, on chronological and stylistic grounds. These two sources chronologically precede *kalām al-ʿarab* and stand out for their degree of literary elaboration, as opposed to *kalām al-ʿarab*, which represents a vernacular source: see Baalbaki (2014: 29). Literary elaboration involves metric structure not only in pre-Islamic poetry but also in the Koran. The issue of interpolation concerning *kalām al-ʿarab* is discussed in Section 6. below. Guillaume (2007: 176) provides a different definition of *kalām al-ʿarab*: 'Although the expression *kalām al-ʿarab* seems to refer to the living usage of the Bedouin Arabs, it should be taken in the restrictive sense of the literary variety of Arabic reflected in the Qurʾān and the ancient poetry.' According to this definition, *kalām al-ʿarab* is a sort of umbrella-term, which encompasses the Koran and pre-Islamic poetry. This definition is not followed here, since it somewhat obscures the features of *kalām al-ʿarab* that distinguish it from the Koran and pre-Islamic poetry, namely, its non-literary nature and more recent attestations.

[2] For instance, the same theoretical framework informs al-Khalīl's (d. 175/791) and Sībawayhi's (d. 180/796) description of number marking, as is shown by shared terms such as *adnā l-ʿadad* 'low number' and *taqlīl* 'diminution in number;' cp. Fück (1936: 628).

[3] In this study, initial *hamza* is transliterated only when relevant for linguistic description.

diminutive in noun plural marking is indicated by the infixal morpheme *.u.ay.* (the same form of diminutive is observed in noun singular marking as well).

Since Classical Arabic is partly derived from *kalām al-ʿarab*, a definition of the plural of paucity and the diminutive in noun plural marking in Classical Arabic might also be valid as a first approximation for *kalām al-ʿarab* itself, for practical orientation.

If the plural of paucity and the diminutive in noun plural marking are defined along the above lines, a clear distributional asymmetry is observed between them. While the plural of paucity can occur in isolation, the diminutive cannot. The latter must occur instead in certain environments, consisting of several kinds of collectives and plurals including the plural of paucity itself. For instance, in the diminutivized plural noun *ʾuqaydām*, the initial *hamza* and final *ā* show that the diminutive occurs within the environment *ʾa..ā.* already observed in the plural of paucity *ʾaqdām*.

This asymmetry influences the arrangement of linguistic materials in the present research: the diminutive will be presented and studied here in conjunction with the environments where it occurs, including the plural of paucity. With the exception of the plural of paucity, these environments are not an object of study in their own right in this article. Thus the plural of paucity plays a double conceptual role in the present research, to the extent that it is both an object of study in its own right and part of the object of study represented by the diminutive.

3. *Status quaestionis*

3.1. The plural of paucity

The plural of paucity has mainly been investigated in connection with the quantity of entities it may represent.

It is traditionally said to denote a set of *few* entities, ranging from three to ten in number, unlike the so-called plural of multitude, or of abundance, which denotes *many* entities, from ten onward (Fleisch 1961: 516, fn. 3; Ferrando 2006: 40).

Modern scholars, such as Ferrando (2006) and Waltisberg (2006), have assessed this traditional claim against statistical textual analyses, based on different sources, periods, and literary genres of Classical Arabic, as well as on different kinds of linguistic evidence, such as contextual meaning and agreement patterns. According to these statistical textual analyses, the traditional distinction between

the plurals of paucity and of multitude appears *not* to be empirically grounded.[4] In texts, the few entities traditionally said to be denoted by the plural of paucity are also denoted by the plural of multitude; likewise, the many entities traditionally said to be denoted by the plural of multitude are also denoted by the plural of paucity. In particular, the two different quantitative values of few and many entities can be diagnosed through two different kinds of agreement patterns. A plural noun agrees with a plural adjective or verb when it refers to *few* entities, while it agrees with a feminine singular adjective or verb when referring to *many* entities. To judge from data reported by al-Farrā' (d. 207/822), cited in Ferrando (2006: 55-6) and reproduced in 1. below, *kalām al-'arab* is among the primary sources of Classical Arabic that attest to both agreement patterns.

The same agreement patterns are also observed in modern Arabic dialects. The latter differ from Classical Arabic only in that, *ceteris paribus*, they attest an additional factor triggering the agreement of a plural noun with a plural adjective or verb.[5] Such an agreement pattern in fact takes place not only when a plural noun refers to *few* entities, as in Classical Arabic, but also when a plural noun is combined with virtually any numeral from two onward. Because of space limitations, only the agreement pattern concerning a plural noun denoting few entities is exemplified here, for both *kalām al-'arab* and Arabic dialects:

1.	Plural of paucity	*thalāthatu 'ayyām*	*khalawna*	(*kalām al-'arab*)[6]
		three days	remain.PL	
		'three days remain [to the end of the month]'		
	Dialectal parallel	*mātu-lha*	*rb'a d l-wlād*	(Moroccan Ar.)[7]
		died.PL-of-her	four of kids	
		'four of her kids died'		

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[4] Ratcliffe (1998) reaches the same results through a statistical analysis based on several Arabic dictionaries rather than on a corpus of texts.

[5] In Blanc's (1970: 52) own words: 'The literature contains scattered observations stating that PC [*scil.* plural concord] is either mandatory or preferred in expressions involving a numeral or some other enumerating or quantifying device.' By the latter term Blanc means a quantifier, including the quantifier *denoting precisely a few entities* (e.g., *shwayyit* 'some').

[6] Data cited in Ferrando (2006: 55-56).

[7] Data from Brustad (2000: 69).

Plural of multitude	*thalāthatu layālin*	*khalawna*	(*kalām al-ʿarab*)[8]
	three nights	remain.PL	
	'three nights remain [to the end of the month]'		

Dialectal parallel	*shwayyit malābis*	*kwayyisīn*	(Egyptian Ar.)[9]
	some clothes	nice.PL	
	'some nice clothes'		

Correlation:	few entities	↔	plural agreement

In sum, in *kalām al-ʿarab*, the plural of paucity, like the plural of multitude, may ambiguously denote few or many entities: in a componential notation (Table 1 in Section 3.3.), it conveys [SOME] *in conjunction with* [MANY]. For this linguistic reason, the plural of paucity *cannot* be identified with the paucal plural known from language typology, which exclusively denotes few entities, i.e., conveys [SOME] *to the exclusion of* [MANY]; nor can the plural of multitude be identified with the so-called multal plural, which exclusively denotes many entities, i.e., conveys [MANY] *to the exclusion of* [SOME].[10]

That said, the question remains *why* Arabic linguistic tradition assumed the plural of paucity to exclusively denote few entities (i.e., to be genuinely paucal from a modern perspective), and the plural of multitude to exclusively denote many entities (i.e., to be genuinely multal).

The discussion so far gives a good idea of the considerable amount of attention scholars have devoted to the number value of the plural of paucity. By contrast, Fück (1936) seems to be the only scholar to have investigated another semantic facet of the plural of paucity: its capability to denote a collection of entities (*kollektiven Grundbedeutung*). According to Fück (1936: 628), this is a corollary of the more general diachronic assumption that Classical Arabic broken plurals developed out of collectives ('*plurales paucitatis* […] wie alle gebrochenen Plurale, alte Kollektiva sind').

Remarkably, Fück's collective interpretation of the plural of paucity implies that a *plural* nominal form can be associated with a *collective* meaning (collection), which is quite at odds with the received view of Western linguistics, which assigns to a plural nominal form member-semantics, and to a

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[8] Data cited in Ferrando (2006: 55-56).

[9] Data from Brustad (2000: 54).

[10] Cross-linguistically, the paucal plural denotes a few entities through a synthetic strategy, i.e., through a bound morpheme within a word. In 1. above it appears that Arabic dialects denote few entities, alternatively, through an analytic strategy, i.e., through a word combined with another word (cp. *shwayyit* + noun 'some').

collective nominal form collection-semantics. However, Fück's view cannot be dismissed so easily, for it is confirmed by recent semantic studies. A collective nominal form may convey member- in addition to collection-semantics (Corbett 2012: 102-104 and references therein), and likewise a plural nominal form may convey collection- in addition to member-semantics (Acquaviva 2008: 129). On this semantic level, collection is a multifactorial notion that includes, *inter alia*, cohesion and/or interchangeability. Cohesion defines entities linked together by a common source and/or space and/or function, which can be numerically low (a family) or high (a society) (Grimm 2018: 546-547, 650-651). Interchangeability defines entities perceived as lacking distinct identities, so that one can be replaced by another with no sensible difference, e.g., insects (Acquaviva 2008: 154, 177-178). Conversely, members are neither cohesive nor interchangeable.

Since a collective nominal form cannot be defined any longer through collection-semantics, nor can a plural nominal form be defined through member-semantics, the most straightforward manner of defining either kind of nominal form is mainly morphological, which is based on the cross-linguistic description of collectives and plurals proposed by Tiersma (1982). A collective nominal form is a stem denoting multiple entities; when expanded through a bound morpheme, it denotes a single entity. Conversely, a plural nominal form, *including the plural of paucity*, is a stem expanded through a bound morpheme to denote more entities. When not expanded by this morpheme, it denotes a single entity. Thus, collective and plural nominal forms tend to display opposite directions of markedness: from multiple entities to a single entity in a collective, and from a single entity to multiple entities in a plural (Grimm 2018: 530-531).[11] In summary:

2. Markedness: stem   +   additional marker

    Collective: more entities   >   single entity

    Plural (of paucity): single entity   >   more entities

Cases in point in *kalām al-ʿarab* are, respectively, the collective *tamr/a* 'date(s),' where the bound morpheme *at* denotes a single entity; and the plural of paucity *qadam/aqdām* 'foot/feet,' where the circumfixal bound morpheme *ʾa..ā.* denotes more entities.

To determine the member- or collection-semantics of a collective or plural nominal form, some diagnostic criteria are required. Regarding the collective nominal form, in English its member- or

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[11] The formally unmarked status of the collective is traditionally worded as 'morphologically singular' (see, e.g., Depraetere 2003: 86). More theoretically-oriented definitions describe it as displaying 'local marking' or 'subtractive morphology.'

collection-semantics is diagnosed through the presence of plural or singular agreement as in, respectively, *the aristocracy are...* vs. *the swarm is... .*[12]

In the search for a similar diagnostic criterion for *kalām al-'arab*, particularly useful is Sībawayhi's remark concerning the Koran (XXVII, 18), where the collective nominal form *naml* agrees with a verb bearing the ending *ū* in the clause *ayyuhā l-namlu-dkhulū masākina-kum* 'Ants, enter your dwelling-places.'[13] Sībawayhi (*al-Kitāb*, II, 47) explicitly states that this kind of agreement is possible only on the condition that *naml* stands for human beings (*l-anāsī*).[14] In this semantic context, the referent 'ants' is assimilated to the referent 'human beings,' who are loosely cohesive and not interchangeable, and so the referent 'ants' can be said in modern terms to convey member-semantics through the mediation of a metaphor, rather than the expected collection-semantics (typically ants are functionally cohesive and interchangeable):

3.   *l-namlu*   *-dkhulū*

                (ants intended as) human beings   enter!.PL[15]

        Correlation: member-semantics   ↔   agreement-marker *ū*

Sībawayhi (*al-Kitāb*, II, 46ff) also reports many examples of *kalām al-'arab* in which the same referent of human beings is expressed through the collective nominal form *qawm* 'people,' which accordingly conveys member-semantics. In these examples, the referent in question agrees with an adjective bearing, again, the ending *ū*, as in *qawmu-ka ḥasanūna* 'your people is handsome:'

4.   *qawmu-ka*   *ḥasanūna*

                (people, i.e.,) human beings   handsome.PL

        Correlation: member-semantics   ↔   agreement-marker *ū*

It follows from Sībawayhi's description that in *kalām al-'arab* (and perhaps in the Koran), member- and collection-semantics are diagnosed through the presence of agreement with a verb or adjective displaying the ending *ū*, or lack thereof.

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[12] See, e.g., Depraetere (2003: 101) and Corbett (2012: 102-104) and references therein.

[13] The English translation of the Koran is Arberry's.

[14] *wa-ṣāra l-namlu bi-tilka l-manzilati ḥīna ḥaddathta 'an-hu ka-mā tuḥaddithu 'an-i l-anāsī.*

[15] Abbreviations in morphemic glosses follow the Leipzig Glossing Rules.

Turning to the plural nominal form (which in principle includes the plural of paucity), it conveys collection-semantics when displaying some diagnostic properties internal to the stem, in which case it may be labeled an inherent plural. These properties distinguish an inherent plural from its counterpart with member-semantics, i.e., the traditionally recognized plural (Acquaviva 2008: 129). An inherent plural is irregular in that (I) it displays gender inversion with respect to the singular; (II) it may alternate with a regular plural; and (III) its morpheme 'is nowhere else in the language an exponent for plurality.' Furthermore, (IV) it denotes inanimates (V) that occur as a homogeneous subgrouping, such as (paired) body parts and measurement units.

An example from Italian is *braccia* 'arms,' which displays the irregular feminine-like ending *a* with respect to the masculine pair *braccio* 'arm'/*bracci* 'armrests:'

5.   *braccia* 'arms.F'

(I) gender inversion relative to the singular form: *braccio* 'arms.M'

(II) a regular plural: *bracci* 'armrests.M'

(III) not an exponent for plurality: *bracci-a* 'arms.F,' *cas-a* 'house.F,' *mel-a* 'apple.F'

(IV) inanimate: 'arms'

(V) (paired) body parts, measurements units: 'arms'

Specifically for *kalām al-ʿarab*, the inherent plural is still a virtually unexplored topic. The early lexicographer al-Khalīl (*Kitāb al-ʿAyn*, I, 117) attests the following utterance of *kalām al-ʿarab*: *inkharaʿat aʿḍāʾu l-baʿīr* 'the limbs of the camel became displaced,' in which the plural of paucity *ʾaʿḍāʾ* 'limbs' qualifies as an inherent plural in a loose manner, given that it displays only some diagnostic properties defining this kind of plural, one of which is indeed uncertain:

6.   *aʿḍāʾ* 'limbs'

(I) gender inversion relative to singular?: *ʿuḍw* 'arm.M' (*aʿḍāʾ* 'limbs' displays *syntactic but not inherent* feminine gender: see its agreement with *inkharaʿat* 'becomes displaced.F')

(IV) inanimate: 'limbs'

(V) (paired) body parts, measurements units: 'limbs'

The considerations concerning *aʿḍāʾ* in 6. also apply to some lexemes of *kalām al-ʿarab* mentioned by Sībawayhi (*al-Kitāb*, III, 491), which accordingly qualify as loosely defined inherent plurals: *ʾakuff* 'palms of the hands' – *ʾukayff, ʾarjul* 'feet' – *ʾurayjil, ʾaqdām* 'feet' – *ʾuqaydām, ʾafkhādh* 'thighs' – *ʾufaykhād.*

Interestingly, these loosely defined inherent plurals are *all plurals of paucity* like the lexeme *ʾaʿḍāʾ* cited by al-Khalīl and, what is more, they *all undergo diminutivization.*

Overall, this data clarifies the existence of nouns that partly behave as inherent plurals in *kalām al-ʿarab.* This data also shows that the study of the plural of paucity calls for a better understanding of the phenomenon of the inherent plural and that, generally speaking, a study of this sort should abandon the traditional conceptual pairs plural/member-semantics and collective/collection-semantics in favor of a more flexible conceptualization, in line with Fück's (1936) insights.

3.2. The diminutive in noun plural marking

The form and meaning of the diminutive in noun plural marking have been extensively studied in Arabic dialects,[16] while its Classical Arabic counterpart has been almost exclusively investigated on the level of form, with the notable exception of Fück (1936), who discusses its semantics with particular reference to collective and plural nouns.

It is also noteworthy that Fück (1936) includes *kalām al-ʿarab* among the sources of Classical Arabic that are the object of his study. Central to Fück's study is the observation that the Classical Arabic diminutive in noun plural marking seemingly oscillates between the meaning of 'small' and 'some.' On the one hand, Sībawayhi (d. 170/796) generally describes the diminutive in noun plural marking, e.g., the diminutivized broken plural *ṣubayya* (from *ṣibya* 'boys'), as referring to *some* boys. The relevant *locus probans* is the following: 'One makes the diminutive […] since one means only to assign paucity to a plural [*taqlīl al-jamʿ*]' (see Section 4.1., Text 3).

On the other hand, texts do not necessarily confirm Sībawayhi's description: for instance, in a poetic line cited by Sībawayhi himself (*al-Kitāb*, III, 486), the semantic context, notably the elative *aṣgharu-hum* 'littlest of them,' forces instead the reading 'little boys' for the same lexeme. This example shows that Fück (1936: 630ff.) derives his observations partly from traditional medieval scholars (grammarians, lexicographers, Koranic commentators, polymaths) and partly from texts.

Reference works on Arabic grammar usually provide no translation for the diminutive in noun plural marking, i.e., for diminutivized plurals, which clearly points to their difficult semantic interpretation.[17] Recently, Lancioni (2011) has provided a critical translation of the ample section of *al-Kitāb* that Sībawayhi (d. 170/796) devoted to the diminutive, including its occurrence in noun plural

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[16] The literature concerning Arabic dialects is cited in Section 6. below.

[17] See, e.g., Wright (1896: I, 169-170) and Fleisch (1961: 386-387).

marking. Interestingly, *kalām al-ʿarab* is among the sources of Classical Arabic of which Sībawayhi avails himself to describe the diminutive in noun plural marking in that section.

In sum, Fück's (1936) study and Lancioni's (2011) translation bring to light a poorly explored topic, the semantics of the diminutive in noun plural marking in Classical Arabic, and especially in *kalām al-ʿarab*, which requires further investigation.

3.3. Terminology

From the foregoing review of current opinions on the subject of the plural of paucity and the diminutive in noun plural marking, it emerges that these terms imply no clear indication for the semantics of the linguistic entities they describe, when they are applied to Classical Arabic and especially to *kalām al-ʿarab*. Actually, in the current state of knowledge, the term 'plural of paucity' describes no effectively attested paucal meaning in the case of *kalām al-ʿarab* (Section 3.1.). Likewise, the term 'diminutive in noun plural marking' refers to a linguistic entity whose meaning ambiguously denotes smallness or paucity (Section 3.2.). It follows that these terms are intended here to describe only formal features of the lexical attestations of *kalām al-ʿarab* under scrutiny, such as the vocalism *ʾa..ā.*, etc. (the plural of paucity), or the vocalism *.u.ay.* (the diminutive in noun plural marking).[18]

Accordingly, in this study the terms 'plural of paucity' and 'diminutive in noun plural marking' are non-committal with respect to the actual semantics of the formal features in question. Rather, the semantics of 'plural of paucity' and 'diminutive in noun plural marking' are expected to emerge from a preliminary description of attestations of *kalām al-ʿarab*, as well as from a distributional analysis of them; they do not constitute an assumption guiding the preliminary description and distributional analysis.

The terms 'plural' and 'collective' warrant attention as well. Albeit with different semantic nuances, in the scholarly literature 'collective,' just like 'plural,' basically describes plurality, i.e., entities numbering more than one (Corbett 2004, Acquaviva 2008). Thus, in spite of the obvious etymological connection, the very term 'plurality' may become misleading, if understood as describing 'plural' alone. Again, 'plural' and 'collective' are intended here to describe formal features of a noun: in practice, in this study these terms are shorthand for 'plural nominal form' and 'collective nominal form.'

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[18] As is well-known, the vocalism *.u.ay.* also occurs in noun singular marking.

To avoid conceptual misunderstandings, the componential notation [MORE] is adopted here to describe the semantic feature (component) of plurality, which occurs in both plural and collective nominal forms.[19] However, due to its wide currency, the term 'plural marking' is retained here, with the caveat that it describes [MORE], i.e., plurality as a whole, thereby encompassing 'collectives' in addition to 'plurals.' Componential notation is used in place of traditional terminology in this study for other semantic features as well, which are listed in Table 1.

Semantic feature	Traditional terminology
[ONE]	singular, singulative
[SOME]	few, some, little
[MANY]	many, much
[SOME] to the exclusion of [MANY]	paucal, paucity
[MANY] to the exclusion of [SOME]	multal

Table 1. Componential notation

Finally, the fine-grained terminological distinction between 'derivational' and 'lexical' morphemes is followed in this study, to stress the capability of noun plural marking to manifest itself, respectively, through bound morphemes or through a stem (Acquaviva 2008). To the extent that broken plurals resort to bound morphemes, notably infixal and circumfixal morphemes to express [MORE], and *may but need not* involve semantic specialization, they can be regarded as derivational plurals (Acquaviva 2008: 212).

4. Sources

Kalām al-ʿarab is a *primary* source of Classical Arabic that, unlike its other primary sources, namely the Koran and pre-Islamic poetry, has been transmitted only indirectly – encapsulated, so to speak, in grammatical or lexicographical sources.

Attestations of *kalām al-ʿarab* concerning the plural of paucity and the diminutive in noun plural marking will be drawn here from these *indirect* sources of grammatical or lexicographical nature, especially when such sources are coeval to the period of attestation of the primary source, *kalām al-*

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[19] Because of the occurrence of dual marking in *kalām al-ʿarab* and, generally speaking, in Classical Arabic and Arabic dialects, the componential notation [MORE THAN TWO] would be more accurate, but more cumbersome as well.

'arab, from the second half of the eighth century to the first half of the ninth century CE (Section 1). This kind of indirect source is generally referred to as an early (indirect) source. An important early source is Sībawayhi (Section 2.1), which is presented here in the English translation by Lancioni (2011), with some modifications. Unless otherwise stated, the remaining early sources are lexicographical. In some cases, attestations of *kalām al-'arab* are drawn from indirect sources dating after the first half of the ninth century, usually referred to as late sources. They are all lexicographical, except for Ibn Ya'īsh (d. 643/1245), a grammarian, and al-Nuwayrī (d. 733/1333), a polymath. Early and late sources are arranged here by genre (grammar, lexicography, erudite works) and in chronological order.

4.1. Sībawayhi (d. 180/796)

al-Kitāb, III, 335-6 (Text 1):

Regarding the irregular change of apophony, they say *hudhayl/hudhaliyy* [...], *banū 'abīda/'ubadiyy*, with *u* after *'* and *a* after *b*: they said precisely *'ubadiyy*.[20]

al-Kitāb, III, 378 (Text 2):

You say *nafariyy, raḥṭiyy* expanding *nafar, raḥṭ* through *iyy*.[21]

al-Kitāb, III, 489-91 (Text 3):

One makes the diminutive of each scheme of paucity [*adnà l-'adad*], without going beyond to another [of multitude] since one means only to assign paucity to a plural [*taqlīl al-gam'*]. [...] The plural of paucity has specific schemes that belong to it in principle [*fī l-aṣl*], but the [plural of multitude] [*al-akthar*] can share them. [...] They are four schemes: all other schemes in principle are for multitude, even if they can be shared by paucity. [...] This happens, for example, in the diminutive of *'aklub – 'ukaylib*[22] [...]. So we heard them from the Arabs. [...]

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[20] *fa-min-a l-ma'dūli lladhī huwa 'alà ghayri qiyāsin qawlu-hum fī hudhaylin hudhalī [...] wa-fī ḥayyin min banī 'adiyyin yuqālu la-hum banū 'abīdata 'ubadī fa-ḍammū l-'ayna wa-fataḥū l-bā'a fa-qālū 'ubadī.*

[21] *wa-taqūlu fī l-iḍāfati ilà nafarin nafariyyun wa-raḥṭin raḥṭī.*

[22] Space limitations prevent a full quotation of the passage in which Sībawayhi enumerates these circumfixal morphemes, namely *'a..u., 'a..ā., 'a..i.a, .i.a.* (cp. also Section 5 below). According to Ferrando (2006: 43), the latter morpheme is *.i.a.a* in Sībawayhi's description. It follows that the circumfixal morpheme *'a..u.* cited in this passage is representative of the remaining three circumfixal morphemes as well.

I asked al-Khalīl about the diminutive of *dūr* 'dwellings'[23] and he answered: I restore it to the scheme for paucity, since I want to diminish its number. [...] if you do not like this, the diminutive will be according to the singular, by adding the *t* of the plural to it.[24] [...]

This happens because it is restored to the nominal that is for paucity. In fact, you say for paucity *ẓabayāt* 'gazelles' [...]: here *.a.a.āt*, has the status of *'a..u.* in the masculine, of *'a..ā.* and similar forms [for paucity]. Analogously, forms whose plural is with *ūna* and *īna*. [...]

If you made the diminutive of *jafanāt* 'bowls' when their number is beyond ten, you would say *jufaynāt* without going beyond the number, because it is a scheme for paucity. [...]

In fact [the Arabs] say *darāhim* 'dirhams' – *durayhimāt* of *fityān* 'young men' or *futayya – futayyūna*.[25]

al-Kitāb, III, 494 (Text 4):

For instance, you say *qawm – quwaym* [...] Analogously *nafar, raḥṭ.*[26]

4.2. Ibn Yaʿīsh (d. 643/1245)

Sharḥ al-Mufaṣṣal, III, 323:

Had it been a broken plural, it would have been restored to the singular, with the plural *āt* added to it [scil. *tamarāt*], so as to make the diminutive, e.g., *tumayrāt*.[27]

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[23] This lexeme exemplifies a plural of multitude, as it displays none of the four circumfixal morphemes typical of the plural of paucity.

[24] I.e., the ending *āt,* as is exemplified by *durayhimāt* immediately below.

[25] *iʿlam anna kulla bināʾin kāna li-adnà l-ʿadadi fa-inna-ka tuḥaqqiru dhalika l-bināʾa lā tujāwizu-hu ilà ghayri-hi min qibali anna-ka inna-mā turīdu taqlīla l-jamʿ [...] wa- iʿlam anna li-adnà l-ʿadadi abniyatun hiya mukhtaṣṣatun bi-hi wa-hiya la-hu fī l-aṣli wa-rubbamā sharika-hu fī-hi l-akthar [...] fa-tilka arbaʿatu abniyatin fa-mā khalā hadhā fa-huwa fī l-aṣli li-l-akthari wa-in sharika-hu l-aqall [...] wa-dhalika qawlu-ka fī ʾaklubin ʾukaylib [...] wa-ka-dhalika samiʿnā-hā min-a l-ʿarab [...] wa saʾaltu l-khalīla ʿan taḥqīri l-dūr fa-qāla aruddu-hu ilà bināʾi aqalli l-ʿadadi li-annī innamā urīdu taqlīla l-ʿadadi [...] fa-in lam tafʿal fa-ḥaqqir-hā ʿalà l-wāḥidi wa-alḥiq tāʾ al-jamʿi wa-dhalika li-anna-ka taruddu-hu ilà l-ismi lladhī huwa li-aqalli l-ʿadad a-lā tarà anna-ka taqūlu li-l-aqalli ẓabayāt [...] fa-faʿalātun bi-manzilati ʾafʿulin fī l-mudhakkari wa-afʿālin wa-naḥwa-humā wa-ka-dhalika mā jumiʿa bi-l-wāwi wa-l-nūni wa-l-yāʾi wa-l-nūn. [...] wa-law ḥaqqarta l-jafanāt wa-qad jāwazna l-ʿashara la-qulta l-jufaynāt lā tujāwizu li-anna-hā bināʾu aqalli l-ʿadad [...] a-lā tarā-hum qālū fī darāhima durayhimāt wa-idha ḥaqqarta l-fityāna qulta futayya wa-in lam taqul dhā qulta futayyūna fa-l-wāwu wa-l-nūnu bi-manzilati l-tāʾi fī l-muʾannath.*

[26] *wa-dhalika qawlu-ka fī qawmin quwaymin [...] wa-kadhalika l-nafaru wa-l-raḥṭ.*

[27] *wa-law kāna mukassaran la-rudda fī l-taṣghīri ilà l-wāḥidi wa-jumiʿa bi-alifi wa-l-tāʾi naḥwa tumayrāt.*

4.3. Al-Khalīl (d. 175/791)

Kitāb al-ʿAyn, II, 188 (Text 1):

l-ʿashiyy is the end of the day, and when you say *l-ʿashiyya*, this is [referred] to the single day, as you say *I have met you today in the ʿashiyya of some day* or *in a ʿashiyya*. If they make the diminutive of l-ʿashiyy, they say *ʿushayshyān*. [They say so] in the *shafà*, that is the last hour of the day, at the *mughayribān* of the sun.[28]

Kitāb al-ʿAyn, IV, 19 (Text 2):

l-rahṭ is a number [of people],[29] from three to ten, who are put together.[30] Someone says: from seven to ten, whereas from seven down to three is *nafar*.[31]

Kitāb al-ʿAyn, IV, 40 (Text 3):

The people of Hijaz say 'this.F is *dhahab*' [...] and [call] *dhahaba* a piece of it; whereas people who are not from Hijaz say 'this.M is *dhahab*.'[32]

Kitāb al-ʿAyn, IV, 104 (Text 4):

In the diminutive *muwayh* and in the plural *miyāh.* Among the Arabs someone says 'this.F is a *mā'a*,' like the Banū Tamīm, meaning a well with its water.[33]

Kitāb al-ʿAyn, VIII, 55 (Text 5):

l-dhawd is from three to ten [taken] out of a camel herd.[34]

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[28] *al-ʿashiyyu ākhiru l-nahār fa-idhā qulta ʿashiyya fa-hiya li-yawmin wāḥidin taqūlu laqītu-hu ʿashiyyata yawmin kadhā wa-ʿashiyyatan min-a l-ʿashiyyāt wa-idhā ṣaghgharū l-ʿashiyya qālū l-ʿushayshyān wa-dhalika ʿinda l-shafà wa-huwa ākhiru sāʿatin min-a l-nahāri ʿinda mughayribāni l-shams.*

[29] This integration is inferred from the following comparison between *rahṭ* and *nafar.*

[30] A more uncertain interpretation, which considers *ʿadad* and *yujmaʿu* as technical terms, would be: '*l-rahṭ* is a [low?] number [of people], which is employed as a plural [to refer to entities] from three to ten.'

[31] *al-rahṭu ʿadadun yujmaʿu min thalāthatin ilà ʿashratin wa-yuqālu min sabʿatin ilà ʿashratin wa-mā dūna l-sabʿati ilà l-thalāthati nafar.*

[32] *wa-ahlu l-ḥijāzi yaqūlūna hiya l-dhahab [...] wa-l-qiṭʿatu min-hā dhahaba wa-ghayru-hum yaqūlu huwa l-dhahab.*

[33] *fī l-taṣghīri muwayh wa-fī l-jamʿi miyāh wa-min-a l-ʿarabi man yaqūlu hadhihi mā'a ka-banī tamīmin yaʿnūna l-rakiyya.*

[34] *al-dhawdu min-a l-ibli min-a l-thalāthi ilà l-ʿashar.*

4.4. Abū 'Ubayda (d. 209/824)

Tahdhīb al-Lugha, VI, 118 (by al-Azharī, d. 370/981):

Ibn al-Sikkīt ascribes the following words to Abū 'Ubayda: if the bucket almost reached its maximum capacity, this [condition] is its *nahd*, so they say: *nahidat* the maximum capacity. He also said: if the bucket is below its maximum capacity, they say: *'arraḍtu* [...] He also said: *waḍakhtu* or *awḍakhtu*, if you put *muwayha* at its bottom.[35]

4.5. al-Sijistānī (d. 255/869)

al-Mudhakkar wa-l-Mu'annath, 145-146:

l-dhawd is a feminine [noun taken] out of a camel herd, is said only of she-camels, and its diminutive is *dhuwayd.* [...] They say irregularly: *he has three, four, ten dhawd* for three etc. [she-camels taken] out of a camel herd.[36]

4.6. Abū Ḥanīfa (d. 282/895)

Al-Nabāt, 162:

They are *tīnāni,* two high mountains far north in the land of the Ghaṭafān, at the feet of which is *muwayha,* called *al-tīna.*[37]

4.7. Al-Azharī (d. 370/981)

Tahdhīb al-Lugha, VI, 195 (by al-Azharī, d. 370/981) (Text 1):

suḥaybatun of water, that is some *muwayha.*[38]

Tāj al-'Arūs, XIX, 312 (by al-Zabīdī, d. 1205/1791) (Text 2):

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[35] *rawā bnu l-sikkīti li-abī 'ubaydata anna-hu qāla idhā qārabat-i l-dalwu l-mal'a fa-huwa nahdu-hā yuqālu nahidat l-mal' qāla fa-idhā kāna dūna mal'i-hā qīla 'arraḍtu fī l-dalw [...] wa-qāla waḍakhtu wa-awḍakhtu idhā ja'alta fī asfali-hā muwayha.*

[36] *wa-l-dhawdu min-a l-ibli mu'annatha wa-lā yuqālu illā min-a l-nūqi wa-l-taṣghīru dhuwaydun [...] wa-yuqālu 'alà ghayri qiyās la-hu thalāthu dhawd li-thalāthin min-a l-ibli wa-arba'u dhawd wa-'asharu dhawd.*

[37] *humā tīnāni jabalāni ṭawīlāni fī mahabbi l-shimāli min dāri ghaṭafāna fī uṣūli-himā muwayhatun yuqālu la-hā l-tīna.*

[38] *suḥaybatun min mā'in, ay muwayhatun qalīla.*

Al-Azharī reported from Thaʿlab: the meaning of *raḥṭ* is plural, but no singular can be derived from its stem.[39]

4.8. Nashwān al-Ḥimyārī (d. 573/1178)

Shams al-ʿUlūm, VII, 466:

l-ʿuqrubān is masculine singular [?] with respect to *l-ʿaqārib*.[40]

4.9. Al-Zabīdī (d. 1205/1791)

Tāj al-ʿArūs, III, 424:

l-ʿaqrāb is a collective. So it is heard [among the Arabs]. [41]

4.10. Al-Nuwayrī (d. 733/1333)

Nihāyat al-Arab, II, 285:

The tenth layer [of tribal organization] is the *raḥṭ*, that is a man's *raḥṭ*, and his *usra*, having the status of the toes. The *raḥṭ* is below ten, while the *usra* is more.[42]

5. Form-oriented description

The attestations of *kalām al-ʿarab* collected in Section 4. bring to light a stock of plurals of paucity richer than that usually assumed for Classical Arabic (Section 2.): in Sībawayhi's description a plural of paucity is any stem that, to express nuances of [MORE], is morphologically expanded not only through the circumfixal morphemes *ʾa..u., ʾa..ā., ʾa..i.a, .i..a* (broken plural), but also through masculine and feminine sound plural endings (Section 4.1., Text 3).

Furthermore, the collected attestations of *kalām al-ʿarab* confirm for this primary source the basic distributional asymmetry, assumed in Section 2 for practical orientation, between the plural of paucity, which can occur without the diminutive; and the diminutive in noun plural marking, which cannot

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[39] *rawà l-azhariyyu ʿan abī l-ʿabbās al-raḥṭu maʿnā-hu l-jamʿu wa-lā wāḥida la-hu min lafẓi-h.*

[40] *al-ʿuqrubān dhakaru l-ʿaqārib.*

[41] *wa-qad sumiʿa l-ʿaqrābu fī-smi l-jins.*

[42] *al-ṭabaqatu l-ʿāshiratu l-raḥṭu wa-hum raḥṭu l-rajuli wa-usratu-hu bi-manzilati aṣābiʿi l-qadam wa-l-raḥṭu dūna l-ʿashrati wa-l-usratu aktharu min dhalika.*

occur without the plural of paucity and, generally speaking, without a nominal form denoting [MORE]. Specifically for *kalām al-'arab*, the nominal forms in question are, in addition to the aforesaid kinds of plural of paucity, also the plural of multitude and three kinds of collective, notably mono-stem, multi-stem, and optional collective. To the extent that in noun plural marking the diminutive must co-occur with these forms, they can be seen as *environments* of it (Harris 1951).

Plurals of paucity have been formally described immediately above. The plural of multitude is, following Sībawayhi (Section 4.1., Text 3), any stem that is morphologically expanded through any infixal or circumfixal morpheme other than *'a..u., 'a..ā., 'a..i.a, .i..a*, to express nuances of [MORE]. Interestingly, in Sībawayhi's description, this kind of plural is not an environment for the diminutive, i.e., *no diminutivized noun is directly derived from a plural of multitude*, which resorts to suppletion instead, as is exemplified, *inter alia*, by the lexical pair *fityān, futayyūna* (instead of the expected **futayyān*).

Finally, a collective is a stem that undergoes no morphological expansion to express [MORE] or nuances of it: e.g., *ibl* 'camel herd,' *dhawd* 'herd of she-camels (from three to ten)' (Section 4.3., Text 5 and Section 4.5.).

However, the same stem can be morphologically expanded through the endings *at, iyy*, and perhaps *ān*, to express [ONE]. The latter ending is uncertainly attested in late sources, through the zoonym *'uqrubān* 'scorpion' (Section 4.8.), as opposed to the collective *'aqrāb* 'scorpions' (Section 4.9.). The morphological expansion through *at, iyy*, and perhaps *ān* defines a mono-stem collective.

In certain nouns, this kind of morphological expansion is subject to dialectal variation: al-Khalīl reports that *dhahaba* and *mā'a* are confined to the usage of a given speakers' community (*ahl al-Ḥijāz* and *Banū Tamīm*, respectively: Section 4.3., Texts 3, 4). Similarly, *rahṭiyy* seems to be possible only for the (unknown) informants consulted by Sībawayhi (Section 4.1., Text 2 and Section 4.7., Text 2). A stem of this sort is an optional collective.

Finally, morphological expansion of the stem through *at, iyy*, and perhaps *ān* to express [ONE] may not be allowed at all, in which case a totally different (technically speaking, suppletive) stem is used instead. In this case a multi-stem collective obtains. This is exemplified by lexical sets such as *ibl* 'camel herd,' *jamal* 'camel,' and *nāqa* 'she-camel' (Section 4.3., Text 5 and Section 4.5.).[43]

In particular, in the collected attestations of *kalām al-'arab* the mono-stem collective stands out as a unique environment for the diminutive. In Sībawayhi's description (Section 4.1., Text 1), for a mono-stem collective referring to a tribal unit, the morphological expansion through *iyy* may be not be

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[43] According to a more traditional terminology, *ism al-jins* and *ism al-jam'*, respectively. These terms, however, raise many interpretive issues (Dror 2016 for an up-to-date discussion and references).

sufficient to express [ONE]: it may also require the diminutive. The latter, however, in this specific environment changes its form from *.u.ay.* to *.u.a.*, undergoing *y*-deletion: e.g., *'abīda* "Abīda' – *'ubadiyy* 'a man from 'Abīda.'

Such a definition of the collective in terms of morphological expansion through *at, iyy*, and perhaps *ān* purposely avoids any allusion to its meaning, apart from the basic feature [ONE]. As is shown by traditional terms such as *ism al-waḥda* and *nomen unitatis*, reference grammars of Classical Arabic semantically characterize *at* and *iyy* as denoting a unitizer, i.e., as an item taken from a collection; yet, in the collected attestations of *kalām al-'arab*, the ending *at* does not necessarily qualify as a unitizer when co-occurring with an optional collective, as is shown by al-Khalīl's gloss of *mā'a* as 'water well,' which does not refer to an item taken from a collection but rather points to an unpredictable (lexicalized) meaning instead (Section 4.3., Text 4).

Overall, the collected attestations of *kalām al-'arab* can be couched in a form-oriented description centered on the notions of stem and morphological expansion through a marker, along the lines of Tiersma's (1982) cross-linguistic description, discussed in Section 3.1. and schematized in 1. above. Such a description allows for a first practical classification of the two intermingled objects of study, the plural of paucity and the diminutive in noun plural marking, regardless of their exact meaning. As schematized in the *white cells* of Table 2 below, this classification includes the diminutive in all of its environments, illustrating any environment both in isolation and in conjunction with the diminutive itself. The two forms of environment are referred to here as the basic and diminutivized collective or plural. This classification includes three kinds of plural of paucity, intended both as environments of the diminutive and as a separate object of study (Section 2):

Designation			Class	Item	Basic	Semantic structure	Diminutivized	Semantic structure	Remarks
Collective	Optional		I	(7)	*mā'/(a)* 'water'	[MORE]	*muwayh(a)*	[SOME]	
				(8)	*'ashiyy/(a)* 'evening'	[MORE]	*'ushayshyān?*	[ONE]	*ān* is uncertain
				(9)	*raht/(iyy)* '3-to-10 people'	[SOME]?	*ruhayt*	?	
	Mono-stem		II	(10)	*'abīda* "Abīda'	[MORE]	*'ubadiyy*	[ONE]	Diminutive is *.u.a.*
				(11)	*'abīd/iyy* "Abīd'	[MORE]	-	-	-
	Multi-stem		III	(12)	*dhawd~nāqa* '3-to-10 she-camels;' 'great herd'	[SOME] [MANY]	*dhuwayd*	[SOME]	'great herd' is later
Plural of paucity	Broken		IV	(13)	*'aklub* 'dogs'	[SOME] [MANY]	*'ukaylib*	?	
	Sound	Fem.	V	(14)	*jafanāt* 'bowls'	[SOME] [MANY]	*jufaynāt*	[SOME]	ultimately from a coll.
		Masc.	VI	(15)	N-*ūna*	[SOME] [MANY]	*futayyūna*	?	
Plural of multitude			VII	(16)	*fityān* 'young men'	[SOME] [MANY]	**futayyān*	See *futayyūna*	
				(17)			~*futayyūna*		

Key of symbols	
/	morphological expansion of collectives
()	optional ending (in collectives)
~	suppletion
N	noun (literally, *mā* 'something')
*	ungrammatical form

Table 2. Classification of instances of the plural of paucity and the diminutive

6. Semantic description

In the collected attestations of *kalām al-'arab*, form and meaning are not on the same footing.

While the formal features of a basic/diminutivized collective or plural attested in *kalām al-'arab* are directly observable, at least with respect to the consonantal *ductus*, its semantic features are not. Rather, they must be inferred from two kinds of linguistic environments, namely the lexemes that surround such a noun within an utterance or a lexical field (Harris 1951: 190-191). Alternatively, its semantic features are indirectly observable within a metalinguistic description, usually labeled as a gloss in lexicographical work.

Because of their indirect nature, an utterance, a lexical field, or a metalinguistic description raise problems of authenticity, so they can serve as semantic evidence but must be treated with caution. In fact, such kinds of evidence might have been subject to selection bias, not to speak of interpolation: an early grammarian or lexicographer might have selected certain utterances, lexical fields, or metalinguistic descriptions from the universe of discourse of *kalām al-'arab* to the exclusion of others, or even modified them, for some theoretical or ideological reasons. To overcome these problems, for any basic/diminutivized collective or plural of *kalām al-'arab*, a parallel with modern living usage, i.e., with a modern Arabic dialect, will be provided here whenever available.

A semantic description of the collected attestations of *kalām al-'arab* arranges them into entries, each including:

- a basic collective or plural
- its diminutivized counterpart
- their meaning, derived from the semantic evidence available in early sources
- a dialectal parallel

The meaning derived from early sources is enclosed in apostrophes if recorded by them in the form of metalinguistic description, including glosses. If not enclosed in apostrophes, the meaning derived from early sources is a contextual meaning inferred from an utterance or a lexical field. Sometimes, further semantic evidence is adduced, especially for the meaning of a basic/diminutivized collective or plural derived from a late source. The resulting entries are illustrated in the following.

7.   *mā'*   –   *muwayh; muwayha*[44]   (Section 4.3., Text 3; Section 4.4.)

     'water'   'some water' (*muwayhatun qalīla*)

     'səl   –   *'sīla*   (Moroccan Arabic) [45]

     'miel'   'du miel'

The meaning 'some water' (*muwayhatun qalīla*) in 7. reflects a gloss drawn from a late source. However, further semantic evidence for this meaning from an early source is provided by the following *locus probans* (Section 4.4.):

> If the bucket almost reached its maximum capacity, this [condition] is its *nahd* [...]. If the bucket is below its maximum capacity, they say: *'arraḍtu* [...] He also said: *waḍakhtu* or *awḍakhtu*, if you put *muwayha* [some/*much water] at its bottom.

This evidence is a lexical field denoting decreasing capacity, forcing precisely the reading 'some water' for *muwayha*:

LEXICAL FIELD: [DECREASING CAPACITY]		
nahd	*'arraḍtu*	*ja'alta muwayha*
maximum capacity	below maximum capacity	some/*much water

Another contextual meaning is available for *muwayha* in early sources such as Abū Ḥanīfa (d. 282/895), in whose description this noun is modified by a proper noun: 'at the feet of which is *muwayha*, called *al-tīna*' (Section 4.6.). In this case, the proper noun itself rules out the mass reading 'some water,' forcing the reading 'little well' instead, i.e., a diminutivized form of *mā'a* 'water well' (Section 4.3., Text 4).

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[44] No dialectal parallel has been found for the form *muwayh* attested in Section 4.3., Text 4. *Muwayh* is also attested in a *ḥadīth*, but no contextual meaning can be inferred for it. The *ḥadīth* reads as follows: *kāna mūsà 'alay-hi l-salām yaghtasilu 'inda muwayh* 'Moses – peace be upon him – was washing himself at a little bath (?)' (*Tāj al-'Arūs*, XXXVI: 508). The conjectural English translation is based on Exodus XL, 30-31, which this *ḥadīth* probably echoes.

[45] Caubet *et al.* (1989: 51). Lane (1863, s. v. '*SL*) based on late lexicographers, also records the lexeme *'usayla*, formally and perhaps semantically akin to *'sīla*. In this Moroccan lexeme, the diminutive is phonologically realized as *ī* (diachronically deriving from *ay* of *.u.ay.*).

8.   *'ashiyy/(a)*   –   *'ushayshyān?*   (Section 4.3., Text 1)

    'end of the day'   'last hour of the day'

    məghrəb   –   *mghêrəb*   (Ḥassāniyya Arabic)[46]

    'sunset'   'immediate approach of sunset'

9.   *raḥṭ/(iyy)*   –   *ruhayṭ* (Sections 4.1., Texts 2, 4; 4.3., Text 2; 4.7.; 4.10.)

    'number [of people], from three to ten'   ?

    'toes'   ?

The meaning 'toes' (*aṣābi'i l-qadam*) in 9. reflects a gloss drawn from al-Nuwayrī's work (Section 4.10.). Further semantic evidence for this meaning is a lexical field attested with slight variations in al-Nuwayrī's work itself and in the sources studied by Varisco (1995). Space limitations prevent a full illustration of the lexical field in question in these sources; it will suffice here to say that in this lexical field, any kind of tribal unit corresponds to a body part. The less populated the tribal unit, the lower the corresponding body part:

LEXICAL FIELD: [TRIBAL ORGANIZATION AS A BODY]							
sha'b	*qabīla*	*'imāra*	*baṭn*	*fakhidh*	*'ashīra*	*faṣīla*	*raḥṭ*
suture	skull bones	breast	belly	belly	-	lower leg	toes

10.   *hudhayl, 'abīda*   –   *hudhaliyy, 'ubadiyy*   (Section 4.1., Text 1)

    H., 'A. (ethnonym)   a man/*a little man from H., 'A

    masā'îd   –   *msê'îdi*   (Southern Tunisian Arabic)[47]

    'Masā'îd (ethnonym)'   'de la tribu des Masā'îd'

The early lexicographer al-Shaybānī (d. 206/821) records a related lexical pair:

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[46] Taine-Cheikh (2018: 108). In the diminutivized noun *mghêrəb*, the diminutive is phonologically realized as *ê* (diachronically deriving from *ay* of *.u.ay.*). Cp. also the lexical pair *maghrib* 'sunset' – *mughayribān* 'last hour of the day' attested in the *locus probans* under scrutiny. See also the diminutivized plural *mughirbiyyāt* in Iksāli Arabic, a dialect spoken in Lower Galilee (Nevo 2006: 46).

[47] The data is drawn from the dialect of Marâzîg (Nefzaoua region) studied by Denizeau (1957: 68), who explicitly states that in *msê'îdi* 'La fonction de la forme diminutive, doublant celle du suffixe *i*, paraît avoir là un rôle strictement singulatif.'

11.   *'abīd*   –   *'abīdiyy*   (*al-Jīm*, III, 189)

       'Abīd (ethnonym)   a man from 'Abīd

This pair minimally differs from the lexical pair *'abīda – 'ubadiyy* in 10., in that its first member does not display *at* and its second member does not display the diminutive.

12.   *dhawd*   –   *dhuwayd*   (Sections 4.3., Text 5; 4.5.)

       'three to ten [taken] out of a camel herd'   ?

       'said only of she-camels'

       'a number of camels from three to thirty'   (Lane 1863, s.v. *DHWD*)

       dhawd-ak, zowd   –   *dhweyd*

       'thy little herd (*dhawd-ak*)''   'a little herd'   (Rwala Arabic)[48]

       'a great herd of camel (*zowd*)'   (Rwala Arabic)[49]

To the extent that it is attested by Arabic lexicographers later than al-Khalīl (cited in Lane 1863, s.v. *DHWD*), the meaning of *dhawd* 'a number of camels from three to thirty' is more recent than its meaning 'three to ten [taken] out of a camel herd.'

13.   *'aklub*   –   *'ukaylib*   (Section 4.1., Text 3)

       'some, many dogs' (*adnà l-'adad, l-akthar*)[50]   'some dogs' (*taqlīl al-jam'*)[51]

       wlād   (Moroccan Arabic)[52]

       '(some, many) kids'

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[48] Data from Musil (1928: 336, 341). Shammari Arabic provides a further interesting parallel, attested in the following passage from an oral narrative: *'ind ibl-ihim dhōd-in gilīl-in* 'near a camel herd, a small herd' (Sowayan 2010: 74). This utterance is semantic evidence for assigning to *dhōd-in*, the Shammari Arabic cognate of *dhawd*, the contextual meaning 'small herd,' inferred from the adjective *gilīl-in* that modifies this collective (cp. Classical Arabic *qalīl*).

[49] Data from Musil (1928: 364).

[50] For convenience, the entire *locus probans* is reproduced here (Section 4.1., Text 3): 'The plural of paucity [*adnà l-'adad*] has specific schemes that belong to it in principle [*fī l-aṣl*], but the [plural of multitude] [*al-akthar*] can share them.'

[51] For convenience, the entire *locus probans* is reproduced here (Section 4.1., Text 3): 'One makes the diminutive of each scheme of paucity, [*adnà l-'adad*] [...] since one means only to assign paucity to a plural [*taqlīl al-jam'*].'

[52] Data from Moroccan Arabic: see 1. above. This example can be replicated in many other Arabic dialects.

14.   *jafanāt*   –   *jufaynāt*   (Section 4.1., Text 3)

      'some, many bowls' (*bi-manzilati 'af'ul*)[53]   'some bowls' (*l-'ashar [...] lā tujāwizu*)[54]

      tämrât   *tmērāt*   (Southern Tunisian Arabic)[55]

      'some, many) dates'   'quelques dattes, de rare dattes'

15.   N-*ūna*   (N = noun)   –   *futayyūna*   (Section 4.1., Text 3)

      'some, many' (*bi-manzilati 'af'ul*)[56]   'some young men' (*jufaynāt [...] futayyūna*

                                                 fa-l-wāwu wa-l-nūnu bi-manzilati l-tā')

      fallaḥīn   (Egyptian Arabic)[57]

      '(some, many) peasants'

16.   *fityān*   –   **futayyān*   (Section 4.1., Text 3)

      'some, many young men'   No diminutivized plural of multitude.

      (*li-l-akthar wa-in sharika-hu l-aqall*)[58] Suppletion instead: 17. below

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[53] For convenience, the entire *locus probans* is reproduced here (Section 4.1., Text 3): '*.a.a.āt*, has the status of *'a..u.* in the masculine, of *'a..ā* and similar forms [for paucity]. Analogously, forms whose plural is with *ūna* and *īna*.'

[54] For convenience, the entire *locus probans* is reproduced here (Section 4.1., Text 3): 'If you made the diminutive of *jafanāt* 'bowls' when their number is beyond ten, you would say *jufaynāt* without going beyond the number, because it is a scheme for paucity.'

[55] The data is drawn from the dialect of Marâzîg (Nefzaoua region) studied by Denizeau (1957: 68), who explicitly states: 'Les conditions d'emploi du pluriel des diminutifs méritent aussi une observation : au lieu de porter sur les objects désignés eux-mêmes, la dégradation peut porter sur leur nombre ; il est courant que *tmērāt* désigne « quelques dattes, de rare dattes » , « moins nombreuses » et non pas « plus petites ou plus mauvaises » que ne le ferait le pluriel *tämrât* du positif.' The latter example can be replicated in many other Arabic dialects, where this kind of plural may denote either few or many entities; see 1. above and the related discussion.

[56] See the end of the *locus probans* cited in fn. 53. In that passage, Sībawayhi provides no example for the masculine plural of paucity, generically describing it as 'something' (*mā*), i.e., a noun, whose plural endings are *ūna* and *īna*.

[57] This example can be replicated in many other Arabic dialects, where this kind of plural may denote either few or many entities: 1. above and the related discussion.

[58] For convenience, the *locus probans* is reproduced here (Section 4.1., Text 3): 'They are four schemes: all other schemes in principle are for multitude, even if they can be shared by paucity.'

17. *fityān* – *futayyūna* (Section 4.1., Text 3)

‘some, many young men’ Suppletion by a diminutivized plural of paucity

(*li-l-akthar wa-in sharika-hu l-aqall*)[59] (*aruddu-hu ilà bināʾi l-aqalli li-taqlīl al-jamʿ*)

The whole semantic picture that emerges from the collected attestations of *kalām al-ʿarab* with regard to the second object of study is that the diminutive in noun plural marking, in its historical reality, *possesses no meaning of its own: it rather doubles a meaning already observed in its environment.* In more traditional terms, in a diminutivized collective or plural, the diminutive appears to convey a meaning already observed in the corresponding basic collective or plural. For the time being, this semantic behavior of the diminutive can be labeled as the ‘doubling function.’ This is illustrated in the white and grey cells of Table 2, under 10., 12., 14.

Thus, in 14. *jufaynāt* conveys, through the co-occurrence of *.u.ay.* and the derivational ending *āt*, the same feature [SOME] already observed in the derivational ending *āt* alone in *jafanāt*, with the caveat that *jufaynāt* conveys [SOME] *to the exclusion of* [MANY] (paucal meaning: Section 3.1.), while *jafanāt* conveys [SOME] *in conjunction with* [MANY], as will be discussed in greater detail immediately below. Likewise in 12., based on dialectal parallels, *dhuwayd* conveys, through the co-occurrence of *.u.ay.* and the manipulated lexical stem *dhawd* (i.e., *dh.w.d*), the same feature [SOME] already observed in the lexical stem *dhawd* alone, again with the caveat that *dhuwayd* conveys [SOME] *to the exclusion of* [MANY], while *dhawd* conveys [SOME] *in conjunction with* [MANY]. This can be schematized as follows (with the doubling function in bold):

18. *jafanāt* **[SOME]**, [MANY] > *.u.ay.* > *jufaynāt* **[SOME]**

dhawd **[SOME]**, [MANY] > *.u.ay.* > *dhuwayd* **[SOME]**

Turning to the first object of study, it appears that the collected attestations of *kalām al-ʿarab* add nothing new to the current knowledge of the *basic* plural of paucity. In fact, in reporting that the latter expresses both [SOME] and [MANY] in attestations such as *ʾaklub*, *jafanāt,* and N-*ūna* in 13., 14., 15., Sībawayhi’s description offers no crucial semantic evidence, since this kind of ‘oscillating’ meaning, as it were, is already known for the basic plural of paucity in *kalām al-ʿarab* and, generally speaking, in Classical Arabic, from the textual statistical study of its agreement patterns (Section 3.1.).

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[59] See fn. 58.

By contrast, Sībawayhi's assertion (Section 4.1., Text 3) that 'in principle' (*fī l-aṣl*) the *basic* plural of paucity conveys [SOME] *to the exclusion of* [MANY] , i.e., in modern terms, it is genuinely paucal (Section 3.1.), cannot be proven nor disproven, for two reasons. First and foremost, no dialectal parallel seems to confirm his assertion. Second, it is not clear from the context which language level his expression 'in principle' (*fī l-aṣl*) refers to. If *aṣl* refers to synchrony, the basic plural of paucity would convey [SOME] to the exclusion of [MANY] at some deeper semantic level, in the language stage described by Sībawayhi, i.e., in *kalām al-'arab*; if *aṣl* refers to diachrony, the plural of paucity would do so at some earlier stage of the language, prior to *kalām al-'arab*.[60]

However, the collected attestations of *kalām al-'arab* shed new light on the meaning of the *diminutivized* plural of paucity. It was pointed out immediately above that in 14. *jufaynāt* expresses [SOME] to the exclusion of [MANY]. It was also pointed out that from the perspective of the second object of study, this phenomenon is the doubling function of the diminutive in noun plural marking.

Turning to the first object study, the same attestation shows that a diminutivized feminine sound plural of paucity like *jufaynāt* in its historical reality conveys *a genuinely paucal meaning*, rather than denoting smallness. This kind of meaning is inferred from the dialectal data in 14., namely *tmērāt*, which confirms Sībawayhi's description. Strictly speaking, however, dialectal data confirms the historical reality of Sībawayhi's description in terms of paucal meaning for the diminutivized feminine sound plural of paucity *if and only if it ultimately derives from an inanimate collective (*as in *tmērāt).* In this sense, the example *tumayrāt* provided by Ibn Ya'īsh (Section 4.2.) seems more apt than *jufaynāt* as an illustration of the paucal meaning of this kind of diminutivized plural of paucity.

Semantically, the basic inanimate collective from which *tumayrāt/tmērāt* ultimately derives, i.e., *tamr*, denotes cohesive and interchangeable entities, which amounts to saying that it conveys collection-semantics (Section 3.1.).

To summarize, it appears from a semantic description of the collected attestations of *kalām al-'arab*, which also considers parallels from modern Arabic dialects, that the traditional term 'plural of paucity' can be intended literally only in the case of the diminutivized feminine sound plural of paucity. The two other kinds of the diminutivized plural of paucity remain semantically obscure, as schematized in 19. below:

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[60] On the synchronic and diachronic interpretations of the term *aṣl,* see Baalbaki (2006).

19.   The historical reality of plural of paucity

Feminine, sound:

tamr [COLLECTION] *> tamarāt* [SOME], [MANY] *> .u.ay. > tumayrāt* [SOME]   (*tmērāt*)

Masculine, sound:

N-*ūna* [COLLECTION? MEMBERS?] [SOME], [MANY] *> .u.ay. > futayyūna* [X]

Broken:

'aklub [COLLECTION? MEMBERS?] [SOME], [MANY] *> .u.ay. > 'ukaylib* [X]

Key:

[SEMANTIC FEATURE]   doubling function

[X]   unknown semantic feature

7. Revisiting the object of study

The collected attestations of *kalām al-ʿarab* bring to light two kinds of linguistic materials that share semantic properties with the twofold object of study.

On the one hand, the diminutivized collective *dhuwayd* in 12. shares a genuine paucal meaning with the diminutivized feminine sound plural of paucity *jufaynāt* (or *tumayrāt*) in 14. In this sense, *dhuwayd* is part of the first object of study - the plural of paucity. On the other hand, the diminutive in noun singular marking, as attested by *ʿubadiyy* in 10., shares the doubling function with its counterpart in noun plural marking. In this sense, *ʿubadiyy* is part of the second object of study - the diminutive. Both kinds of linguistic materials are discussed in what follows.

7.1. From plural of paucity to collective of paucity

Based on the collected attestations of *kalām al-ʿarab*, the kinds of plurals traditionally labeled 'plural of paucity' actually convey paucity (paucal meaning) only in the case of the diminutivized feminine sound plural, as schematized in 19. above.

However, in the same attestations a genuine paucal meaning is plausibly observed outside this traditional category, i.e., in several collectives, which can accordingly be subsumed into a new category of collective of paucity, where the term 'paucity' is to be taken literally. In fact, the collective of paucity genuinely conveys paucal meaning when *diminutivized*, as illustrated at the end of Section 6 and schematized in 18. above: the relevant attestation is *dhuwayd* 'little herd,' whose paucal meaning is inferred from the dialectal parallel *dhweyd* in 12.

Upon closer scrutiny, also the *basic* collective of paucity effectively conveys paucal meaning in the attestations of *kalām al-'arab* collected here. A case in point is *dhawd*, which is genuinely paucal in the earlier attestation reported by al-Khalīl, according to whom it effectively denotes from three to ten she-camels (Section 4.3., Text 5), thereby expressing [SOME] to the exclusion of [MANY]. By contrast, *dhawd* is not paucal according to late lexicographers, who report that it expresses [SOME] in conjunction with [MANY]. Dialectal parallels are found for both the paucal and non-paucal meaning of *dhawd*, but the relative chronology of the lexicographical descriptions plausibly shows that its paucal meaning is older, as illustrated in Section 7 in connection with the data in 12. This amounts to saying that *dhawd* originally encodes a number value ranging from three to ten *in its stem*, i.e., that it expresses [SOME] to the exclusion of [MANY] *lexically rather than derivationally* (see also the end of Section 3.3.).

It also appears that *raḥṭ* in 9. conveys a lexical paucal meaning like *dhawd*, though the semantic evidence is less direct in this case. Al-Bustānī (1870 [2009], IV, 197) reports for Lebanese Arabic the lexical pair *yərḥaṭ* and *yəlḥaṭ* 'he eats with vigor (*ya'kulu shadīdan*), where the oscillation *r, l* is observed.[61] In this lexical pair, the identity of phonological environment in the root (*_ḤṬ* of *RḤṬ, LḤṬ*) and the identity of meaning (*ya'kulu shadīdan*) lead al-Bustānī (1870 [2009]: IV, 197) to describe *yəlḥaṭ* as a dialectal variant of *yərḥaṭ* (*yərḥaṭ* [...] *wa-l-'āmmatu taqulu yəlḥaṭ bi-l-lām*). It is worth considering in this light a lexical pair of *kalām al-'arab* where the same oscillation *r, l* is observed. The pair consists of the collective *raḥṭ*, in the sense of 'toes' (9. above and Section 4.10.), and the abstract noun *laḥṭ* in the sense of 'beating with the outstretched palm of the hand,' as reported by Abū Zayd al-Anṣārī (d. 215/830).[62] In this case too, the identity of phonological environment in the root (*_ḤṬ* of *RḤṬ, LḤṬ*) and the identity of meaning (both *raḥṭ* and *laḥṭ* refer to digits) make it possible to describe *raḥṭ* 'toes' and *laḥṭ* 'palm of the hand' as dialectal variants in *kalām al-'arab*.[63]

This amounts to saying that *raḥṭ* encodes the number value of ten *in its stem*, i.e., that it expresses [SOME] to the exclusion of [MANY] *lexically rather than derivationally* (see also the end of Section 3.3.). The alternative meaning of *raḥṭ*, namely '3-to-10 people,' which is attested as early as the Koran (XXVII, 48) in the number phrase *tis'atu raḥṭin* 'nine people,' is likely to be the result of a semantic shift 'digits' >

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[61] Al-Bustānī's dictionary, in Arabic script, provides no vocalization for the prefix *y* of the prefix-conjugations *yərḥaṭ, yəlḥaṭ*. This does not affect the main point, namely, that this data attests to the oscillation *r, l*. The vocalization of both prefix-conjugations is inferred from similar data from Syrian Arabic, a dialect close to Lebanese Arabic: *laḥaṭ yəlḥaṭ* 'manger tout (le plat)' in Barthélémy (1935: 767).

[62] Cited in *Tahdhīb al-Lugha*, VI, 104: *wa-qāla abū zayd l-laḥṭu l-ḍarbu bi-l-kaffi l-manshūra.*

[63] From a purely phonological perspective, it is not relevant whether the triconsonantal skeleton *RḤṬ* shared by *yərḥaṭ* and *raḥṭ* is one and the same root (polysemy) or two different roots (homophony). The same holds for the triconsonantal skeleton *LḤṬ* shared by *yəlḥaṭ* and *laḥṭ*.

'number of people, from three to ten,' along a pattern of metaphorical extension from inanimate to animate. External linguistic evidence to this effect is Latin *manus* 'hand' > 'band, troop.'

Remarkably, in addition to paucal meaning, *raḥṭ* shares with *dhawd* countability. This is shown by the Koranic number phrase *tisʿatu rahṭin* mentioned immediately above, and by the number phrase *thalāthatu dhawdin* attested in *kalām al-ʿarab* (Section 4.5.). The property of countability clearly distinguishes the collective of paucity from the traditionally recognized collective, which is neither paucal nor countable.

To summarize, the collective of paucity is still attested in its original paucal meaning both when basic and diminutivized:

20.   The historical reality of the collective of paucity

Optional collective:

raḥṭ   [COUNTABLE] [SOME] > .u.ay. > *ruhayṭ* [X]   (cp. *yərhaṭ, yəlhaṭ*)

Multi-stem collective:

dhawd [COUNTABLE] **[SOME]** (older), [MANY] (later) > .u.ay. > *dhuwayd* **[SOME]**

(cp. *dhawd-ak, zowd, dhweyd*)

Key:

[SEMANTIC FEATURE]   doubling function

[X]   unknown semantic feature

7.2. The diminutive from noun plural marking to noun singular marking

The considerations offered in Section 6., concerning the doubling function of the diminutive in noun plural marking, also apply to its occurrence in singular noun marking, especially when the diminutive co-occurs with an ending that morphologically expands a collective.

As schematized in 10.-11. in Table 2, *ʿubadiyy* conveys, through the co-occurrence of .u.ay. and the derivational ending *iyy*, the same feature [ONE] already observed in the derivational ending *iyy* alone in *ʿabīdiyy*. This attestation, in conjunction with the attestations *dhuwayd*, *jufaynāt* (or *tumayrāt*) in 12., 14. allows drawing the following generalization for the diminutive in *kalām al-ʿarab* :

21.   *.u.a(y).* semantically performs a doubling function in both noun singular marking, for the feature [ONE], and noun plural marking, for the feature [SOME] (to the exclusion of [MANY]).

In this respect, the diminutive attested in *kalām al-ʿarab* performs the same semantic function that Denizeau (1957: 68) originally observed only for noun singular marking in the Southern Tunisian Arabic dialect of Marâzîg (cp. *msêʿîdi* in 10. in Section 6.): 'La fonction de la forme diminutive, doublant celle du suffixe *i*, paraît avoir là un rôle strictement singulatif.' However, Denizeau does not explain *why* the diminutive performs such a semantic function.

The collected attestations of *kalām al-ʿarab* plausibly show that in both noun singular and plural marking, the diminutive occurs to remove a semantic ambiguity in its environment, i.e., a diminutivized noun arises to remove a semantic ambiguity found in its corresponding basic noun. Effectively, as schematized in 12., 14. in Table 2, in noun plural marking the basic nouns *jafanāt* and *dhawd* each ambiguously express [SOME] *in conjunction with* [MANY], while the corresponding diminutivized nouns *jufaynāt* and *dhuwayd* each unambiguously express *only* [SOME]. Likewise, as schematized in 10.-11. in Table 2, in noun singular marking the two basic ethnonyms *ʿabīd* and *ʿabīda* share a stem *ʿabīd* that ambiguously refers to two different tribal units (the ʿAbīd and the ʿAbīda); while the corresponding diminutivized noun *ʿubadiyy* unambiguously refers to the ʿAbīd only. This is schematized in 22. below:

22.   The historical reality of the diminutive

           Plural marking:

           jafanāt **[SOME]**, [MANY] > *.u.ay.* > *jufaynāt* **[SOME]** [MANY]

           dhawd **[SOME]**, [MANY] > *.u.ay.* > *dhuwayd* **[SOME]** [MANY]

           Singular marking:[64]

           ʿabīd- [ETHNONYM 1], [ETHNONYM 2] [MORE] > *ʿabīdiyy* [ETHNONYM 1], [ETHNONYM 2] **[ONE]**

           ʿabīd- [ETHNO. 1], [ETHNO. 2] [MORE] > *.u.ay.* > *ʿubadiyy* [ETHNONYM 1], [ETHNONYM 2] **[ONE]**

           Key:

           [SEMANTIC FEATURE]   doubling function

           [SEMANTIC FEATURE]   semantic ambiguity (removed)

           ʿabīd-   stem of *ʿabīd, ʿabīda*

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[64] Notice that the input form *ʿabīda* displays an additional marker, notably *at*, when compared to the input form *ʿabīd*. Similarly, the output form *ʿubadiyy* displays an additional marker, notably diminutive, when compared to the output form *ʿabīdiyy*. The distribution of the two additional markers *at* and diminutive is not accidental, since they both belong to the same derivational pair *ʿabīda* (input) – *ʿubadiyy* (output). It follows that the morphological complexity of the output form matches that of the input form. Matching in morphological complexity is thus a criterion that explains why, to remove semantic ambiguity, the diminutivized form *ʿubadiyy* is associated with *ʿabīda*, rather than with *ʿabīd*.

Notice that no doubling function is observed in the diminutivized noun *muwayha*, for the simple reason that its corresponding basic noun bears no semantic ambiguity, so no doubling function should be invoked to remove it.

In fact, when *muwayha* means 'some water' (7. above), it derives from an inanimate collective with collection-semantics, notably *mā'*, that cannot enter into two different agreement patterns to ambiguously express [SOME] or [MANY], as discussed at the end of Section 3.1. Rather, this semantic behavior is typical of plurals (1. above), while inanimate collectives like *mā'* convey unambiguously a different semantic feature, namely an undifferentiated [MORE]. Therefore, the diminutive, while occurring in the environment of *mā'*, conveys a meaning other than the doubling function, notably [SOME] (to the exclusion of [MANY]). Analogously, when *muwayha* means 'little well,' it derives from a singular *mā'a* that unambiguously refers to a 'water well' (see the discussion of 7. above). Therefore, the diminutive, while occurring in the environment of *mā'a*, conveys a meaning other than the doubling function, notably [SMALL].

Finally, the pervasiveness of the doubling function in 21. makes it plausible to describe it as a regular pattern that underlies the attestations of the diminutive (diminutivized nouns) in *kalām al-'arab*, and that contributes to characterize such attestations as a full-fledged system within this primary source. In turn, the systemic nature of the attestations of the diminutive in *kalām al-'arab* is internal evidence in favor of their authenticity, which can be coupled with the external evidence offered by the dialectal parallels.

8. Intermediate results

The description of the attestations collected from *kalām al-'arab* carried out here assesses the historical reality of the plural of paucity and the diminutive in noun plural marking only in part.

Regarding the first object of study, as schematized in Table 2 above, such a description elucidates the form of the *basic* plural of paucity, offering a tripartite classification into broken, masculine, and feminine sound plurals of paucity: e.g., *'aklub*, *jafanāt* (or *tamarāt*), N-*ūna* in 13., 14., 15. By contrast, this description does not contribute to a better understanding of the meaning of the *basic* plural of paucity. The latter is said by Sībawayhi (A) to express [SOME] in conjunction with [MANY] and (B), under certain conditions (*fī l-aṣl*), to express [SOME] to the exclusion of [MANY], i.e., to be genuinely paucal. However, only Sībawayhi's assertion in (A) finds confirmation in dialectal data.

Turning to the *diminutivized* plural of paucity, the description of the attestations collected from *kalām al-'arab* carried out here partly clarifies its meaning, only in the case of the diminutivized

feminine sound plural of paucity, e.g., *jufaynāt* 'some bowls.' The latter is said by Sībawayhi to convey *a genuinely paucal meaning* (i.e., [SOME] to the exclusion of [MANY]), rather than denoting smallness, and his assertion is confirmed by dialectal data, especially when this kind of diminutivized plural of paucity ultimately derives from a collective with collection-semantics, notably *tmērāt* in 14.

Regarding the second object of study, as schematized in 21., 22. above, the description of the attestations collected from *kalām al-'arab* carried out here clarifies that the *diminutive bears no intrinsic meaning*, performing instead a doubling function: it doubles a meaning already observed in its environment, i.e., in the basic collective or plural to which it is added. Specifically for noun plural marking, the diminutive doubles and hence 'indirectly' conveys a paucal meaning, i.e., [SOME] to the exclusion of [MANY]. The diminutive, along with its doubling function, removes semantic ambiguity: e.g., while *jafanāt* semantically oscillates between [SOME] and [MANY], *jufaynāt* unambiguously expresses [SOME].

Finally, the description of the attestations collected from *kalām al-'arab* carried out here brings to light two kinds of linguistic materials that are partly related to the two topics under study and have received little or no attention in Arab(ic) linguistics. The first kind of linguistic material is a diminutive performing a doubling function in noun singular marking, in ethnonyms such as *'ubadiyy* 'a man from 'Abīda.' In this data, *.u.a(y).* effectively doubles the feature [ONE] already conveyed by *iyy*. The second kind of linguistic material is a collective conveying a genuinely paucal meaning, such as *dhawd* '3-to-10 she-camels' and *rahṭ* '3-to-10 people' (Section 7.1.). Interestingly, it is precisely the paucal meaning of *dhawd* and *rahṭ* that allows for their countability, which is not possible in traditionally recognized non-paucal collectives.

In sum, the description of the attestations of *kalām al-'arab* collected here allows for a better understanding of the meaning of the diminutive in noun plural marking, but it is not particularly revealing regarding the meaning of the plural of paucity, except for the diminutivized feminine sound plural.

The remaining kinds of plural of paucity, namely the basic and diminutivized broken plural and the masculine sound plural, as well as the basic feminine sound plural, require further semantic investigation. In particular, dialectal data offers no semantic evidence to assess the historical reality of the paucal meaning that Sībawayhi ascribes to them under certain conditions: see his expression *fī l-aṣl* 'in principle.' In this regard, the question also remains *why* Sībawayhi assigned (under certain conditions) paucal meaning to the plural of paucity.

To assess the historical reality of the paucal meaning in the case of the plural of paucity, a different kind of semantic evidence should be adduced, deriving from a distributional study that also considers

poorly known features of the plural of paucity, such as its collection-semantics and the status of the inherent plural (Section 3.1.). To the extent that the diminutive is part of some kinds of plural of paucity whose meaning is unclear, namely the diminutivized broken and masculine sound plurals, it should be included in a distributional study of this sort.

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New insights on infixed *-an*(*n*)*-* in Iraqi Arabic dialects

Qasim Hassan

In the few studies conducted so far on infixed *-an*(*n*)*-* in Iraqi Arabic, only a small area in southern Iraq was explored. Ingham, in his pioneer research on south Iraqi Arabic, considers it a characteristic feature of the dialects spoken by the dwellers of the marshy and rural areas in southern Iraq. This point of view has been widely adopted in subsequent research dealing with this infix. However, much is yet to be investigated concerning its possible presence in dialect areas other than the southern one. In this paper, I will first argue that infixed *-an*(*n*)*-* is not exclusive for the so-called *southern continuum*, to follow Ingham's terminology, but is a regular idiosyncrasy throughout the *šrūgi*-dialectal area; second, I will show that this infix has crept into the remote *qəltu-* and *gələt-*dialects outside the *šrūgi*-area.

1. Introduction

To date, there exists little research on infixed *-an*(*n*)*-* in Iraqi Arabic (INF, henceforth), and if existent, then, most often, only in connection with the geographic origin and distribution of the participial infix in Eastern Arabia (Wilmsen and Al Muhairi 2020; Holes 2016, 2011; Ingham 2000, among others). As regards its geographic distribution in Iraq, INF is characteristic for the *šrūgi*-dialectal area, with the majority of population following the Shiʿi faith of Islam, and thereby being an isogloss separating their dialects from the other *gələt*-dialects spoken overwhelmingly by Sunni-Muslims in the non-*šrūgi*-dialectal area.[1]

    Although there is no certainty about the origin of INF in *šrūgi*-Arabic (Wilmsen and Al Muhairi 2020: 287; Holes 2016: 22-23), the sectarian-based split of the *gələt*-dialects just introduced may tell us

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[1] The *šrūgi*-dialectal area refers to all *gələt*-dialects spoken in southern Iraq and the Middle Euphrates area, whereas the non-*šrūgi* one includes only the *gələt*-dialects in the northern and western parts of the country. For more details on the split of the *gələt*-dialects into *šrūgi*- and non-*šrūgi*, see Hassan (2020; 2021).

something about it. One would consequently assume that INF may be a vestige of a long-standing historical and religious ties of the Shiʿi population in Iraq with that in Baḥrain and in the eastern province in Saudi Arabia. It should also borne in mind the frequent migratory movements of the tribes from Eastern Arabia to southern Iraq (Holes 2016: 6; 2011: 86, 92). Nowadays, some whole Shiʿi tribes and families in the *šrūgi*-area claim descent from Baḥrain, and some others claim to be indigenous Iraqis who previously settled in Baḥrain and returned to the *šrūgi*-area some centuries later, but some remained.

Putting aside the demographic and sectarian aspects, Ingham (2007: 575; 2000: 127) considers it a contraction of the first person pronoun typical for south Iraqi Arabic. Since then, this kind of infixes has been considered an exclusive characteristic feature of the dialects spoken in southern Iraq (Wilmsen and Al Muhairi 2020: 287; Holes 2016: 23, etc.) and nothing has been hazarded on its possible presence in the other parts of the *šrūgi*-dialectal area, and possibly elsewhere in Iraq. The present paper gives a contribution in this direction by providing new insights on its geographic distribution within the *šrūgi*-dialectal area; light will also be thrown on its introduction into dialects outside the *šrūgi*-area. The material used throughout this paper is mainly based on the author's knowledge of his own speech communities in both *šrūgi*- and non-*šrūgi*-dialectal areas.

2. Characteristic features of INF in Iraqi Arabic

INF exhibits certain characteristic features that merit particular consideration. Below, I will briefly demonstrate these features through examples from the colloquial speech in the *šrūgi*-dialectal area. One of its most distinctive features is its occurrence with only imperfective hollow and geminated verbs:

1. *mā-šūf-an   šī*
    NEG-I_see-INF thing
    'I do not see anything.'

2. *aḥibb-an-hum   killiš*
    I_love-INF-3PL.M   a_lot
    'I love them a lot.'

3. *arīd-an   ākil*
    I_want-INF I_eat

'I want to eat.'

4. *abūs-ann-ič*   *ib-ḥalg-ič*
   I_kiss-INF-2SG.F   in_mouth-2SG.F
   'I kiss you on your mouth.'

However, there is no complete paradigm of INF in Iraqi Arabic and it thereby occurs solely in the first person singular. It is also worthy of note that INF is not obligatory in 1.-4. and can be omitted without changing the semantic value of the sentences:

5. *mā-šūf-an*   *šī*   ~   *mā-šūf*   *šī*
   NEG-I_see-INF   thing   NEG-I_see   thing
   'I do not see anything.'

6. *aḥibb-an-hum*   *killiš*   ~   *aḥibb-hum*   *killiš*
   I_love-INF-3.PL.M   a_lot   I_love-3.PL.M   a_lot
   'I love them a lot.'

7. *arīd-an*   *ākil*   ~   *arīd*   *ākil*
   I_want-INF I_eat   I_want I_eat
   'I want to eat.'

8. *abūs-ann-ič*   *ib-ḥalg-ič*   ~   *abūs-ič*   *ib-ḥalg-ič*
   I_kiss-INF-2SG.F. in_mouth-2SG.F   I_kiss-2SG.F in_mouth-2SG.F
   'I kiss you on your mouth.'

Interestingly, INF may also occur in imperfective non-hollow and non-geminated verbs, but only if an object suffix comes directly afterward:

9. *aširb-*(an)*   *aširb-ann-ah*
                         I_drink-INF-3SG.M
                         'I drink it.'

10. *asimʿ-*(an)* *asimʿ-an-ha*

    I_hear-INF-3SG.F

    'I hear her.'

11. *akitl-*(an)* *akitl-ann-ah*

    I_kill-INF-3SG.M

    'I kill him.'

12. *ašikr-*(an)* *ašikr-ann-ah*

    I_thank-INF-3SG.M

    'I thank him.'

Moreover, INF in 9.-12. is omitted in imperfective non-hollow and non-geminated verbs when the verb is negated by the circumfix *mā-...-š*, as in 13.-16. respectively, but it is allowed in negated geminated and hollow verbs, as in 17.-20. below:

13. *mā-šrab-*(an)*-hā-š*

    NEG-I_drink-INF-3SG.F-NEG

    'I do not drink it.'

14. *mā-smaʿ-*(an)*-hū-š*

    NEG-I_hear-INF-3SG.M-NEG

    'I do not hear it/him.'

15. *mā-ktil-*(an)*-hū-š*

    NEG-I_kill-INF-3SG.M-NEG

    'I do not kill him.'

16. *mā-šikr-*(an)*-hū-š*

    NEG-I_thank-INF-3SG.M-NEG

    'I thank him.'

17. *mā-ḏiḷḷ-ann-īš*

    NEG-I_stay-INF-NEG

    'I do not stay.'

18. *mā-šūf-an-hū-š*

    NEG-I_see-INF-3SG.M-NEG

    'I do not see it/him.'

19. *mā-ridd-an-hū-š*

    NEG-I_send back-INF-3SG.M-NEG

    'I do not send it/him back.'

20. *mā-zūr-an-hū-š*

    NEG-I_visit-INF-3SG.M-NEG

    'I do not visit it/him.'

Notably, INF can also occur with or without an object suffix on more than one verb in a sentence (21., 22.):

21. *arīd-an   agūl-an*

    I_want-INF   I_say-INF

    'I would like to say.'

22. *arīd-an   arūḥ-an   aǧīb-an   il-ḥalāl*

    I_want-INF   I_go-INF   I_bring-INF ART-cattle

    'I want to go to bring the cattle.'

3. The geographic distribution of INF in the *šrūgi* dialectal area

This section seeks to show that INF is an inherent feature in the *šrūgi*-dialectal area (Map 1.), and can therefore be easily observed in the everyday speech of everyone in rural and urban areas alike. However, before an attempt is made to explain this, it should be noted that INF is generally considered a rural feature, but nevertheless still common in the speech of urban dwellers with rural backgrounds. Being rural and being thereby stigmatized as being a low and old-fashioned variety of speech, people

of rural origin avoid using it in towns. However, there are still numerous cases where INF is clearly recognizable in the speech of urban dwellers of rural origin despite every effort to switch to urban features.
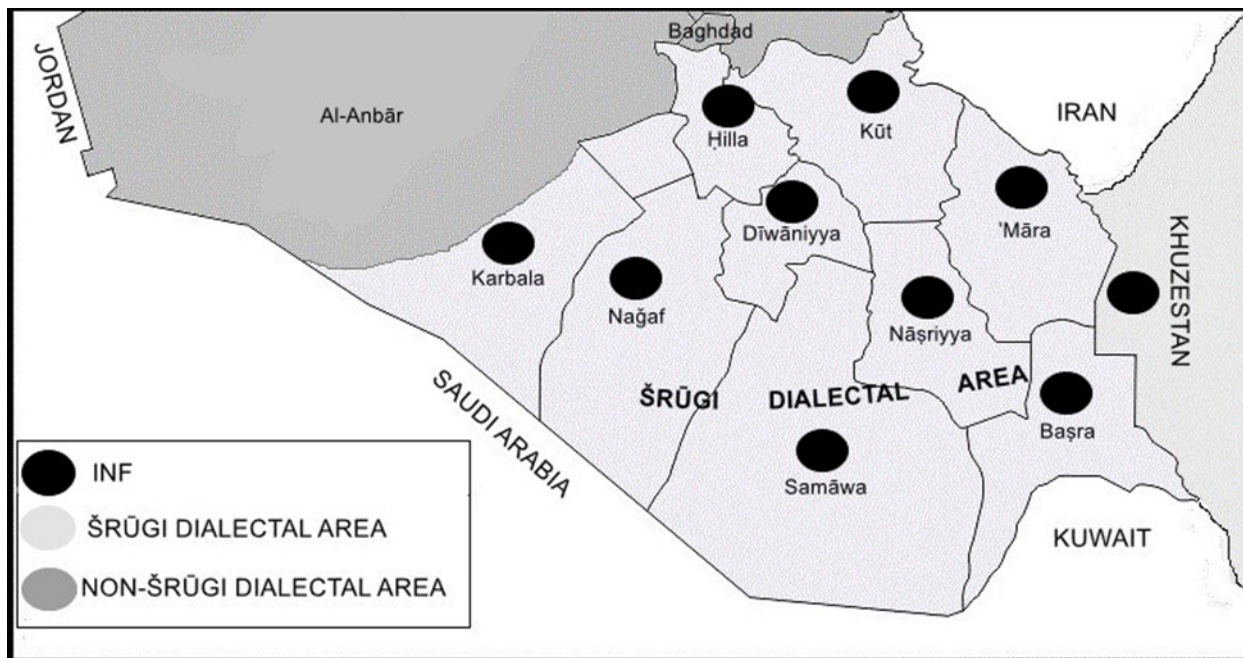
Map 1. The distribution of INF in the šrūgi-*dialectal area*

Below are some selected lines of colloquial poems from different parts of the *šrūgi*-dialectal area, particularly from outside the southern continuum,[2] in which the use of INF is easily observable. It must be emphasized once again, however, that the use of INF in the lines below is not to add a 'southern color' to the poem, but a common practice throughout the entire *šrūgi*-dialectal area. The first three examples (23.-25.) are taken from orally transmitted poetry from the western part of the *šrūgi*-dialectal area beyond Samāwa and Kūt, particularly from the Middle Euphrates area. The other five (26.-30.), on the other hand, from the very southern part of the area:

23. *xāf   imn-agūl-an   āh   tiššammat   iʿdā-y*
    maybe when-I_say-INF ouch rejoice   enemy-1SG
    'My enemy may rejoice my misfortune when I groan.'

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[2] According to Ingham (1994: 93), the so-called southern continuum ends by Kūt on the Tigris and Samāwa on the Euphrates. Hassan (2020, 2021) extended this continuum to include the *šrūgi*-dialects beyond Samāwa and Kūt as far as Baghdad.

24. *ǧēt   ašūf-an   salwit-i   wi-tšūf   ǧarḥ-i   wēn-ah*

    I_came I_see-INF   beloved-1SG and-she_sees wound-1SG   where-3SG.M

    'I came to see my beloved and she sees where my wound is.'

25. *aṣḥa   w-amūt-an   w-antišir*

    I_wake_up and-I_die-INF   and-I_get up

    'I wake up, die, and get up again.'

26. *gaḷb-i   mā-ʾafiṭ-ann-ah*

    heart-1SG   NEG-I_open-INF-3SG.M

    'I do not open my heart.'

27. *aṣīḥ-an   b-ī   wa-ṭird-ann-ah*

    I_shout-INF at-3SG.M   and-I_threw out-INF-3SG.M

    'I shout at him and threw him out.'

28. *xifit   askit   wa-ṭamʿ-ann-ah*

    I_feared I_keep_silent   and-make_greedy-INF-3SG.M

    'I thought I make him greedy when I keep silent.'

29. *ṣāḥib čān   il-i   wa-ḥibb-ann-ah*

    friend he_was to-1SG   and-I_love-INF-3SG.M

    'He was my friend and I liked him.'

30. *yinām   ib-nōmt-i   wa-gʿid   wa-gaʿd-ann-ah*

    he_sleeps in-sleep-1SG   and-I_wake_up and-I_wake_up-INF-3SG.M

    'He sleeps when I sleep, and I wake him up, when I wake up.'

Often enough, INF is used to an extent that it occurs repeatedly at the end of each line of a rhymed poem. The poem below[3] is an example:

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[3] The poem is available (first 32 seconds) at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=P1-fxnWO_Tc.

31. *mā-ṭašr   il-ḥači   w-bi-čfūf-i   alimm-ann-ah*

     NEG-I_scatter ART-speech and-in-hands-1SG I_collect-INF-3SG.M

     '... I do not scatter words, but I collect them with my hands.'

    w-ṣidīǧ-i   aʿātb-a   w-marrāt   aḏimm-ann-ah

     and-friend-1SG I_grumble-3SG.M and-sometimes   I_criticize-INF-3SG.M

     '... and I grumble my friend, and sometimes I criticize him.'

    mūš   ib-bāṭil   ib-maʿrūf awalm-ann-ah

     NEG   in-untruth in-favor   I_agree-INF-3SG.M

     '... I agree with him in good things, not in bad things.'

    kūn-ah   bi-l-xašim   ʿanbar   wa-šimm-ann-ah

     to_be-3SG.M in-ART-nose odor   and-I_smell-INF-3SG.M

     '... May he be amber in the nose, so I can smell it.'

    giddām   iʿrub-ah   w-ṣidgān-ah   ašaym-ann-ah

     in_front_of   relatives-3SG.M and-friends-3SG.M I_praise-INF-3SG.M

     '... I praise him in presence of his relatives and friends.'

In the light of the above, it seems that INF is a regular idiosyncrasy in everyday and poetic speech throughout the entire *šrūgi*-dialectal area, and that its use outside the so-called southern continuum is not an imitation of the poetic conventions of the *šrūgi* poetry.

4. The geographic distribution of INF outside the *šrūgi*-dialectal area

It is worthwhile to point out at the outset that the use of INF outside the *šrūgi*-dialectal area is not new at all. However, unlike the case with the *šrūgi*-area, its use in the non-*šrūgi* one is exclusively limited to oral colloquial poetry.[4] It is in general rather hard to find a colloquial poem without a 'southern poetic

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[4] An exception to this is Wādi Ḥaǧar, a residential quarter on the right bank of the Tigris in Mosul. This quarter has been found in the seventies of the last century to be home to, among others, *šrūgi*-soldiers at a nearby army-training center. Most soldiers and their families preserved their *šrūgi*-features, including INF, and they choose to settle permanently in the quarter, forming

color' outside the *šrūgi*-dialectal area, including the adoption of INF. The first four lines below are from Mosul, a *qəltu*-dialectal area in northern Iraq, the other two are from the non-*šrūgi*-dialectal area in Al-Anbār in western Iraq (Map 2.):

32. *w-agil-l-ak*   *bi-l-'aḥiss-an*   *w-inta*   *hamm*   *gil-l-i*
    and-I_say-to-2SG.M in-ART-I_feel-INF and-you.M too   say-to-1SG
    '...and I tell you what I am feeling, and you tell me too.'

33. *w-iḏā*   *b-gaḷb-ak*   *a'īš-an*   *faqaṭ*   *ya-l-maḥbūb*
    and-if   in-heart-2SG.M I_live-INF only   oh-ART-beloved
    '...and if only I live in your heart, oh my beloved.'

34. *w-yiḏḏāhar*   *arīd-ann-ah*   *'la-rūḥ-ah*
    and-he_protests I_want-INF-3SG.M   against-soul-3SG.M
   '...and I want him to protest against himself.'

35. *gilit-l-ak*   *rāḥ*   *arūḥ-an*
    I_said-to-2SG.M he_went   I_leave-INF
    '...I said to you that I am leaving.'

36. *w-'al*   *gā'*   *aḏill-an*   *činit*
    and-on ground I_remain-INF I_was
    '...and I remained on the ground.'

37. *amūt-an*   *lō*   *šifit*   *diğla*   *bilā*   *māy*
    I_die-INF   when I_saw Tigris   without water
    '...and I die when I see the Tigris without water.'

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a *Sprachinsel* surrounded by *qəltu*-communities. However, over time, INF has almost disappeared in this area for being socially stigmatized as a *šrūgi*-feature.
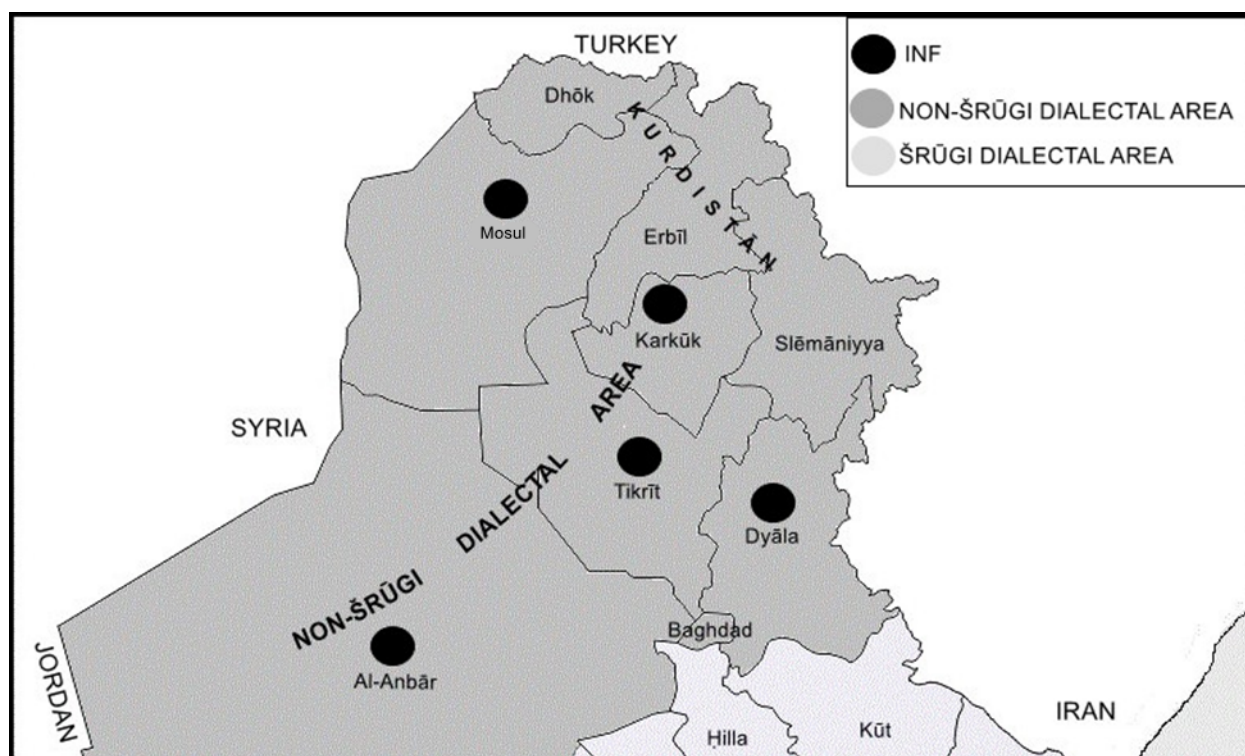
*Map 2. The distribution of INF in the non-*šrūgi *dialectal area.*

More than this, colloquial poets in the non-*šrūgi* dialectal area, be they *gələt-* or *qəltu*-speakers, have adopted the native *šrūgi*-poetic recitation forms and body movements, which are usually central to oral performance.

5. Conclusion

One purpose of this paper is to provide a clear picture of the geographic distribution of INF in Iraqi Arabic. As shown by the examples given in this paper, INF is not exclusive to the southern part of the *šrūgi*-dialectal area, as supposed by Ingham, but also to all areas where *šrūgi*-Arabic is spoken. A further purpose is to ascertain the use of this infix outside the *šrūgi*-dialectal area, namely in *qəltu-* and *gələt-* colloquial poetry in western and northern Iraq. It is in this regard worthwhile to note that, beside INF, a number of other *šrūgi*-features have recently been entered into the colloquial poetry outside the *šrūgi*-dialectal area. Among these features are the use of the discontinuous negation with *mā-...-š*, such as in *mā-šifithū-š* 'I did not see him' and the employment of the palatal approximant /y/, which is usually pronounced as the voiced affricate /ǧ/ in this area.

Abbreviations

ART	Article
F	Feminine
INF	Infix
M	Masculine
NEG	Negative
PL	Plural
SG	Singular

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Ibn Baṭṭūṭa's "Prayer of Damascus"
A window on to Damascus in the hell of the Black Death
(Part Two)[1]

Claudia Maria Tresso

Ibn Baṭṭūṭa's famous *Riḥla* [(Chronicle of) *Travels*] is probably the only work of medieval travel literature whose protagonist claims to have personally witnessed the plague pandemic known as the Black Death, which ravaged the Mediterranean world between 1347-1350 (and continued in subsequent waves). The passages describing the scourge include the story of a rogatory – a multi-religious prayer held in Damascus in July 1348. This is probably the most often mentioned passage of the *Riḥla*, the most quoted in the studies on the Black Death in the Middle East, as well in those on relations between religious groups in the Mamluk empire. Nevertheless, to this day it has not yet been the subject of in-depth analysis. This article is an endeavour to contribute to both the studies on Ibn Baṭṭūṭa's *Riḥla* and the Black Death by analysing the story of the Damascus prayer in its historical context and literary aspects, i.e., by answering the questions: how does the story fit into the climate of the pandemic in general and into Ibn Baṭṭūṭa's *Riḥla* in particular? What are its lexical and narrative characteristics? Moving from the story to the narrated event leads to the question on relations between the different religious groups that took part in the rite. Moreover, how did Islamic scholars interpret the prayer gathering? Since the *Riḥla* is not a chronicle but a narrative work, another question arises: to what extent is its information reliable? The answer will be found by comparing it with the main Middle Eastern Arabic sources of the 14th and 15th centuries, which are mostly Chronicle texts. The concluding paragraph investigates whether the story of the Damascus prayer derives from Ibn Baṭṭūṭa's personal testimony, as he claims in the *Riḥla*, or whether he (and/or the editor of the work, Ibn Juzayy) might have taken the information from other sources.

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[1] Part One was published in *Kervan* 25/1 (Tresso 2021).

7. The supplication of the sons of Moses: Muslims and *dhimmī* in Mamluk times

The prayer gathering described in the *Riḥla* takes place when Damascus has just been hit by the pandemic,[2] which starting from Alexandria (where it had now reached its peak)[3] has begun to rage in Cairo and in various cities in the Middle East. The news coming from the places already affected is terrifying and in Damascus "people are afraid that the plague will come to them too."[4]

At the beginning of *Rabīʿ I* of 749 (early June 1348) the lieutenant of the Mamluk Sultan in Gaza informs Arghūn Shāh, his counterpart in Damascus, that in his jurisdiction, in just one month, from the 10th of *Muḥarram* (10 April) to the 10th of *Ṣafar* (10 May), the plague caused more than 20,000 deaths.[5] From that day on, prayers and supplications multiply in Damascus to implore the end of the scourge, but by the end of July, there have probably already been many victims, and fear continues to grow. It is perhaps no coincidence, therefore, that IB concludes the story of this event with a powerful evocative image. In the background, once the prayer is completed, a "white minaret" (*manāra bayḍāʾ*) stands out. It is the so-called *Miʾdhanat ʿĪsā* (Minaret of Jesus) of the Umayyad Mosque, an item that literally looms over the scene not only because of its height (77 metres) – which makes it the tallest of the three minarets of the Great Mosque – but also because of the end-of-the-world vision that it evokes. A famous *ḥadīth* reported by Muslim – though not quoted in the *Riḥla* – states that when that day comes, the Antichrist (*al-Masīḥ al-Dajjāl*) will appear and "God would send the Messiah (*al-Masīḥ*) son of Mary and he will descend near the White Minaret on the east side of Damascus […], will look for the Antichrist

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[2] The plague is attested in Damascus in early June by Ibn Kathīr, who reports that on the 7th of *Rabīʿ I* (5 June) people gathered to recite al-Bukhārī's collection of *ḥadīth* and ask God to ward off the plague (Ibn Kathīr, *al-Bidāya*, vol. 16, 341; for more information on the Black Death in Ibn Kathīr's work, see Mirza 2020a).

[3] The peak of deaths in Alexandria was probably reached at the beginning of 749, i.e., in the spring of 1348, when the plague may have killed 50,000 people – which out of an estimated 105,000 inhabitants, represents 48% of the population. Borsch and Sabraa (2017: 68-70) also take into account IB, who reports that in Alexandria there were 1,080 dead per day (al-Tāzī IV: 181; Gibb and Beckingham IV: 919-920 [EP 323]).

[4] Ibn Kathīr (2010, vol. 16: 341), where the author reports that in Damascus the news came that the majority of the population had died in Cyprus, and that prayers had begun (see Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba 1994, vol. 1: 542, who quotes him). On the "Panic in Damascus" in those days see Mirza (2020a). On the fear, resignation and confusion among the population, especially in Cairo, during the Black Death and the subsequent waves of plague, see Shoshan (2002: 4-8) and Borsch and Sabraa (2017: 77-78). In Europe, too, there was enormous consternation, and to prevent mass panic, the authorities often went so far as to ban both public mourning and the ringing of bells, except for Sunday masses (Biraben 1976: 99-100).

[5] Al-Maqrīzī 1971, vol. 4: 82, where the author adds that the lieutenant of Gaza had run away, leaving a deserted city (see Ibn Taghrī Birdī 1979, vol. 10: 198, who quotes him). IB relates that at the beginning of June 1348, in Gaza, there were more than 1,000 victims a day – and later, perhaps more accurately, he would say 1,100 (al-Tāzī IV: 179 and 180; Gibb and Beckingham IV: 918 and 920 [EP 320 and 322]).

until he finds him and kills him at the gate of Lod."[6] This is an eschatological reference which, although in Islam there are not figures like the "horsemen of the Apocalypse," at that time encapsulated the idea of many that the end of the world was nigh.[7] Furthermore, popular religiosity still preserves an ancient legend according to which, at the end of time, this event will hail the reconciliation between Christians, Jews and Muslims, on that very same spot.[8] It is perhaps also for this reason that the Minaret is the background to the description of their common prayer on that anguished Friday at the end of July, when the end of the world seemed close at hand.

This episode is all the more interesting when we study European Christian society in that period, already imbued with anti-Semitism as well as serious social tensions.[9] With most of the commercial and financial sectors in the hands of the Jews, it was their own society which experienced persecution. Thousands of Jews were accused of living in sin, or, as in the past, of poisoning the water fountains to spread the disease, thus provoking the wrath of God that fell upon men with the arrows of the plague. Whatever the accusation, they were burned alive (and their properties confiscated) first in the Dauphiné, Provence and other regions of France, then in Catalonia, Aragon, Switzerland, Savoy, Germany, Belgium, Luxembourg and Austria. The attempts of many rulers to re-establish social order by preventing the massacres were of little or no use, nor were the two bulls, papal declarations, that the current Pope Clement VI, in exile in Avignon, issued on 5 July and 26 September 1349 reiterating that the plague did not distinguish between Christian and Jew.[10] On the contrary, as had happened before, in several cases the accusation was extended to the Muslims of Spain, who were accused of having convinced the Jews to ally with them to exterminate European Christians.[11]

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[6] Muslim 2014, vol. 7: 338 (*ḥadīth* 3057). The same *ḥadīth* is related by al-Tirmidhī, *Jāmiʿ*, 834-835 (*ḥadīth* 2394 (2244); Abū Dāwud 2014: 474 (*ḥadīth* 4273); Ibn Mājah 2009: 708-709 (*ḥadīth* 4075). This is why the minaret is also called "the minaret of Jesus" (*manārat ʿĪsā*]) As for *al-Masīḥ al-Dajjāl* (the False/Deceiving Messiah), an eschatological Islamic figure that may be compared to the Antichrist, see Cook (2002: 92-136) and Tottoli (2002).

[7] In chroniclers' texts, the arrival of the plague is sometimes preceded by the rising of a mighty wind and/or a furious swell, which leads people to believe that the Hour (of the end of the world) has come. See al-Maqrīzī (1971, vol. 4: 85; Ibn Taghrī Birdī 1979, vol. 10: 203, who quotes him); Ibn Abī Ḥajala (fol. 76a); Ibn Ḥajar (1993a: 237). For an analysis of disasters as signs of Doomsday in Islam see Akasoy (2007: 393-396). In any case, there have been no Messianic Muslim movements that have associated the Black Death with the end of the world (Dols 1974b: 283-284; Dols 1977: 294; Borsch and Sabraa 2017: 84-85).

[8] Cammelli (2005: 7). Another example of good interreligious relations in Syria mentioned in IB's *Riḥla* is the hospitality given to Muslims by the Christian monks of an unidentified monastery near Latakia (al-Tāzī I: 293-294; Gibb I: 115 [EP 183]).

[9] See, among others, Dols (1974b); Melhaoui (1997); Hanska (2002); Stearns (2009); Speziale (2016).

[10] The text of the second *bull*, translated into English, can be consulted in Aberth (2005: 158-159), as well as other documents of the time relating to these pogroms.

[11] Moreover, the accusation of poisoning water was opposed to the most widespread theories of the time, which attributed the contagion to the unhealthy air – and not to the water. But it was a repetition of what had happened in 1321 with "the

As for the *Dār al-Islām* (the House of Islam), i.e. those territories where the sovereigns, and therefore the institutions and the Law (and possibly the majority of the population) were Muslim,[12] from the beginning it had included more or less large communities of other religions, mostly monotheistic and revealed religions. First and foremost Jews and Christians, therefore, but also Samaritans, Zoroastrians and other groups, depending on places and times, all lived under the protection (*dhimma*) of Muslims (hence they were called *dhimmī*), in return for which they paid a special tax. They were also called *ahl al-dhimma* (the people of the *dhimma*) or *ahl al-Kitāb* (the people of the Book), if they had Holy Texts revealed by God before the Quran. They enjoyed better conditions than other non-Muslim subjects and could organise themselves in communities with their own rules in certain realms such as testamentary and family law. However, they had limited rights and duties as compared with Muslims, and at certain times and places had to wear a distinctive sign.[13] This did not prevent occasional serious episodes of intolerance towards them and scholars agree that under the Mamluks the *dhimmī*, and in particular Christians, were subject to discrimination and abuse. But during the Black Death, there is no evidence of groups or people who, according to their religious affiliation, were held responsible for the fury of the pandemic.[14] On the contrary, in this period the presence of

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lepers' plot," when in France, starting in Périgueux, in the south-western region, and then in Aquitaine and elsewhere, hundreds of lepers were tortured and executed on the charge of poisoning the waters at the instigation of the Jews – who in turn had been pushed by the Muslim king of Granada (and a mythical "Sultan of Babylon") – in order to spread their own disease and make Christianity sick or die. At that time, the King of France, Philip V, also promulgated an edict in Poitiers, accusing the lepers of "injuring his majesty." On the persecution of lepers and religious minorities in Europe before and during the Black Death, see among others Biraben (1975: 57-63: "Les poursuites contre les juifs et les lépreux"); Brossollet (1984: 62-63); Ginzburg (1989: 5-35: "Lebbrosi, ebrei e musulmani," and 36-42); Hanska (2002: 102-105: "Scapegoats and Political Explanations"); Cohn (2007); Nirenberg (2015: 93-125: "Lepers, Jews, Muslim and Poison in the Crown;" and 231-259: "Epilogue. The Black Death and Beyond"), where the massacres of the Jewish population and the reasons for them are analysed with particular attention in the kingdoms of Valencia and Aragon.

[12] For the complex notion of *Dār al-islām* in medieval times, Calasso (2011: 294-295) speaks of "a notion in which a political-territorial dimension and a legal-religious dimension are combined, but to which is entrusted, perhaps before anything else, the expression of the sense of belonging to a unitary reality, of a collective identity."

[13] In the *Riḥla*, for example, we found that in Lādhiq (ancient Laodicea) the men of *ahl al-dhimma* wore "a tall red or white cap" and women "a big turban" (al-Tāzī II: 169; Gibb II: 425 [EP 272]). On the condition of *ahl al-dhimma* in Islamic land see Tritton (1930: 115-126) and Cl. Cahen in *EI2*, s.v. *dhimma*. In particular, among others, see for the Christians Frassetto (2019), for the Jews Lewis (1984) and for the Samaritans, Boušek (2018), where on pp. 124-125 there is the story of the prayer of Damascus as related by Ibn Kathīr (see below).

[14] Dols cites an anti-Christian pamphlet written by the Egyptian al-Asnawī (d. 772/1370) and analysed by Perlmann, where there is news of an incendiary act perpetrated in Syria against Christians at the beginning of the first year of the Black Death (749/1348-1349), but agrees with the author that there is no connection between the events (Perlmann 1942: 854-855 and Dols 1977: 296, note 44). See also Congourdeau and Melhaoui (2001: 96, note 7); Melhaoui (2005: 101-102); Mirza (2020b), who states that the common prayer of Damascus "focused the community on praying to God to end the calamity rather than blaming one segment of the community for its occurrence."

dhimmī is attested not only in the religious rites that we are examining, but also in public secular events.[15] Finally, it should be noted that not even in Byzantium, the capital of Eastern Christianity, was any sect, including the Jews, ever held responsible for the scourge.[16] The history of the tensions that characterized economic and social relations between Christians and Jews in Europe probably requires greater attention.

8. Religious and juridical aspects of the multi-religious prayer to ward off the plague

The Damascus prayer was unusual and not a common occurrence, even in *Dār al-Islām*. This is confirmed when two contemporary historians, reporting the same event, conclude by commenting: *Kāna yawman mashhūdan* [It was a memorable day].[17] IB also speaks of a "remarkable [*yuʕjabu minhu*]" event. Among their contemporaries, many felt the same.

As already mentioned in the first part of this article (Tresso 2021: 149), there are three main types of prayers in Islam: the canonical *ṣalāt* which is essentially an act of worship and praise to God, the *duʕāʔ* which is a prayer of supplication and imploration, and the *dhikr*, practised in Sufi circles, which consists of "mentioning," with incessant repetition, one or more words of praise and invocation to God.[18] In times of the plague, nobody criticised worshipping and praising God with the *ṣalāt*, but many wondered whether or not it was lawful to invoke and plead with the Most High to ward off the plague. Being the only Creator, in His inscrutable designs, God also creates evil, and man's task is to conform to His *Qadar* [Decree] with *ṣabr* [acceptance]. In addition to this, since *duʕāʔ* is usually understood as an individual act, jurists wondered whether it was lawful to meet for this purpose [*al-ijtimāʕ li-l-duʕāʔ*].[19]

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[15] In the Mamluk period, both in Damascus and Cairo, the presence of representatives of the Christian and Jewish communities (sometimes with their Holy Books in hand) is documented at institutional feasts: see, among others, the events that took place in Damascus for the return to the throne of Sultan Barqūq in 729/1390 (Frenkel 2007: 46-47) and the celebrations for the end of *Ramaḍān* in Cairo in 1515 (Shoshan 2002: 75).

[16] See the paper by Congourdeau and Melhaoui (2001, especially 96, note 7).

[17] The expression is used by Ibn Kathīr (2010, vol. 16: 342; see Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba 1994, vol. 1: 547, who quotes him) and Ibn Abī Ḥajala (fol. 76a): Ibn Kathīr designates the epidemic by the term *wabāʔ*, while Ibn Abī Ḥajala, as IB, uses *ṭāʕūn*. For the analysis of Damascus prayer gathering in the chronicle of Ibn Kathīr, see Mirza (2020a, 2020b).

[18] *EIʔ²*, G. Monnot s.v. *Ṣalāt*, L. Gardet ss.vv. *Duʕāʔ* and *Dhikr*.

[19] Ibn Ḥajar dedicates the first chapter of the fifth part of his work to this theme, in which he reports several opinions on whether or not the *duʕāʔ*, individual or collective, is lawful on the occasion of the plague (*Hal yushraʕu al-duʕāʔ bi-rafʕihi aw lā?* [Is it lawful or not to pray to ward it (: the plague) off?]); Ibn Ḥajar (1993a: 195-207). Other opinions of Islamic jurists on this issue can be found in Ibn Iyās (1984, vol. 1: 531). Among modern scholars, see Sublet (1971: 147-149) and Mirza (2020b).

However, Islam also provides for some common prayers to be held in particular circumstances (such as the two great annual festivities, as well as eclipses, funerals, etc.) and these include a solemn rogatory rite called "begging for water" [*istisqāʾ*] in case of drought. The Quran, in fact, twice mentions the episode in which Moses, in the desert, "begged for water" [*istasqā*] for his people[20] and a series of *ḥadīth* attest that on several occasions Muḥammad also asked God to let the rain fall.[21] The same texts reports that the pleas of both were received by the Most High. Therefore, from the early days of Islam, the invocation of water/rain entered the list of "lawful" prayers in times of drought and even if the prayer could be said individually – following the model of Moses' and the Prophet's prayers – the practice of praying in common soon took hold, and the jurists codified its precise rules. Following the Prophet's example, the prayer gathering must be preceded by three days of fasting, and then, after the *ṣalāt al-ṣubḥ* [the prayer of dawn], the faithful go together on foot to an open-air oratory, generally on the outskirts of the city, where the supplication takes place. The presence of high dignitaries is recommended and they, like the all other faithful, must wear plain clothing as a sign of humility.[22] Women, minors and *dhimmī* may participate in the rite, although with some restrictions.[23] Evidence of this rite can be found in some Arab Christian sources too: a rogatory prayer for the rain is mentioned in the Annals that the Melkite Patriarch of Alexandria, Eutychius, wrote in Arabic in the 10th century. In this work he reports that in the year 290/903 "the [level] of the Nile fell to thirteen cubits and two fingers, and Muslims, Christians and Jews went out to beg for rain."[24] The similarities between the rite

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[20] Qur 2, 60 and Qur 7, 160: God gave orders to Moses to strike the rock with his staff and twelve springs gushed forth from it: one for each tribe of Israel. The episode is also related in the Bible (Ex 17, 1-7 and Nm 20, 1-11).

[21] According to a *ḥadīth*, "The Prophet never raised his hands for any invocation except for that of the *istisqāʾ*" (al-Bukhārī 2014, vol. 2: 97 [*ḥadīth* 1040]). Al-Bukhārī dedicates a whole chapter of his work to this prayer (al-Bukhārī 2014, vol. 2: 79-102 [*ḥadīth* 1015-1048], *Bāb al-istisqāʾ wa-khurūj al-nabī fī al-istisqāʾ* [The book of the (prayer) of *istisqāʾ* and the Prophet's going out to perform it].

[22] And also to show God their suffering, in order to arouse His mercy (Melhaoui 1997: 108).

[23] According to Islamic legislation, children had to understand the canonical prayer, only women who were ʿajāʾiz ("elderly," see note 39) were allowed to participate and the faithful of other religions were supposed to pray at the same time as Muslims, but in a separate place. On these and other legal aspects of *istisqāʾ* prayer, see the manual of maliki law by Khalīl Ibn Isḥāq al-Jundī (d. 1365) edited by Guidi and Santillana (1919, vol. 1: 139-140; XIX/63); Melhaoui (1997: 108-109 and *passim*), where the slight differences between the four Sunni legal schools are illustrated; Talmon-Heller (2007: 263). Ibn Kathīr records an *istisqāʾ* prayer in Damascus 30 years before the Black Death, when "the problem was not a plague but rather an intense drought" (quoted by Mirza 2020b). In the same paper, Mirza also seems to suggest that, at least in the case of plague, the prayer of *istisqāʾ* is always preceded by the reading of the collection of *ḥadīth* by al-Bukhārī, but I have not found similar information in other sources, while the reading of al-Bukhārī is attested on far more occasions than the prayer for rain and independently of it: see note 50.

[24] However, that time the rite was unsuccessful: "But the level of the Nile did not increase," concludes the Patriarch, "and the water continued to flow" (Cheikho *et al.* 1906: 74). The episode is quoted in Piccirillo (2008: 18), together with IB's story of the prayer of Damascus. Other rites performed in Egypt by Muslims, Christians, Jews and Samaritans from the early times of Islam

"for the water" and the one described by IB are evident, and given the eyewitness accounts of other prayers that took place during the years of the Black Death on this model, it can be deduced that, although with some hesitation and criticism, at least in Damascus and Cairo, the idea prevailed that the plague could be equated to the scourge of drought.[25]

On close examination, IB explains neither the nature nor the purpose of this prayer, but both the context in which it takes place and the repetition of the verbs *taḍarraʿa* [to implore] and *dāʿā* [to invoke, to supplicate], as well as the final comment ("God Most High lightened their affliction...") make it clear that it was a prayer of supplication. This, moreover, is the character of the rites related in the medieval Muslim chronicles, where the prayers are explicitly defined as "a supplication to ward off the epidemic" [*duʿāʾ li-rafʿ al-wabāʾ*]. In Islam, there are no reports of prayers of atonement or penance as there were in the Christian sphere,[26] just as there were no movements that preached penance and mortification similar to that of the flagellants, already widespread in Europe in the second half of the 13th century, and invigorated by the outbreak of the Black Death.[27] In Christianity, the presence of original sin brought about the idea that the Black Death was a punishment sent by God to man, who is

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to propitiate the floods of the Nile and safeguard the prosperity of the territory are cited by Patrizi (2019: 74-81: "The rites shared between Christians and Muslims in Islamic times").

[25] For adapting the plea for rain to the plea to ward off the plague during the Black Death in Damascus and Cairo see Sublet (1971: 148); Dols (1977: 248); Melhaoui (1997); Mirza (2020a, 2020b), who notes that these gatherings were criticised especially when they "started to be replicated in other parts of the Empire, such as Cairo." Ibn Ḥajar, for example, in the aforementioned chapter dedicated to the lawfulness of the rogatory prayer on the occasion of the plague, does not condemn it, but referring explicitly to the prayer of Damascus (and to another similar one held in Cairo in 833/1430), states that adapting the rite of prayer for water to the plague is a *bidʿa* (innovation) (Ibn Ḥajar 1993a: 204). The term *bidʿa* describes a practice or belief which is not present in the Quran or in the Prophet's Tradition, so that – as with all other actions carried out by man – it can be judged in various ways: from "recommended" (*mandūb*) to "illicit" (*muḥarram*), but it often sounds like a synonym for "heresy" (see J. Robson in *EI²*, s.v. *bidʿa*). For other Islamic rites adapted to the plague, see below and notes 50 and 51. In the Christian area as well, prayers and rites for other disasters and catastrophes were adapted to the Black Death, see among others Hanska (2002: 68-78 and *passim*).

[26] On prayers, masses, processions, relics, etc. in Christian Europe, see among others Biraben (1976: 62-84), Dols (1974b: 272-275), Hanska (2002: 54-60 and *passim*), Stearns (2009: 4-5). The lack of Christian and Jewish sources on both their own prayers and the multi-religious ones in the *Dār al-Islām* during the Black Death should be noted. As for Christians, not even the detailed *Croniche di Terra Santa* [Chronicles of the Holy Land] by Golubovich (1906-1927) report any prayers during the plague. For the reactions of Christians and Muslims of Byzantium at the time of the first plague pandemic, or "Justinian's plague" (mid-5th-7th century), see Congourdeau and Melhaoui (2001). For a comparative study on Muslim, Christian and Jewish responses to the Black Death, see Stearns (2009).

[27] Biraben (1975: 65-71) and related bibliography. Especially because of their anti-Jewish attitudes, the flagellants were threatened with excommunication in the already mentioned *bull* issued by Pope Clement VI in 1349 (Brossollet 1984: 61-62). In this regard, see Dols' critique (Dols 1977: 294, note 37) of Von Kremer (1880: 102), who "uncritically associated the religious fanaticism of the flagellants in Europe with the dervish orders in Muslim society."

born in sin.[28] Conversely, the concept of "original sin" does not exist in Islam,[29] so that the plague was often interpreted as a warning against sin, but the authors tended rather to consider it within an inscrutable divine Design, underlining its "purifying" character, which allowed many to understand it as a *shahāda*, a "martyrdom" that guarantees Paradise for those who die of it.[30]

Despite this, the Arabic sources also testify to a penitent attitude, which led Dols to state that "the Black Death was interpreted, at least in part, as a warning and reproach from God for the communities' moral laxity."[31] As for the sources quoted in this article, in addition to the example cited in the last note about Ibn al-Wardī, Ibn Abī Ḥajala says that in Damascus, when the number of deaths increased, people begged the Most High "asking Him for forgiveness" [*yastaghfirūnaHu*]. Al-Maqrīzī recalls that during the repetition of the Noah sura in the mosques of Damascus, the faithful begged God and "repented of their sins" [*tābū ʿalā dhunūbihim*] – and Ibn Ḥajar, who recounts the same rite, states that on that occasion "people repented" [*ḥaṣala al-nās al-tawba*]. As for Cairo, Ibn Iyās reports a *khuṭba*

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[28] Dols (1974b: 272-275), Brossollet (1984: 54-55), Stearns (2009).

[29] Islam affirms Adam and Eve's original fall from the state of innocence in which God had created them, but concludes that after having driven them out of Eden, God forgave them (Qur 2, 36-37), so that "the idea of an original sin transmitted by Adam to his descendants is absolutely contrary to the teachings of Islam" (Anawati 1970: 39-40).

[30] Sublet (1971: 144-147); Dols (1977: 295-299); Congourdeau and Melhaoui (2001: 104-105); Stearns (2007: 123, note 37); Speziale (2016: 76-81 and *passim*); Stearns (2020a, 2020b). There are many *ḥadīth* in this regard: among them, one is reported in both Muslim's and al-Bukhāri's *al-Ṣaḥīḥ* and in the authoritative collections of al-Tirmidhī and al-Nasāʾī: "Five are regarded as martyrs: they are those who die because of plague, abdominal disease, drowing or falling building and the martyrs in God's cause" (al-Bukhārī 2014, vol. 4: 65 [*ḥadīth* 2846]; Muslim (2014, vol. 5: 240 [*ḥadīth* 1967]); al-Tirmidhī (2011: 519 [*ḥadīth* 1086 (1063)]; al-Nasāʾī (2014: 544 [*ḥadīth* 2054]). This is because the plague "was distinguished from other contagious diseases in the narratives of the early Muslim communities" (Stearns 2020a). Among the medieval authors cited in this article, Ibn Ḥajar dedicates the third chapter of his *Badhl al-māʿūn* (101-134) to this subject [*Fī bayān anna al-ṭāʿūn shahāda li-l-muslimīn* (On the Statement that the Plague is a Martyrdom for Muslims)]; Ibn Iyās (1984, vol. 1: 531) states that the Prophet did not pray "to remove the plague from his community [*umma*], but to draw it upon the faithful to offer them an opportunity for martyrdom." It should be noted that even in Christian Europe, the belief that whoever dies of the plague goes to Paradise was established. In the 7th century, for example, in the third of the *Homeliae Toletane*, the author (possibly Ildefonso or Giuliano of Toledo) promised eternal life to those who died of the plague (Tovar Paz 1993: 387-389), and during the Black Death Pope Clement VI granted general absolution from sins to the faithful who died in the pandemic (Brossollet 1984: 58-59). But as noted by Stearns, these were exceptions and not a widespread idea as it was the case for a long time in the Muslim sphere (Stearns 2009: 4-5).

[31] Dols (1974a: 454, note 65), where the author comments on a passage from Ibn al-Wardī's *Risāla*, that says: "We ask God's forgiveness for our souls' bad inclination; the plague is surely part of His punishment [...] They said: the air's corruption kills. I said: the love of corruption kills" – which does not prevent Ibn al-Wardī, a little further on, from stating "It has been established by our Prophet, God bless him and give him the peace, that the plague-stricken are martyrs. This noble tradition is true and assures martyrdom" (the same passages can be found in Ibn al-Wardī 1997, vol. 2: 340). See also Congourdeau and Melhaoui (2001: 96) and Melhaoui (2005: 31-32), who considers that for Ibn Abī Ḥajala the plague is the result of "disrespect for morality."

[sermon] at al-Azhar Mosque, where the preacher invited the faithful to "repent of their sins" [*al-tawba min dhunūbihim*].[32]

9. Comparison of the figures and information provided by IB with those of the chroniclers

After having introduced and analysed the story of Damascus prayer in the *Riḥla*, we now proceed to compare the figures and information given in the text with those of the most important Middle Eastern Arab chroniclers of the 14th and 15th centuries. These chroniclers describe the same or similar prayers which they have directly witnessed or read about in other works.[33]

The Damascus prayer gathering is recorded by two chroniclers who lived at the time of the events, the Syrian Ibn Kathīr (700/1301–774/1373) and the Maghribi (resident in Damascus) Ibn Abī Ḥajala (725/1325–776/1375). The prayer gathering is also mentioned in the later works of the Syrian Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba (779/1377–851/1448), based on the testimony of Ibn Kathīr, and the Egyptian Ibn Ḥajar (773/1372–852/1449), who says that he derives his information from the chronicle of Ibn Abī Ḥajala.[34]

The different versions of the event are very similar, even though the narrative style and pathos which characterize the story in IB's *Riḥla* are not found in the more stringent renditions given by those chroniclers. The latter merely record the event or at most, as in the aforementioned case of Ibn Ḥajar, comment on the lawfulness and outcome of such a prayer gathering.[35] In any case, both the *Riḥla* and the chronicles report that the rite was preceded by a three-day fast that ended on the Friday, when the people of Damascus gathered together and went to a place outside the city where the common prayer was held to beseech God to ward off the plague.

However, the comparison shows some discrepancies. First of all, the problem of dating should be noted. According to the *Riḥla*, the prayer gathering took place at the end of the month of *Rabīʿ II* of 749 and followed a three-day fast that ended on a Thursday. So it is likely that it took place on Friday 27,

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[32] Ibn Abī Ḥajala (fol. 76a); al-Maqrīzī (1971, vol. 4: 85); Ibn Ḥajar (1993a: 238); Ibn Iyās (1984, vol. 1: 531).

[33] The Arabic historical sources on the Black Death (for which see Dols (1977: 320-335, "Appendix 3, The Arabic Manuscript Sources for the History of Plague from the Black Death to the Nineteenth Century")) concern almost exclusively the two centres of the Mamluk sultanate, namely Egypt and, to a lesser extent, Syria, from 1347 to the middle of the 15th century. Moreover, since the chroniclers were all city-dwellers, we should note the lack of similar sources to study the epidemic in rural areas (see Borsch 2005 and Borsch 2014, who analyses the impact of the Black Death on the rural economy of Egypt).

[34] Ibn Kathīr (2010, vol. 16: 342), Ibn Abī Ḥajala (fol. 76a), Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba (1994, vol. 1: 545-547), Ibn Ḥajar (1993a: 237-238). Unless otherwise indicated, the same references also include the other information on the Black Death in Damascus contained in this paragraph.

[35] See note 25. As for the style of the four texts mentioned here, it is to be noted that Ibn Abī Ḥajala was not a historian and in his work he quotes several poems on the plague and uses both verse and rhymed prose [*sajʿ*].

which corresponds to 25 July 1348.[36] This is confirmed by the chronicle of Ibn Kathīr, who reports the same event on the same date, but not in those of Ibn Abī Ḥajala, Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba and Ibn Ḥajar, who relate it as being in the previous month, *Rabīʿ I*, i.e. June.[37]

As for the place, Ibn Kathīr, Ibn Abī Ḥajala and Ibn Ḥajar agree that the prayer gathering took place at "al-Qadam" Mosque, while IB calls it "al-Aqdām" and Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba does not name the Mosque, but specifies that the rite took place in "al-Jusūra." However, the two names of the Mosque are still used today and al-Jusūra is the ancient name of the area where this Mosque is located.[38]

Ibn Kathīr confirms the presence of Jews and Christians (*naṣāra*), and adds that there were also Samaritans (*sāmira*), while Ibn Abī Ḥajala, Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba and Ibn Ḥajar speak more generally about the participation of "the people of the *dhimma*." It should also be noted that if we have seen (note 23) that the prayer of *istisqāʾ* includes the rule that the faithful of other religions must pray in a separate place from Muslims, neither the chroniclers, nor IB, claim that the religious groups were separated.

The other chroniclers also relate the presence of notables, elderly and children: regarding the last-mentioned, IB designates them as *ṣighār* [little ones], Ibn Kathīr and Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba use the word *ṣibyān* [young] and Ibn Abī Ḥajala and Ibn Ḥajar talk about *aṭfāl* [children], but there does not seem to be any disagreement in the means of designating "minors" (Abdesselam 1935, *s.v.*).

As to women, whose participation with men in the prayer gathering was as exceptional as that of the *dhimmī*, IB refers to them as *ʾanāth* [females] and *nisāʾ* [women] and also reports the presence of Jewish and Christian women. Ibn Kathīr and Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba designate the women who participated in the gathering (without specifying their religion) as *ʿajāʾiz* (sing. *ʿajūz*) – a word which today corresponds to "elderly/old person" and in the legal lexicon of classical Islam indicated women who are not of childbearing age because they have passed menopause or even, in some cases, because they

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[36] In the second quotation of this same event in the *Riḥla*, moreover, we found that IB had arrived in Damascus the day before, i.e., Thursday (al-Tāzī IV: 179; Gibb and Beckingham IV: 918 [EP 320]).

[37] Ibn Abī Ḥajala says it was the 13th of *Rabīʿ I*, Ibn Ḥajar says the 17th and Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba reports that it took place in the "second decade" of the month. However, it is odd to note that the 13th of *Rabīʿ I* was a Wednesday and the 17th was a Sunday, while the prayer for water, which served as a model for the prayer of Damascus, must take place on a Friday: perhaps they refer to the date of the announcement.

[38] This was the name given to the area near the present al-Daqqāq Mosque (formerly known as Karīm al-Dīn Mosque), in the south-eastern district of Damascus now known as al-Mīdān, not far from al-Qadam Mosque (al-Nuʿaymī 2014: 96). Ibn Taghrī Birdī attests the use of the name in the 15th century citing al-Jusūra as a "place outside Damascus," but without specifying its location (Ibn Taghrī Birdī 1979, vol. 7: 295).

are too young.[39] Finally, neither Ibn Abī Ḥajal nor Ibn Ḥajar mention the presence of Muslim or *dhimmī* women.

IB's *Riḥla* concludes the story of the prayer gathering in an almost triumphant tone saying that "God Most High lightened their affliction" and that in Damascus "the number of deaths in a single day reached a maximum of two thousand." The other chroniclers relate the number of victims without correlating it with the prayer itself while providing partially divergent figures.[40] In the passage immediately following the Damascus prayer, Ibn Kathīr reports that in the month of *Rabīʿ I* (June) the number of deaths in a single day was 100, in the following month 200, and continued to increase until it reached 1,000 (including only those who were taken to the Mosque for the funeral) in the middle of *Jumāda II* (10 September).[41] But in relating these figures he states that "God defended Damascus and preserved it" because, as he repeats twice, the number of victims was not particularly high compared to the number of inhabitants (Ibn Kathīr 2010, vol. 16: 341-342). Ibn Abī Ḥajala speaks of a strong wind that stirred up a great cloud of dust and spread the epidemic even more, and states that from that moment on, the plague continued to rage in Damascus until the beginning of the year 750 (March 1349), claiming 1,000 deaths a day among the population living within its walls.[42] As for Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba, he quotes al-Ḥusaynī who relates 400 victims per day at the beginning and an increase in deaths in the

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[39] The noun *ʿajūz* is one of the so-called *al-asmāʾ al-aḍdād* [opposite nouns]. It refers to the fact of "being unable (to procreate or seduce)," so it indicates a woman both before and after her fertile/seductive age (see Lane 1984, vol. 1, 1930a; Monteil 1960: 211). With specific reference to the *istisqāʾ* prayer, in their edition of Khalīl's *Mukhtaṣir*, Guidi and Santillana (1919, vol. 1: 139 (XIX/63), translate *ʿajāʾiz* as "donne attempate, incapaci di sedurre" [aged women, unable to seduce], and specify that participation of unseductive young women is not recommended. Talmon-Heller (2007: 263) translates "women." Wiet, who translated Ibn Kathīr's narration of the plague into French, suggests "vieillards et vieilles femmes" [old men and old women] (Wiet 1962: 382). I do not agree with Mirza, who translates Ibn Kathīr's two words *shuyūkh wa-ʿajāʾiz* [elderly man and elderly women] with the single word "elderly" and does not mention women in either of his two papers on the prayer gathering of Damascus in the chronicle of Ibn Kathīr (Mirza 2020a and Mirza 2020b): one of the aspects that led Ibn Kathīr to say that it was a "memorable day," was precisely the presence of both women and men!

[40] In the second mention of the prayer, IB's *Riḥla* speaks of 2,400 victims a day (al-Tāzī IV: 179; Gibb and Beckingham IV: 918 [EP 320]). On mortality in Egypt and Syria during the Black Death, and on the various (and often contradictory) estimates related by Arab chroniclers, see Dols (1977: 193-204, "General mortality of the Black Death," and 212-223, "Medieval and Modern Estimates of Mortality caused by the Black Death"); Ayalon (1985) and Borsch and Sabraa (2017).

[41] See also Ibn al-Wardì, who speaks of "1,000 and more" victims per day (Ibn al-Wardī 1997, vol. 2: 339). These same figures are related by the Syrian historian Ibn Ḥabīb al-Ḥalabī (710/1310–778/1377) in a compendium of his work in Latin cited by Ayalon (1985: 4).

[42] According to the most recent studies, during the pandemic, in Damascus there were about 36,000 deaths out of a population which depending on the capacity of the walls and the size of the houses, probably did not exceed 60,000 inhabitants before the Black Death (Borsch and Sabraa 2017: 84-85). Dols takes into account both the massive exodus from the countryside to the capital and the large number of people living outside the walls, and estimates the number of inhabitants as 80,180 (Dols 1977: 203-204).

months of *Rajab* and *Shaʿbān*, i.e. late September – mid-November (Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba 1994, vol. 1: 543). In subsequent pages, he quotes the figures provided by Ibn Kathīr, without considering the impact of these figures on the total population. After describing the ritual, Ibn Ḥajar notes that "the dead increased and the situation only worsened," specifying that "before prayer, it was much less heavy."[43] Then he quotes Ibn Abī Ḥajala. With respect to Ibn Ḥajar, finally, it should be noted that, as we have seen (note 25), he does not hesitate to define the rogatory prayer on the occasion of the plague as a *bidʿa* [(heretical) innovation], and perhaps it is also for this reason that he is the most sceptical about its effectiveness. He is sceptical to the point that not only, as we shall see, does he describe a nefarious outcome for another similar prayer held in Damascus during the Black Death, but he also mentions a third one held in Cairo in 833/1430, during a subsequent wave of the epidemic. Even that prayer did not have the desired effect: on the contrary, Ibn Ḥajar says that "the number of deaths was forty a day and then it increased to a thousand."[44]

Regarding the number of victims of the Black Death in Cairo, the *Riḥla* reports that it was 24,000 per day, without specifying the time of year.[45] Chroniclers agree that the peak in the number of deaths occurred in the months of *Shaʿbān* and *Ramaḍān* (November and December) and speak of figures similar to those provided in the *Riḥla*.[46] Ibn Kathīr relates that "there are those who exaggerate and those who minimise: those who minimise say 11,000 and those who exaggerate say 30,000 per day." The same numbers are related by al-Sakhawī, who quotes Ibn Kathīr and concludes by saying that, according to some, about half of all living beings perished in the Black Death.[47] Ibn Abī Ḥajala speaks of 20,000 dead,

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[43] During the Black Death, prayer gatherings with a large attendance were occasions for contagion, and the problem also affected Europe. In 1350, for example, in order to give comfort to Christians during the epidemic, Pope Clement VI proclaimed a Jubilee Year and granted absolution from Purgatory and access to Paradise to pilgrims who had gone to Rome. The number of participants was very high (possibly 1,200,000 people) and according to the chronicles of the time, only one out of ten survived (Brossollet 1984: 59).

[44] Ibn Ḥajar (1993a: 204); see Mirza (2020b). Other sources also report similar numbers of victims in Damascus: al-Maqrīzī (1971, vol. 4: 85) states that during the month of *Rajab* there were 1,200 deaths per day (see Ibn Taghrī Birdī 1979, vol. 10: 203, who quotes him) and Ibn al-Wardī (1997, vol. 2: 339) speaks of "over 1,000" (but does not specify in which period).

[45] Later in the *Riḥla*, we find that in Cairo the Black Death killed 21,000 people a day (al-Tāzī IV: 181; Gibb and Beckingham IV: 920 [EP 323]).

[46] In addition to the authors cited for the prayer of Damascus, from now on we will also consider the chronicles of the Syrian Ibn al-Wardī (691/1292–749/1349) and the Egyptians al-Maqrīzī (766/1364–845/1442), Ibn Taghrī Birdī (813/1411–874/1470) – of Turkish origin, which repeats almost verbatim the text of al-Maqrīzī, al-Sakhāwī (830/1427–902/1497) and Ibn Iyās (852/1448–930/1524).

[47] Ibn Kathīr (2010, vol. 16: 10 and 342), Al-Sakhāwī (1992, vol. 1: 97). Like some other scholars, al-Sakhāwī also cites a number of animals that were affected by the plague: not only mammals (dogs, cats, camels, dromedaries, donkeys, etc.) but also various types of birds (including ostriches) and fish (see al-Maqrīzī 1971, vol. 4: 81; Ibn Iyās 1984, vol. 1: 530; Ibn Abī Ḥajala, fol. 75b). On animals that died in the pandemic, see Dols (1977: 157-160). For clinical studies on animals that may be affected by the

but adds that according to some it is 25,000 and according to others 27,000 and he goes on to state that in the two months of the peak there were 900,000 victims. Ibn Ḥajar relates the same and quotes Ibn Kathīr and Ibn Abī Ḥajala. Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba (who quotes al-Ḥusaynī) talks about 11,000 deaths and says that others relate more than 20,000, while al-Maqrīzī, Ibn Taghrī Birdī and Ibn Iyās relate that there were 13,800 victims in two days, including only those who were taken to the Mosque for funeral rites. According to them, during the peak months there were 20,000 victims per day and 900,000 funerals took place.[48]

Finally, unlike IB, none of the chroniclers mentioned speaks of the ban on selling cooked food at the market,[49] nor do they mention the white minaret of the Umayyad Mosque, or the ḥadīth which evokes the end of the world.

10. Other prayer gatherings in Damascus and Cairo during the Black Death

The prayer gathering at al-Aqdām Mosque is mentioned among other rites and processions which took place at that time of the tragedy in Damascus to beseech the Most High to ward off the plague. Equally renowned and related by various sources are, in the month of *Rabīʿ I* [June], the already mentioned recitation of al-Bukhārī's *Ṣaḥīḥ* in various mosques in the city[50] and a ritual that took place in the Umayyyad Mosque at the *miḥrāb* called "of the Companions [of the Prophet]," following the fact that

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plague, see among others Christie *et al.* (1980), Chomel *et al.* (1994), Perry and Fetherston (1997: 50-56), Green (2015: 31-34), Varlik (2015: 19). It has been noted that none of the sources, neither Arabic nor Western, mention rats among the animals killed by the Black Death – which is quite surprising, given that rats (thanks to their fleas) are the first victims of the plague bacillus *Yersinia pestis*.

[48] Ibn Abī Ḥajala (fol. 75b), Ibn Ḥajar (1993a: 237), Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba (1994, vol. 1: 543), al-Maqrīzī (1971, vol. 4: 86-87; see Ibn Taghrī Birdī 1979, vol. 10: 207-208, who quotes him), Ibn Iyās (1984, vol. 1: 528). Such a high number of deaths has long been considered improbable by scholars, but it should be noted that Cairo, at the time, had a population estimated at between 250,000 and 500,000. See the hypothesis of Shoshan (2002: 1 and 38, notes 5 and 6), obtained by comparing different proposed estimates: the population would then be reduced to 150,000-300,000 in the 15th century, that is after the waves of plague that began with the Black Death. See also Borsch and Sabra (2017, especially 80-81) where the authors state that the figure of 20,000 victims is possible if it refers to a period of two days and includes the entire city (which means including the ancient capital Fusṭāṭ).

[49] Some sources speak instead of the closure of markets due to the pandemic: both because of the lack of products to sell and the high mortality rate that decimated farmers, customers and sellers. See for example al-Maqrīzī (1971, vol. 4), who mentions the closure of markets in Gaza (: 82), Alexandria (: 84) and Cairo (: 87).

[50] The recitation of al-Bukhārī's *Ṣaḥīḥ* or parts of the Quran is reported by Ibn Kathīr (2010, vol. 16: 341), Ibn Abī Ḥajala (fol. 75b), Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba (1994, vol. 1: 544, who quotes Ibn Kathīr), Ibn Ḥajar (1993a: 237-238, who quotes Ibn Abī Ḥajala), al-Maqrīzī (1971, vol. 4: 86-87), Ibn Taghrī Birdī (1979, vol. 10: 204-205, who quotes al-Maqrīzī). This prayer gathering is attested since the early days of the Mamluk era on festive occasions (such as the appointment of a new sultan) and on occasions of suffering (such as non-flooding of the Nile). It became a common practice in Syria and Egypt at the time of the Black Death and was maintained during the subsequent waves of plague (Dols 1977: 247-248). See also Mirza (2020a, 2020b).

"somebody" [*rajul*] saw the Prophet in a dream urging him to recite the Noah sura (Cor 71) 3,363 times.[51] Scholars express different opinions about the outcome of the prayers in these cases as well: Ibn Kathīr confirms his judgment that there were many dead but God defended and protected the city, while Ibn Abī Ḥajala and Ibn Ḥajar report that, far from ending, the plague spread even further and Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba refrains from giving his opinion. Both these rites are also related, albeit with slight differences, by other authors. According to al-Maqrīzī's description (later taken up by Ibn Taghrī Birdī), they took place in the month of *Rajab* (25 September – 24 October), when the plague killed more than a thousand people a day, but after the first prayer "the scourge decreased day by day, until it stopped," while after the second "the epidemic, on the whole, decreased." As for the Noah sura, al Maqrīzī relates that it was read 3,360 times and for the reading of al-Bukhārī he says that it was followed by a procession to an oratory outside the city, for a three-day rogatory rite in which the minors [*ṣibyān*] also participated – which is very similar to the prayer gathering at al-Aqdām Mosque. Still on the subject of the Noah sura, al-Sakhāwī reduces the number of recitations to 3,063 times.[52]

Similar prayer gatherings and processions took place in the western capital of the Mamluk sultanate, Cairo, in the months of *Shaʿbān* and *Ramaḍān* (November and December 1348), when the plague reached its height and there were so many dead that at the beginning of *Dhū al-qaʿda* (last decade of January 1449) "the city was completely deserted (*khāliya muqfira*)."[53] Among these rites, Ibn Iyās reports a prayer he explicitly describes as "similar to the one of "begging for water" (*istisqāʾ*), in which people gathered outside the city of Cairo, under the Red Mountain, and then went to al-Azhar Mosque. "But the plague," comments Ibn Iyās, "increased and spread even more."[54] Also near the Red Mountain (at the Qubbat al-Naṣr)[55] and at the Khawlān Oratory in the Qarāfa cemetery, al-Maqrīzī relates the final moment of a series of rites and prayers that took place in Cairo from Friday 6 to Sunday 8 Ramaḍān (28-

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[51] Ibn Kathīr (2010, vol. 16: 341-342), Ibn Abī Ḥajala (fols. 75b-76a), Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba (1994, vol. 1: 544), Ibn Ḥajar (1993a: 237-238). For this rite in Ibn Kathīr's chronicle see Mirza (2020a, 2020b). As for the Prophet who appears to someone in a dream recommending a particular prayer to ward off the plague, it is a recurring story already attested during Justinian's plague (Dols 1977: 127) and often related in the chronicles of the Black Death and subsequent waves of plague, as well as other forms of visions and supernatural events (Dols 1974b: 281-282).

[52] Al-Maqrīzī (1971, vol. 4: 85; see Ibn Taghrī Birdī 1979, vol. 10: 203-204, who quotes him); al-Sakhāwī (1992, vol. 1: 98).

[53] Al-Maqrīzī (1971, vol. 4: 87; see Ibn Taghrī Birdī 1979, vol. 10: 206, who quotes him).

[54] Ibn Iyās (1984, vol. 1: 531). The so-called Red Mountain [*al-Jabal al-Aḥmar*] is a hill that has long since been incorporated into the northeastern part of Cairo.

[55] In another of his famous works, al-Maqrīzī reports that the Qubbat al-Naṣr (which can still be visited today and is called Qubbat Naṣr Allāh) was a *zāwiya* [monastery, convent] located just outside Cairo, in the desert, under the Red Mountain – which lies to the north of the Muqattam hill relief, where the famous Qarāfa cemetery still stands today (al-Maqrīzī 1998, vol. 3: 312).

30 November). These prayers, however, did not have the desired effect either: according to al-Maqrīzī, in that month "the epidemic grew so strong that it was no longer possible to count the dead."[56]

Finally, only for the prayer gathering of Damascus do the chroniclers specify that women, children and the *ahl al-dhimma* took part, as the Islamic norms exceptionally allow for the prayer for water [*istisqāʾ*]. In the case of the other rites, the chroniclers do not mention their presence. But it should be noted that they always designate the faithful who participate by the terms *al-nās* [the persons, the people], *ahl al-bilād* (the people of the country) or *al-miṣriyyūn* (the Egyptians), and not by words such as *al-muslimūn* (the Muslims) or *al-muʾminūn* (the (Muslim) believers). Therefore we might suppose that, by using these words, the authors intended to communicate that believers of other religions – so well as women and children – could also have been present. However, it is a supposition that, as far as I know, remains unverifiable.[57]

11. Conclusions

The *Riḥla* recounts that IB loved to tell his stories and bewitch his listeners: "The Sultan [of Ceylon] was delighted with the tales I told him of kings and countries," he says with satisfaction.[58] Ibn Juzayy himself, who met IB in a garden in Granada in 1351, describes the first impression he had of him: "*Shaykh* Abū ʿAbdallāh [IB] delighted us with the story of his travels (*akhbār riḥlatihi*) and we profited greatly from him."[59] This information is also confirmed by some sources. First and foremost the eminent historian Ibn Khaldūn, who probably never met IB but relates that "At the time of the marinide Sultan Abū ʿInān, a *shaykh* from Tangier called Ibn Baṭṭūṭa returned to Morocco. 20 years earlier, he had left for the Orient and travelled in Iraq, Yemen and India. [...] He used to tell of (*ḥaddatha*) his travels and the marvellous things (*ʿajāʾib*) he saw" (Ibn Khaldūn 1858, vol. I: 328). Ibn Ḥajar also reports that according to al-Khaṭīb, IB had travelled all around the world and after returning home told (*ḥakā*)

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[56] Al-Maqrīzī (1971, vol. 4: 86; see Ibn Taghrī Birdī 1979, vol. 10: 204-205, who quotes him). For these and other prayers during the Black Death and the following waves, see Dols (1977: 246-252).

[57] The only reference I have found in this respect is by Mirza 2020b, who quotes an *istisqāʾ* prayer recorded by Ibn Kathīr in the same Mosque of Foot in Damascus 30 years before the Black Death (early *Ṣafar* 719 / April 1319), in a period of severe drought. In this case, Ibn Kathīr does not specify whether non-Muslims attended it (see Ibn Kathīr 2010, vol. 16: 141, where the terms *al-nās* and *ahl al-bilād* are used) and Mirza suggests that given the "inclusive" language of Ibn Kathīr, non-Muslims could also have been present. But in this case, i.e., the prayer for water, the participation of non-Muslim faithful (as well as that of women and children) is provided for in Islamic law (see note 23).

[58] Al-Tāzī (IV: 79); Gibb and Beckingham (IV: 848 [EP 168]).

[59] Al-Tāzī (IV: 226); Gibb and Beckingham (IV: 943 [EP 372]).

stories about his doings and what he had learned (*mā istafāda*) from the people he met.[60] From Ibn Khaldūn and Ibn Ḥajar we also know that IB's stories were considered exaggerated and unbelievable by some of his audience, who accused him of lying.[61] But Ibn Khaldūn concludes his passage on IB by stating: "One day I met the Sultan's famous vizier, Fāris ibn Wadrār. I talked to him about this matter and intimated to him that I did not believe that man's stories [...]. Whereupon the vizier Fāris said to me: 'Be careful not to reject such information [...], because you have not seen such things yourself'" (Ibn Khaldūn 1858, vol. I: 328-329). And from Ibn Ḥajar and Ibn al-Khaṭīb we know that some prominent figures of the time respected IB and considered him a great traveller.[62]

What we do not know is whether IB ever thought to put these stories in writing: no information on this is found in the *Riḥla*.[63] Ibn Juzayy reports that it was the Sultan Abū ʿInān who decided to have them recorded: when IB came back to Fez from his last journey in Western Sudan, he ordered him to dictate his travelogue and Ibn Juzayy to edit it.[64] We can thus deduce that although some of IB's stories were exaggerated and unbelievable (as claimed by some of his contemporary audience) and others were borrowed from his reading or invented (as proven by modern *Riḥla* scholars), the Sultan – and his advisors – certainly found them particularly interesting and fascinating. After all, it is not often that a ruler orders a traveller to dictate an account of his journey and commands a scribe to edit it. If he gave such an order, IB certainly was a good storyteller and a good part of his audience appreciated him. As for the scribe, Ibn Juzayy, he was the son of a famous scholar of Granada and was a court scribe, first in Granada and then in Fez.[65] He was therefore a man of culture and a courtier, with a somewhat pompous

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[60] Ibn Ḥajar (1993b, vol. 3: 480). A translation in English of this passage could be found in Gibb (I: IX-X).

[61] Ibn Khaldun quotes some of IB's anecdotes on the rich and prodigal Sultan of Delhi (Muḥammad Ibn Tughluq) and notes that they did not seem possible in the court of Fez, where people "confabulated that he was lying" [*tanājā bi-takdhībihi*] (Ibn Khaldūn 1858, vol. I: 328). Ibn Ḥajar reports two testimonies. The first is by Ibn al-Khaṭīb, who related [*qāla*] a detailed summa of IB's travels and added that the Andalusian *qāḍī* al-Balfīqī had personally heard the "strange things" [*gharāʾib*] IB used to tell – especially about Constantinople, where he claimed to have seen twelve thousand bishops in the Great Basilica. The second is a manuscript by Ibn Marzūq, a prominent scholar of Tlemcen, who wrote that al-Balfīqī accused IB of lying [*ramāhu bi-l-kadhb*] (Ibn Ḥajar 1993b, vol. 3: 480-481).

[62] Ibn Ḥajar (1993b, vol. 3: 480-481), where Ibn Ḥajar refers that in the same manuscript, Ibn Marzūq states having cleared IB (of al-Balfīqī's accusation of lying) [*baraʾahu*] and does not know of anyone who have made such a journey around the word [*lā aʿlamu aḥad jāla al-bilād ka-riḥlatihi*]. As for Ibn al-Khaṭīb, as we have seen, he speaks of IB as "one of the great trustworthy [*yūthaqu bihim*] travellers" who related news [*ḥaddatha*] of the plague (Ibn al-Khaṭīb 1863: 9, see Tresso 2021: 143, note 53).

[63] Gibb notes that IB "seems to have entertained no idea of writing his experiences down" (Gibb 2004 [1929]: 11).

[64] As we have seen, this information is confirmed by both Ibn al-Khaṭīb and Ibn Marzūq in Ibn Ḥajar's *Al-durar al-kāmina* (see Tresso 2021: 142, note 44). It should be noted that there is no information on the Sultan's order to IB and Ibn Juzayy in the abridged manuscripts of the *Riḥla* edited by Kosegarten (1818) and Lee (1829).

[65] For more information about Ibn Juzayy see Collet (2017).

style and a penchant for panegyrics. He finished writing the *Riḥla* at the age of 35 and probably died the following year.

At this point, a question arises: who is the real author of the *Riḥla*? The narrator or the editor? In his "Introduction" to the work, Ibn Juzayy says that IB "dictated a narrative which gave entertainment to the mind and delight to the ears and eyes." Then, as we have already seen, he relates having complied with the Sultan's order to "prune and polish" the language of the text dictated by IB (Tresso 2021: 142, note 44), but he also states: "I rendered the sense of the narrative of IB" [*naqaltu maʿānī kalām al-shaykh*].[66] At the end of the *Riḥla*, he speaks of "the epitome I made of the composition" of IB (*mā lakhkhaṣtuhu min taqyīd al-shaykh*),[67] but in the *Riḥla*, no mention is made of whether and how IB contributed to the writing, or whether he read and approved the final manuscript by Ibn Juzayy. In short, we do not know how the two men collaborated, but given the aforementioned testimonies, it is possible to assume that at least in several parts of the work, the rhythm and pathos of the story is due to IB's great experience and storytelling skills, while the literary form is due to Ibn Juzayy. As I have tried to show, the story of the Damascus prayer gathering may be one of these passages, as it reveals not only good stylistic and lexical choices (perhaps due to Ibn Juzayy), but also great storytelling skills. It is only a suggestion, but whoever the author of "The Prayer of Damascus" was, the fact remains that this tale is a masterpiece of Arabic medieval literature.

As for the reliability of the information it gives, i.e., both the description of the prayer and the figures regarding the victims of the pandemic, comparison with Arabic sources reveals minimal discrepancies and essentially confirms them. In this regard, however, we cannot fail to note the statement that opens the story: "I witnessed [*shāhadtu*] at the time of the Great Plague at Damascus [...] a remarkable instance of the veneration of the people of Damascus." Nobody can prove whether IB was in Damascus or not on that day, but given the number of studies that have demonstrated that IB and/or Ibn Juzayy borrowed several parts of the *Riḥla* from other sources, another question arises. Whether or not IB was in Damascus, is it possible that the story does not derive from his personal experience or from an oral source that he could have met there, but from the combination of his storytelling skills with Ibn Juzayy's literary ones, and that he/they drew the information from other sources?[68]

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[66] al-Tāzī (I: 152); Gibb (I: 6 [EP 10]).

[67] al-Tāzī (IV: 280); Gibb and Beckingham (IV: 977 [EP 449]).

[68] Ibn Juzayy probably knew more sources than IB did (we have seen that Ibn al-Khaṭīb's said that IB had "a modest share of science;" Tresso 2021: 142, note 44), and might therefore bear more responsibility for borrowing from other sources. Scholars generally agree that he played a substantial role in the writing of the *Riḥla*. See among others Gibb (2004 [1929]: 11-12), who suggests that "Ibn Juzayy has often substituted (possibly at Ibn Battùta's desire or with his permission) an abridgment of Ibn

As we have seen, both his/their contemporary scholars Ibn Kathīr and Ibn Abī Ḥajala report more or less the same information, so we could assume that yes, he/they could have drawn the information from these works. If, however, according to Ibn Juzayy, the writing of the *Riḥla* was completed in the month of *Ṣafar* 757/February 1356, it should be noted that Ibn Kathīr and Ibn Abī Ḥajala had not yet completed their works by that date. Ibn Kathīr closes his chronicles with a description of events relating to the year 768/1366-1367 (Ibn Kathīr 2010, vol. 18: 468-472), and Ibn Abī Ḥajala describes some events that occurred after 757/1356.[69] This is a consideration that has to be made, but it does not exclude IB and/or Ibn Juzayy having had access to parts of these texts that may have circulated before the final writing of the *Riḥla*,[70] nor having consulted other sources that remain unseen and/or unexamined so far. It should also be noted that, even if Arab chroniclers who reported on the Black Death after the pandemic often cite previous sources, none of them, as far as I am aware, mentions IB as a witness of the scourge.

Conversely, in order to corroborate the hypothesis of IB's direct testimony, it should be noted that a comparison with both Ibn Kathīr's and Ibn Abī Ḥajala's chronicles reveals five details of particular importance that "personalize" the story of IB's *Riḥla*, and which can therefore lead us to believe that the information has not been taken from these sources:

1. The *Riḥla* is the only source to report that the lieutenant of Damascus, Arghūn Shāh, ordered proclaiming the rite to ward off the plague.

2. It is the only one to assert that the lieutenant established the prohibition of selling cooked food at the market during the three days of fasting before the prayer gathering.

3. Only the *Riḥla* states the positive outcome of the prayer ("God Most High lightened their affliction").

4. Only in the *Riḥla* is the mosque called "al-Aqdām" (all others source call it "al-Qadam").

5. Only in the *Riḥla* is mention made of the white minaret and the *ḥadīth* evoking the end of the world.

Jubayr's work;" Elad (1987: 258), who speaks of "the obvious reliance of Ibn Baṭṭūṭa (or more precisely, his editor, Ibn Juzayy) upon Ibn Jubayr;" Euben (2006: 219, note 8), who states: "Indeed, Ibn Juzayy's role in creating the *Riḥla* was closer to that of ghostwriter than editor;" Elger (2010b: 71) who says that "even if we do not know how these two exactly cooperated, certainly Ibn Juzayy played a major part in the project."

[69] For example, he reports the death by plague of the Great *Shaykh* [*Shaykh al-Shuyūkh*] Zakī al-Dīn in 764/1362-1363 (Ibn Abī Ḥajala, fol. 87a). According to Dols, Ibn Abī Ḥajala wrote his work in this same year (Dols 1977: 324, see also 327) and Conrad (1981: 73) suggests "sometime between 764/1362 and 776/1375." As for the other two authors who report the prayer of Damascus, Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba and Ibn Ḥajar, both wrote their work in the first half of the 15th century, long after the *Riḥla* was written.

[70] This hypothesis has also been put forward by scholars with regard to other possible borrowings in the *Riḥla*: see for example Trausch (2010: 141), who, comparing IB's Indian journey with Baranī's chronicle, notes that "such elaborate chronicles were not written in one go but developed over many decades, in some cases even generations."

However, regarding the first detail, it can be challenged that Arghūn Shāh is mentioned by several sources as the Mamluk lieutenant of Damascus at that time (Tresso 2021: 147, note 68), and from this IB and/or Ibn Juzayy could have rightly deduced that he was the one who made the announcement. As for the ban on cooked food, even though the chroniclers do not mention it, in moments of common fasting it seems appropriate. As for the epilogue of the prayer, the other sources do not mention it, but we have seen that in reporting the figures of the dead, Ibn Kathīr makes the same consideration as IB: in Damascus, the percentage of victims was not particularly high. Finally, an answer to the last two points is not to be sought in the chronicles but in the already mentioned *Riḥla* of Ibn Jubayr, from which we have seen that most of the description of Damascus is drawn (Tresso 2021: 139, note 33). In fact, Ibn Jubayr calls the mosque "al-Aqdām," and with its description he concludes the list of "Sanctuaries and outstanding monuments" of the Syrian capital: just as IB does. A few lines later, Ibn Jubayr lists the gates of the city: the first, it says, stands "next to a white minaret," and he reminds the reader that it is the place where "the Messiah will descend" (Ibn Jubayr n.d.: 229).

We can therefore reiterate that yes, IB and/or Ibn Juzayy could have collected and assembled information drawn from other works.

However, a final consideration adds one more verse to this refrain of "it could be… but …" Both the Arabic text of IB's *Riḥla* and its translation in English quoted in this paper refer to the *Editio Princeps* edited by Defremery and Sanguinetti that, as we have seen, is based on the five Algerian manuscripts from the *Bibliothèque Nationale* in Paris. Although other manuscripts exist, most of them have not been edited so far and the few that are available are rarely mentioned in IB's *Riḥla* studies. A comparison with other manuscripts is not the aim of this paper, but I have only seen the two already mentioned compendia of the *Riḥla* translated by Kosegarten and Lee in the early 19th century.[71] The story of the Damascus prayer gathering is not mentioned in the Latin translation by Kosegarten (Kosegarten 1818), but it is in the compendium by al-Baylūnī that Lee translated into English. In this text, the mosque is called "al-Qadam," the event is dated on 746/1345 and the rite does not seem similar to an *istisqāʾ* prayer. The numbers of twenty-four thousand victims refers to Damascus instead of Cairo; the outcome of the prayer is a real miracle, and the final image is not the white minaret, but Mount Qāsiyūn,[72] near

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[71] As already mentioned, the compendium by al-Baylūnī has been translated into German by Elger, who used both the manuscript Qq 205 of Cambridge (used by Lee) and the manuscript 1541 of Gotha (Elger 2010a: 239-240; see also Elger 2010c).

[72] It should be noted that, according to Ibn ʿAsākir (12th century), the place of choice in Damascus for the *istisqāʾ* prayer was the *Maghārat al-damm* (the "Cave of the Blood"), the alleged site of Abel's murder, which is located on Mount Qāsiyūn (cited by Talmon-Heller 2007: 263, note 71). However, the manuscript by al-Baylūnī translated by Lee only mentions another

Damascus. "I myself was present at the Mosque of the Foot (*Masjid al-Qadam*) in the year 746[73] when the people were assembled for the purpose of prayer against the plague (*ṭāʿūn*): which ceased on that very day. The number that died daily in Damascus had been two thousand: but, the whole daily number, at the time I was present, amounted to twenty-four thousand. After prayers, however, the plague entirely ceased. On the north of Damascus is the mountain Kisayun, in which is the cave where Abraham was born."[74] In this case, no borrowing can be found from Ibn Jubayr, nor can it be assumed that the author drew information on the prayer from Ibn Kathīr or Ibn Abī Ḥajala. One of the five manuscripts on which Defremery and Sanguinetti's *Editio Princeps* is based appears to bear the signature of Ibn Juzayy.[75] Are we to assume that, in writing his compendium of the *Riḥla*, al-Baylūnī[76] deliberately removed the two pieces of information borrowed from Ibn Jubayr and the description of that "memorable" prayer gathering borrowed from Ibn Kathīr, Ibn Abī Ḥajala or other sources? How do the other manuscripts of the *Riḥla* tell this story?

A collection of all the manuscripts of IB's *Riḥla* that have been found and the analysis of the variants from the *Editio Princeps* has still to be done. This is something that many have hoped for,[77] but so far has not been achieved.

In short, in this case too, it is highly probable that there have been some borrowings but it is not possible to prove them. However, this is not essential to appreciate the quality of "The Prayer of Damascus" from the literary point of view. I personally agree with those scholars who do not question the fact that IB traveled to the areas where he says he was, but suggest that he and Ibn Juzayy would have done a work of "haute couture" (Collet 2017) or "bricolage" (Fauvelle-Aymar and Hirsch 2003) bringing together personal experiences, information received from witnesses met on site and news

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sanctuary on this mount, which is "the Cave of Abraham" [*al-ghār allādhī wulida bihi Ibrāhīm*] (Lee 1829: 31; al-Baylūnī, fol. 10a; Elger 2010a: 35).

[73] This date is not correct: no plague is attested in Damascus in 746/1345.

[74] Lee (1829: 30-31); al-Baylūnī (fol. 9a); Elger (2010a: 34-35). Detailed notices on both Kosegarten's and Lee's translations and manuscripts, as well as on some other manuscripts of the *Riḥla* and their translations, can be found in Defremery and Sanguinetti's "Préface" (Monteil 1979, vol. I: XIII-XX). As for Elger's translation, see Elger (2010c) and Masarwa (2014).

[75] For more details on these manuscripts see Monteil (1979, vol. I: XXI-XXVI).

[76] The three-copies manuscript translated by Lee was found in Egypt by Johann Burckhardt and placed in the Cambridge University Library after his death. All the copies are signed by Muḥammad ibn Fatḥ Allāh al-Baylūnī (Monteil 1979, vol. I: XVI; Lee 1829: IX-XII; al-Baylūnī, fol. 2a; Elger 2010a: 16).

[77] See, among others: "A full apparatus of variants has still to be produced" (Hamdun and King 1998: 9); "The level of research on IB is so low, that not even a well edited version has been produced yet" (Elger 2010b: 72); "A comparison of all copies [of manuscripts] is necessary – a task that has yet to be undertake" (Trausch 2010: 154); "A separate comparison of all transcripts could quickly provide clarity" (Masarwa 2014: 352, note 4).

extrapolated from other works. Like all arts, literature allows elements from previous works to be continually revived by fitting them in an harmonious new whole. There is no doubt that, if IB (with the substantial or minimal help of Ibn Juzayy and maybe of some posterior copists) had not written this masterpiece, the news of this prayer would have remained buried in books of chronicles accessible to only a few specialists. And the fact remains that none of the chroniclers would have been able to narrate this event so engagingly that even today, more than seven centuries later, it still fascinates readers all over the world. "The Prayer of Damascus," as I have tried to show, is perhaps the most beautiful tale of the *Riḥla* because of its narrative style, its literary and lexical features, and because it reflects, like a kaleidoscope, a constellation of cultural references and people's feelings in such a difficult time as that of the most deadly of pandemics known to mankind.

Whether IB participated in it or not, *Allāhu aʿlamu*, as he would say: God knows more.

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[78] EI² (*Encyclopedia of Islām*, 2nd edition) and *Oxford Dictionary of English* 2011 (https://www.oed.com) have been consulted and sometimes quoted in the notes, but are not listed in the Bibliography.

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N.B.: Lee did not edit the Arabic text, but the manuscript by the copist Fatḥ Allāh al-Baylūnī (manuscript Qq 205 of Cambridge) is available at

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[79] The alphabetical order takes into account the name by which the author is known, which appears before the comma. For information on the manuscripts of many of the cited works see Dols 1977: 320-335, Appendix III, "The Arabic Manuscript Sources for the History of Plague from the Black Death to the Nineteenth Century."

[80] Ibn Ḥajar's work was analysed by Sublet (1971). See also Dols (1977: 110-121). Dols (1974b: 374) defines it as "perhaps the most comprehensive and best-known plague treatise in the later Middle Ages," and it is a summa on the behaviour of a good (educated) Muslim of the 15th century during an epidemic.

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[81] The *Riḥla* of Ibn Jubayr has been translated into English by Broadhurst (1952).

[82] Wiet (1962) translated Ibn Kathīr's narration of the plague into French. Some passages translated into English can also be found in Aberth (2005: 112-114).

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[84] Al-Maqrīzī's text on the Black Death is translated into French in Wiet (1962). The appeal of al-Maqrīzī is probably due to the name of a neighbourhood in Baalbek, Lebanon, where his ancestors lived (Mallett 2014: 162). For his work see Mujani and Yaakub (2013) and Dols (1977: 7-8), who defines it as "the most important (though not contemporary) historical text dealing with the Black Death in Egypt and Syria."

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235

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The mythological journey of the *Kaknus* and its place in Ottoman poetry

Aslı Aytaç

Myths as a product of common culture are the stories that each culture takes and kneads within itself and conveyed for generations. The source for them is human. Myths are shaped by the culture, lifestyle and beliefs of communities. Mythology has a great place in making sense of literary texts as it is in human history. Mythological narratives and items, which have changed as a result of the interaction of different cultures with each other, are cultural accumulations whose origins cannot be determined exactly, but which are believed to be true by the society. One of the fields that divan poetry, which continues as a literary tradition, makes use of while maintaining its existence is mythology. Various mythological elements in literary works play an important role in understanding the meaning of the work. Divan poetry, mostly fed by the source of Persian mythology, also benefited from the mythological animals belonging to this culture. Among mythological animals, birds are considered as mythological elements that occupy much of divan poetry. Kaknus, the subject of our study, is a mythological bird with a story in both western and eastern mythology. In Greek mythology, the mythological person Kyknos is a bird named Kaknus in Persian mythology. In this study, the mythological history of Kaknus will be discussed and the characteristics of its use in Divan poetry will be detailed.

Keywords: Kaknus, Kyknos, mythology, Ottoman Divan literature, Phoenix, music

1. Introduction[1]

The myths that we can characterize as a creation story are considered sacred stories. Mythology has a great place in human history as a common belief, and each culture or society creates its own legendary and mythological past which conveys the beliefs of its origin and past. Mythology makes a hypothesis and brings it to life through belief systems. The shaping of our culture, belief, and way of life is shaped by rumors that we believe without knowing the cause or origin. The source of these beliefs is human and each evolves from age to age and from generation to generation. Man produces myths based on

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[1] In this article, western mythology will be used to meet Greek and Roman, and eastern mythology will mostly be used to meet Iranian mythology.

facts within the boundaries of his own mind and culture. Mythology is a world created, grown, and nutured by humans (Eliade 1993: 15-16; Armstrong 2008: 5-6; Gezgin 2014: 7).

While Ottoman poetry continued to exist, it fed off various sources, such as religion, mysticism, epics, fairy tales, various narratives and stories. One of them is mythology. In order to fully understand the texts, it is necessary to know in what context these sources are used. In addition to his own knowledge of poetry, a poet also includes in his poems historical and cultural elements and mythological elements. In order to emphasize the importance of myths in literary works, Wellek-Warren says that "our own view, on the other hand, sees the meaning and function of literature as centrally present in metaphor and myth" (1949: 198).

Ottoman poetry texts, the mythological source of which is mostly composed of Persian mythology, were created by using cultrually specific individuals, animals, and other creatures to carry their stories. In Divan literature texts, there are many mythological elements from culture. So, there is a need to look at the origin of the mythological elements of the culture in question when evaluating the texts. However, it can be seen that the content of Divan poetry does not only contain elements of Islamic eastern mythology. States that have been established in the Near East throughout history have hosted different beliefs and religions, and when Islamic culture settled, new interpretations were made on top of the remnants of the old religion and belief systems. Due to this diversity, mythological individuals and concepts may display different appearances, though their origins are similar in various cultures. With the change of the religion of people living in the Near East, it is not possible to completely destroy the information previously accumulated. This accumulated information continues to exist through metamorphosis. With the spread of the Great Roman Empire to the east, Near East culture was kneaded with Greek and Roman culture and various exchanges were made. As a result of this exchange, a versatile east-west composition emerged with the addition of those belonging to the new culture on old mythological history and beliefs. This period, dating back to the 4th century, was called the Hellenistic culture period (Tekin 2009: 181-182). In Campbell's words:

> Both overland and by sea, the ways between Roma, Persia, India and China were opened
> in this period to an ever-increasing commerce, and to such a degree that nowhere in the
> hemisphere was there any longer the possibility of a local mythological development in
> isolation. The exchange of ideas was multifarious (1986: 288)

The culture of the Near East has influenced Greek culture mostly through stories, proverbs and thoughts. It has also led to the birth of a different type literature not previously seen in Greek culture which appeals to the taste of the people. In the Hellenistic period, the face of Greek literature changed

and a new style of literature emerged, in which stories and legends belonged to the Near East mythology. The culture, which was the synthesis of the east-west, reached Europe and North Africa with the expansion of the Roman Empire and acquired new forms by blending with the local cultures there (Tekin 2009: 182). It is certain that the Divan poetry, which is largely sourced from Persian mythology, contains traces of Greek culture and mythology. Eckard Peterich draws attention to the importance of Greek mythology in European culture in terms of study and understanding by saying "We cannot read any of our great poets without encountering Greek gods and heroes" (1959: IX). Although a much deeper study is needed in order to fully understand the interaction between them, common or similar data in both cultures show this interaction. Şenocak's statement "Mythological figures of Iranian poetry in Ottoman poetry come to life on the shores of the ancient Hellenic world. In Anatolia, East and West are intertwined with various mythological currents" (1997: 53) also draws attention to this interaction. Our aim with this study is to point out how the mythological element reflects on Divan poetry through its common points in these cultures rather than the determination of its cultural origin.

It is seen that among mythological creatures, birds, although referred to by different names, show similar characteristics in different cultures. In myths, animals can have human characteristics and appear in different shapes and have different functions regarding their appearance and abilities. Gezgin, makes the following explanation about mythological animals in her book where she discusses animal myths: "Sometimes gods are depicted in animal form or thought with their protective animals. The most important symbols of power of heroes whose names have passed through the ages are shown with animals" (2014: 8).

Anka, Hümâ, Simurg, Hüdhüd and *Kaknus* (*Kûknûs*) are mythological birds whose stories are given in Divan poetry. Analogies are established between their characteristics and heroes. The mythology of these birds differs according to the cultures. Sometimes they show similar extraordinary features, although their names change in different cultures. The determination that the mythological story of Kaknus, which is our main subject, has similar characteristics in Eastern and Greek mythology, sometimes as a god and sometimes a bird, has led to the preparation of this study.

2. Kyknos/Cycnus in Greek Mythology

Latin *cygnus/cycnus* (and its derivates, such as French "cygne") and Greek *kuknos* share the same root. *Kuğu* means "swan" in Turkish. *Cygnus*, or "the star of the swan," is also the name of a constellation in the Northern Hemisphere (Pultar 2007: 63). In addition, when the Turkish word *Kaknus* is searched in a dictionary, the description of a phoenix is sometimes given as an equivalent (Johnson 1852: 974;

Steingass 1998: 982). Grimal, in the *Kyknos* article of his dictionary, states that the word means *swan* and there are many heroes with this name; he further adds their stories as found in Greek mythology (1986: 113), according to which there are five different *Kyknos*[2] and the hero is raised by a swan or turned into a swan that makes harmonious sounds while dying. *Kyknos* is described in different ways, including the son of Poseidon and Kalyke, the son of Ares and Pelopeia, the son of Apollo and Thyria, and the king of Liguria.[3] Coleman also includes four different *Cycnus* in his work and indicates the origin of all of them in Greek: Cycnus is either the son of Apollo and Hyrie, of Ares and Pelopia, or of Poseidon and Calyce, and we also find a Cycnus, son of Sthelenus, who is the king of Liguria (Coleman 2007: 262).

In addition to the motive of the hero being transformed by God (Zeus) into a swan, the connection between the swan and music in one of the stories seems central to our topic. In mythology, Kyknos, the king of Liguria, is given the ability to make harmonious sounds by Apollo:

> A king of Liguria, and a friend of Phaethon, Cycnus mourned Phaethon's death so bitterly that he was transformed into a swan. Apollo had given this Cycnus a beautiful voice and from this account springs the supposition that swans sing when on the point of death (Grimal 1986: 114)

The beautiful tunes the swans make while dying find therefore their origin in Greek mythology and establish the "swan-song" relationship. Coleman also mentions the same story of Cycnus, the music king of the city of Liguria and the son of Sthelenus, and emphasizes that he was turned into a swan[4] by Apollo because he was a friend of Phaethon, whom he lamented upon his death (2000: 262).

In Greek and Roman mythology the swan is known for its beauty. Aphrodite/Venus is the goddess of beauty. The animals of the carriage that Venus rides are depicted by the artists as swans or pigeons. The fact that the swan was chosen for the carriage of the goddess of beauty is a proof of its own beauty (Kam 2008: 134).

Based on these narratives in Greek mythology and the origin of the word, the relationship between "Kyknos-swan" and "Kyknos-music" can be clearly seen. The point that draws attention with

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[2] For more information, see Grimal (1986: 113-114).

[3] Three of the five different Kyknos have the motive of being transformed into swans, and one of them is raised by swans. In contrast, the story of Kyknos, who is described as the son of Ares and Pelopeia, does not include a swan.

[4] Phaethon, while traveling the sky with his solar carriage, was struck to death by Zeus with lightning; his death revealed Kyknos' hostility to fire and made him choose to live in the lakes (Bayladı 2005: 303).

this information in Western mythology is that a swan is not a mythical creature but a living animal. However, in Eastern mythology, Kaknus appears as a mythological bird.

3. Kaknus in Eastern Mythology

Kaknus, which can be seen in the sources *kaknûs, keknûs, kûknus, kûknûs, kuknûs* and *koknus,* is described as a large bird that passes in the oriental tales in the Ottoman-Turkish dictionary and makes various sounds as the wind blows in its beak (Devellioğlu 2000: 580). The reason why it is referred to as "swan bird" in some sources (Levend 1984: 182; Pala 2008: 253) can be linked to the mythological narratives mentioned above. The following explanation for this bird is found in *Mütercim Âsım*'s dictionary:

> ...It is a bird decorated with colorful patterns. There are three hundred and sixty holes in his nose. In the high mountain tops, sitting against the wind creates various sounds as the wind touches those holes. Hearing this sound, the birds gather next to it. It grabs some of them and eats. It is said that after a thousand years, it piles up countless timbers, rises above them and makes a wonderful sound. It passes out like a mad lover and flaps its wings. A fire emerges from its wings and burns the wood. In the end it burns in the fire... (2000: 415)

Kaknus is described as a bird that makes various tunes in *Mantıku't-tayr* and attracts all other animals with these sounds. It is also stated that there is no other bird that looks like it; it lives up to a thousand years and knows when it will die. When it is time to die, *Kaknus* makes good tunes, flaps its wings quickly and, at the last moment, ignites the bush under it and eventually burns itself and becomes ash. When the flames disappear, another smaller *Kaknus* emerges from the ashes. This bird is praised in *Mantıku't-tayr* for the ability to give birth after death (Attâr 2010: 209-211).

The story of *Kaknus* believed to be living in the Indian islands is similar to the stories of other mythological animals such as *Ankâ, Sîmurg*, and *Semender*, due to the interest in fire and the ability to be reborn from ashes after burning (Ceylan 2004: 32-33). The explanation of "Phoenix" in some of the dictionaries of Western origin, as the equivalent of the word "Kaknûs/Kaknus," can be an example of this use (Johnson 1852: 982). The Phoenix, which is the symbol of resurrection after death in ancient Egyptian mythology, coincides with *Sîmurg* in Persian, *Ankâ* in Arabic and *Zümrüdüankâ* in Turkish (Eskigün 2006: 10). This bird is involved in mythology, with the ability to die many times and be reborn from its ashes (Tansü-Güvenç 2017: 785). While rebirth from ashes after being burned is a common feature of these two mythological birds, the beautiful tunes that *Kaknus* sings when close to his death and his relationship with music are features that distinguish him from the *Phoenix*. In addition, when

giving information about the *Phoenix*, the ancient sources mention a worm that appeared after his death, this also is a difference between the two birds (Tekin 2008: 425). The baby, which appears as a worm in the *Phoenix* story, appears as an egg in *Kaknus*. Besides; while Demiri is describing Kaknus in his work *Hayâtü'l-hayevân*, in which he includes the characteristics of animals he compiled from Islamic texts, a spark comes out when the male and female bird rub their noses together during mating, and as a result, both of them burn in the fire.. Then, it is said that the rain falling on the ash formed a wolf and this wolf formed the *Kaknus*. According to this; the sounds of the *Kaknus* made during mating caused the sparks of love to emerge, and this caused the expression of "burning with love fire like *Kaknus* being ash with its own fire" as an inspiration to the lovers (Demîrî 2011: 528). With the information given, we see the connection of *Kaknus* with fire rather than its voice in the Eastern sources. In this respect, it differs from the data in Greek mythology. When the sources giving information about *Kyknos* in Greek mythology are examined, it is noticeable that there is no variant related to burning itself and being reborn from its ashes.

In Ottoman literature, the *Kaknus* is sometimes referred to by a musical instrument: *Mûsikâr*. *Mûsikâr* is one of the old wind instruments formed by the gathering of several flutes (Pala 2008: 336). The term *mûsıkî* (music) and the musical instrument *mûsikâr* were born because ancient music scholars invented this science as a result of the sounds from *Kaknus's* beak (Pala 2008: 253).

Considering the Eastern and Western mythologies, the characteristic of *Kyknos*, who is a legendary hero in Greek mythology that makes harmonious sounds while dying overlaps with a characteristic of the *Kaknus* bird in Eastern mythology, and these two mythological beings are similar in terms of their beautiful sounds. In his work, Kam makes the following statement regarding the swan bird:

> The swan is not one of the imaginary birds that are the products of the dreams of legend writers, but have no existence. It is a real bird, beautifully created to be called an elite poem of creative might. Artists sometimes have Venus' carriage pulled by a few pigeons and sometimes by a couple of swans in their paintings. According to the beliefs of the ancients, the swan would sing very harmoniously when it will die. The last work created by the geniuses close to their deaths is that the French call it *'conte de cygne' (swan tale)* based on this legend about the swan. This is the original word of *Kaknus*, which has passed from Iranian literature to Turkish literature (2008: 134).

The "Kyknos-swan" relationship in the Greek sources appears as *Kaknûs-mûsıkî* in the East. The relationship of the swan with beauty and beautiful sound is in parallel with the association of this legendary bird with music in Eastern mythology.

4. *Kaknus/Kaknûs/Kuknûs* in Ottoman Poetry

In line with its features in Eastern and Western mythologies, Kaknus is referenced to in Ottoman poetry with burning itself on fire and the beauty of its voice. In the couplets, it is referred to as the words *kaknus, kaknûs, kuknûs, kukınûs* and *mûsikâr*. In Divan poetry dictionaries, it is described as a bird with decorated wings and holes in its beak that lives on the Indian island. It is stated that there are three hundred and sixty holes on the face and when in the huge mountains it stands against the wind, various sounds are made when the wind penetrates into those holes. It is also added that when other birds that have heard the sounds gather next to it, *Kaknus* catches and eats a few of them. It is said that it lives for about a thousand years. When its death approachs, it makes wonderful tunes, sets a fire from its wings and it eventually burns. In the end, a baby *Kaknus* rises from the ashes. Sources state that the science of music was inspired by the sounds made by this bird (Onay 2007: 222; Pala 2008: 253).

Considering the information above it is seen that *Kaknus* in Ottoman poetry has been handled in terms of rebirth from its own ashes, making beautiful sounds, its fancy beak and living for many years. Sometimes lovers scream tunes like *Kaknus* and sometimes they burn themselves in love's flames. In the context of its relationship with fire these words "scream, ash, soil, breath, red, kebab, burn/burner" are mentioned together:

> *Âteş-i 'ışka Muhibbî yana hâkister ola*
> *Nâr-ı 'ışk ile yanup nite kül oldı Kaknus*
>
> Muhibbî (Ak 1967: 664)

"Just as *Kaknus* burned with the fire of love, Muhibbî also burns down with the fire of love, too."

> *Kuknûs-ı âşiyân-ı mahabbet degül midür*
> *Kendi demile 'âşık-ı muztar kebâb olur*
>
> Sâbit (Oener 2019: 215)

"Isn't it the Kaknus of the love that burned the helpless lover with his own breath?"

> *İşitdük Zâtîyâ kaknûsı yakmış âteş-i âhı*
> *Meger kim yana yana okıdı bu şi'r-i pür-sûzı*
>
> Zâtî (G. 1700/5)

"Oh Zâtî! When it read this burning poem, we heard that the fire of pain burned *Kaknus.*"

When it comes to music, it makes sad sounds, cries and groans. For this purpose, it is called by the name of the musical instrument called *mûsikâr* (*mûsîkâl/miskâl*). Because of this feature in dictionaries *mûsikâr*, which is mentioned as a kind of wind instrument made by connecting fifteen or twenty flutes, is used in the couplets with *tevriye* (double-entendre) by means of both bird and musical instrument (Onay 2007: 284; Devellioğlu 2000: 822; Mütercim Âsım 2000: 533; Pala 2008: 336). However, considering the knowledge that music science was invented due to the sounds made by *Kaknus* in mythology, it can also be thought that it (*mûsikâr*) was derived from the word *mûsıkî* and named as a musical instrument because of the similarity between them. In some couplets, it remains uncertain whether *Kaknus* itself or the musical instrument is mentioned. In couplets about music; words such as *sürûd, nâle, nâlân, çeng, nağme, nevâ, rebâb, ney, kânun* come to the fore.

> *Sâyesinde kimsenin itmez recâ âheng-i gam*
> *Ya'ni mûsîkâr içün bâl-i hümâ lâzım değil*

<div align="right">Şeyh Gâlib (Okcu 2011: 485)</div>

"The melody of sorrow does not hope to be in anyone's shadow, the wing of the *hümâ* (phoenix) is not needed for the *mûsikâr.*"

> *Benümle nâlede dem-sâz olur mı mûsîkâr*
> *Ki âteşin nagamâtümle neysitân tutışur*

<div align="right">Seyyid Vehbî (Dikmen 1991: 560)</div>

"Can *mûsikâr* be companion with me in wailing? The reeds catch fire from my burning tunes."

> *Rebâb-ı nâleyi kânûn-ı ʿaşka uydurup ey dil*
> *Nevâ-yı nagme-i ʿuşşâkı mûsîkâra göstersek*

<div align="right">Seyyid Vehbî (Dikmen 1991: 594)</div>

"Oh heart! If we show the *uşşâk* tunes to *mûsikâr* by keeping the moaning reed in love *qanun.*"

> *Ko cengi çeng-i ʿaşkun n'eydügin bilmezsin ey vâʾiz*
> *Ne raʾnâ söyler ol çeng ile mûsîkârı tuymazsın*

<div align="right">Bâkî (Küçük 1994: 344)</div>

"Oh preacher! Give up your war, you don't know what the love reed is and you don't hear how beautiful that reed and *mûsikâr* sing."

The feature of rebirth of *Kaknus* from its own ashes was also handled by the poets of the Divan poetry. According to mythology, the sparks emerge when it kicks its wings over the wood it has collected when it feels it is close to death, then a great fire emerges and causes it to burn in that fire. Christians have adopted the appearance of a new egg emerging from the ashes as a symbol of rebirth (Hançerlioğlu 2011: 758).

> *Umaram hâkisterümden ide bir 'âşık zuhûr*
> *Olmayam gayretde eksük 'Âşıkâ kaknûsdan*

<div align="right">Âşık Çelebi (Kılıç 2017: 106)</div>

"Oh Âşık! I hope (after I die) a lover falls from my ashes, I do not want to be missing from Kaknus in the effort."

> *Bulmaz hayât kaknus-ı dil yanmadıkça ten*
> *Âbisten oldu beççeye muşt-i remâdımız*

<div align="right">Hâzık (Güfta 1992: 272)</div>

"Unless the skin burns, the heart does not come to life, a handful of ashes conceived a baby."

When *Kaknus* is compared to a pen, the words or writings of the poet are described as "fire." In this context, the words *âteş, âteş-feşân, od* refer to the effect of the words poured from the pen of the poet. At the same time, reference is made to the musical authority with the double-entendre use of the word *sûznâk*:

> *Yine feyz-i bahâr-âşûb cünbiş saldı murgâna*
> *Yine kaknûs-ı hâmem cilveden âteş-feşân oldu*

<div align="right">Lebîb (Kurtoğlu 2017: 78)</div>

"The abundance that stirred the spring gave the birds a rampant again, and the *Kaknus* of my pen again sparked fire with a twist."

> *Gören hâmem sanur kaknûs minkârıdur ey 'Âşık*
> *Sözüm odlar saçar âfâka şöyle sûz-nâkem ben*

<div align="right">Âşık Çelebi (Kılıç 2017: 105)</div>

"Oh Âşık! If *Kaknus* sees my pen, it thinks its beak. I am so touching that my words burn fire to horizons."

> *Sûznâk eş'âr yazamaz ey Celîlî kilk-i şevk*
>
> *Belki minkâr-ı zebândan od saçar kaknûsveş*

<div align="right">Celilî (Kazan Nas 2018: 139)</div>

"Oh Celîlî! The eagerness pen cannot write effective poems, but maybe it burns fire from its beak like *Kaknus.*"

The Sun can be identified with *Kaknus* due to its color, heat and constant movement in the sky. With this interest, it is described as the "the golden winged *Kaknus* of the sky" in the couplet below. The image of the Sun, in the shape of a fireball is compared to *Kaknus* burning itself completely inside its nest:

> *Âteşîn-dem olmada kaknûs-ı zerrîn-bâl-i çerh*
>
> *Kendi de olsa aceb mi şu'lesi içre kebâb*

<div align="right">Fehîm-i Kadîm (Felek 2007: 566)</div>

"Since the golden winged *Kaknus* of the sky has a breath of fire, is it surprising that it reflects in its own fire?"

Due to the connection of *Venus's* carriage being pulled by the swan in Western mythology, there are couplets in Divan poetry where *Zühre* and *Kaknus* are used together. The council filled by *Zühre* with burning melodies is a home of fire for Kaknus:

> *Her şerâr-ı nagme-efrûz etti bezm-i zühreyi*
>
> *Kukınûs-ı 'aşka âteş lâne kim gönlümdür ol*

<div align="right">Yümnî (Onay 2007: 222)</div>

"Every spark that shines in a tune has made Venus's council into house full of fire to the love *Kaknus,* which is my heart."

It is seen that *Zühre* (Venus), who was dreamed of as the musician of the sky, was mentioned with the *mûsikâr* in some couplets due to her interest in music:

> *Mevsim-i 'ayş u tarabdır şeb-i 'îd irdi diyü*
>
> *Mutrib-i çarh eline aldı meger mûsikâr*

<div align="right">Bâkî (Küçük 1994: 66))</div>

"As if the season of eating, drinking and having fun and the night of the holiday came, the musician of the sky took the instrument in her hand."

Venus is the brightest star. It is easily identifiable because it is brighter at night than other stars. Its brightness is evident until the Sun rises. In the couplet below with the use of euphemism, the words of the mouth are coincided with the flame of *Kaknus* and it is stated that their rise to the sky will bring fear to *Zühre* just like the rising of the Sun, because the *Sun* will reduce the brightness of *Zühre*:

> *Çıkdı kürre-i ‘arza eder zühreyi lerzân*
> *Âteş saçılır tu'me-i kûknûs-eserimden*

<div align="right">Lâedrî (unknown poet)</div>

"My food, which has an effect like Kaknus, rises into the sky by flaring fires and frightens *Zühre*."

5. Conclusion

Mythological elements play an important role in understanding the literary texts of the culture they belong to. Mythological stories, which are mostly born and shaped as a common cultural product, may change according to the culture to which they belong, and over time, gain different qualities.

Animals hold great importance mythology. Sometimes animals that are in a godlike position have the ability to speak, shape shift and have various other supernatural features. In Eastern mythology the *Kaknus* bird, which burns itself in fire with beautiful tunes and is reborn from its ashes, appears as a mythological hero in the West, called *Kyknos/Cygnus* in Greek mythology. Although there are various variants related to *Kyknos* in the narratives of this culture, some of them are similar to the characteristics of *Kaknus* in Eastern mythology. In Greek mythology, there is a hero named *Kyknos*, who, after he was very upset with the death of his friend Phaethon, was turned into a swan by Apollo, who gave him the ability to lament and make harmonious sounds. In other versions, there are motives that turn the hero into a swan, or are grown up by a swan. The swan is featured in Greek mythology with its color and beauty. The animals of the carriage that Venus rides are depicted as swans because of these features. In Eastern mythology *Kaknus* is instead seen as a bird, not a hero. The story of this bird, believed to have lived for many years, is that when it feels it is about its time to die, it burns the wood it previously collected with a spark ignited by the beating of its own wings and eventually it burns itself completely and is then reborn from its own ashes. In Greek mythology *Kyknos* is a legendary hero who was later turned into a swan, a legendary bird known for its beautiful tunes when it died in the East. The striking point here is that the figure depicted in the West is an animal that exists, a swan; on the contrary, in the East it is a bird that never existed.

In Islamic sources, in addition to being referred to as swan, it is said that it has colored feathers and in this respect, it differs from the stories of Greek mythology, where it is described as being white. In Greek mythology, *Kyknos* stands out because of the harmonious voice that was given to him, while his interest in fire in the East is more prominent. In *Kyknos* articles of Greek mythology sources, a feature related to "fire" or "burning" could not be determined. In the stories, although the motive of "being punished with lightning strikes" is mentioned, this is not a feature of *Kyknos* directly. In contrast, in the sources of Eastern mythology, *Kaknus* is featured with fire-related qualities such as flapping its wings, sparking, burning itself and being reborn from its ashes. Poets in Ottoman poetry give place to *Kaknus* with the features such as sparking, burning itself, rebirth from ashes, having harmonious voice, relationship with music, its beak and living for many years. In the context of its relationship with music, it is seen that poets frequently give place to musical terms and create various literary works with them; because of its rebirth from ashes, they have included words about burning and colors that remind fire.

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Semantic frames of *tašxis* ("identification") in Persian
A corpus-based study

Zolfa Imani and *Ebrahim Badakhshan*

One of the lexical conceptual relations in language is the polysemy relation by which Finch (2000) and Saeed (2009) mean that a word or lexeme has more than one meaning. In polysemy, out of the polysemous word, multiple meanings are interpreted which are closely related to each other. According to what Richards and Schmidt (1985) define, the semantic units composed of a sequence of events or affairs which are relevant to specific situations evoke their own semantic frames. In fact, a frame is a representation of the context including the sentence in which linguistic items are presented (Matthews, 1997). The concept of Frame was primarily proposed by Fillmore (1977; 1982; 1985) in 1970s. The present research has been done in two phases with the goal of comparing the semantic frames of the word *tašxis* (*Identification*) by determining the relationship among them in a way that first the sentences containing it were looked up in the Persian Corpus of Bijankhan. Then, the sentences including *tašxis* (*Identification*) were separated from the sentences comprising different inflectional forms of the verb *tašxis dādan* (*to identify*). Afterwards, each sentence was converted into its equivalent noun/adjective phrase. In the second phase, the English equivalents of *Identification* in each phrase were obtained from three different Persian to English dictionaries to be able to extract the semantic frames for them. After extracting the frames, each English counterpart called Lexical Unit in the FrameNet alongside its semantic frame was compared to other frames and ultimately the following conclusions were drawn: the contexts where *Identification* is used are classified into 5 categories as linguistics, medical science, law, security checking and politics. Regarding the same usage of some words in two categories, four semantic frames are evoked out of five contexts all of which share the concept of the capability of making distinction and that of making decision.

1. Introduction

One of the lexical conceptual relations in language is the polysemy relation which, according to Finch (2000) and Saeed (2009), means a word or lexeme has more than one meaning; however, the relation is

distinguished from the homonymy relation where two words are by accident of the same spoken or written forms. In fact, the main distinction between the two conceptual relations is relevant to the fact that the coexistence of many possible meanings for a word or phrase is called polysemy, whereas the existence of two or more words which have the same forms but different meanings and origins is called homonymy. In polysemy, multiple readings from a word are interpreted which are closely related to each other. As an example, it is possible to excerpt different meanings like obvious, clear, and unadorned from a word like Plain. By contrast, the word plane is considered as a homonymous word having such interpretations as carpenter's tool and airplane (Crystal 2003).

One of the frequently used types of polysemy in Persian is the word *rošan* "light" (Safavi 2006) which makes such phrases as *rūz-e rošan* "a sunny day," *češm-e rošan* "a blue-eyed," *ābi-e rošan* "light blue" when it is preceded by the words *rūz* "day," *češm* "eye" and *ābi* "blue," respectively. Indeed, when the adjective is preceded by any words, it denotes the transparency of that word. As an example, if it is said *kif-e rošan* "light bag," it is meant the bag whose color is light, whether light blue, light green, light red or any other light color, there is no difference. Therefore, it should be said that among the meanings of the word *rošan* there is a kind of semantic association, namely *clarity* or *transparency*, which makes the word *rošan* to be considered polysemous. However, each of the phrases mentioned earlier are used in a particular context. To put it another way, as defined by Richards and Schmidt (1985), semantic units which comprise the sequence of events as well as that of the affairs relevant to specific contexts evoke their own *frame.* Indeed, frame is the representation of the context including the sentence in which linguistic items are represented (Matthews 1997).

The concept of frame was primarily introduced by Fillmore in 1970s in his theory of Frame Semantics. It is derived from the theory of Case Grammar (Fillmore 1986) the developed form of which is known as the Frame Semantics Theory (Fillmore 1977; 1982; 1985). Fillmore and Atkins (1994) have emphasized the significance of the Frame Semantics Theory, regarding it as a theory relevant to lexicography. Based on this theory, the meaning of words would be interpretable by the help of using the semantic frame of those words which is composed of events, participants, and the relations among the constituents of the events. In other words, the representation of the semantic frames of Lexical Units has been inserted in the FrameNet (http://framenet.icsi.berkeley.edu/fndrupal).

In the FrameNet, Lexical Units are dealt with rather than words. A Lexical Unit is the association between a word and its concept. FrameNet is a developing project which is considered as a database for English vocabularies involving some instances of words in their actual usage. From the students' point of view, the project is a dictionary including 13000 conceptual words most of which imply the semantic as well as pragmatic aspect of the words by virtue of annotated examples. For a researcher in

Natural Language Processing (NLP), there are more than 200,000 annotated sentences which are in connection with 1200 semantic frames (The FrameNet Database).

In FrameNet, the citation form (Booij, 2005) of each syntactic category has been inserted as a Lexical Unit. In front of each Lexical Unit, the semantic frame(s) of the unit exists which involves the definition of that frame alongside the Core Frame Elements, Non-Core Frame Elements, Frame-frame relations, and the FE Core set(s) which comprise the semantic frame of that unit altogether. Tables 1. and 2. depict the semantic frames of two closely related syntactic categories:

Lexical Unit	Semantic Frame	Core Frame Elements	Non-Core Frame Elements
Distinction	Similarity	Differntiating_fact; Dimension; Entities; Entity-1 Entity-2	Depictive; Circumstances; Degree; Explanation; Manner; Place; Time

Table 1. Semantic frame of *Distinction*

Lexical Unit	Semantic Frame	Core Frame Elements	Non-Core Frame Elements
Distinct	Similarity	Differntiating_fact; Dimension; Entities; Entity-1 Entity-2	Depictive; Circumstances; Degree; Explanation; Manner; Place; Time

Table 2. Semantic frame of *Distinct*

According to Table 1., the semantic frame for the Lexical Unit Distinction is "similarity" which has five Core frame Elements and eight Non-Core Frame Elements. In Table 2., the semantic frames of the

Lexical Unit Distinct have been illustrated. As the two tables show, the two syntactic categories share identical semantic frames.

It should also be mentioned that there are two other semantic frames for the Lexical Unit Distinct which are "identicality" and "distinctiveness," as Table 2. reveals. However, as the only semantic frame for the Lexical Unit "distinction" is "similarity" which the two syntactic categories have in common, we ignore providing further explanations about them. In what follows, the most outstanding pieces of research carried out within the framework of Frame Semantics Theory will be pointed out and then, the main goal of the current study will be referred to.

Up to now, a great body of research has been done with respect to the theory of Frame Semantics in Persian, the most recent of which are Gandomkar (2014), Nayebloui *et al.* (2015), Mousavi *et al.* (2015), Hesabi (2016), Haji Ghasemi and Shameli (2016), Delaramifar (2017), Ajdadi and Razavi (2018), Mousavi and Amouzadeh (2019), Amraei *et al.* (2019), Mousavi and Zabihi (2019), Dehghan and Karami (2019), Dehghan and Vahabian (2020), Imani and Motavallian (2020a), Imani and Motavallian (2020b) and Imani and Motavallian (2020c).

In the aforementioned works, the semantic frames of some verbs and nouns have been discussed. As far as the present authors know, none of these works and no other work have focused on the study of the semantic frames of *tašxis* "identification."

Our research question can be stated as follows: Is there any relationship among the semantic frames of the word *tašxis*?

The article contains four sections. In the next section, a detailed description of the method of collecting data, making comparison and analysis will be presented. The third section argues for the way the semantic frames of the word in question are interrelated. The concluding remarks will be expressed in the fourth section.

2. Method

The research data have been collected in two phases and then, they were analyzed in a descriptive way. In the first phase of data collection, the word *tašxis* "identification" was searched through the Persian Corpus of Bijankhan, as a result of which a number of 12298 sentences including the word *tašxis* and the infinitive form *tašxis dādan*[1] "to identify" appeared. From among them, the sentences including

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[1] In Persian, the citation form for the verbs as lexical entries in dictionaries is their infinitive forms which are typically made by such light verbs as *dādan* "to give," *kardan* "to do," *dāštan* "to have," and a few other verbs which have been grammaticalized. In such cases, these verbs mean 'to do the noun' followed by them.

tašxis (identification) were separated from those including the various inflectional forms of the verb *tašxis dādan.* Thereafter, for the sake of simplicity and saving space, sentences containing the word *tašxis* were converted into their noun/adjective phrase counterparts. Afterwards, the repeated phrases were removed and at last, out of the 400 phrases under investigation, 30 phrases were selected and included in this paper. In the second phase, the English equivalents of the word *tašxis* were obtained via three distinct Persian to English dictionaries (Aryanpur 2007; Aryanpur and Aryanpur 2008; Haim 2010) so that the extraction of their semantic frames from FrameNet would be feasible. Then, the extracted semantic frames along with what they have inside were separately tabulated and finally comparisons among the frames were made.

3. Discussion

As mentioned earlier, the FrameNet is structured in a way that its Lexical Units are of various syntactic categories and their citation form (Booij 2005) has been specified in the database. Moreover, for each Lexical Unit, there is at least one semantic frame and five semantic frames at most. This depends on the syntactic category of the Lexical Units as well as the idioms constructed out of them as well. For the word *tašxis*, ten English equivalents were obtained from three different Persian to English dictionaries and then, the English counterparts were looked up through the FrameNet to seek for their semantic frame(s). Some equivalents have only one semantic frame, whereas some others evoke more than one semantic frame and for some others no semantic frame was proposed, since it refers to the fact that the English version does not exist as a Lexical Unit at all. To put it another way, from the FrameNet that equivalent is absent.

At this point, before making comparisons among the semantic frames, the syntactic phrases involving the word *tašxis* will be checked out and then, the semantic frames will be compared and argued via tables.

In what follows, phrases 1. through 30. will represent the contexts where *tašxis* is used:

1. اداره محترم تشخیص هویت *edāre mohtaram-e tašxis-e hoviyat*

2. با تشخیص پزشک *bā tašxis-e pezešk*

3. بنا به تشخیص خود *banā be tašxis-e xod*

4. تشخیص رمز *tašxis-e ramz*

5. تشخیص کلمات *tašxis-e kalamāt*

6. تشخیص مصلحت نظام *tašxis-e maslahat-e nezām*

7. مرکز تشخیص و پیگیری   *markaz-e tašxis va peygiri*

8. تشخیص خوب از بد   *tašxis-e xub az bad*

9. تشخیص صحیح از سقیم   *tašxis-e sahih az saqim*

10. مانع تشخیص و آگاهی از جزئیات   *māne' tašxis va āgāhi az ǰoz'iyāt*

11. سیستم تصدیق و تشخیص هویت   *sistem-e tasdiq va tašxis-e hoviyat*

12. قدرت تشخیص و انتخاب کاندیدا   *qodrat-e tašxis va entexāb-e kāndidā*

13. تشخیص مسیر پنالتی   *tašxis-e masir-e penālti*

14. مسئولیت تشخیص مشاغل سخت و زیان‌آور   *mas'uliyat-e tašxis-e mašāqel-e saxt va ziyān āvar*

15. به تشخیص پزشک و توصیه مربیان   *be tašxis-e pezesk va tosiye morabiyān*

16. به تشخیص دادگاه و قاضی   *be tašxis-e dādgah va qāzi*

17. دستگاه اسکنر دستی برای تشخیص سرطان   *dastgāh-e eskaner-e dasti barāye tašxis-e saratān*

18. مراجعه به افراد خبره برای تشخیص مرجع تقلید   *morāǰǰe' be afrād-e xebre barāye tašxis-e marǰa'e taqlid*

19. فضای آزمایشگاهی تشخیص اعتیاد   *fazāye āzmāyešgāhi-e tašxis-e e'tiyād*

20. تشخیص سریع نقاط قوت و ضعف   *tašxis-e sari'e noqāt-e za'f va qovat*

21. تشخیص به موقع و درست ناملایمات   *tašxis-e be moqe va dorost-e nāmolayemāt*

22. بهترین وسیله برای تشخیص تناسب داستان کوتاه با سن مخاطب   *behtarin vasile barāye tašxis-e tanāsob-e dāstān-e kūtah bā sen-e moxātab*

23. تشخیص راه صحیح و شیوه درست   *tašxis-e rāh-e sahih va šive dorost*

24. تشخیص و درمان مسمومیت   *tašxis va darmān-e masmūmiyat*

25. تشخیص و دقت شما   *tašxis va deqat-e šomā*

26. آزمایشگاه تشخیص طبی   *azmayešgāh-e tašxis-e tebi*

27. اعزام تیم قهرمانی به تورنمنت با تشخیص فدراسیون   *e'zām-e tim-e qahremāni be tornoment bā tašxis-e fedrāsiyon*

28. ضعیف بودن کودک در تشخیص دوری یا نزدیکی   *za'if būdan-e kūdak dar tasxis-e duri yā nazdiki*

29. تشخیص و تمیز صداهای کلامی و غیرکلامی   *tašxis va tamiz-e sedāhāy-e kalāmi va qeyr kalāmi*

30. تشخیص علت مرگ *tašxis-e elat-e marg*

1. The respectable identification office

2. By doctor's diagnosis

3. By one's own recognition

4. Code specification

5. Vocabulary recognition

6. Expediency Council

7. Identification and tracking center

8. To distinguish good from bad

9. To make a distinction between correct and incorrect

10. The prevention of detection and awareness of details

11. Authentication and Identification System

12. The power to identify and select candidate

13. Penalty track detection

14. The responsibility for identifying hard and harmful jobs

15. At the physician's discretion and on the coaches' advice

16. At the court and judge's discretion

17. Handheld scanner to diagnose cancer

18. To refer to experts to identify the imitation reference

19. Laboratory space for addiction diagnosis

20. Quick identification of strengths and weaknesses

21. Timely and correct diagnosis of accidents

22. The best tool for determining the appropriateness of a short story to the age of the audience

23. To identify the right way

24. The diagnosis and treatment of poisoning

25. Your diagnosis and accuracy

26. Medical diagnosis laboratory

27. To send the championship team to the tournament at the discretion of federation

28. The child's weakness in near or far diagnosis

29. To make a distinction between verbal and nonverbal sounds

30. The diagnosis of the cause of death

It is worth noting that although it seems that the word *tašxis* in the abovementioned data has been used in 30 different contexts, it must be said that some of them are almost semantically identical. To put it another way, the word appears to have been used in two or more diverse contexts; however, it is interpreted in the same way. For instance, examples 1., 11. and 16. can be referred to, all of which evoke the semantic frame of law. Moreover, in examples 2., 4., 5., 10., 15., 17., 19., 24., 26., 29. and 30., in spite of the fact that the word *tašxis* has been used in two various contexts—linguistics and medical sciences—its uses are semantically synonymous in a way that they are interpreted as and pointed to the capability of recognition and specification as well. Likewise, examples 3. and 25. on the one hand, and examples 6., 12., and 18. on the other, are considered to be synonymous, as a result of which they will evoke the same semantic frame.

Table 3. illustrates the semantic frames of the equivalents and Table 4. displays each frame together with its Core and Non-Core Frame Elements:

Lexical Unit	Semantic Frames
Distinction	Similarity
Discernment	Mental_property
Identification	Document
Assessment	Examination; Assessing
Finding	Verdict; Documents
Evaluation	Assessing
Diagnosis	---------
Recognition	----------
Detection	----------
Discretion	----------

Table 3. Semantic frames of *tašxis*

Lexical Unit	Semantic Frames	Core Frame Elements	Non-Core Frame Elements
Distinction	Similarity	Differentiating_fact; Dimension; Entities-1; Entities-2	Circumstances; Degree; Depictive; Explanation; Manner; Place; Time
Discernment	Mental_property	Behavior; Practice; Protagonist	Degree; Domain; Judge; Manner
Identification	Document	Bearer; Document; Issuer; Obligation; Right; Status	Descriptor; Medium; Specification
Assessment	Examination	Examination; Examinee; Examiner; Knowledge; Qualification	Manner; Means; Place; Purpose; Time
Finding	Assessing	Assessor; Feature; Medium; Method; Phenomenon	Beneficiary; Circumstances; Co-participant; Degree; Depictive; Duration; Evidence; Explanation; Frequency; Manner; Means; Place; Purpose; Result; Standard; Time; Value
Evaluation	Verdict	Case; Charges; Defendant; Finding; Judge	Circumstances; Explanation; Legal_basis; Manner; Means; Place; Purpose; Time

Table 4. The Core and Non-Core Frame Elements of *tašxis*

According to Table 3., such English equivalents as Diagnosis, Recognition, Detection and Discretion lack semantic frames. In other words, these four words have not been included in the list of the FrameNet Lexical Units. By contrast, the word "distinction" has only one semantic frame: "similarity." Furthermore, for each of the Lexical Units, that is to say Assessment and Finding, two semantic frames have been defined. One of the frames evoked by Finding is shared by Identification—Document—

relevant to which the two Lexical Units, that is to say Identification and Finding exist. They have identical Core and Non-Core Frame Elements.

Another point to be stated is that from among the Core Frame Elements, merely the elements belonging to the Identification and Finding Frames have been totally repeated, whereas the repeated Non-Core Frame Elements can almost be found within all frames. Thus, with regard to the two latter facts, Tables 5. and 6. will be shown:

Core Frame Elements	Relevant Frames
Bearer	
Document	
Issuer	
Obligation	Finding
Right	Identification
Status	
Phenomenon	

Table 5. The Core Frame Elements all frames have in common

Non-Core Frame Elements	Relevant Frames
Manner	Similarity
Medium	Mental_property
Place	Document
Time	Examination
Purpose	Assessing
Specification	Verdict
	Documents

Table 6. The Non-Core Frame Elements all frames have in common

As Table 5. shows, the Frame Elements all frames have in common are solely restricted to Finding and Identification Frames while the Non-Core Frame Elements of the same type are not only limited to the two aforementioned frames but are also relevant to every frame evoked by *tašxis*. It is worth noting that although there are no semantic frames for Diagnosis, Recognition, Detection as well as Discretion, for such verbs as Detect and Recognize the FrameNet has Lexical Units and semantic frames. The

semantic frames of Detect are Perception_experience[2] and Becoming_aware,[3] and the only semantic frame of Recognize is Becoming_aware. As the latter frame is shared by the two verbs, the Core and Non-Core Elements belonging to it will be considerable:

Lexical Units	*Semantic Frames*	*Core Frame Elements*	*Non-Core Frame Elements*
Detect Recognize	Becoming_aware Becoming_aware	Cognizer; Instrument; Means; Phenomenon; Topic	Circumstances; Degree; Evidence; Explanation; Frequency; Ground; Manner; Time; Particular_iteration; Period_of_iterations; Purpose; State; Frequency

Table 7. Core and Non-Core Frame Elements of Becoming_aware

It must be stated that the two elements Means, and Phenomenon are prominent here, as the former is what the Non-Core Frame Elements in Table 6. have in common while the latter is what Assessment Frame has amongst its Core Frame Elements. In addition, the investigation of the phrases containing the word *tašxis* (phrases 1. through 30.) on the one hand and taking the semantic frames the word evokes into consideration on the other, would express that tašxis (identification) in Persian enjoys the four following English equivalents:

1. Recognition
2. Identification
3. Evaluation
4. Distinction

Indeed, the contexts in which *tašxis* is used are classified into the following five categories. However, given the fact that the two words Diagnosis and Identification can be substituted in the field of medicine, the four semantic frames are evoked out of the five distinct contexts as follows:

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[2] According to the FrameNet, "This frame contains perception words whose Perceivers have perceptual experiences that they do not necessarily intend to."

[3] According to the FrameNet, "Words in this frame have to do with a Cognizer adding some Phenomenon to their model of the world. They are similar to Coming-to-belive words, except the latter generally involve reasoning from Evidence."

a. Vocabulary recognition

b. Doctor's identification = diagnosis

c. Judge's discretion

d. Identification Center

e. Imitation Reference/ Candidate/ Correct or incorrect identification

Regarding the abovementioned classifications as well as the English versions pertaining to each context, the semantic frames set for *tašxis* will be considerable:

Lexical Unit	Context of Use	English Equivalents	Semantic Frames
Becoming_aware	Linguistics		Becoming_aware
		Recognition	
Document	Medical science		Document
		Identification	
Assessing	Law		Assessing
		Evaluation	
Similarity	Security checking		Similarity
		Distinction	
	Politics		

Table 8. Practical classification of *tašxis* (*identification*) and its semantic frames

4. Conclusion

The word *tašxis* that is frequently used in both spoken and written forms in Persian will be disparately interpreted in different contexts like any other words of polysemy. Contexts, which were considered as frames in this paper, make the word evoke different frames in diverse situations. As the word *tašxis* is a polysemous word, the semantic frames relevant to it were expected to be meticulously associated in a way that its several elucidations are closely related to each other. After extracting from the FrameNet, the semantic frames of the word in question were compared. Consequently, it became clear that different uses of *tašxis* are restricted to five contexts or frames which are linguistics, medicine, politics, security checking and law. Like the close relationship existing among the various interpretations of the word *tašxis*, there are also near associations among the semantic frames evoked by the word under study as well, which are the capability of making decision as well as distinction.

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265

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Exploring universals in audiovisual translation
A case study of *Frozen* dubbed into Persian

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Previous remarks in Translation Studies have involved generalizations based on comparing translations to their source texts (Chesterman 2010). In this article, Baker's (1993; 1996) translation universals are examined on the animated movie *Frozen* (2013) and its three Persian dubbed versions. The reflection of the following translation universals on a character's speech are attested: Simplification, Explicitation, and Normalization. Results show that Simplification and Explicitation are the most frequent strategies that were adopted in the dubbed versions. Furthermore, another strategy, namely Exaggeration, is observed in the data. It is used only for one character in the movie, i.e., an ice salesman called Kristoff. The reason for employing this conscious strategy appears to be the inequality of power distribution among characters that influenced the style of translation in the Persian dubbed versions.

Keywords: Translation Universals, Persian Dubbing, *Frozen* Movie

1. Introduction

Dubbing audiovisual products in Iran is a developing industry that dates back to the 1940s (Ameri 2018), and agents in this area are making progress in different aspects of dubbing such as song translation and song dubbing (Golchinnezhad and Afrouz 2021a). In Iran, dubbing is favored more over other modes of audiovisual translation (AVT) (Khoshsaligheh and Ameri 2016). Nord, Khoshsaligheh, and Ameri (2015: 13) scrutinized professional dubbing in Iran into two categories of IRIB (Islamic Republic of Iran Broadcast) and Home Entertainment Distribution Studios. The former is administered by the government and the latter is a private section.

With the growth of Descriptive Translation Studies (DTS) in the 1970s, translated texts begun to be considered as valuable target text types that are worth examining based on their own merits, regardless of how imperfect and flawed they might be compared with non-translated target texts (Chesterman 2010). In the 1990s, it was Baker who first integrated a corpus-based approach to the study of translated texts (Baker 1993; 1995; 1996).

In time, corpus-based methodology crawled its way into AVT studies and became practical in the field of AVT research. Malmkjaer (1998) introduced general advantages of applying a corpus-based

approach in Translation Studies. They can be adapted to the field of AVT as follows: singling out the audiovisual translated texts features, determining norms in dubbing and subtitling –hence leading to make a particular translation tool specifically designed for film translation, and helping with the improvement of film translator training programs.

In light of developments in corpus-based AVT research, in this study, we seek answers to the following questions by exploring the universal features occurring in three Persian dubbed versions of the animated movie *Frozen* (2013):

1. Making reference to Baker's (1996) Translation Universals, what are the most and the least frequent universal features occurring in the dubbed versions of the movie *Frozen* (2013)?

2. What strategy can be added to Baker's (1996) Universals in the context of Audiovisual Translation?

2. Review of literature

2.1. Translation universals

Sager's (1994) attempts to uncover functional features of translated documents revealed the value of translated text as a distinct and independent type of target language production. The recognition of translated text characteristics was brought into the spotlight by Baker's (1996) corpus-driven research Baker (1996) analyzed English translated texts from different source texts belonging to various genres. In doing so, she hoped to discover consistencies that are unique to translations. Baker (1996) examined three universal features formerly attested in literature; that is, simplification, explicitation, and normalization or conservatism, against the corpus of translated texts. She added a fourth universal feature called levelling out and she also scrutinized exaggeration of the target language features (Baker, 1993) as another feature of translated texts.

The importance of universals lies in both methodology (development in corpus making and empirical research designs) and pedagogy (in translation training courses) (Chesterman, 2010). The following section will explain these universal features more closely.

2.1.1. Simplification

There are several ways to make a linguistic code simple or simpler. As one example, translators may split up long sentences to shorter ones. 'Average sentence length,' and contrastive analysis of non-translated target texts with translations into the same language can indicate whether the translation is simplified or not (Baker 1996: 181).

Baker (1996) mentions other examples of simplification such as strengthened punctuation, lexical density, and type-token ratio which presents vocabulary range of a text. These are considered on the premise that the texts which have less wide-ranging vocabulary and more grammatical words are simpler and easier to understand.

2.1.2. Explicitation

It is a general belief that translations contain more words than their source texts and this expansion of the text makes it more explicit. The linguistic mediator would interpret implicit ideas that the original text carries, and then make them explicit by conveying them in more words. Baker points out some manifestations of explicitation in translated texts such as the use of descriptive lexicon, repetitions, explanations, the addition of modifiers and conjunctions, and addition of supplementary information to the text (Baker 1996: 180).

2.1.3. Normalization

Normalization is the translator's tendency towards target language culture and conventions. This strategy is in line with the power relation between the source language and the target language, in a way that the lower the status of the source language, the higher the possibility for the translator to normalize the translated text according to the target language norms (Baker, 1996, 183).

2.1.4. Levelling Out

Levelling out involves falling on the center of a range of predispositions to either source language or target language. The same phenomenon is called 'convergence' by Laviosa: it is the "relatively higher level of homogeneity of translated texts with regard to their own scores on given measures of universal features" (Laviosa 2002: 72). Examples of such a case would be most of the translated texts that show the same or approximate lexical density, type-token ratio, and M sentence length compared with a corpus of the same domain non-translated target texts (Baker 1996: 184).

2.1.5. Exaggeration

Exaggeration of target language features (Baker 1993: 245) refers to the characteristics of a translation that entails a particular construct that is only specific to the target language, not the source language

(Roks 2014). This feature somewhat correlates to the term "third code" (Frawley 1984: 168) mentioned by some scholars (Baker 1993).

2.2. Previous Studies

Olohan and Baker (2000) examined explicitation by analyzing two corpora of translated and non-translated English texts, namely the Translational English Corpus (TEC) and the British National Corpus (BNC). Using a concordance tool, they provided concordance lists of *that-zero* connective with all forms of the verbs *say* and *tell.* The results demonstrated that the *that* construction occurred more in translated texts than in the original ones while the *zero* constructions were more frequent in the original English texts. These results are in line with previous studies maintaining that translations tend to be more syntactically explicit. Also, the structure of *said* with the subject *it* in a passive form (like *it is said that…*) was very common in the translations. This was interpreted as the possibility of translators' avoidance of alternative structures such as *one says* or *one can say* and so on. In addition to that, Olohan and Baker found that proper nouns are more common in reporting structures of translated texts than pronouns. This again confirms the translators' tendency towards grammatical explicitation (Olohan and Baker 2000: 157).

Pym (2005) offers a model of Explicitation through the lens of risk-management to understand why Explicitation is common in translation, and what is the reason for using this strategy. Pym defines risk as a possible unwanted outcome which is non-cooperative in communicating the source text message to the target reader or audience. For Pym, low-risks are those unwanted outcomes that are very restricted in number, and high-risks are indeed the opposite. The process of translation imposes communicating in the target culture with less source-culture references alike; therefore, compared with non-translated target texts, there are more risks available for translation. Regarding this, it is understandable and rational that translators would tend to be risk-averse in cases where taking risks would not be appreciated. Trying to avoid risks is one explanation for employing universal strategies. Also, Halverson proposed a hypothesis of gravitational pull (Halverson 2003: 2007 quoted in Chesterman 2010). This hypothesis posits how target language norms would affect the translator's decision-making process. In other words, these norms are held in the translator's mind that can generate translation universals in practice.

Zasiekin (2016) looked at research on translation universals from a psycholinguistic point of view. He aimed to propose a psycholinguistic approach to Ukrainian translations of English fictional texts by analyzing empirical data. He studied forty Ukrainian translations by undergraduate studentsof A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court by Mark Twain and Franny by J. D. Salinger. By applying a

merged approach of think-aloud protocol and psycholinguistic techniques, the researcher identified that translator's brains hold some sort of 'switching' device that enables them to interpret and recreate the source text. The results of his study also approved the existence of certain 'procedural and discursive' S-universals in the process of translation.

Feng, Crezee and Grant (2018) tested the existence possibility of two universal features of Simplification and Explicitation, because "they are the most obvious features that would distinguish translational language from native-speaker language" (Feng, Crezee and Grant 2018: 2). In doing so, they selected collocation as a linguistic device to have a well-defined methodological and interpreting view. They employed Feng's (2014) comprehensive theoretical model of collocation in translation through searching for collocability and delexicalization in their comparable corpus of original English and translated Chinese into English business texts. Their findings validated that in translated texts collocations are simpler and more explicit in form and meaning in comparison with collocations in non-translated target texts.

3. Methodology

3.1. The Case of Study

Frozen (2013) is the tenth highest-grossing movie of all time (www.boxofficemojo.com). It also won two Oscar Awards for Best Animated Feature Film and Best Original Song (www.imdb.com). This is a special Disney movie because it features two princesses as sisters.

This movie was selected among all other available options since it has become very popular and supposedly has been of great influence on younger generations for breaking the stereotypes of gender roles to depict a society of equal genders (Garabedian 2014). The theme setting of the movie was inspired by Norwegian housing architecture and design which made Norway tourism flourish by 37 percent just half a year after *Frozen* was released (Stampler 2014, quoted in Patel 2015: 2). It is worth noting that this movie is well received not only by children but also by adults (Kowalski and Bhalla, 2015). Kowalski and Bhalla (2015) also identified the psychodynamic effect of this movie in depicting the problematic relationships between the siblings, the psychological defense mechanisms they might pick, and the emotional progress of the target audience.

There are three dubbed versions of this movie available in Persian. All of them were considered in this study. There is usually more than one Persian dubbed version of movies accessible in Iran because, in addition to the national broadcast, private sectors in dubbing industry are also active and popular. These three versions are provided by three different Home Entertainment Distribution Studios and translated by Ali Caszadeh, Omid Golchin, and Erfan Honarbakhsh.

3.2. Procedures

Frozen has six main characters who are all royals except for one, Kristoff. Kristoff, who harvests and sells ice, was selected for close examination because he was expected to show different character traits due to his diverse social status compared with the rest of main characters (Golchinnezhad and Afrouz 2021b).

Kristoff's original dialogue lines and all three dubbed versions of the corresponding lines were transcribed. Then Translation Universal strategies introduced by Baker (1993; 1996) were applied to the target texts. In the following sections the results of the analysis are presented as tables, and discussions and explanations are provided.

4. Results and Discussion

4.1. Results

There were 150 segments (linguistic units in each scene) spoken by Kristoff. They were analyzed in terms of the universal features of Deletion, Explicitation, Simplification, Normalization, and Exaggeration. As shown in table 1, each translator had a different style for translating Kristoff's lines. They will be discussed in detail later on. Generally, Simplification was the most frequently used strategy by all three translators (33 percent). Simplification was followed by the strategies of Explicitation (26 percent) and Normalization (24 percent). The results of this study correspond to those provided by Roks (2014) who studied universal features including Explicitation, Simplification, and Normalization using a corpus of Dutch subtitles of the English TV series *Sherlock Holmes*. As the spatial constraint is a critical component determining the translation strategy in the subtitling mode, "Explicitation thus appears to be in conflict with the space constraint and it, therefore, seems unlikely that this translation universal will be found in subtitles" (Roks 2014: 38).

Translators	Strategies				
	Deletion	Explicitation	Simplification	Normalization	Exaggeration
Omid Golchin	0	40	47	9	0
Erfan Honarbakhsh	21	30	38	25	2
Ali Caszadeh	0	18	27	46	36
Total	6%	26%	33%	24%	11%

Table 1. Frequency of strategies and their total percentage

As demonstrated in Table 1, the most frequently employed translation universal for Caszadeh was Normalization and the least frequent was Deletion with zero percent. It is worth noting that translators choose to delete parts of the source text for several reasons, one of which can be due to censorship. Honarbakhsh used Explicitation and Exaggeration as the most and the least applied strategy respectively. And finally, Omid Golchin utilized Simplification as the most used strategy and Deletion as the least applied one.

Translator	Number of Translated Words in Kristoff's Line	Total Number of Translated Words	Two Most Frequent Strategies	Two Least Frequent Strategies
Caszadeh	910	1,668	Normalization & Exaggeration	Deletion & Explicitation
Honarbakhsh	864	1,563	Explicitation & Simplification	Deletion & Exaggeration
Golchin	987	1,786	Simplification & Explicitation	Deletion & Normalization

Table 2. Translator's most and least applied strategies

4.2 Discussion

To answer the first research question regarding the most and the least repetitive strategies, Simplification and Deletion were the most and the least frequent strategies applied in *Frozen* (2013), respectively. The data analysis also revealed a new trend in this audiovisual text type, namely Exaggeration. In the following sections, the strategies are illustrated by giving examples from the data.

4.2.1. Explicitation

Explicitation is the process or the result of making the source text message explicit in the target version. It can happen by several means; basically it involves adding clarifying the message using more words. In the following example, Kristoff has just entered Oaken's shop, with half of his face covered with a cloth, and he looks frozen. He goes straightly to Anna and tells her 'Carrots.' which are right behind her. She is somehow scared of him and tries so hard not to make eye contact with him. Golchin

and Honarbakhsh translated the line as هویج می‌خوام /havīj-mīkhām/[1] 'I want carrot' and هویج بده /havīj-bedeh/ 'give me a carrot,' respectively. Both of these translations add more words to the message that conveys the message that Kristoff *wants* carrots, although it seems that Jennifer Lee intentionally begins Kristoff's lines with single words to give the impression that he is a gruff character. Meanwhile, Caszadeh's translation seems to highlight the original intention by not making the line more explicit: هویج /havīj/ 'carrot.'

Sometimes, translators add more information to the original message. For instance, in the following translation by Golchin, the sentence این خیلی گرونه /amā-īn-kheylī-gerūneh/ 'this is very expensive' is added to the translation to make it clearer why Kristoff is not accepting Anna's gift:

1. ST (KRISTOFF):	No. I can't accept this.
TT (by Golchin):	اما این خیلی گرونه من نمی‌تونم قبولش کنم.
	/amā-īn-kheylī-gerūneh-man-nemītūnam-qabūlesh-konam/
Back translation:	But this is very expensive, I can't accept it.

Another typical example of explicitation in translation is the use of proper nouns (or nouns in general) instead of the pronouns spoken in the source text. In 2. we see that 'her' in the original line (referring to Elsa, Anna's sister) is translated as خواهرت /khāharet/ 'your sister' in Golchin's and Honarbakhsh's translations. However, Caszadeh translated it with the inflectional morpheme ش /sh/ that shows third person singular in Persian.

2. ST (KRISTOFF):	So you're not at all afraid of *her*?
TT 1 (by Caszadeh):	یعنی اصلاً ازش نمی‌ترسی؟
	/ya'nī-azash- nemītarsī/
Back translation:	You mean you're not afraid of *her* at all?
TT 2 (by Golchin):	پس یعنی از خواهرت نمی ترسی؟
	/pas-ya'nī-az- khāharet-nemītarsī/
Back translation:	So you mean you're not afraid of *your sister*?
TT 3 (by Honarbakhsh):	پس گفتی از خواهرت نمی‌ترسی دیگه؟
	/pas-goftī-az-khāharet-nemītarsī/
Back translation:	So you said you're not afraid of *your sister*, right?

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[1] Persian is transliterated according to the UN System (1972). Retrieved from http://ee.www.ee/transliteration.

4.2.2. Simplification

As discussed earlier, simplification concerns simplifying the original message. It entails shortening the sentences, in other words, the target text has fewer words. In 3., the phrase 'how to climb mountains' is translated into a single word کوهنورد /kūhnavard/ 'mountaineer.'

3. ST (KRISTOFF):	It's too steep. I've only got one rope, and *you don't know how to climb mountains.*
TT 1 (by Caszadeh):	شیبش خیلی تنده. یه کلاف طناب بیشتر نارّم. تو هم که کوهنورد نیسی.
	/shībesh-kheylī-tondeh-ye kalāf-tanāb-bīshtar-nārram-to-ham-keh-kūhnavard-nīsīt/
Back translation:	It's too steep. I've only got one hank of rope. And you're not a mountaineer.
TT 2 (by Golchin):	خب شیب کوه زیاده. منم فقط یه رشته طناب دارم. تو هم که کوهنورد نیستی.
	/khob-shībe-kūh-zīyādeh-manam-faqat-yeh-reshteh-tanāb-dāram-to-ham-keh-kūhnavard-nīsīt/
Back translation:	Well, the mountain's too steep. I only have one hank of rope. And you're not a mountaineer.

Simplification sometimes involves using more general words or subordinates. For instance, in 4. translators used عقل و هوش /aqlo-hūsh/ meaning 'brain' and 'intelligence' instead of 'judgement:'

4. ST (KRISTOFF):	Because I don't trust *your judgement.*
TT 1 (by Honarbakhsh):	چون به عقل تو شک دارم.
	/chon-beh-aqle-to-shak-dāram/
Back translation:	Because I doubt *your brain.*
TT 2 (by Golchin):	چون به عقل و هوشت اعتماد ندارم.
	/chon-beh-aqlo-hūshet-e'temād-nadāram/
Back translation:	Because I don't trust *your brain and intelligence.*

In the next example, 'twenty feet of fresh powder' is translated as a less specific phrase چندین لایه برف /chandīn-lāyeh-barf/ meaning 'several layers of snow:'

5. ST (KRISTOFF):	There's *twenty feet of fresh powder* down there.
TT 1 (by Honarbakhsh):	اون پایین چندین لایه برف تازه است.
	/ūn-pāyīn-chandīn-lāyeh-barfe-tāzeh-ast/
Back translation:	Down there, there are *several layers of fresh snow.*
TT 2 (by Golchin):	اون پایین چندین لایه برف نرمه
	/ūn-pāyīn-chandīn-lāyeh-barfe-narmeh/
Back translation:	Down there, there are *several layers of soft snow.*

4.2.3. Normalization

Normalization is the exaggeration of the target language features in the translations. In the present study, many cases of target language proverbs and common phrases were found. For instance, in the translation of 'calm down,' the idiom از کوره در رفتن /az kūreh dar raftan/ 'to get mad, angry' is used. In 6., the negative form of the idiom is applied.

6. ST (KRISTOFF):	All right feisty pants. *Calm down.*
TT (Caszadeh):	آروم باش آتیشی خانم جوش نیار. بیخیال **از کوره در نرو**.
	/ārūm-bāsh-ātīshī-khānūm-jūsh-nayār-bīkhīyāl-az-kūreh-dar-naro/
Back translation:	Calm down Ms. Fire! Relax. Come on. Calm down.

Sometimes, translators would complete intentional or unintentional unfinished sentences of the original text in their translations. In 7., Kristoff says this line while Oaken is carrying him on his shoulder to throw him out of the shop. His sentence is left unfinished because Kristoff's head is banged against the shop board. The rest of his sentence is predictable (maybe 'I'm *sorry*'). The translator finished it by اشتباه کردم /eshtebāh-kardam/ meaning 'I made a mistake.'

7. ST (KRISTOFF):	Okay. Okay, *I'm*- Ow! Whoa!
TT (by Golchin):	آی آی اشتباه کردم. آی سرم آی
	/āy-āy-eshtebāh-kardam-āy-saram-āy/
Back translation:	Ouch! Ouch! I made a mistake, Ouch my head! Ouch!

4.2.4. Exaggeration

Exaggeration analysis yielded surprising results compared with what was expected, given many constraints that dubbing contains vis-à-vis lip-synchronization and temporal limitations. The translations of Kristoff's lines showed a fascinating trait, especially in Caszadeh's translation. There seems to be three unique features of the Persian language that made exaggeration possible in this dubbed version: changing the vowel sounds, clipping words, and the use of highly colloquial expressions. The following two examples are samples of vowel change:

8. ST (KRISTOFF):	This is fresh lacquer. Seriously, were you raised in a *barn*?
TT (by Caszadeh):	تازه بهش روغن جلا زدم. تو توو طِویله بزرگ شدی؟
	/tāzeh-behesh-roghan-jalā-zadam-to-tū-tevīleh-bozorg-shodī/
Back translation (neutral):	I've recently applied the lacquer. Were you raised in a barn?

In 8., the word 'barn' (طَویله formally /tavīleh/) is pronounced /tevīleh/, with an unconventional pronunciation of the vowels.

9. ST (KRISTOFF):	So how exactly are you planning to stop this weather?
TT (by Caszadeh):	میگَم تو دقیقاً چطو میخوای جلوی این سرما رو بیگیری؟
	/mīgam-to-daqīqan-cheto-mīkhāy-jeloye-īn-sarmā-ro-begīrī/
Back translation (neutral):	I'm asking how exactly do you want to stop this cold weather?

In 9., one part of the compound verb بگیری/ /begīrī/, meaning 'to stop,' is dubbed بیگیری /bīgīrī/, which is also uncommon in everyday Persian speech.

There were also some cases in which the words were shortened due to the linguistic economic principle rather than just being an attempt to synch to the character's lip movements.

10. ST (KRISTOFF):	I wouldn't put my foot there.
TT (by Caszadeh):	أ من میشنوی پاتو اونجا نذا.
	/a-man-mīshnavī-pāto-ūnjā-nazār/
Back translation (neutral):	If you ask me, don't put your foot there.

As can be seen in 10., where words like نذا /nazā/, short form of نگذار /nagozār/ or نذار /nazār/ 'don't put,' and أ /a/ (shortened for the word أز /az/ 'from') have been used in the translation.

11. ST (KRISTOFF):	Because I've seen them do it before.
TT (by Honarbakhsh):	واسکه قبلاً هم این کارا رو کردن.
	/vāskeh-qablan-ham-īn-karā-ro-kardan/
Back translation (neutral):	Because they've done it before.

In 11., three words have been merged: واسه این که /vāse-ine-keh/ as واسکه/vāskeh/ meaning 'because of.' Cases like these are very common in the data.

4.2.5. A different variety

The highly colloquial target-language expressions applied in translations are categorized into three groups: use of Old Tehrani dialect expressions (examples 12. and 13.), use of caregiver-words (examples 14. and 15.), and finally, use of expressions attributed to the Lati or Jaheli variety of Persian language (examples 16., 17. and 18.).

In the following scene, Kristoff has put some supplies and carrots on Oaken's desk and wants to pay for them:

12. OAKEN: That'll be forty.

ST (KRISTOFF):	Forty? No, ten.
TT 1 (by Caszadeh):	چهل؟ نخیرم اینا ده چوقه
	/chehel-nakheyram-īna-dah-tā-chūqeh/
Back translation (neutral):	Forty? No, they cost ten.
TT 2 (by Golchin):	چهل تا؟ من ده تا بیشتر نمیدم
	/chehel-tā-man-dah-tā-bīshtat-nemīdam/
Back translation (neutral):	Forty? I won't pay more than ten.
TT 3 (by Honarbakhsh):	برو بابا ده تا بیشتر بهت نمیدم
	/boro-bābā-dah-tā-bīshtar-behet-nemīdam/
Back translation (neutral):	Common! I won't pay more than ten.

In the first translation, we see that the translator added the word چوق /chūq/, 'a monetary unit,' which is absent in the original. But what is interesting about the employment of such a word is that this is an old word from Old Tehrani dialect. There is another case of Tehrani dialect in 13. کله سحر /kalleh-sahar/ 'at dawn,' which is still common in the colloquial speech of Persian speakers.

13. ST (KRISTOFF):	We leave at *dawn*.
TT (by Caszadeh):	کله سحر میزنیم جاده
	/kaleh-sahar-mīzanīm-jādeh/
Back translation (neutral):	Right at dawn, we hit the road.

In the next two examples, the translator has employed expressions that are only used when talking to toddlers. Like saying something is جیز /jīz /, an onomatopoeia for things that would burn and hurt you (14.); or هم کردن /ham-kardan/ 'to eat' (15.).

14. ST (KRISTOFF):	Didn't your parents ever *warn you* about strangers?
TT (by Caszadeh):	بابا ننت هیچوقت بت نگفتن آدم غریبه جیزه؟
	/bābā-nanat-hīchvaqt-bet-nagoftan-ādame-qarībeh-jīzeh/
Back translation (neutral):	Didn't your dad and mom ever tell you that strangers might burn you?
15. ST (KRISTOFF):	And *eats* it.
TT (by Caszadeh):	و همش کنه
	/va-hamesh-koneh/
Back translation (neutral):	And eats it.

Three examples will be given on the third subcategory, i.e. the Lati variety. Lati, or Jaheli, is also known as زبان کوچه بازار /zabāne-kuche-bāzār/ 'the language of markets and streets,' and it is highly colloquial. Najafi (1999) has classified this speech variety into two categories: informal speech (everyday language) and colloquial which consists of conventional and unconventional Lati subcategories (Neghabi and Tajfiruzeh 2018). In 16. we see a fairly uncommon equivalent for 'guys' as بر و بچ /baro-bach/ while normally it would be بچهها /bachehā/ in informal speech.

16. ST (KRISTOFF):   Hey, *guys!*
TT (by Caszadeh):   سلام بر و بچ!
                            /salām-baro-bach/
Back translation (neutral): Hey, guys!

There are two other cases of Lati variety in 17.: جمالتو عشقه /jamāleto-'eshqeh/ 'it's nice to see you,' and مخلصیم /mokhlesīm/, which does not have quite an exact equivalent in English—being an informal expression for greetings, loosely equivalent to a formal 'sincerely yours.'

17. ST (KRISTOFF):   You are a sight for sore eyes.
TT (by Caszadeh):   به! جمالتو عشقه. خیلی مخلصیم.
                            /bah-jamāleto-'eshqeh-kheylī-mokhlesīm/
Back translation (neutral): Nice! Nice to see you! Sincerely yours.

In 18., the most prominent Lati word is هرّی /herrī/, which is a rather impolite way of telling someone to go away.

18. ST (KRISTOFF):   Yes! *Now, back up* while I deal with this *crook* here.
TT (by Caszadeh):   بله. دیگه لطفاً هرّی. من با این قالتاق یُخده کار دارم.
                            /bale-dīgeh-lotfan-herrī-man-bā-īn-qāltāq-yokhdeh-kār-dāram /
Back translation (neutral): Yes! Now, please go away. I've something to do with this charlatan here.

Apart from the features of this strategy, there is a question of why. In other words, why do translators apply such a strategy to the original text in normal, everyday informal language? In order to find the answer to this question, we need to compare attributes of a person who would speak the Jaheli variety of Persian, called Jahel or Looti, to Kristoff's characteristics and his social status as well as his

relationship with the prominent character in the movie, Anna. His interactions with Anna are examined because he has most of his interactions with this character.

Jaheli, also called "velvet capped" is considered as a film genre in Iran's pre-revolutionary cinema (Jahed 2012: 126). A Jahel (Looti or Lat) was a generous and public-spirited man who would protect the poor and fight against tormentors in the neighborhood; however, in the modern culture of Iran, Lat corresponds chiefly to a "ruffian" (Jahed 2012: 127). Although Jahel is charitable, he usually has "illegal" or mediocre jobs and spends some of his lifetime in prisons (Jahed 2012: 127).

Considering Kristoff's character and job reveals some similarities between him and a so-called Jahel. In a thesis on *Frozen*, Kristoff's character is described as follows:

> When Kristoff first appears as an adult, his face is obscured, and he is covered in snow from head to toe. He behaves in a gruff manner that makes him seem intimidating and villainous. However, it quickly becomes clear his behavior is mostly bravado. He is not a prince and has been raised by the rock trolls. His character is down to earth, exemplified by his close connection to his reindeer, Sven (Patel 2015: 22).

Kristoff's different life style is highlighted by him companying the princess of Arendelle, Anna throughout the movie. Kristoff is an ice salesman who helps Anna find her sister, Elsa. He takes on the adventures alongside the princess as a 'peasant' (Hickey 2017). There is an obvious social gap between these two characters. Although as a worker, Kristoff has to obey Anna, he clearly does not take orders, as he rejects Anna's request for help at first:

19. ANNA: I want you to take me up the North Mountain.
KRISTOFF: I don't take people places.

Yet Anna reminds Kristoff several times during the film that she is the authority. One example of this would be her reaction after Kristoff refuses to help her:

20. ANNA: Let me rephrase that…
ANNA: *Take me up the North Mountain.* Please.
ANNA: Look, I know how to stop this winter.
KRISTOFF: We leave at dawn… And you forgot the carrots for Sven.
KRISTOFF: Ugh!
ANNA: Oops. Sorry. Sorry. I'm sorry. I didn't—(catching herself) *We leave now. Right now.*

 After Anna tells Kristoff that she is marrying a young man she has just met, Prince Hans from the Southern Isles, Kristoff finds her out of her right mind and tells her to consider some things about this guy:

> 21. KRISTOFF: Have you had a meal with him yet? What if you hate the way he eats? What if you hate the way he picks his nose?
> ANNA: Picks his nose?
> KRISTOFF: And eats it.

But Anna immediately reminds her that Hans is a prince and Kristoff, as an ordinary peasant, has forgotten the fact that Hans is different from guys like Kristoff by saying in a more formal tone: 'Excuse me, sir. He's a prince.' Nevertheless, Anna's superiority is not limited to these two cases mentioned above. When they meet Olaf, an alive talking snowman, and they find out that Olaf loves summers and wants to experience the heat and sunshine, Kristoff tells Anna that he intends to tell Olaf what happens to a snowman in the summer. Anna, having social power over Kristoff, tells him seriously 'Don't you dare.'

This social gap is in some scenes very noticeable, as in the abovementioned cases; however, in some other scenes, it is not obvious, because these two characters are evolving and dynamically changing through the plot of the movie. The translator's attempt in detecting this social gap and power relations and then assigning a different strategy to such a character is valuable. However, there have been some complaints made by Iranian parents who believe *Lati* expressions per se are not suitable for children who are supposed to be the majority of the audience, and they consider this type of dubbing as a bad influence on their infants (https://www.afkarnews.com). Nonetheless, signalizing speech features of characters in dubbed animations can attribute to the real-life social gap and power relations issues, as a message to children and a reminder to adults. These two characters, though with a huge social gap between them, embark on the journey ahead together, side by side, despite their social and economic differences.

5. Conclusion

Baker's translation universals (1993; 1996) were examined in the animated movie *Frozen* (2013) script and its Persian dubbed versions. *Frozen* is the tenth highest-grossing movie of all time and was dubbed into Persian by three dubbing studios in Iran. The translations under investigation in this article were produced by three translators, namely Omid Golchin, Erfan Honarbakhsh and Ali Caszadeh. The result

of data analysis proved that Simplification is the most occurring strategy in the three dubbed versions of *Frozen.* Simplification and Explicitation were applied the most by Golchin and Honarbakhsh, while in the dubbed version produced by Caszadeh it was revealed that Normalization and Exaggeration were the most frequently used strategies. Exaggeration in Caszadeh's translation makes his dubbed version of this movie to stand out. Three features for this strategy were identified: the use of clipped words, changed vowel sounds, and highly colloquial target-language expressions. It was also uncovered that the social status of characters in an audiovisual product can influence the translator's decisions for choosing words and expressions and applying a particular style to their speech. To assure that this specific strategy was consciously adopted, we contacted the translator, Ali Caszadeh, in the social media and sought the reason for the use of this particular variety for the translation of Kristoff's character. He stated that his strategy was intentionally adopted and that he considered the character's facial features, social status, physical appearance, and even nationality in determining a distinct style or register for   the character while translating his lines.

The audiovisual translation field is full of possibilities, an ocean of unexplored areas, especially as regards research on the English-Persian language pair. Traditionally, research attributed to contrastive analysis of source text and target text was conducted to signify the pejorative shifts (Chesterman 2010). Nevertheless, the opposite can be approachable as well. By looking at idiosyncrasies in the translations of dubbed films positively, the dubbing industry of a country would be appreciated and therefore progress. This can also be possible that many of these strategies would be applied to other fields of AVT and generally translation practice. Thus, research on the style of AVT is strongly encouraged, especially because translation strategies can influence the style of translation (Afrouz 2019; 2020; 2021a; 2021b; 2021c). Moreover, it is possible that translators may consider social factors related to each character in translating their lines, the psychology of a character's behavior and their psychodynamic characteristics may also affect the translator's choice of style, which is a possibility that requires more investigation. Furthermore, enhancing a corpus of translated and non-translated Persian scripts of movies can help develop research on translation universals in two ways. The translation strategies will be revealed by comparing different target texts of the same source text, and the possible features of translated texts can be uncovered by comparing specific structures in data available from translated movies to those of original movies in the corresponding genres.

Filmography

Del Vecho, Peter (Producer); Chris C. Buck and Jennifer Lee (Directors); November 22, 2013; *Frozen* [Motion picture]. Country of origin: United States. Production and distribution: Walt Disney.

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Modi e il Mahatma

la manipolazione del messaggio e della figura di Gandhi nel discorso politico
del primo ministro indiano

Tommaso Bobbio

This article analyses the intriguing relationship between Narendra Modi and Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi. Since Modi's beginnings as Chief Minister of Gujarat in 2001, Gandhi's image and discourses have been constant references in the BJP leader's political rhetoric. Through an analysis of Modi's discursive landmarks and of the recurrent themes in his propaganda, this article explores the way Modi has juxtaposed himself to the figure of the Mahatma. It suggests that Gandhi played a central role in the construction of an imagery of India based on a partial and stereotyped reading of the past, functional to claim for himself and for the country a role of moral leadership in the global world. In this framework, the omnipresent Gandhi in Modi's discursive and visual rhetoric has become a political seal to disguise exclusivist politics, intolerant of dissent and closed to diversity and dialogue.

1. Introduzione

Molto è stato detto e scritto sulla figura politica del primo ministro indiano Narendra Modi, che dal 2014 ha portato il partito della destra hindu, il Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), alla guida dell'Unione Indiana con una maggioranza incontrastata (Jaffrelot 2021; Maiorano e Torri 2014; Torri 2019). Leader carismatico e autoritario, abilissimo comunicatore e sempre orientato alla creazione di un'ampia base di consenso popolare, Modi ha costruito la sua carriera polarizzando sulla propria immagine pubblica i principali temi del dibattito politico e culturale nel paese, presentandosi – e venendo riconosciuto – come l'uomo forte in grado di guidare una democrazia sempre al bivio tra l'imboccare una strada di grande crescita economica e il rimanere immobile nel pantano della povertà diffusa e della corruzione imperante. Esponente di un'ideologia nazionalista fortemente esclusivista nei confronti delle minoranze religiose, e che riconosce negli appartenenti alle comunità hindu gli unici autentici appartenenti alla nazione indiana, Modi è stato per anni etichettato come un politico estremista e settario, un fondamentalista attivamente e aggressivamente antimusulmano: dall'esordio come Chief Minister del Gujarat a fine 2001, segnato dal coinvolgimento del suo governo nei pogrom

antimusulmani del febbraio del 2002, Modi è rimasto per molti anni una figura isolata sia sul piano politico nazionale, sia a livello internazionale. Nel corso di un decennio, e di tre consecutive vittorie nelle elezioni statali in Gujarat, è però riuscito ad affermarsi sia come leader incontrastato all'interno del suo partito sia come figura rispettata dalla comunità internazionale, in virtù delle proprie – presunte – abilità nel portare efficienza nella macchina amministrativa e nell'attuare politiche di sviluppo efficaci.

Questo articolo propone un'analisi del discorso politico e della retorica utilizzata da Modi per costruire un'immagine pubblica ripulita dallo stigma del fondamentalismo e della violenza antimusulmana del 2002, allo stesso tempo fortemente ancorata a un immaginario idealizzato di valori tradizionali e chiaramente identificabili con la cultura e la religione hindu. In particolare, l'analisi dei discorsi tenuti dal leader del BJP in diversi momenti della sua carriera politica sia durante gli anni da Chief Minister sia poi da Primo Ministro rivela che, negli intrecci retorici portati avanti nel corso degli anni, la figura di Mohandas Gandhi emerge in modo ricorrente, un contraltare di Modi stesso tra riferimenti diretti, allusioni e simboli. Il richiamo continuo alla figura e ai valori incarnati dal Mahatma serve qui da chiave di lettura per capire la parabola politica di Modi, i cardini della sua retorica basata sulla manipolazione di riferimenti storici e culturali: il Modi che si specchia nell'immagine di Gandhi aspira così a presentarsi come l'incarnazione di un'India tradizionale e moderna insieme, portatrice di valori antichi e moralmente puri ma allo stesso tempo votata verso un futuro di crescita e sviluppo economico. In questo continuo rimpallo tra passato e presente, Modi ha disegnato una nuova immagine per se stesso con l'ambizione di ridisegnare la nazione nel suo complesso, costruendo una "realtà fittizia" (Vijayan 2021) in cui, con amara ironia, il Mahatma ha potuto diventare il simbolo di un'India governata dalla stessa ideologia di chi lo assassinò il 30 gennaio del 1948.

Avendo svolto lunghi periodi di ricerca negli archivi e nei quartieri di Ahmedabad a partire dal 2007, l'onnipresenza di Modi (allora Chief Minister) nei media locali, sui cartelloni pubblicitari della città, nei discorsi delle persone per le strade e negli uffici pubblici che frequentavo mi ha costretto, volente o nolente, a fare i conti con la pervasività della sua figura e dei suoi discorsi nello spazio pubblico, prima dello stato e poi della nazione nel suo complesso. In questo contesto, Gandhi emergeva sempre come una costante nel variegato e mutevole panorama dei temi politici affrontati da Modi come se, nello sforzo continuo di mettere la propria figura al centro del dibattito, l'accostamento al Mahatma potesse servire da lasciapassare nei confronti dell'opinione pubblica. In più, come già osservava Ashis Nandy in un articolo uscito sul "Times of India" all'indomani delle elezioni statali del 2007, Gandhi è diventato un feticcio per ampi settori delle classi medie, un sigillo per un'India ansiosa di sentirsi parte

di un mondo globalizzato e in crescita ma che fatica a fare i conti con ciò che questa crescita implica in termini di marginalizzazione, intolleranza ed esclusione.[1]

2. Gandhi e i valori dell'identità gujarati

Il 2 ottobre del 2003, nella cittadina di Porbandar in Gujarat, l'allora Chief Minister dello stato Narendra Modi pronunciò uno dei discorsi inaugurali del summit per investitori internazionali denominato *Vibrant Gujarat Global Investors' Summit.* Giorno e luogo erano carichi di simbolismo, essendo l'anniversario e il luogo di nascita di Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi. Nel quadro di un evento mirato ad attirare investimenti nello stato, Modi fin dall'incipit presentò il la questione in un quadro più ampio:

> Anche se cerchiamo di portare mega investimenti in Gujarat, questo non è sufficiente. Il Gujarat ha molti punti di forza che devono essere fatti vedere al mondo […]. Questo Summit è il tentativo di portare all'attenzione internazionale alcune delle nostre qualità nascoste, come il vegetarianesimo, l'ayurveda, la naturopatia, lo yoga, il *khadi*, le industrie di villaggio, e allo stesso tempo mettere gli investitori a proprio agio con le più avanzate tecnologie e un ambiente moderno in cui fare business (Modi 2003).[2]

Un evento internazionale di tale portata era l'occasione per il governo del Gujarat e Modi in particolare di provare a rilanciare la propria immagine, e farlo nel luogo natale e nel giorno dell'anniversario della nascita di Gandhi erano un'occasione imperdibile.

Com'è ormai ben noto, Modi era salito alla ribalta della scena politica nazionale appena due anni prima, nel novembre del 2001, quando era stato scelto dal suo partito come Chief Minister per sostituire il poco incisivo Keshubhai Patel per rilanciare le quotazioni del Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), che stava perdendo molti consensi nello stato. Dopo solo due mesi, il Gujarat era diventato teatro di uno dei peggiori massacri di massa ai danni della popolazione musulmana dai tempi della *Partition*, orchestrato

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[1] Gli argomenti centrali di questo articolo sono stati presentati per la prima volta durante il convegno "Gandhi after Gandhi" tenutosi a Torino nel dicembre del 2019, e hanno beneficiato enormemente dei commenti di chi era presente. Desidero anche ringraziare Alessandra Consolaro per le molte discussioni di questi anni, Gianni Pellegrini per i riferimenti ai testi classici e i due anonimi revisori per i commenti puntuali alla prima versione di questo articolo. La responsabilità di quanto scritto rimane ovviamente solo mia.

[2] Le traduzioni dall'inglese, dall'hindī e dalla gujarātī sono a cura dell'autore.

e perpetrato con la regia di gruppi legati alle associazioni fondamentaliste hindu del *Sangh Parivar*.[3] Sulla scia dei massacri del 2002 e delle accuse al suo governo di esserne stato complice, o quanto meno spettatore colpevolmente inattivo, Modi aveva reagito rilanciando la propria azione politica, indicendo elezioni anticipate (Dicembre 2002) e girando per mesi in tutte le città e i villaggi dello stato, in un lunghissimo tour elettorale che egli stesso denominò *Gaurav Yatra* ("corteo per l'orgoglio") (Bobbio 2012: 668-670). La netta vittoria elettorale che ne seguì, in cui il BJP ottenne 127 seggi su 182 disponibili, da un lato segnò un enorme successo personale per Modi, dall'altro diede l'opportunità al neo confermato Chief Minister di resettare i temi del dibattito politico, deviando l'attenzione dalle questioni legate alla violenza e all'estrema marginalizzazione dei musulmani e parallelamente avviando un processo di ricostruzione della propria immagine di leader politico su basi del tutto diverse.

La consacrazione elettorale, da questo punto di vista, diede a Modi e a tutto il suo governo la forza per affermare una linea politica pragmatica e al tempo stesso incentrata su temi 'altri' rispetto a quelli della violenza comunitaria, del settarismo e della segregazione su base religiosa. "Orgoglio" (*gaurava)*, come ripetuto incessantemente da Modi durante la campagna elettorale, diventava così la rivendicazione di un'identità collettiva gujarati che quasi intrinsecamente respingeva qualsiasi riferimento alla violenza per affermare invece presupposti identitari completamente diversi. Il sottinteso fondamentale in questo discorso era però un'identificazione totale dell'identità stessa gujarati con l'appartenenza religiosa hindu, stabilendo così i confini netti di un'esclusività assoluta su base religiosa, per cui solo gli hindu potevano dirsi gujarati, e abbracciando in pieno i presupposti ideali dell'idea di *hindutva*, cioè di immaginario nazionale definito dall'appartenenza religiosa. Sfruttando la sua grandissima abilità retorica e la capacità di interpretare e canalizzare il sentito collettivo in discorso politico, nei comizi del *Gaurav Yatra* Modi aveva rovesciato su tutta la popolazione – hindu – dello stato le accuse rivolte a lui e al suo governo di essere complici della violenza: "[gli oppositori politici] dicono che i gujarati sono persone violente. Dicono che accoltellano la gente per strada. L'avrete sicuramente sentito anche voi. Il Congresso dice che i Gujarati vanno in giro con bombe incendiarie, e poi le usano per bruciare le persone per la strada! Loro [il Congresso] mettono sotto

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[3] Sui pogrom del 2002 in Gujarat e sulle organizzazioni fondamentaliste hindu sono stati svolti innumerevoli studi e indagini, e non c'è spazio in questo articolo per approfondire questi due nodi storici. Sui pogrom del 2002 si rimanda allo studio di Siddharth Varadarajan 2002; mentre sulla nascita e lo sviluppo del movimento fondamentalista hindu si veda, tra gli altri, Christophe Jaffrelot 1996 e Jyotirmaya Sharma 2003.

accusa l'orgoglio gujarati".[4] La processione elettorale suonava quindi come una chiamata a tutta la popolazione a riunirsi intorno all'unico leader che difendeva il popolo gujarati dall'accusa ingiusta di essere dei violenti e degli assassini.

Riconfermato al governo, Modi poteva quindi considerare e dichiarare chiusa questione comunitaria, seppellendo in un silenzio senza memoria i massacri del 2002, e incentrando invece la propria agenda politica sul pilastro fondamentale dello sviluppo economico a oltranza. L'organizzazione del summit *Vibrant Gujarat* nell'autunno del 2003 fu quindi il primo passo per sancire ufficialmente il nuovo corso del suo governo, attrarre capitali privati nell'economia dello stato, e contestualmente provare a farsi accettare come leader politico anche in un consesso internazionale, laddove l'eredità dei pogrom dell'anno prima aveva spinto i principali governi europei e gli Stati Uniti a evitare ogni rapporto ufficiale con il suo governo. Da quel momento, la figura politica di Narendra Modi è stata sempre legata a discorsi sullo sviluppo economico, sul successo o sull'insuccesso delle sue politiche in materia di sviluppo, lungo una strada che nel corso di dodici anni, e due mandati e mezzo da Chief Minister, l'ha portato alla ribalta della politica nazionale con l'elezione a primo ministro dell'Unione Indiana nel 2014.

Nei discorsi inaugurali di questa prima edizione di un evento divenuto poi biennale, Modi delineò una visione di sviluppo e di economia dalle forti tinte etico-morali ed *etnico*-morali, in cui le basi stesse del progresso trovavano un fondamento quasi naturale nella storia, nella cultura e nelle tradizioni del Gujarat. Si identificava ed esaltava un'idea di *ethos* gujarati, con un richiamo implicito a quell'orgoglio su cui aveva basato la sua campagna elettorale l'anno prima. Ovviamente, uno dei presupposti impliciti di tutti questi discorsi, era – e rimane – l'identificare l'idea di popolazione gujarati con la comunità hindu, negando quindi appartenenza alle comunità religiose non-hindu, in particolare i musulmani.[5] Nel mosaico di immagini e richiami tra cultura e religione, tradizione e modernità, che caratterizzavano la sua retorica politica e la sua visione di sviluppo economico, alla figura del Mahatma Gandhi fu riservato un posto d'onore:

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[4] Comizio elettorale di Narendra Modi durante la campagna dell'autunno 2002. La registrazione, così come molti altri stralci di discorsi tenuti da Modi durante il *Gaurav Yatra*, è contenuta nel documentario di Rakesh Sharma, *Final Solution*, 2004.

[5] Nel 2005 il governo di Manmohan Singh istituiva una commissione, presieduta dall'ex giudice della Corte Suprema Rajinder Sachar, per indagare la *condizione sociale, economica e lo stato di istruzione dei Musulmani* nel subcontinente. Il rapporto finale, uscito nel 2006, poneva grande attenzione sulla crescente ghettizzazione dei musulmani nelle città, sui problemi di integrazione e scambio che questa poneva e sul senso di insicurezza diffuso tra i Musulmani indiani (Sachar Report 2006: 14 ss., 242 ss).

La vita portò Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi sulle lontane coste dell'Africa, ma il richiamo della madre India lo riportò in questa terra antica, perché i suoi figli erano ancora schiavizzati da una potenza straniera. Il tipico spirito gujarati, intraprendente anche nelle situazioni più difficili, si mise all'opera e l'uomo di Porbandar divenne il Mahatma non solo per il Gujarat, o per l'India nel suo complesso, ma per milioni di persone in tutto il mondo[...]. Oggi, nel 135° anniversario della nascita del Mahatma Gandhi, o Bapu come lo chiamiamo noi con affetto, siamo qui riuniti per agevolare lo sviluppo economico del XXI secolo e portare le più avanzate tecnologie nella sua città natale (Modi 2003).

Come si vede da questi riferimenti, l'entrata in scena del Mahatma, convocato con il nomignolo affettuoso e informale di Bapu, non è solamente dovuta alla ricorrenza del suo anniversario di nascita. Gandhi qui è chiamato in causa come figura di riferimento per quel rapporto molto stretto tra rispetto della tradizione, intraprendenza e propensione verso gli affari che l'ethos Gujarati dovrebbe incarnare. Il Mahatma non solo come faro morale quindi, ma anche come riferimento di una cultura che, unendo spirito d'iniziativa, rispetto per la vita e attitudine agli affari, rendeva idealmente il Gujarat il posto migliore in cui investire: "le ineguagliabili lezioni della vita del Mahatma devono essere diffuse e portate avanti ora che stiamo entrando nel XXI secolo, un'era di tecnologia moderna e digitale. Quando parliamo di *khādī* non ci riferiamo semplicemente a una stoffa, ma a un'ideologia di amor proprio, welfare, emancipazione delle comunità locali e progresso economico per la nostra nazione. Se il *carkhā*, o filatoio, arriva nei nostri villaggi insieme alle infrastrutture più moderne, e alla tecnologia, le persone diventeranno economicamente indipendenti e si potranno generare posti di lavoro a livello locale". In un continuo rimbalzo tra riferimenti alla tradizione e proiezioni in un futuro in cui la tecnologia sembra essere portatrice inevitabile di benessere, Gandhi diventava così il simbolo di un'India che nelle proprie radici, storiche, intellettuali e morali, trovava le basi di una grande promessa di sviluppo e benessere. "Bapu ci ha dato la ruota del progresso nella forma del filatoio, ora è nostro dovere dare un'accelerazione a quella ruota" (Modi 2003).

A quasi vent'anni di distanza da quel discorso, con Modi ormai divenuto il leader indiscusso del BJP e issatosi alla guida del governo dell'Unione dal 2014 con una maggioranza parlamentare indiscussa, possiamo dire che il "modello Gujarat" è stato aggiornato e migliorato per essere calato sul resto del paese, e che la retorica di cui è sempre stato caratterizzato, così come le sue contraddizioni, sono entrate a far parte del discorso politico e della cultura pubblica indiana (Mahadevia 2007; Bhalla e Jha, 2017). Poco importa che un tale modello di sviluppo sia stato portatore di maggiori disuguaglianze, rendendo i benefici dell'aumento degli investimenti industriali, così come dell'arrivo di grandi capitali nello stato, accessibili a poche élite: l'immaginario che una tale retorica ha contribuito a rafforzare è quello di un paese in rapida crescita, proiettato verso un futuro (che non diventa mai

presente, ma non è questo il punto) di benessere e ricchezza per tutti, dove il sogno della classe media, dell'accesso ai capitali e ai beni di consumo, diventerà realtà per fasce sempre più ampie della popolazione. La costruzione di questo immaginario, e di un'immagine di se stesso come personificazione di questo successo, ha assorbito molti degli sforzi retorici di Modi, accompagnandone l'ascesa da leader locale a primo ministro e guida indiscussa del primo partito nazionale. In questo percorso, la figura di Gandhi è stata un riferimento costante, un sigillo apposto sui continui richiami alle tradizioni e alla cultura del subcontinente. Allo stesso tempo, nel continuo essere chiamato in causa, il Mahatma è diventato una sorta di contraltare di Modi, un punto di riferimento ad uso e consumo del primo ministro che, come vedremo, lo ha trasformato in una sorta di marchio della nuova India che guarda al futuro mantenendo vivo il passato. Proprio come un marchio commerciale, Gandhi è stato completamente scollegato dalla realtà storica della persona, dal suo messaggio e dalle sue idee.

Sullo sfondo di questa costruzione, il Mahatma è diventato il modello mai esplicito di quella convergenza tra religione, etica e politica che Modi a sua volta ha sempre aspirato a incarnare. La chiara impronta religiosa (hindū) di Gandhi e la totale aderenza fra le scelte etiche e di vita del Mahatma con la sua azione politica sono diventati un rimando costante per il leader del BJP. E se presentarsi come una guida religiosa, prima ancora che politica, è uno degli aspetti tipici dei leader del Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh, la sovrapposizione della propria immagine con quella di Gandhi si è rivelata una scelta strategica più funzionale per rendere accettabile la propria figura di fronte all'opinione pubblica.

3. "Blame the Middle Class:" l'ossessione per Gandhi e l'*ethos* della classe media

Le elezioni del 2007 in Gujarat sono state un momento di svolta sia per Narendra Modi sia, e forse ancora di più, per l'opinione pubblica nazionale, per la stampa e per gli osservatori internazionali, che hanno incominciato ad accorgersi di quanto il leader gujarati del BJP non fosse solo un fenomeno localizzato, un estremista anti-musulmano abile a capitalizzare in voti l'ondata di violenze del 2002. La riconferma del BJP come primo partito nello stato, cinque anni dopo i pogrom e nuovamente con un'ampia maggioranza fu un risultato significativo, proprio perché ottenuto attraverso una polarizzazione della campagna elettorale sulla figura di Modi. Oltre a metterne in luce l'abilità politica e retorica, così come la grande capacità di trasformare in argomenti a suo favore gli attacchi ricevuti dalle opposizioni politiche, la vittoria elettorale fu un successo personale di Modi nel proporre un'immagine di sé come politico efficiente e incorruttibile, capace di mettere in pratica politiche innovative, di smuovere la macchina statale per attuare riforme e portare sviluppo (Sud 2008).

A più di un decennio di distanza, e con varie tornate elettorali nel mezzo, l'elezione del 2007 può essere vista come il momento in cui Modi ha imboccato la strada per diventare il leader indiscusso del

partito a livello nazionale, imponendo la sua agenda politica e la sua retorica, centralizzando sempre sulla sua persona ogni discorso politico. Inoltre, la conferma elettorale e il modo in cui fu ottenuta, con una larga maggioranza e puntando molto su tematiche legate al progresso e alla crescita economica, ebbero l'effetto di rendere Modi una figura accettabile anche sulla scena internazionale, rompendo l'ultimo tabù ereditato dal ruolo del suo governo nei pogrom del 2002 e proiettandolo verso la scalata alla leadership del partito a livello indiano (Bobbio 2013).

Uno degli aspetti più interessanti di quel momento di snodo nella carriera politica di Modi fu il modo in cui, nel gestire la campagna elettorale, il leader gujarati fece appello a una classe media idealizzata, rivolgendosi direttamente ai settori più in crescita della società ma allo stesso tempo contribuendo a delineare i contorni di un immaginario di aspirazioni a cui potevano attingere tutti coloro che non ne facevano parte, o ne erano direttamente esclusi. Con un costante rimando ai presunti successi del suo governo nel far crescere l'economia dello stato, nel portare infrastrutture e benessere, unito all'idea che esistano caratteristiche innate della cultura gujarati identificabili in un *ethos* votato al business e al commercio, Modi e il suo governo hanno non solo puntato ad aggregare il voto delle classi medie (di per sé un contenitore molto vago e difficile da definire) ma soprattutto hanno proposto un immaginario, una idea di classe media, di benessere e di modernità, che si è affermata col tempo come un *topos* nella società indiana di oggi. In questo contesto, il Mahatma Gandhi occupa un posto centrale.[6]

In un articolo apparso sul *Times of India* all'indomani delle elezioni, Ashis Nandy polemizzava duramente su una vittoria elettorale che, nella sua analisi, era il segno dell'affermazione di una cultura e di una mentalità che, in nome del progresso, "giustifica amoralità, riduzione della libertà e collasso dell'etica sociale" (Nandy 2008). Il titolo dell'articolo era già di per sé un atto d'accusa: *Blame the Middle Class*. Ma perché la classe media veniva particolarmente identificata con Modi e con il successo di un certo modo di fare politica?

Secondo Nandy, anche se Modi non avesse vinto le elezioni, "non avrebbe fatto molta differenza per la cultura politica del Gujarat": le classi medie urbane infatti, dopo quarant'anni di propaganda mirata, avevano abbracciato una visione comunitaria per cui hindu e musulmani, "un tempo uniti in

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[6] Tridip Suhrud (2008) argomentava che "Bisogna capire che il Gujarat non è più la terra di Gandhi. [...] Il rifiuto da parte di Gandhi nei confronti della proprietà privata e della famiglia come depositario unico della trasmissione delle eredità è contrario all'ethos mercantile delle classi capitaliste in Gujarat" (Suhrud 2008: 11). Contrariamente a quanto argomentato dall'autore, questo articolo sostiene che Modi abbia avuto successo nello svuotare Gandhi dei suoi contenuti etico-sociali, rendendolo una figura perfettamente adattabile alle aspirazioni e all'immaginario delle classi medie gujarati e indiane nel loro complesso.

modo consistente da lingua, cultura e commerci", erano ormai percepiti come nazioni distinte, e ostili l'una all'altra. Il risultato di decenni di propaganda anti-musulmana, unita a una forte ideologia votata al progresso economico ad ogni costo, era stato l'emergere di una cultura pubblica aggressiva, intollerante verso il dissenso e fortemente esclusiva nei confronti di ciò che si trovava al di fuori dei confini identitari, in particolare la minoranza musulmana e gli strati più poveri della popolazione urbana (Banerjee e Metha 2017). Seguendo Nandy, l'ideologia fondamentalista hindu aveva fornito alle classi medie urbane una nuova forma di "self-respect, una nuova identità virtuale attraverso un'idea marziale di comunità", in più il controllo su media e giornali aveva reso questi settori della società i promotori della nuova ideologia e dell'odio sociale che l'accompagnava. Modi non andava visto quindi semplicemente come una novità dirompente sul panorama politico. La sua ascesa andava capita e contestualizzata in relazione a dinamiche più ampie, che avevano reso il Gujarat un terreno fertile per il radicamento di una cultura politica affine alla retorica promossa dal BJP. Non a caso, fin dagli anni '80 lo stato era diventato un laboratorio di sperimentazione per le associazioni del Sangh Parivar, che avevano sfruttato fasi di incertezza politica e dissesto economico per lanciare mobilitazioni nei quartieri operai di Ahmedabad e Surat, spesso sfociati in episodi di violenza di massa tra hindu e musulmani (Spodek 1989 e 2010; Shani 2007).

I tratti principali di questo *ethos* delle classi medie urbane hanno sempre più coinciso con una totale adesione all'ideologia hindu fondamentalista e con il parallelo identificarsi di ampi settori della società con una propaganda che esalta lo sviluppo economico come motore di progresso sociale. Il discorso religioso ha rappresentato quindi una copertura ideologica che ha giustificato atteggiamenti di sempre più manifesta intolleranza. In questo senso, delle battaglie etico-morali di Gandhi per riformare la società in funzione costruttiva, aderendo quindi ad un progetto politico di ampio respiro, nella cultura politica contemporanea rimaneva intatto solo l'aspetto moralista. Un esempio rappresentativo è quello delle politiche sul consumo di bevande alcoliche: la battaglia contro il consumo di alcool è sempre stata uno dei capisaldi della morale e del progetto sociale gandhiano (Fahey e Manian 2005) e, in nome di questi valori, il Gujarat è l'unico stato dell'India postcoloniale ad aver sempre mantenuto una politica proibizionista. Oltre la coltre del proibizionismo però, è ben noto come il consumo illegale di alcolici sia parte della vita quotidiana delle persone e la rete di contrabbando sia organizzata e capillare.[7] Parallelamente, le esigenze del business e del turismo hanno creato una

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[7] Che in Gujarat il proibizionismo sia costantemente aggirato è cosa ben nota e documentata, si veda ad esempio *Liquor prohibition: Is Gujarat really a dry state or a tippler's paradise?* apparso su *The Economic Times* il 31 marzo del 2013. Già durante il mio primo anno di fieldwork ad Ahmedabad, nel 2007, molte delle mie conoscenze avevano il contatto diretto di qualche "bootlegger" e la rete di contrabbando era organizzata in una sorta di antesignano delivery via SMS, per cui le bottiglie erano

situazione paradossale, per cui per le classi più abbienti – e per gli stranieri – è diventato facile procurarsi un permesso per poter comprare alcolici legalmente. Il tutto mantenendo salva la facciata della legge proibizionista, in nome di un principio (gandhiano) che pochi, nella pratica, rispettano. In questo quadro, la novità rappresentata da Modi è stata quella di sapersi inserire alla perfezione negli spazi aperti tra una cultura politica fortemente moralista e la retorica della crescita e della modernità. Presentandosi come un uomo di religione, prima ancora che un politico, ha fornito legittimazione agli aspetti più conservatori in cui si identificavano le classi medie gujarati, in funzione di un discorso politico orientato alla crescita economica e alla competitività.

Narendra Modi è emerso come un perfetto interprete di questo insieme di tratti identificativi: il suo presentarsi come un leader politico efficiente e capace in ambito economico, il Chief Minister-amministratore delegato (CM-CEO, come amava definirsi lui), ha attirato ammirazione e contribuito a conferirgli un'aura di affidabilità e rispettabilità negli ambienti delle classi medie e alte, ma anche a fornire legittimità alle aspirazioni degli strati più poveri della popolazione, delle caste basse e delle minoranze religiose discriminate, in nome dell'idea che lo sviluppo economico sia l'unica vera forma di liberazione sociale e di secolarismo.[8] La tendenza di Modi ad accentrare su se stesso sia la gestione politica sia i temi della propaganda e gli argomenti di dibattito, così come il suo uso smodato dei social media, già spiccato in anni (come il 2007) in cui la loro diffusione nel subcontinente era alquanto scarsa, ha fatto sì che da subito venisse identificato con gli ideali di cui si faceva promotore.[9] Il suo stile ha sicuramente incontrato il malcontento di buona parte dell'elettorato nei confronti di una classe politica percepita come corrotta e incapace, rafforzando al contempo il mito che la macchina statale possa funzionare meglio se amministrata con stile manageriale, cosa che ovviamente gli ha garantito il supporto di buona parte della classe industriale dello stato (Jaffrelot 2008: 14-15). La tendenza a identificare il discorso politico con la propria persona ha reso Modi l'icona di una società tradizionalista e allo stesso tempo in crescita, dove le aspirazioni di ascesa sociale si combinavano con il mito dello sviluppo economico e delle opportunità per tutti. Poco importava che i dati reali della crescita in

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ordinate via telefono e consegnate direttamente a casa. Oltre alle esperienze personali, la presenza di una rete di contrabbando di alcolici è ben nota e tollerata, e ovviamente fattura cifre altissime. Ornit Shani ha ben descritto l'intrecci di interessi, corruzione e violenza che negli anni '80 del XX secolo ha legato il mondo della malavita legata al contrabbando di alcolici con l'ascesa del fondamentalismo politico (Shani 2007: 89 -107).

[8] Secondo il sociologo Shiv Vishwanathan, nella retorica di Modi "si parla di secolarismo sempre e solo in termini di razionalità economica. Come gli investimenti, possono essere calcolati, quindi sono razionali. Tutto ciò che è al di fuori di questo quadro concettuale è bollato come soggettivo, etnico e irrazionale" (citato in Yadav 2011).

[9] Durante la campagna elettorale del 2007 Modi faceva vanto di leggere rispondere personalmente alle mail ricevute dai suoi elettori (Jaffrelot 2008: 14).

Gujarat smentissero l'immagine dell'efficiente Chief Executive Officer, e raccontassero al contempo di opportunità di crescita praticamente inaccessibili per i settori più poveri della popolazione (Sud 2012).

Durante i raduni elettorali del 2007 si diffuse la moda tra i partecipanti di indossare una maschera raffigurante il volto di Modi, così come molti giornali, riviste e programmi televisivi dedicarono ampio spazio ai racconti agiografici sulla sua figura. Concentrando su se stesso qualsiasi tema politico, dall'economia alla povertà, dalla violenza comunitaria al dibattito sul secolarismo, Modi ha alimentato un culto della personalità identificando in modo inscindibile la sua figura pubblica con la propria vita privata. Ma se questo è tipico di leader politici autoritari, accentratori e insieme insofferenti verso i vincoli della democrazia, Modi ha interpretato il ruolo in maniera molto particolare proprio perché ha fin da subito delineato i contorni di un personaggio politico moderno e tradizionale insieme, efficiente come un capo d'azienda e allo stesso tempo portatore di valori antichi, che lo rendevano fortemente ancorato alla storia e alla cultura di cui era espressione, fortemente nazionalista e proiettato verso il mondo globalizzato. Tutto veniva riportato alla sua vita: le origini in una famiglia di casta bassa ed economicamente umile rendevano il Chief Minister una persona intitolata a parlare legittimamente di povertà e ne accreditavano le politiche agli occhi degli strati più vulnerabili della popolazione; la scelta di osservare il celibato, il passato di *prachārak* (lett. predicatore/promotore), come vengono chiamati i volontari dell'organizzazione fondamentalista hindu Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh, hanno contribuito a trasmettere un'immagine di sé dalle tinte fortemente religiose, quella di un politico completamente dedito alla sua 'missione', che anzi incarna con la propria vita la missione che si è posto. Da qui l'enfasi sul Modi rinunciante, sulla frugalità quasi ascetica, sugli esercizi spirituali e lo yoga, che sono diventati poi elemento fondamentale del suo ruolo di primo ministro, hanno rafforzato l'idea di un politico totalmente dedito e dalla moralità indiscutibile, proprio perché legata a doppio filo a un immaginario religioso (Seethi 2019; Mazumdar 2019).

In questo senso, associare se stesso al Mahatma è diventato per Modi un esercizio di stile e di sostanza. Nei continui riferimenti a Gandhi in discorsi ufficiali, nell'uso della sua immagine che, come vedremo, ha reso Gandhi un'icona ad uso e consumo del premier, Modi ha costantemente giocato sulle analogie tra la vita del Mahatma e la propria, richiamando in particolare la religiosità e l'aderenza totale tra la sua vita e il suo messaggio politico-sociale. Poco importa se il senso dell'esempio gandhiano, il valore delle sue rinunce e della sua visione del rapporto tra religione e società andassero in direzione totalmente contraria a quella di Modi, aspirando a un'India inclusiva, libera dal colonialismo, dal modello economico e dalle rigide costruzioni comunitarie che questo aveva imposto sulla società indiana. Allo stesso tempo patria multireligiosa, esatto opposto della concezione esclusivista e omogeneizzatrice dell'ideologia fondamentalista hindu. Come illustra Alessandra

Consolaro nel suo articolo su questo numero di Kervan, Modi ha giocato con queste analogie anche dal punto di vista visuale, appropriandosi e ribaltando il messaggio gandhiano nella creazione di un'estetica, oltre che di un discorso, dell'uomo moderno e portatore di valori forti e saldamente ancorati alla tradizione e alla religione (hindu).

Nel suo rivolgersi direttamente a un presunto ethos delle classi medie, inoltre, Modi ha sapientemente amalgamato l'immagine del saggio religioso con quella dell'uomo moderno, votato alla tecnologia, campione di sviluppo economico. Uomo forte quindi, da un lato, ma come abbiamo visto anche uomo della tradizione, paladino di un'ideale nazionale che concilia perfettamente la difesa delle caratteristiche identitarie nazionali (solo per gli hindu, vale la pena ripeterlo) abbracciando convintamente la spinta modernizzatrice di un mondo integrato dal punto di vista economico e delle comunicazioni. Il tutto ovviamente incarnato nella sua persona.

E Gandhi? Da simbolo di un'etica civile votata al dialogo e alla non-violenza, guidata dalla ricerca costante della Verità, nell'era di Modi e della sua ascesa alla politica nazionale è diventato uno dei marchi più efficaci e sfruttati del nuovo *brand* India. O, per dirla ancora una volta con le parole di Ashis Nandy: "Gandhi himself has been given a saintly, Hindu nationalist status and shelved" (Nandy 2008).

4. L'uomo di buona volontà

Uno dei marchi di fabbrica del Modi politico in Gujarat è sempre stato quello di presentarsi come uomo d'azione, sempre in movimento, sempre attivo, vicino alle persone. I suoi successi elettorali sono largamente dovuti anche alla sua instancabile ricerca di un rapporto diretto con gli elettori e le elettrici, al suo ricercare continui bagni di folla, che diventavano anche l'occasione per rivolgersi direttamente alle persone, parlare con la 'sua' gente. Il bagno di folla è stata una delle sue armi più potenti nei momenti di difficoltà, come in occasione del già citato *Gaurav Yatra* del 2002 in cui, in una serie innumerevole di comizi elettorali, aveva raggiunto gli elettori di praticamente tutti i centri abitati del Gujarat per reagire alle accuse rivolte a lui e al suo governo di complicità nei massacri dello stesso anno.

La ricerca quasi ossessiva del 'contatto diretto' con la popolazione è stato uno dei tratti più caratteristici dell'agire politico di Modi, e uno dei pilastri nella costruzione della sua figura pubblica. Anche in questo caso i rimandi gandhiani non potevano mancare. Nel settembre del 2011, un anno prima dalla nuova tornata elettorale in Gujarat, lo spettro dei pogrom del 2002 si affacciò di nuovo a incrinare la figura del Chief Minister, dal momento che la Corte Suprema fu chiamata a pronunciarsi sulla possibilità di procedere contro Modi per il suo presunto coinvolgimento in uno dei più sanguinosi episodi avvenuto nei giorni dei massacri: l'assalto alla Gulbarg Society, un complesso residenziale di

Ahmedabad, in cui furono trucidate circa settanta persone, tra cui un ex parlamentare del Congresso, Ehsan Jafri.[10] Di fronte alla possibilità di un procedimento giudiziario (poi non verificatasi), Modi reagì nel modo a lui più congeniale, rilanciando cioè la propria azione con una nuova campagna di massa.

Il nome dato all'iniziativa era ancora una volta molto evocativo: *Sadbhavana Mission*, dove il sostantivo hindi *sadbhāvanā* stava a indicare buona volontà/buone intenzioni. La "missione", in questo caso, era quella di portare un messaggio di rettitudine e abnegazione girando in varie località dello stato, sottoponendosi a periodi di digiuno che venivano poi terminati in grandi cerimonie rituali, cui seguiva l'immancabile comizio. Il riferimento ai digiuni fino alla morte di Gandhi era immediato e diretto, e serviva non solo a richiamare un parallelismo già costantemente presente, come abbiamo visto, con la figura del Mahatma. Ancora una volta, infatti, l'analogia con Gandhi era funzionale a presentare Modi sotto l'aura spirituale e morale del leader totalmente dedito alla propria missione di verità.

Nella pratica e nel lessico gandhiano, il digiuno portava sul piano dell'azione politica una pratica religiosa: "digiunare per penitenza o per illuminazione è una pratica antica. L'ho osservata nel Cristianesimo e nell'Islam, mentre l'Induismo è costellato di esempi di digiuno come purificazione. Ma diventa un privilegio se allo stesso tempo è anche un dovere [...]", con queste parole, pronunciate in occasione del digiuno che condusse nella prigione di Yeravada nel 1932, Gandhi poneva la sua scelta su un piano religioso, prima che politico. "Avendo compiuto sforzi incessanti di auto-purificazione, ho sviluppato una certa capacità di ascoltare correttamente la 'mia piccola voce interiore', e compio questo atto di rinuncia in obbedienza a quella voce" (Pyarelal 1932: 32-33). Quasi ottant'anni dopo, fatto proprio dal leader-padrone del BJP in Gujarat, il digiuno diventava una messa in scena studiata ad arte, un'esposizione di forza politica, un palcoscenico da cui arringare la folla e sfidare i propri avversari. Lo sfondo era idealmente sempre quello della penitenza e della pratica religiosa, ma il messaggio era completamente rovesciato: nei comizi che seguivano la fine dei suoi digiuni, Modi metteva in luce quanto efficaci fossero le politiche del suo governo, sottolineando sempre l'interdipendenza tra sviluppo economico e secolarismo.[11] La pratica di penitenza diventava quindi

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[10] Nella mattina del 28 febbraio del 2002 una folla armata di circa 20-22 mila persone mise sotto attacco la *Gulbarg society* per più di sette ore, saccheggiando e dando alle fiamme le abitazioni, stuprando e massacrando i residenti. I morti furono circa 70. In quelle ore concitate, Ehsan Jafri chiamò più volte al telefono il Commissioner di Ahmedabad e anche direttamente l'ufficio del Chief Minister Modi, ma senza ottenere interventi diretti da parte della polizia. Nel massacro, perse la vita anche l'ex parlamentare insieme a tutta la sua famiglia (Citizens for Justice and Peace 2002: vol. I, 19).

[11] Vedi, ad es. *Modi Speech at Sadbhavna Mission, Ahmedabad*, 11 October 2011 (Gujarati)

(https://www.narendramodi.in/sadbhavna-mission-will-kindle-light-of-samvedna-in-every-house-4163).

occasione di affermazione politica e di promozione di una retorica autoreferenziale, così che indirettamente l'azione politica del Chief Minister veniva assimilata sul piano del suo sforzo morale. I temi dei suoi discorsi, spesso pronunciati da palchi su cui troneggiava una gigantografia del Mahatma, ricalcavano con poche variazioni lo schema discorsivo che ne aveva caratterizzato la propaganda politica fin dal 2007: lo sviluppo economico era l'unica forma di emancipazione delle classi più povere; il Gujarat aveva una storia e una cultura che erano naturalmente votate al business, e lui ne era l'incarnazione; di conseguenza, tutte le forze politiche che contestavano la sua politica sbandieravano in realtà uno "pseudo-secolarismo", volto a mascherare una mentalità settaria che si concretizzava in operazioni di ingegneria elettorale.

"In tutto il Paese, Gujarat e sviluppo sono ormai diventate una parola sola", il suo governo aveva portato l'elettricità in "praticamente tutti i 18.000 centri abitati dello stato", aveva costruito infrastrutture, messo in atto programmi di welfare nelle zone tribali, il tutto "senza alcuna discriminazione nei confronti di chi possa beneficiarne, hindu, musulmani, cristiani o parsi" (Modi 2011). Era questa la base che, nella sua retorica, aveva garantito un decennio di armonia e pace tra le comunità in tutto lo stato. L'accostamento ideale con Gandhi era qui portato ad un livello più intimo e profondo: nel rendere la propria vita un tutt'uno con la propria battaglia politica e con il proprio progetto di rinnovamento sociale, il Mahatma agiva su due livelli interconnessi. Da un lato, rendeva totalmente pubblica la sua vita privata, ponendo se stesso come esempio ultimo e più alto del messaggio morale e politico che intendeva promuovere; dall'altro, poneva la lotta per l'indipendenza dal governo coloniale su un piano universalistico di cambiamento dell'individuo e della società insieme, da lui definito *pūrṇa swarāj* (o autogoverno completo). Con l'adozione del digiuno rituale e l'accostamento diretto a Gandhi, Narendra Modi aspirava a porsi simbolicamente sullo stesso livello, indossando le vesti della guida morale, prima ancora che politica, promuovendo l'idea di una totale aderenza tra la sua vita privata, fatta di rinunce e sacrifici ma anche di elevazione spirituale e saggezza, e la sua proposta politica, che in questo senso diventava una diretta conseguenza della sua rettitudine morale e abnegazione, permettendogli anche di presentarsi come un campione dell'armonia e della pace tra comunità.

Da questo punto di vista, la figura del Mahatma è stata da sempre per Modi il contraltare perfetto per consolidare rafforzare la costruzione di una leadership politica popolare e allo stesso tempo efficiente, presentandosi come l'uomo pio votato alla realizzazione di un progetto di modernizzazione e cambiamento sociale. Allontanato, o quanto meno smorzato, l'eco della violenza comunitaria, sepolte le critiche di settarismo sotto il mantra dello sviluppo economico come unico motore possibile di uguaglianza, il Chief Minister è emerso sempre più fortemente come una figura di spicco non solo

all'interno del suo partito ma anche a livello internazionale. La vittoria nelle elezioni statali del 2012 è stata la consacrazione di questo modo di fare politica, di una propaganda che vestiva politiche di sviluppo intrinsecamente inique del manto del progresso per tutti. Poco importa che l'uguaglianza e l'armonia comunitaria sbandierate nei comizi poggiassero su un'estrema marginalizzazione delle fasce più deboli della società, soprattutto musulmani e dalit, sempre di più esclusi dalle possibilità di accesso ai benefici delle politiche di sviluppo, anzi sistematicamente sfruttati come esercito di forza lavoro a basso costo da impiegare ad uso e consumo di un sistema di produzione sempre più deregolamentato, ghettizzati nei grandi centri urbani e costretti in una condizione di perenne insicurezza e con la minaccia costante di rappresaglie e violenze.[12]

Se è vero che crescente insicurezza e povertà sono state il lato nascosto del "modello Gujarat" proposto da Modi, è altrettanto vero che la promessa contenuta nella sua retorica politica ha contribuito a rafforzare la fiducia degli elettori, anche tra quelle stesse fasce della popolazione più danneggiate dalle sue politiche. E così, con la popolazione degli slum che nel decennio 2001-2011 cresceva a ritmo doppio rispetto a quella delle città nel loro complesso, il BJP targato Narendra Modi si assicurava l'ennesima vittoria elettorale nel 2012, che per il leader significava la tanto agognata consacrazione internazionale, dopo gli anni di ostracismo diplomatico da parte degli Stati Uniti e dell'Unione Europea seguiti proprio ai pogrom del 2002. La stampa internazionale già aveva cominciato a puntare i riflettori su di lui, *the boy from the backyard* come l'aveva definito la rivista *TIME* in uno speciale a lui dedicato nel marzo del 2012, esaltandone lo stile efficiente, la capacità di abbattere gli ostacoli di una burocrazia mastodontica per attirare capitali e investimenti e apprezzata dalle élite finanziarie globali (Thottam 2012). La consacrazione internazionale per Modi arrivò pochi mesi dopo, di nuovo in occasione del summit biennale Vibrant Gujarat, per la prima volta partecipato anche da delegazioni ufficiali statunitensi, come ebbe a riportare l'*Economist*: "Ron Somers, il presidente dello US-India Business Council, ha dichiarato che Modi ha stabilito un nuovo standard in politica, dimostrando che il progresso è motore di buone politiche" (The Economist 2013). Significativamente, la nuova sede voluta e ideata da Modi come centro congressi, polo turistico e sede dei Vibrant Gujrat Summit, altro non poteva essere che un ennesimo rimando a Gandhi. Il Mahatma Mandir (tempio del Mahatma), costruito tra il 2011 e il 2013, è un monumentale complesso costruito nella capitale del Gujarat, Gandhinagar, il cui edificio principale riproduce una montagna di sale, simboleggiante la

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[12] In quegli anni la popolazione degli slum urbani cresceva al doppio della velocità di quella delle città nel loro complesso, a testimonianza che crescita economica e urbanizzazione concorrevano nel processo di estremo impoverimento di ampie fasce della popolazione, specialmente tra i migranti verso le città e i migranti stagionali. Su questo si veda il già citato Sachar Report (2006), ma anche Breman (2016) e Shah (2012).

marcia di Dandi del 1930, rivolto verso due enormi pale eoliche che richiamano alla forma del *carkhā*. Quale posto migliore per ospitare Summit internazionali di finanzieri e investitori, la "Indian Davos" come la definì lo stesso Chief Minister: "nessuno meglio di Gandhi può guidarci verso un uso ottimale delle risorse naturali per il benessere collettivo, nutrendole e controllandole allo stesso tempo" (Modi 2013).

La consacrazione di Modi su scala nazionale, avvenuta l'anno seguente, è storia recente. Ma è significativo che anche su scala nazionale, il suo stile politico fortemente giocato sull'ambiguità tra tradizionalismo e modernità, tra conservatorismo e tecnocrazia, ne abbia caratterizzato l'azione e consolidato il consenso sia internamente sia in consessi internazionali, dov'è ammirato da investitori e leader autoritari di tutto il mondo.

5. Dalle latrine alla fratellanza universale: il marchio Gandhi nell'India globale

Gli anni spesi da Narendra Modi come primo ministro dell'Unione Indiana sono stati, sono ancora in realtà, un continuo rimbalzo tra populismo, repressione del dissenso e politiche autoritarie, in un crescendo di intolleranza che da molti analisti è visto come il risultato di una deriva sempre più esplicita verso la realizzazione del progetto di un *Hindu Rashtra*, la nazione hindu vagheggiata dalle organizzazioni fondamentaliste affiliate all'RSS. Valutazioni e analisi dell'impatto dei governi Modi sul piano nazionale vanno al di fuori degli obiettivi di questo articolo. Solo uno sguardo di lungo periodo renderà possibili considerazioni significative, ma certo è che con le manifestazioni di violenza e intolleranza, unite a un progressivo irrigidimento sul piano legislativo del modo in cui viene concepita e resa possibile la cittadinanza attiva, unita a un sempre maggiore svuotamento dell'autonomia del potere giudiziario, dell'indipendenza dei media e conseguentemente della libertà del dibattito pubblico, la strada che sembra tracciata non indica sicuramente in una direzione di armonia, unità e tolleranza.

Sul fronte della costruzione di rappresentazioni che incentrano sulla sua persona un'idea di progetto nazionale, Modi è stato attivissimo fin dall'inizio del mandato come primo ministro. Molte grandi campagne nazionali con cui ha aperto il suo mandato, come ad esempio la *Heritage City Development Augmentation Yojna* (Hriday), andavano a rafforzare quel rapporto tra tradizione e modernità, con la prima quasi a rappresentare un presupposto necessario alla seconda, che abbiamo visto essere uno degli argomenti di fondo nella retorica di Modi. E se il discorso sull'esaltazione del patrimonio storico e di un'immagine strumentale della storia indiana ha occupato grande spazio nelle azioni del primo ministro, fin dai primi mesi, la campagna più pubblicizzata come un momento di

crescita (culturale e strutturale) per l'intero paese è stata quella per dotare di servizi igienici villaggi, slum e in generale tutti gli abitati non forniti di collegamenti all'acqua e alle fognature.

La Swachh Bharat Abhiyan (Missione India Pulita) fu infatti lanciata subito dopo l'entrata in carica del governo, significativamente il 2 ottobre 2014, giorno dell'anniversario della nascita del Mahatma. Il piano era quello di dichiarare l'intero paese "libero dalla defecazione all'aperto" (*open defecation free*) nell'arco di cinque anni – doveva concludersi il 2 ottobre del 2019: "Un'India pulita sarebbe il tributo più altro che potremmo rendere al Mahatma Gandhi nel giorno del suo 150° anniversario, nel 2019", aveva dichiarato il primo ministro inaugurando il programma con una scopa in mano intento a spazzare per terra in una colonia Dalit a Delhi (Sagar 2017). La questione dell'impossibilità di accesso all'acqua e della mancanza di servizi sanitari è uno dei nodi cruciali dal punto di vista sociale ed economico nell'India contemporanea: secondo i dati del censimento 2011, il 53,1% delle abitazioni nel paese ancora non avevano servizi igienici, situazione ancora più critica negli slum, dove un'alta concentrazione di persone condivide spazi stretti, chiusi in mezzo al resto della città e con accessi all'acqua ridottissimi, servizi igienici collettivi – quando ci sono – sempre insufficienti per il numero di persone che dovrebbero servire, spesso rotti e non mantenuti. Queste carenze, unite a scarsissimi servizi di raccolta dei rifiuti e a una cronica insufficienza dei sistemi fognari, costringe circa metà della popolazione del paese in condizioni di grande carenza dal punto di vista sanitario, favorendo la diffusione di malattie quali il colera e il tifo, uniti ad alti tassi di mortalità infantile. Non solo, in un paese dove la raccolta dei rifiuti e la pulizia delle fognature è ancora relegata al rango di attività impura, deputata al lavoro di individui appartenenti a gruppi considerati intoccabili, un'azione estensiva e decisa da questo punto di vista avrebbe potuto migliorare sensibilmente le condizioni di vita di milioni di persone, allo stesso tempo dando un segnale concreto di contrasto a pratiche discriminatorie sulla base dell'appartenenza di casta. Nello stile sempre grandioso e iperbolico delle politiche di Modi, la Swachh Bharat Abhiyan è però diventata un'altra operazione per celebrare se stesso, nel nome del Mahatma.

La *safāī*, la pratica gandhiana del fare pulizia, uno degli elementi simbolici più forti nell'esercizio della non-violenza, veniva qui ripresa e idealmente trasferita su un piano di ristrutturazione nazionale: il volto di Gandhi, e in particolare i suoi occhiali rotondi, venivano essenzializzati fino a diventare il logo dell'intera operazione, dipinto su bagni, bidoni della spazzatura, camion dei rifiuti, accompagnati dalla scritta "un passo verso la pulizia".

(foto dell'autore)

Nonostante i proclami e le dichiarazioni, il progetto di portare servizi igienici in ogni villaggio e slum non solo non veniva portato a termine, ma laddove in effetti i servizi effettivamente erano stati

installati, spesso non funzionavano o funzionavano solo parzialmente. Infatti, se è vero che molti più servizi igienici erano stati portati nelle aree residenziali che ne erano sprovviste, alcuni report mettevano in luce come i dati rilasciati dal governo fossero contraddittori e inattendibili (Sagar 2017: 9). Inoltre, anche dove erano state create delle strutture, erano spesso inutilizzabili perché mancava un collegamento vero e proprio alla rete idrica. Inoltre, la pratica di impiegare "intoccabili" per la pulizia dei nuovi bagni continuava, e venivano riportati numerosi casi in cui la pulizia era fatta a mano, senza protezioni o attrezzature adeguate (Sagar 2017: 16-27).

Al di là del successo o meno del programma, quello che contava era in ogni caso creare un evento, associare se stesso all'idea di una grande campagna riformatrice che, nel nome ovviamente del Mahatma, avrebbe trasformato la società, nelle sue infrastrutture così come nella cultura.

Il secondo aspetto, strettamente legato al primo, ha riguardato l'attività di Modi sul piano internazionale. Parallelamente alle grandi campagne interne, il Modi primo ministro ha impiegato da subito enormi sforzi per farsi accreditare come interlocutore accettabile nei consessi della politica e dell'economia mondiale, reclamando un posto di spicco per l'India come nuova potenza mondiale. Nei mesi subito successivi all'elezione del 2014, il neo primo ministro ha dato subito un'impronta molto internazionale al suo mandato, viaggiando intensamente tra un forum e l'altro, facendosi invitare a parlare nelle assemblee di varie agenzie internazionali, dall'ONU all'Unesco, più di quanto avessero mai fatto i suoi predecessori. In questo caso, la strategia portata avanti era sempre quella di promuovere l'immagine del paese come destinazione ideale per investimenti e capitali da tutto il mondo. In un'epoca in cui la competizione tra stati per attrarre movimenti di capitali e investimenti privati è diventata elemento centrale nella ridefinizione degli equilibri geopolitici, la versione indo-nazionalista portata avanti da Modi è stata fortemente incentrata sul ridefinire una rappresentazione simbolica della nazione come culla di antiche tradizioni e di una cultura radicata in un passato remoto fatto di saggezza, spiritualità e conoscenza, esaltando caratteristiche (vere o presunte) della tradizione che rendessero l'India un ambiente ideale per il business (Kaur 2020).

E così elementi attribuiti a una specifica cultura religiosa, quali il vegetarianesimo – costantemente citato da Modi nei suoi discorsi –, la non-violenza e il rispetto per le altre forme di vita, sono diventati le parole chiave per la costruzione di un "brand India" da vendere sul mercato internazionale della finanza e del turismo. Se da un lato si promuovevano campagne come "Make in India", mirata a rendere il paese il nuovo polo mondiale dell'industria manufatturiera, dall'altro un'intensa attività sul piano delle politiche culturali e del patrimonio, ad esempio, ha portato il governo Modi a far riconoscere dalle Nazioni Unite una giornata internazionale dello Yoga, nel 2014 (poi inserita anche nella World List of Intangible Cultural Heritage dall'Unesco, nel 2016). Nei suoi numerosi discorsi

in contesti internazionali, Modi ha sempre intessuto sapientemente una retorica che esaltasse la mistura di elementi tradizionali come presupposto della modernità della nazione:

> Noi vediamo il ricco e diversificato patrimonio culturale dell'India come una ricchezza dell'umanità e faremo di tutto per preservarlo per le generazioni future. [...] Inoltre, le culture conservano la grande ricchezza del sapere tradizionale. Le società in giro per il mondo si sono evolute attraverso la saggezza accumulata nel corso delle epoche. E in questo risiedono i segreti per trovare soluzioni economiche, efficienti e sostenibili per i problemi della nostra epoca, ma oggi sono a rischio di estinzione nel nostro mondo globalizzato. Per questo motivo dobbiamo fare lo sforzo di rivitalizzare, preservare e nutrire il nostro sapere tradizionale (Modi 2015).

Nel tracciare un collegamento diretto tra saperi tradizionali e problemi del presente, Modi reclamava così un ruolo centrale per se stesso e per l'India come guida morale ed etica verso un capitalismo globale sostenibile. Elevando l'immagine stereotipata di un paese armonico e spirituale, culla di diversità, a caratteristica dominante del paese di oggi, cercando di colpire l'immaginario esotizzante con cui il paese è per lo più identificato nel mondo occidentale, Modi si è fatto portatore e incarnazione di un'idea nazionale fortemente sciovinista e allo stesso tempo universalistica:

> Non da oggi, e nemmeno nel suo passato post-coloniale, ma fin dai tempi antichi l'India ha sempre proposto un'idea di cooperazione tra tutti nell'affrontare le sfide e i problemi [...]. L'India ha sempre dimostrato che tutte le dispute e le fratture possono essere ricomposte con la democrazia, il rispetto per la diversità, l'armonia, la cooperazione e il dialogo. Rivolgo a tutti voi un invito: se volete avere ricchezza con benessere, allora lavorate in India; se ricercate la pienezza della vita unita alla salute, venite in India; se cercate la pace con la prosperità, allora restate in India. Se venite in India, sarete sempre i benvenuti (Modi 2018).

In questo costante riferimento a valori e tradizioni antiche, a una saggezza quasi primordiale, significativamente nei discorsi di Modi il passato di riferimento risale sempre a tempi antichi, astorici, antecedenti alle incursioni e stanziamento di domini centrasiatici nel subcontinente. Come se il millennio intercorso tra l'epoca d'oro dell'induismo e la fine del colonialismo britannico fosse una parentesi scarsamente rilevante. La straordinaria facilità con cui la storia del subcontinente viene essenzializzata alle eredità di un passato mitologico fatto di spiritualità, yoga e armonia, ad uso e consumo del nuovo brand India in vendita sul mercato globale, rappresenta un ironico trionfo di un pensiero orientalista che tanto ha contribuito a rendere egemone una cultura esotizzante e una comprensione errata di dinamiche e processi del passato come del presente.

6. Conclusione: l'abito del guru

"Vasudev kutumbhakam", il mondo è una grande famiglia. Con questo verso del *Hitopadeśa* di Nārāyaṇa, fin dagli anni in cui era Chief Minister e a maggior ragione oggi da Primo Ministro, Modi ha riassunto in giro per l'India e poi per il mondo la sua idea di una politica che sia prima di tutto il risultato di scelte morali. L'idea di fondo portata avanti da Modi è quella di società come famiglia, in cui quindi far prevalere la cooperazione e l'armonia al di sopra di ogni differenza "in sostanza, siamo tutti uniti come in una famiglia e il nostro destino è legato da un filo comune" (Modi 2018: 2).[13] Un rimando ricorrente che, mentre afferma un principio di solidarietà universale, usato in ambito politico contiene in sé molti messaggi: è innanzitutto un modo di porre l'azione politica in subordinazione rispetto ad altri legami, di stampo più morale o etico, rappresentati appunto dall'immagine della famiglia; ma è, allo stesso tempo, l'avanzamento di una visione fortemente organica della società in cui il principio di solidarietà, che fa da perno al mantenimento di equilibrio e armonia, è legato a doppio filo all'idea che ciascun membro abbia un posto preciso al suo interno, e lo debba rispettare.[14] Riprodotta in ambito internazionale, l'idea del mondo come grande famiglia serviva a Modi per reclamare un ruolo per l'India (per l'appunto in un sistema fortemente gerarchico come le organizzazioni internazionali), sulla base di caratteristiche morali e culturali che giustificherebbero una posizione centrale nel panorama degli equilibri internazionali, come guida in un momento di "grandi sfide per l'umanità" (ibid).

Ancora una volta, quella che viene suggerita è l'immagine stereotipata di un paese e di una cultura omogenee e monolitiche che affondano la propria identità in un passato mitico fatto di grandi scoperte filosofiche e tecniche, di spiritualità e armonia sociale, condensate nei testi sacri dei Veda. In questo, il senso della retorica di Modi riflette in modo neanche troppo nascosto l'eco dei capisaldi dell'orientalismo classico ottocentesco, in particolare l'a-storicità della società indiana e l'induismo come nucleo filosofico-culturale originario.[15] Non solo, la realizzazione in termini discorsivi e anche

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[13] Il verso completo recita: *ayaṃ nijaḥ paro veti gaṇanā laghucetasām |udāracaritānāṃ tu vasudhaiva kuṭumbakam*, "Questo è mio o altrui: un tale calcolo appartiene a chi ha un animo misero, per coloro che invece agiscono nobilmente la terra è invero una famiglia" (*Hitopadeśa of Nārāyaṇa* 1.71 (1998: 15). Traduzione dal sanscrito di Gianni Pellegrini.

[14] In una società come quella indiana, già fortemente gerarchizzata, sanzionare un tale principio è ovviamente problematico e rivela, al contempo, un'accettazione di elementi quali ad esempio il sistema delle caste e di tutte le ineguaglianze che questo riproduce, ancora oggi, nella società. Da questo punto di vista, risuona l'eco delle posizioni di Gandhi, laddove il Mahatma si impegnò tutta la vita in campagne e azioni per ridare dignità agli intoccabili, senza mai però mettere in discussione una visione gerarchica della società nel suo complesso. Sull'orientalismo indiano la letteratura è molto vasta e articolata, si veda qui come riferimento Van Der Veer and Breckenridge (1993) e Torri (2002).

[15] Non è un caso che, come mostrato anche dalla messa in pratica del progetto Swachh Bharat, da Modi e dal governo non sia arrivata alcuna presa di posizione, né alcuna reale politica, contro il sistema castale e le discriminazioni che questo perpetua.

pratici di tali politiche ha messo in luce quanto il progetto di stato nell'era del BJP di Narendra Modi sia fortemente impregnato di una lettura della società indiana che cancella ogni dinamica storica, ogni evoluzione culturale e sociale, che rifiuta la complessità del passato per proiettare nel futuro un'immagine statica e costruita ad arte.

Non è un caso che l'immagine e il messaggio gandhiano si siano rivelati un simbolo perfettamente adattabile a questo progetto, nel momento in cui venivano privati della complessità e del contenuto filosofico/politico ed elevati a marchio di un'India immaginata. Grande organizzatore di campagne di massa, come ha sostenuto Romila Thapar il messaggio di azione non violenta del Mahatma ha potuto incontrare l'immaginario delle masse indiane proprio perché basato su un discorso religioso, all'intersezione in cui la religione incontra il dissenso, e proponendo una strada per opporsi al potere coloniale che era allo stesso tempo un percorso di liberazione sul piano morale e spirituale (Thapar, 2020: 129-140). Nelle mani della macchina propagandistica di Narendra Modi, Gandhi è diventato un compagno di viaggio e un manifesto da sfoderare nelle occasioni più varie: il fondamento etico e religioso del messaggio gandhiano ha permesso a Modi di far aderire la propria figura e la propria azione a un progetto che superasse i confini della politica; allo stesso tempo, il forte elemento religioso hindu nel pensiero e nella vita del Mahatma ha fornito da appiglio per la retorica di Modi che, spogliando gli ideali di Gandhi del loro aspetto di universalità e armonia interreligiosa, ha mantenuto invece gli aspetti più conservatori, inventando così un'aderenza tra il progetto di società puramente hindu e l'etica politica del Mahatma. Infine, l'universalità del messaggio gandhiano ha anche fatto sì che Modi potesse estrarre un Gandhi diverso a seconda delle occorrenze, rendendolo così una mascotte da portare con sé, un marchio che certificasse la qualità delle politiche proposte, dalla costruzione di latrine in tutto il Paese alla liberalizzazione degli investimenti, fino all'ambientalismo.

Nel marzo 2021, intervenendo alla *Cera Week*, una conferenza internazionale sull'energia e l'ambiente organizzata dal colosso dell'informazione IHS Markit, Narendra Modi ha reclamato un posto di rilievo per l'India anche nello sforzo per rallentare il cambiamento climatico. Per l'ennesima volta, l'aura luminosa del Mahatma serviva da apripista, quasi come un sigillo di garanzia a dimostrazione che la cultura e la tradizione indiana sono già attrezzate sull'argomento in questione. In questo caso, "in Gandhi abbiamo uno dei più grandi difensori del clima di sempre. Se l'umanità avesse seguito il percorso indicato da lui, non avremmo dovuto affrontare molti dei problemi cui ci troviamo di fronte oggi" (Modi 2021: 2'50").[16] La figura del Mahatma che sancisce un ruolo di primo piano per l'India (e per Modi) come faro morale per l'azione politica: "c'è qualcosa che va al di là del mondo delle leggi e della

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[16] Speech at Cera Week, 5 marzo 2021, 2'50".

politica, è il cambiamento nei comportamenti e nelle abitudini. [...] Se cambiamo noi stessi il mondo sarà un posto migliore" (Ibid: 4'40").

Un'immagine poliedrica, quella di Gandhi, usata come lasciapassare per rivendicare un ruolo in ogni occasione ma che, così facendo, è stato privato di ogni contenuto. L'appellativo Bapu, con cui Modi spesso chiama in scena il Mahatma nei suoi discorsi, richiama ancora una volta la metafora della famiglia. Come un padre benevolo e affettuoso, Bapu indica la strada da seguire, depositario di una saggezza millenaria che affonda le proprie radici in una non meglio identificata cultura antica, localizzata nei testi sacri della tradizione hindu, in particolare i Veda. Ma se Gandhi è una figura che dall'alto sovrintende e indica la strada, il ruolo del capo famiglia è indiscutibilmente riservato a Modi. L'ex CM-CEO del Gujarat, ormai diventato primo ministro ha dismesso l'abito del dirigente d'azienda per incarnare nella sua totalità l'immagine e il ruolo della guida spirituale, prima ancora che politica. Barba bianca lunga e capelli raccolti sopra la testa, abiti sempre rigorosamente 'tradizionali', l'aspetto del primo ministro oggi rimanda sempre più direttamente all'immaginario del guru, anche se senza rinunciare mai allo sfoggio di marzialità e machismo, un *riśirāj*, santo e allo stesso tempo re (Chatterjee, Samuelson, Nielsen, Ruud 2021).

Vestire gli abiti dell'uomo dedito a una vita spirituale ha sicuramente posto l'accento sull'ambizione del primo ministro a essere identificato come una guida, ispirando fiducia e autorevolezza. E mentre la pandemia di Covid-19 mieteva vittime a migliaia, mettendo in luce la totale inadeguatezza della riposta politica all'emergenza, Modi si trincerava ancora di più nel ruolo di leader spirituale. Come abbiamo visto, la costruzione di questa immagine ha accompagnato Modi durante tutto il suo percorso politico, così come la rielaborazione e lo svuotamento della figura di Gandhi ha rappresentato un elemento fondamentale in questo percorso, rivelandosi funzionale all'elaborazione di una retorica che si fonda su un passato mitico, ancorché inventato, per dare autorevolezza a un percorso verso un futuro glorioso. Non importa se questo futuro non si realizza mai (come le promesse di sviluppo e prosperità economica) o se in esso non c'è spazio per la differenza e per il dissenso. Da buon capofamiglia, Modi ha imposto i suoi valori, nel nome di un Gandhi non più Mahatma ha disegnato i contorni di un'India esclusivamente hindu il cui carattere distintivo sarebbe un ethos umanista definito da un'eredità culturale risalente alle grandi figure della religione e della spiritualità nel subcontinente, in una linea continua che va da Buddha a, per l'appunto, Gandhi (Waikar 2018: 172). In nome di questo umanesimo tutto è giustificato, anche la repressione del dissenso e l'eliminazione della diversità dal passato indiano.

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Alla ricerca del "vero uomo"

Declinazioni della mascolinità di Narendra Modi

Alessandra Consolaro

This article deals with some issues regarding masculinity in contemporary India, focusing on popular culture, the clothing semiotics, and the media discourse on masculinity, referred to Prime Minister Narendra Modi, leader of the Hindu nationalist party Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP). Modi has manipulated many figures from the nationalist past in order to build an image of himself as "the real man," reaffirming the mandate of masculinity in order to lead the nation into the new millennium.

1. Introduzione

Nell'India contemporanea si è affermato da tempo un immaginario politico legato a narrazioni populiste di "nazione" e "religione", ma anche strutturato su linee di genere. Narendra Modi, l'attuale Primo Ministro indiano, ha sfruttato la reinvenzione connotata per genere di "nazione" e "religione" per affermare pratiche di governo nelle quali interpretazioni egemoniche di laicismo e religione si trasformano in narrazioni normalizzanti, volte a sanare forme di insicurezza ontologica presenti nella società indiana (Kinnvall 2019). In questo articolo si presenterà il discorso sulla mascolinità che si è messo in rilievo in India negli ultimi decenni, ponendo l'attenzione sul nazionalismo culturale di Narendra Modi, che si fonda sulla mascolinità del leader come personaggio "forte", in grado di salvare la società da tutti i suoi mali.

Il riferimento di partenza di questa trattazione è la critica femminista, che studia l'attività quotidiana e "incarnata"[1] dello stato e dell'ideologia politica, sostenendo che i corpi e gli aspetti più

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[1] Il termine è usato qui per tradurre l'inglese "embodied", anche se il suo primo significato in italiano denota l'atto per cui un essere spirituale, per lo più divino, assume corpo fisico. Tradurre come "personificato" non mantiene il riferimento diretto alla corporeità, che invece è l'elemento predominante di questo discorso. Il termine "incorporato" mi è sembrato ancor meno adatto poiché pur facendo riferimento al corpo, intende l'unione in un organismo più vasto. A partire dagli anni Ottanta del

intimi della vita sono profondamente geopolitici (Hyndman 2001; Fluri 2011; Clark 2016). Esiste un'ampia letteratura sul nazionalismo incarnato, che dimostra come la nazione venga costruita in base al genere per giustificare una mascolinità violenta in sua difesa (Enloe 1989; Anthias and Yuval-Davis 1992; Das 1995; Collins 1999; Mayer 2004 and Roberts 2014). L'attenzione all'insorgere politico di una mascolinità violenta dominante va a integrare le teorie della mascolinità, in particolare la concettualizzazione della mascolinità egemonica come una forma idealizzata che regola e modella la gamma di mascolinità possibili all'interno di una società (Connell 1987; Connell and Messerschmidt 2005). Il collegamento del nazionalismo incarnato con le forme egemoniche emergenti di mascolinità violenta approfondisce l'analisi fornita dalle etnografie e dalle storie orali che mettono a fuoco l'esperienza vissuta e di genere di tale violenza (Das 1995; Butalia 2000; Chatterji and Mehta 2007; Saikia 2011). Esistono diverse geografie della mascolinità, che mettono in luce una produzione di mascolinità molteplice, fluida e relazionale, influenzata dalle dinamiche politiche, etniche, di genere, religiose, di classe e casta, specificamente locali e allo stesso tempo legate anche ai discorsi globali e a strategie geopolitiche (Berg and Longhurst 2003; Ehrkamp 2008; Hopkins and Noble 2009; Gökarıksel and Secor 2020). Per esempio, nel periodo successivo all' 11 settembre, l'immagine dell'uomo musulmano proveniente dall'Asia meridionale si trasformò in Europa da "appasionato di cricket" a "sospetto terrorista", con conseguenze che sono state studiate da Claire Dwyer, Bindi Shah and Gurchathen Sanghera (2008) e Consolaro (2014).

La critica femminista è stata particolarmente efficace nel rilevare i modi in cui un senso di insicurezza nazionale viene prodotto dagli agenti politici per sostenere i propri interessi, mentre contemporaneamente viene minata la sicurezza umana (Mountz 2004; Oza 2007; Fluri 2011; Martin 2011; Christian, Dowler and Cuomo 2016; Gökariksel and Secor 2020; Dixon and Marston 2011; Williams and Massaro 2013). Nella narrazione dei gruppi che sostengono una mascolinità forte come i suprematisti bianchi negli Stati Uniti, i nazionalisti hindu in India o il discorso sulla gioventù nazionalista sunnita di Erdoğan in Turchia, la diversità – caotica – di un mondo multiculturale e il disordine delle donne e della femminilità costituiscono sia lo sfondo sia l'avversario in una trama incentrata sulla forza e sull'eroe maschile come vero protagonista di tutte le storie. In questo contesto, la centralità di un uomo come salvatore è fondamentale per il funzionamento del discorso sul sogno nazionalista.

secolo scorso l'uso del termine "incarnato" si è attestato in diverse discipline, dalla linguistica cognitiva all'intelligenza artificiale, dalla neurobiologia alla fenomenologia.

In questo articolo si analizza la mascolinità proposta da Modi attraverso il proprio modello corporeo e le scelte di abbigliamento, concludendo con un mini caso studio, che lo vede confrontarsi con Gandhi. Molti studi hanno discusso la semiotica dell'abbigliamento, il modo in cui gli indumenti funzionano come un sistema di segni o come una sorta di linguaggio (Barthes 1967; Eco 1972; Hebdige 2017; Entwistle and Wilson 2001). Riguardo all'Asia meridionale, Emma Tarlo (1996) ha dimostrato come gruppi e individui abbiano sempre utilizzato l'abbigliamento per affermare il proprio potere, sfidare le autorità, definire o nascondere la propria identità, promuovere o prevenire cambiamento sociale ai vari livelli della società indiana, dal villaggio alla nazione. In *Dressing the Colonial Body*, Nira Wickramasinghe (2003) sottolinea come le politiche sartoriali segnino i cambiamenti nelle relazioni sociali di potere e siano uno dei modi per capire la natura del colonialismo. Malgrado le esortazioni a dare maggiore valore ai contenuti, il look e la politica del vestire sono elementi fondamentale nella comunicazione.

2. Il dibattito sulla mascolinità nell'India contemporanea

Nel secondo decennio del XXI secolo si avviò in India un dibattito su mascolinità e virilità, sia a livello accademico, sia nell'opinione pubblica, anche a seguito di una campagna mediatica in connessione ad alcuni tragici eventi che scatenarono una forte reazione. Il caso più famoso risale al dicembre 2012, quando una studente di fisioterapia che sarebbe passata alla storia col nome di Nirbhaya (intrepida) fu brutalmente percossa con una spranga d'acciaio, torturata e sottoposta a un violentissimo stupro di gruppo mentre viaggiava su un bus con il suo compagno. L'ondata di proteste portò all'approvazione di una nuova legge antistupro nel 2013 e a un'ampia riflessione sulla mascolinità.

La mascolinità è un particolare tipo di posizione di genere: mascolinità e femminilità non sono termini uguali e opposti, ma sono in rapporto gerarchico. Allo stesso modo, fra uomini e donne non ci sono solo squilibri, ma anche strutture sociali e gerarchie che permettono a un numero ristretto di uomini e donne di avere potere politico e autorità culturale, subordinando ed emarginando una schiera di altre persone. Esistono mascolinità eterosessuali, mascolinità non eterosessuali, eccetera. Il patriarcato non solo costruisce tutti gli uomini come superiori a tutte le donne, ma anche alcuni uomini come superiori ad altri uomini. Il termine hindi *mardānagī* non è traducibile solo in termini di mascolinità, ma ha una forte componente nell'affermazione dell'identità personale e dell'individualità, con una connotazione di aggressività e assertività. La mascolinità è importante nella misura in cui si concentra non solo sulle relazioni tra uomini e donne, ma anche su quelle tra uomini e uomini. Per esempio, se si hanno solo figlie si può essere considerati meno "uomo" di chi ha figli maschi e se si è

disoccupati si può non essere "uomo" come un uomo che lavora. Nella percezione comune, se un uomo non controlla le sue donne nella propria famiglia è meno "uomo" di chi lo fa. Seguendo Rosalind O'Hanlon (1999) e Sanjay Srivastava (2015), va sottolineato come anche in Asia meridionale non sia utile costruire l'"uomo" come una categoria universale. Non esiste una singola monolitica formazione di genere, ma ci sono sempre mascolinità molteplici, che emergono in relazione a categorie sociali come etnia, nazione, religione, casta, geografia, classe e sessualità. Inoltre, la sessualità e il genere vanno ripensati nel contesto della mascolinità e del nazionalismo: il nazionalismo non è solo un progetto politico, ma anche culturale, e *mardānagī* è molto importante storicamente per l'India in quanto ha un rapporto molto significativo con il nazionalismo, in particolare con il nazionalismo hindu (Banerjee 2012). Nella storia dell'Asia meridionale la costruzione della mascolinità non è mai stata omogenea, data anche la grande diversità culturale della regione (Dasgupta and Gokulsing 2014). Ma alcuni gruppi maggioritari per numero o per potere hanno reso egemoni certi discorsi sulla mascolinità (Srivastava 2016).

3. Nazionalismo e mascolinità

Il nazionalismo indiano si è sviluppato con una marcata connotazione di genere: molti pensatori e politici nazionalisti hindu incentrarono il proprio discorso sull'opposizione alla costruzione coloniale dell'uomo hindu come impotente (Banerjee 2012). La ricerca della forza e dell'autostima nazionale, che è stato un tema ricorrente nei movimenti hindu nazionalisti per oltre un secolo, si fonda sul recupero della mascolinità e sull'esorcizzazione del senso di castrazione che la costruzione coloniale nel XIX secolo aveva consolidato attraverso la narrazione per cui la popolazione hindu era effeminata e imbelle a causa di secoli di dominazione musulmana (Blom Hansen 1996).

L'interiorizzazione dell'ideale mascolino vittoriano sconvolse la percezione della propria e dell'altrui mascolinità nel subcontinente, per la popolazione sia hindu sia musulmana (Nandy 1983). Le posizioni di Swami Dayananda Saraswati e dei suoi collaboratori dell'Arya Samaj, come anche di molti altri riformatori sociali hindu, palesano un costante impegno a dimostrare che gli indiani non sono "femminucce", esortano la popolazione hindu a sviluppare ed esibire la propria mascolinità, cercando le prove della mascolinità indiana nella tradizione dei testi sanscriti. Data l'equivalenza fra religione, mascolinità e nazione, molti nazionalisti hindu di casta alta del XIX secolo erano convinti che l'"evirazione" degli hindu fosse dovuta ai musulmani. Swami Vivekananda, popolarmente definito "il santo guerriero" (Rahbar and Mathur 2001), influenzò profondamente il movimento nazionalista indiano. Discepolo del grande guru Ramakrishna, egli si propose di diffondere la filosofia vedantica sia

in India sia in occidente,[2] attingendo all'idea orientalista della superiorità spirituale dell'India per elaborare una risposta all'accusa di effeminatezza. Infatti, nella sua visione, il maschio hindu – aggettivo che Vivekananda usa in senso geografico, non religioso – riesce a trovare un equilibrio fra la dimensione disciplinata, austera e rinunciante dell'ascetismo e gli aspetti militanti della cultura *kṣatriya*, la categoria guerriera della società hindu (Roy and Hammers 2014; Chakraborty 2019: 94-117). La combinazione di forza fisica e qualità marziali del "nazionalismo mascolino" con la forza spirituale risultava irresistibile per le generazioni di giovani uomini indiani: l'inazione che agli occhi dei colonizzatori era impotenza, in realtà non era altro che il controllo dell'energia sessuale che si ottiene attraverso l'astinenza e l'ascesi, come insegna l'antica disciplina yogica (Alter 2004). Vivekananda propone l'ideale del guerriero spirituale, un uomo forte nel fisico e nello spirito, forgiato da una strenua disciplina, che esprime la sua virilità creando e difendendo la nazione indiana indipendente, che è immaginata come la Madre India (Consolaro 2003).

Più militante è l'idea di maschio hindu proposta da Madhav Sadashiv Golwalkar, leader del Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS), l'associazione di volontari nazionalisti ispirata all'ideologia dell'"induità" (*hindutva*), che propugna il suprematismo hindu contro un nemico interno, identificato principalmente con la popolazione musulmana. Per lui il termine "hindu" non ha nulla dell'inclusività di Vivekananda, ma implica che le minoranze (specialmente musulmane e cristiane) possano far parte della nazione indiana solo se abbracciano l'ideologia dello *hindutva*. L'RSS è un'associazione paramilitare che non si occupa direttamente di politica elettorale. Ma è fortemente connessa al Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), il partito attualmente al governo in India, che ha contribuito negli ultimi decenni a trasformare il paese in uno stato nazionalista hindu autoritario. La militanza hindu mira a organizzare una società nella quale gli uomini disciplinino i propri corpi non solo per acquisire forza e vigore fisico, ma anche per sviluppare una furia che possa essere incanalata per la causa della nazione hindu (Chakraborty 2019: 118-137).

4. Il "vero uomo" nel nuovo millennio

Con il nazionalismo si realizza la produzione dell'eroe nazionale maschio eterosessuale: la famigerata sezione 377 del codice penale che criminalizza i rapporti sessuali "contro natura" viene mantenuta dopo l'indipendenza dall'ordinamento giudiziario coloniale, confermando l'ansia per la perdita del sé

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[2] La sua partecipazione nel 1893 al Parlamento mondiale delle religioni a Chicago fu breve ma lasciò un segno indelebile.

e dell'identità maschile (Bhaskaran 2002). Tuttavia, a cavallo fra XIX e XX secolo, il modello eterosessuale del maschio forte che si stava affermando continuò a coesistere con altri modelli di mascolinità (Srivastava 2020).

Nei decenni successivi all'indipendenza le mascolinità rappresentate nella cultura popolare sono attentamente calibrate per riflettere pratiche maschili dominanti e allo stesso tempo mostrano versioni idealizzate di mascolinità egemonica (Srivastava 2006; Rajan 2006), documentando il passaggio dal modello degli anni 1950-60 che afferma il binomio tra mascolinità e scienza (medici, ingegneri, costruttori di dighe sono i salvatori della nazione) all'ideale dell'eroe provinciale anti-stato degli anni 1970 in un paese che non si identifica più con la retorica della nonviolenza gandhiana (Prasad 1998: 131; Mishra 2002: 136). Il modello mascolino è il *mard* (eroe, valoroso, guerriero, marito), portatore di *mardānagī*, che esibisce incessantemente; l'ideale promosso è un maschio dell'India del nord, hindu, di casta alta, eterosessuale, che ha come tratti caratteristici la sua capacità e il desiderio di essere l'unico sostentatore (anche in senso economico, come unico elemento che lavora fuori casa), protettore e capo della famiglia. Questo modello di uomo vendicativo, violento, imperscrutabile e ipermascolino viene messo in discussione nei decenni successivi. Soprattutto all'inizio degli anni 1990 si afferma un'identità nazionale monolitica e maggioritaria, contrassegnata da politiche divisive, dall'ascesa della destra nazionalista hindu e dall'emarginazione delle minoranze (Mazzarella 2003; Mitra 2020) che lo sostengono. Ma allo stesso tempo il cliché della *mardānagī* viene complicato dalla rappresentazione del maschio metrosessuale che non ha bisogno di essere un bullo ma si afferma grazie al suo "soft power": l'uomo del XXI secolo può essere gentile, bellissimo e perfino gay e la sfida più notevole al concetto di *mardānagī* viene proprio dal cambiamento nella rappresentazione del maschio omosessuale (Srinivasan 2011).

È in questo contesto che nel 2013, in risposta al caso dello stupro di gruppo di Nirbhaya, divampò il dibattito sulla mascolinità, con l'opinione pubblica che si interrogava sulle caratteristiche che costituiscono l'*āslī mard*, il "vero uomo". Per esempio, la campagna "Men Against Rape and Discrimination" (MARD) proponeva come gli attributi del *mard* forza, sicurezza, coraggio ma anche il rispetto per le donne, di cui il "vero uomo" è un amico e un compagno (Mard Official 2014). Anche la fortunata trasmissione televisiva *Satyameva Jayate* condotta dal popolare attore Aamir Khan contestò l'idea che gridare, picchiare e comportarsi in maniera aggressiva sia segno di *mardānagī*, sottolineando che questo tipo di violenza non è diretta solo alle donne, bensì anche ad altri uomini, poiché l'esercizio di controllo e potere porta all'accettazione del bullismo e della sopraffazione sulle persone sottoposte, a prescindere dal loro genere (Star Plus 2014).

Nello stesso periodo anche nella politica indiana l'idea di mascolinità si pose in primo piano e divenne un tema dominante nella campagna elettorale del BJP, incentrata in modo personalistico sull'attuale Primo ministro indiano Narendra Modi (Jaffrelot 2015). Le prossime sezioni approfondiranno alcuni aspetti della politica corporea di Modi, in particolare mettendo a confronto la cultura popolare e il discorso mediatico sulla mascolinità di Modi con la narrazione comune riguardo a Gandhi e alla sua posizione nella storia nazionale dell'India dal punto di vista del suo corpo, anziché dalla prospettiva più alta delle sue idee sulla giustizia, sull'uguaglianza e sulla nonviolenza.

5. Mascolinità *à la* Modi

Narendra Modi nacque nel 1950 in una famiglia hindu del Gujarat settentrionale. Secondo la biografia ufficiale il padre possedeva un negozietto di tè dove Narendra lavorava fin da ragazzino. Dopo una brillante carriera come attivista del RSS,[3] dal 2001 al 2014 fu Chief Minister del Gujarat, salendo al potere subito dopo il terribile terremoto e pochi mesi prima dei fatti di Godhra, il 27 febbraio 2002, rispetto ai quali ha avuto sostanziali responsabilità. Dal 2014 a oggi ha ricoperto la carica di Primo ministro dell'Unione indiana.

Quando Modi prese il potere nel 2014 mise in atto un fenomeno di branding. Il marchio Modi si costruisce attraverso un attento gioco di attrazione e diversione dell'attenzione, con una smisurata pubblicità che mette in ombra ciò che, in ultima analisi, il pubblico non vuole sapere. Il primo fondamentale cambiamento è stata la trasformazione di un *pracārak* (attivista volontario) dell'RSS della prima ora nel "miglior piazzista che l'India abbia mai avuto" (Kaur 2000: 243), convinto sostenitore della magia dello sviluppo economico neoliberista capace di convincere tutto il mondo a investire in India. Sebbene la polarizzazione comunitarista in Gujarat abbia senza dubbio rafforzato la sua immagine di uomo forte nell'opinione pubblica, ai fini del governo dell'intero paese si ritenne più opportuno mettere in secondo piano l'associazione con la violenza comunitarista e presentarsi come il *vikās puruṣ* (l'uomo dello sviluppo). Con la sua massiccia presenza sui social, Modi ha costruito attentamente la propria immagine pubblica di leader esperto di tecnologia, in linea con le aspirazioni

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[3] Nel 1990 fu l'organizzatore della Ram Rath Yatra, la "processione sul carro di Rama" che doveva portare LK Advani da Somnath ad Ayodhya e segnò una forte ascesa elettorale del BJP e ponendo le basi per la demolizione della moschea nota come Babri Masjid nel 1992. All'epoca Modi si mantenne rigorosamente dietro le quinte, ma fu il responsabile della logistica e della mobilitazione di massa.

di una nuova modernità indiana, completando la trasformazione della sua impronta mediatica dall'uomo degli scontri del Gujarat del 2002 al volto politico della modernità (Pal 2015).

Durante la campagna elettorale il discorso programmatico di Modi era stato quanto di più populista si possa pensare: lo slogan *acche din ānevāle haiṃ* proponeva la retorica dei "bei tempi" e marcava una decisa svolta a destra verso un mondo capitalista ideale, ammantato del nazionalismo culturale hindu nutrito dalle classi medie e da coloro che aspirano a diventare classe media. I bei tempi di tassi di crescita elevati, flussi di capitale, disponibilità di infrastrutture ad alta tecnologia e buon governo garantiscono non solo la crescita economica, ma anche l'identità culturale e il ripristino dell'orgoglio nazionale attraverso il recupero del tesoro perduto della grande cultura civilizzatrice indiana e il suo riconoscimento (e rispetto) a livello internazionale.

Lo stile utilizzato nella campagna elettorale improntato a una fortissima personalizzazione ricordava più le elezioni presidenziali americane che quelle indiane. Tale personalizzazione fu apprezzata come un efficiente, dinamico, potente mezzo in grado di superare la "paralisi politica" che nel discorso del BJP caratterizzava il regime precedente (Chakravartty and Roy 2015). Il secondo aspetto retorico che caratterizzò la stagione elettorale si incentrava sulla contrapposizione fra la "potente mascolinità" di Modi contrapposta al suo "impotente" predecessore Manmohan Singh, che rappresentava un tipo indiano "effeminato", incapace di debellare sia il nemico esterno (Pakistan, Cina), sia le minacce interne (il terrorismo islamico). Dal punto di vista corporeo il Primo ministro di allora, Manmohan Singh, con la sua fragile corporatura, usciva a pezzi dalla retorica della circonferenza toracica da 56 pollici (*cappan inc kī chātī*) che costruiva Modi come un'incarnazione desiderabile di mascolinità, il maschio alfa dal petto possente, capace di – e disposto a – farsi carico degli oneri più gravosi al servizio della Madre India (Srivastava 2015).

Nessuno misurò davvero la circonferenza del petto del candidato Primo ministro, che millantava di essere alla pari di quello di Arnold Schwarzenegger o del lottatore e attore Dalip Singh Rana, meglio conosciuto come The Great Khali. Ma l'invocazione metonimica della macchina propagandistica del BJP fu un successo ed entrò nel linguaggio mediatico, tanto che perfino i suoi oppositori cominciarono a utilizzare lo stesso idioma, se non altro criticando le sue affermazioni sul suo essere un "vero uomo" per metterle in discussione. Un modello di mascolinità consolidato si ripropose in modo nuovo e anche il tema della virilità di Modi divenne imperante: il criterio di mascolinità fu utilizzato per descrivere scelte sia personali sia politiche. Infatti, il Congresso portò avanti una campagna contro Modi argomentando che fosse misogino, e che, in quanto dedito al celibato, non sarebbe mai potuto diventare Primo ministro poiché ciò era un segno di un deficit di virilità (Aaj Tak 2013). In effetti, sebbene sposato con Jashodaben con un matrimonio combinato fin dall'infanzia (di cui ammise

l'esistenza pubblicamente solo nel 2014), Modi non ha mai convissuto con la moglie se non per i tre mesi iniziali del matrimonio, e non ha figli. Addirittura, nel febbraio 2014 l'eminente politico del Congresso Salman Khurshid definì Modi *napuṃsak* (impotente) per la sua incapacità di fermare la violenza antimusulmana in Gujarat nel 2002 (NDTV 2014).

Questi attacchi, tuttavia, caddero nel nulla. Lungi dal ledere l'immagine virile, il ricorso al tema dell'astinenza sessuale rafforza l'idea della potenza in base alla fisiologia yogica (Alter 2004). Il recupero della mascolinità forte serve da una parte a ripristinare moralità nel nazionalismo e dall'altra a creare cittadini perfettamente virili ed efficienti. Il maschio α in stile Modi risolve l'annosa questione del rapporto fra la domesticità e il mondo esteriore, poiché promette simultaneamente l'apertura al mondo e il controllo interno. Narendra Modi è un ottimo comunicatore, sa benissimo quanto l'immagine sia fondamentale e usa il suo corpo e la moda per proiettare il suo modello di mascolinità. Modi piace all'estero, tra le comunità della diaspora indiana, poiché proietta un'idea di efficienza, competenza, prontezza di azione e decisione. Le classi medie indiane proiettano in lui le qualità che vorrebbero possedere: economia, decisionalità, bruschi modi patriarcali, una modernità radicata nella tradizione senza però soccombere ad essa.

6. La politica del guardaroba di Modi

In questa sezione si mette a fuoco l'iconicità della mascolinità di marchio Modi, che fa di lui molto più di un Primo ministro o di un politico del BJP, attraverso la politica del suo stile corporeo e di abbigliamento, che lo ha aiutato ad appropriarsi di diverse figure del passato. Nelle sezioni successive, attraverso il confronto delle politiche corporee di Modi e Gandhi, si approfondirà il modello di mascolinità proposto da Modi.

In principio, l'attivista dell'RSS Narendra Modi esprimeva il proprio ascetismo *svadeśī* indossando *kurtā* bianchi di *khādī*, [4] un'eredità del tempo della lotta anticoloniale e della formazione della democrazia, quando il cotone tessuto a mano non era tinto ed era simbolo del movimento per l'autosufficienza economica che, insieme all'autogoverno o *svarāj*, era il concetto chiave della filosofia politica gandhiana. Per le masse il politico biancovestito rappresentava il sacrificio del lusso da parte

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[4] Il capo di abbigliamento tradizionale detto *kurtā* è un'ampia camicia lunga fino alle ginocchia. Il tessuto *khādī*, noto anche come *khaddar*, è una fibra naturale tessuta a mano realizzata con cotone. Le altre varianti includono seta e lana. Questo tessuto ha una consistenza robusta e se indossato durante la stagione invernale trattiene il calore corporeo, pur mantenendo fresco in estate. La lavorazione del tessuto *khādī* fa parte delle produzioni tessili, artigianali e artistiche dell'India rurale.

delle persone di casta e classe elevata, che potevano parlare a nome del popolo intero in quanto "immacolate", sia letteralmente sia in senso figurato. Dopo l'indipendenza molti politici, Nehru per primo, abbandonarono l'uso, ma *dhotī kurtā* o *kurtā pajāmā* di *khādī* bianco rimasero come *dress code* dell'uomo politico (Tarlo 1996: 94-128). Nel secondo decennio del nuovo millennio, tuttavia, il bianco ascetico suonava ormai come una lingua morta. Grazie al rinnovamento del guardaroba, Modi è arrivato a occupare le pagine della moda - non solo sulla stampa indiana – con i suoi copricapi elaborati e i completini a colori pastello che lo legano all'audience locale o *desī*: "Modī kurtā" di *khādī* a mezza manica e "Modi jacket".[5] Un trapianto di capelli completò il nuovo look, volto a promuovere la sua trasformazione in icona di uno *hindutva* più neutro ma aggressivo e tecnocratico (Vishwanathan 2013).

Grazie a diversi fattori, fra cui il comune interesse a contrastare l'ascesa della Cina come potenza regionale e globale, dopo l'insediamento come Primo ministro Modi riuscì fulmineamente a trasformarsi da un nome sulla *blacklist* statunitense a una priorità diplomatica assoluta per gli Usa, tanto che Obama fece ben due visite ufficiali nel paese (Ganguly 2021).[6] Anche in questo caso il Primo ministro mantenne una grande attenzione al proprio look. Fu proprio in occasione della seconda visita del Presidente degli USA, nel gennaio 2015, che Modi stupì il mondo indossando un completo gessato *baṇḍgālā*[7]scuro monogrammato, nel quale le strisce erano costituite da un singolo motivo: il nome Narendra Damodardas Modi.[8] Prima di lui, solo Mubarak aveva sfoggiato un abito ricamato col proprio nome.

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[5] Una variante del capo dritto, attillato, lungo fino ai fianchi e abbottonato fino al colletto rigido alla coreana comunemente chiamato *baṇḍī* o "Nehru jacket". Mentre le giacche alla Nehru erano di *khādī* o di cachemire, la variante in stile Modi è un po' meno aderente ed è fatta di seta *maṭkā* (tessuto di seta grezza realizzato con filati molto spessi su telaio a mano), *khādī silk* (50% cotone e 50% seta grezza) o poliestere.

6 Nel 2005 Modi è stato il primo dignitario straniero a cui sia mai stato negato il visto per gli Stati Uniti a causa di gravi violazioni dei diritti umani, in connessione con gli scontri del 2002 quando era Governatore del Gujarat. Nel 2014, solo pochi mesi dopo essere diventato Primo ministro, gli fu accordata una visita di stato negli USA, durante la quale non solo gli fu tributata un'entusiastica accoglienza da parte delle comunità di origine indiana, ma riuscì anche a stringere un rapporto personale con Obama.

[7] Noto anche come *jodhpurī*, è la foggia più antica di abito da sera formale all'occidentale indiano, molto popolare in epoca coloniale. Riunisce il taglio occidentale con tessuto indiano e ricami a mano in oro o argento chiamati *zardozī*. Questo completo di giacca e pantaloni, che si indossa con un panciotto o una giacca alla Nehru, rimane molto in voga per occasioni come matrimoni, cerimonie e riunioni formali.

[8] Damodardas è il nome del padre di Modi. Che il look di Modi abbia colpito il pubblico è dimostrato anche dal fatto che questo abito sia entrato nel Guinness dei primati poiché l'anno successivo fu venduto per oltre 43 milioni di rupie (486.000 euro), diventando il vestito più costoso mai andato all'asta.

Mentre affermava la padronanza sul proprio corpo come oggetto pubblico, Modi reclamava anche il controllo sul campo simbolico della cultura indiana. Per prima cosa comprese che citare Savarkar o Hedgewar, i padri dell'RSS e dell'ideologia dello *hindutva*, non era più opportuno, e che riferirsi a una figura eccessivamente mistica come Ramakrishna non creava consenso. Il Sangh Parivar ha spesso rivendicato l'affinità ideologica con Sardar Patel, contrapponendolo strumentalmente a Jawaharlal Nehru attraverso la costruzione del primo come esponente del vero nazionalismo, quello hindu, e del secondo come occidentalizzato e perciò non veramente nazionalista. Ma Modi si è appropriato del leader del Congresso noto come l'"uomo di ferro" in modo personalistico, in linea con il tentativo di fare di se stesso un personaggio straordinario, il superuomo che può far sfrecciare l'India in avanti rispetto al resto del mondo. Già nel 2013 lo fece in occasione della posa della prima pietra per la "statua dell'unità", un colosso rappresentante Sardar Patel situato sull'isola di Sadhu-Bet nel fiume Narmada, a pochi chilometri dalla diga Sardar Sarovar, progettato con l'obiettivo di diventare una delle maggiori attrazioni turistiche del paese in quanto statua più alta del mondo.

All'epoca, Modi era ancora solo un leader del Gujarat e molti commentatori ritenevano che non sarebbe mai diventato Primo ministro perché, nonostante avesse un certo appeal panindiano, l'India non è il Gujarat. Ma fu proprio la *lohā campaign* ("campagna del ferro": v. Statue of Unity 2019) che Modi-ficò l'India nel Gujarat: Modi, ufficialmente dichiarato candidato Primo ministro solo nel settembre 2013, nel giro di pochi mesi sarebbe diventato il primo Primo ministro a capo del primo partito indiano capace di ottenere la maggioranza assoluta in trent'anni.

Come si è detto, Narendra Modi non è la prima figura del BJP/RSS a far riferimento a Sardar Patel o a costruire una statua. Ma la campagna per la raccolta di ferro da fondere per la statua più grande del mondo riuscì a rendere il Gujarat (e indirettamente Narendra Modi) una realtà familiare nell'India rurale, che fino ad allora era rimasta piuttosto estranea al marchio Modi. Senza mettere il nome di Modi in grande rilievo, la campagna creò un legame emotivo fra gli agricoltori e il BJP, chiedendo loro di donare i propri strumenti di lavoro e una manciata del suolo del proprio villaggio per portare omaggio a Sardar Patel, il politico la cui immagine popolare è legata all'agitazione dei contadini durante la lotta anticoloniale (Dhanagare 1980). Questi stratagemmi da psicologia comportamentale contribuirono a convincere le persone ad acquistare il marchio Modi senza dirlo esplicitamente e la *lohā campaign* fu l'arma silenziosa per rendere popolare Modi come un leader eccezionale e inculcare ovunque l'idea della superiorità del "modello Gujarat:" pensare in grande, eseguire e realizzare, far succedere cose e usare la tecnologia. Il clamore intorno a Modi che si creò durante la campagna elettorale con gli eventi

di *Cāy pe carcā*[9] o con i comizi di ologrammi 3D (NaMo3d2014 2014; Sen 2016) ebbe larga risonanza perché la *lohā campaign* aveva già creato consapevolezza su Modi negli angoli più remoti del paese.

Grazie all'enfasi sulla governance e sull'idea di *vikās* (sviluppo) Modi riuscì a oscurare l'agenda del BJP legata allo *hindutva*, e a espandere il nucleo elettorale del partito. Un elemento chiave della strategia di Modi è stato raffigurare se stesso come una persona *super partes*, che non si cura della politica di partito, ma lavora per il bene della nazione. In questo contesto diventa importante l'appropriazione di un'altra icona del passato, Swami Vivekananda, il cui vero nome Narendra Nath ha fatto sì che in più di un'occasione i due Narendra separati da un secolo fossero pubblicamente equiparati (v per es. Bhattacharya 2013). Sebbene l'induismo di Vivekananda si differenzi sotto molti aspetti dallo *hindutva* propugnato dall'RSS, il pensatore è senza dubbio una delle icone e dei modelli più celebri per i volontari e gli attivisti dell'organizzazione. Affermando di essere il vero erede della sua eredità, l'RSS attinge selettivamente agli scritti e ai discorsi di Vivekananda e indica una convergenza con le sue idee, in quanto il maestro spirituale aveva dimostrato la superiorità dell'induismo sulle altre religioni e prefigurava la conquista del mondo intero da parte della religione e della spiritualità hindu (Beckerlegge 2003). Il fondatore dell'RSS, K.B. Hedgewar, era un attivista politico poco interessato ai temi religiosi e per lui l'induismo di Vivekananda restava periferico rispetto alla politica. Al contrario, il suo successore, M.S. Golwalkar, era più incline allo spiritualismo e trascorse un periodo in Bengala presso il Ramakrishna Ashram. Legato all'RSS è anche il Vivekananda Kendra,[10] un'organizzazione sociale fondata nel 1972 a Kanyakumari da Eknath Ranade, ex segretario generale dell'RSS.[11]

Anziché far riferimento ai fondatori dell'RSS, controproducenti poiché troppo di parte, Modi ha indicato Vivekananda, che è una sorta di eroe nazionale, come un'icona della sua gioventù e ne ha rivendicato l'eredità, legata all'idea di un induismo muscolare e nazionalista, come ciò che segna tanto la traiettoria del futuro dell'India quanto un'autentica comprensione del suo passato. Come Vivekananda, Modi è un innovatore culturale che cerca di rivitalizzare la società indiana di fronte alla nuova modernità. Come Vivekananda, propone una mascolinità fondata sulla disciplina corporea e sul

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[9] Una serie videoconferenze organizzate in un migliaio di chioschi del tè lungo le strade di 300 città indiane scelte strategicamente fra le circoscrizioni nelle quali il BJP era candidato alle elezioni. Attraverso internet e monitor TV appositamente installati, Modi interagiva con la gente comune sfruttando la sua immagine di povero figlio di *cāyvālā* che si è fatto da solo.

[10] https://www.vrmvk.org

[11] L'associazione è pensata come memoriale vivente e dinamico di Swami Vivekananda in associazione alla costruzione in mattoni e cemento che lo precedette, il Vivekananda Rock Memorial completato nel 1970.

controllo (ascesi e spiritualità hindu), che non lascia spazio ai deboli (Alter 1992; Alter 2011; Chakraborty 2011).

Già dall'epoca in cui governava in Gujarat, Modi aveva abbracciato e promosso le figure di Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel e Swami Vivekananda, tanto che nella campagna elettorale del 2012 aveva attraversato tutto lo stato in un pulmino ad aria condizionata sul quale troneggiava un'enorme immagine di Vivekananda, citandolo come suo modello nell'obiettivo di realizzare un' India capace e potente (*samarth aur saśakt Bhārat*; Menon 2014: 142). Tuttavia, né Patel né Vivekananda potevano avere un vero appeal panindiano. Per questo era necessario appropriarsi di una figura ben più universale: Gandhi.

7. Modi e Gandhi

Nonostante molti dei suoi aderenti detestino Gandhi e nutrano ammirazione per il suo assassino Godse,[12] la posizione ufficiale del BJP nei confronti di Gandhi non è mai stata apertamente ostile, tanto che fin da quando si costituì il partito, nel 1980, adottò come categoria fondante quello che Atal Bihari Vajpayee definì "socialismo gandhiano", allontanandosi dal suo precursore, il Bharatiya Jana Sangh (Banerjee 2005).[13] Tuttavia, sia il Jana Sangh, sia il BJP e l'RSS, hanno rappresentato Gandhi in modo parziale, sostenendo che la sua insistenza sull'unità fra hindu e musulmani fosse inopportuna e che mostrasse un'eccessiva generosità nei confronti delle richieste e delle aspirazioni delle comunità musulmane indiane. Ai loro occhi, anche la scelta di Jawaharlal Nehru a scapito di Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel come primo Primo ministro dell'India indipendente fu un errore, poiché Nehru sarebbe l'esponente di un'élite occidentalizzata mentre Patel era il simbolo del possente e robusto stato che l'India avrebbe dovuto essere, con forti radici hindu. Il nazionalismo hindu ha sempre avuto una relazione problematica con Gandhi: Nathuram Godse, l'assassino del Mahatma, era legato all'RSS e l'organizzazione fu messa al bando dopo che Gandhi fu ucciso (Consolaro 2020). Tuttavia, col passare

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[12] Per esempio, esponenti di rilievo del BJP come Shivraj Singh Chouhan e Uma Bharti nel 2019 non esitarono a farsi fotografare in compagnia di Pooja Shakun Pandey, la segretaria nazionale dell'Akhil Bharat Hindu Mahasabha (ABHM) che mise in scena una rievocazione dell'assassinio del Mahatma sparando a un'effigie di Gandhi in occasione del 71° anniversario dell'omicidio.

[13] Il Bharatiya Jana Sangh era stato dal 1951 al 1977 l'ala politica dell'RSS e aveva poi dato vita al Janata Party. Nel 1980 una scissione nata dalla discussione sul doppio tesseramento (il Janata Party come partito politico e l'RSS come organizzazione sociale) diede vita al Bharatiya Janata Party.

dei decenni, sia il Sangh sia il BJP cominciarono ad appropriarsi di Gandhi, ponendo in evidenza soprattutto il suo induismo.

Fin da quando ha assunto la carica di Primo ministro nel 2014 Modi ha esibito la sua affinità con Gandhi in due ambiti: il tessuto *khādī* e l'igiene. Durante la campagna elettorale era stato annunciato l'ambizioso obiettivo di porre fine alla defecazione all'aperto entro il 150° anniversario del Mahatma Gandhi (ottobre 2019). La prima e più sfarzosa appropriazione di Gandhi da parte di Modi come Primo ministro fu il programma *Svacch Bhārat*. La campagna "India pulita" fu molto simbolica:[14] il 2 ottobre 2014, anniversario della nascita di Gandhi e festa nazionale, tutti i media trasmisero l'immagine del Primo ministro che, armato di ramazza, puliva le strade di Delhi. Ciò ebbe un impatto fortissimo su tutte le classi medie urbane, che non solo rappresentavano una grossa fetta dell'elettorato del BJP, ma aspiravano anche al decoro urbano. Inoltre riuscì a coinvolgere una serie di celebrità, dalle star dello sport a quelle del cinema, che in condizioni normali difficilmente avrebbero appoggiato una campagna governativa.

L'immagine del Primo ministro spazzino non poteva che riportare alla mente quella di Gandhi che nel 1901, trovandosi in India per partecipare come delegato alla riunione annuale del Congresso di Calcutta, quando vide le condizioni igieniche disastrose del luogo imbracciò la scopa e si mise a pulire le latrine (Mukherjee 2015; Gandhi 1940: 252-254). Gandhi è stato l'unico vero leader di massa prodotto dall'India nel recente passato ad avere un appeal sia nazionale che internazionale. Va sottolineato, tuttavia, che questa appropriazione di Gandhi implica una completa deradicalizzazione del suo pensiero. Per Gandhi non solo l'impegno a pulire le latrine serviva a mettere alla prova la determinazione di chi voleva aderire al lavoro sociale, ma segnalava anche un'identificazione profonda con le comunità denominate *manual scavenger*, le persone che si occupano di pulire a mano le latrine e che sono fra i gruppi più emarginati della società indiana. Modi, per il quale l'impegno per l'igiene si riduceva a una posa per la stampa, non era intenzionato a ricordare Gandhi per le sue idee sulla verità, la non violenza, la campagna *svadeśī* o l'armonia intercomunitaria, poiché tutto ciò è antitetico al pensiero suo e della sua organizzazione. *Svacch Bhārat* riduce Gandhi esclusivamente al programma di

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[14] Lo *Svacch Bhārat Abhiyān* è uno schema igienico-sanitario governativo che ripropone la Total Sanitation Campaign (TSC) del 1999, mirata ad accelerare la copertura sanitaria in tutto il paese, in particolare nelle aree rurali. La TSC portò ad alcuni progressi, ma fu implementata con una priorità relativamente bassa e il suo successo fu danneggiato da un impiego inefficace delle risorse. Fu rinominata *Nirmal Bhārat Abhiyān* nel 2012 e rilanciata come *Svacch Bhārat Abhiyān* nel 2014. Nell'ambito del programma, per esempio, le persone che vivono sia al di sotto sia al di sopra della soglia di povertà possono usufruire del rimborso per la costruzione di servizi igienici a livello familiare.

igiene e alla pulizia, cancellando tutte le implicazioni troppo radicali dell'"egualitarismo sacrificale" gandhiano (Kumar 2015: 189).

Quanto alla stoffa *khādī*, non c'è bisogno di ricordare quanto fosse importante per Gandhi come simbolo di autostima e come arma politica, e si è già detto come invece Modi lo abbia reso una stoffa alla moda, promuovendolo fra l'altro fin dalla prima puntata della trasmissione radiofonica *Man ki bāt* (Pensieri interiori), un programma mensile lanciato nell'ottobre 2014 nel quale il Primo ministro parla alla nazione da All India Radio, Doordarshan National e Doordarshan News. Modi ha anche affermato che grazie al suo patrocinio le vendite sono quasi raddoppiate, anche se tale affermazione non sembra corrispondere a verità (Mohammad 2017). Comunque sia, la "Khadi and Village Industries Commission" (KVIC) si è trasformata da impresa etica incentrata sui produttori di villaggio a una marca da vendere sul mercato.

Schemi governativi su *khādī* e servizi igienico-sanitari a parte, i costanti tentativi di Modi di appropriarsi dell'eredità del Mahatma sono ancor più evidenti nel contesto dell'istituzione più vitale dell'ecosistema gandhiano, il Satyagraha Ashram situato sulle rive del fiume Sabarmati ad Ahmedabad. Modi ha strumentalizzato questo luogo, che fu la casa di Gandhi tra il 1917 e il 1930 e fu testimone di molti momenti vitali nella storia indiana moderna, per rafforzare la sua posizione alla presenza di leader globali in visita, organizzando tour progettati per lo spettacolo della televisione. Gli aspetti performativi di queste visite accuratamente studiate sono inquietanti: in occasione delle visite dei leader cinese e israeliano Modi si è aggirato nell'*aśram* come se ne facesse parte, quasi fosse un maestro di cerimonie gandhiano. Arrivò perfino a trasformare il luogo in cui il Mahatma sedeva a filare in una sorta di installazione museale interattiva,[15] tradendo così una totale mancanza di comprensione culturale del fatto che la sede di Gandhi dovrebbe essere trattata con riverenza da chi rispetta le idee e i valori che Gandhi rappresenta. Ma evidentemente l'eredità gandhiana è solo uno spettacolo curioso tanto per i capi di governo stranieri, quanto per lo stesso governo di Modi.

8. Modi e la riaffermazione del mandato di mascolinità

In questa sezione conclusiva si prenderà in esame la narrazione comune riguardo a Gandhi e alla sua posizione nella storia nazionale dell'India dal punto di vista del suo corpo, anziché dalla prospettiva

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[15] Si veda per esempio il video che mostra Netanyahu e sua moglie goffamente accovacciati sul sedile di Gandhi situato nella veranda di Hriday Kunj (Bharatiya Janata Party. s.d., 14:45).

più alta delle sue idee sulla giustizia, sull'uguaglianza e sulla nonviolenza, ponendola a confronto con la politica corporea di Modi.

Modi si è sostituito a Gandhi cancellandolo anche iconograficamente, come evidenzia il confronto di due immagini che costituisce la conclusione di questo scritto. La prima (fig. 1) raffigura il Mahatma al filatoio: come è noto, il programma di filatura domestica di Gandhi (come pratica) e l'esibizione della ruota che gira (come icona), che facevano riferimento all'autoproduzione dei beni, furono elementi chiave del movimento Swadeshi nella lotta per lo *svarāj*, o autogoverno, e rappresentano uno degli elementi unificanti più significativi del movimento nazionalista in India (Brown 2010). La seconda immagine (fig. 2) apparve sulla copertina del calendario e dell'agenda della KVIC del 2017.
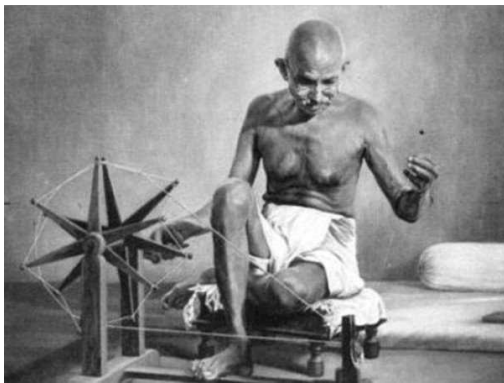
Fig 1.

www.tribuneindia.com
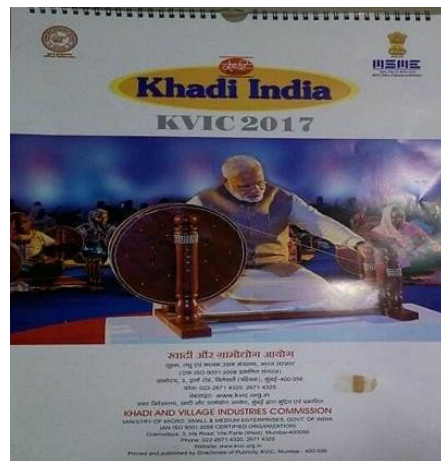
Fig.2

Foto dell'autrice

Nella copertina del calendario, Modi prende il posto di Gandhi nella foto iconica che lo ritrae al filatoio *carkā* e che per settant'anni ha rappresentato i valori e gli ideali che stanno dietro il marchio *khādī*. La posa riprende quella gandhiana, ma ci sono alcune differenze significative. In primo luogo, va sottolineato che il calendario non è una documentazione del lavoro dell'agenzia KVIC, ma è un prodotto pubblicitario: il calendario è stato realizzato dal Directorate of Advertising and Visual Publicity, l'agenzia che si occupa della pubblicità a pagamento di tutte le organizzazioni del governo centrale (http://www.davp.nic.in). L'immagine in questione è un prodotto costruito per comunicare e la semiotica di questa sostituzione è evidente: il posto di Gandhi è stato preso da una figura che appartiene orgogliosamente a un gruppo politico alcuni esponenti del quale celebrano l'assassino di Gandhi e mettono in scena rievocazioni dell'omicidio (Jacob 2019). Più problematicamente, la persona che era alla guida di uno Stato che ha perpetrato violenza genocida contro i propri cittadini ha sostituito il simbolo universale di pace e di nonviolenza. Ciò è oltraggioso perché non solo questa mossa mutila la

memoria e la figura di Gandhi, ma contribuisce anche ingannevolmente a rinsaldare la posizione etica profondamente intaccata di Modi.

Che l'immagine di Modi entri in modo così plateale nell'iconografia della KVIC segna una svolta fondamentale anche nella teoria del lavoro postcoloniale neoliberista. Gandhi era l'icona della KVIC non solo perché indossava *khādī*, ma perché lo filava: indossare ciò che si produce implica creare una relazione cruciale fra creazione (filare) e consumo (stoffa). Alla base della produzione di *khādī* non c'è l'idea di produrre oggetti di consumo, ma l'importanza della creazione, che per Gandhi aveva un significato spirituale, poiché la ruota del filatoio realizzava la possibilità di unire nella quotidianità il *dharma* e la praticità. Filare, un'attività tradizionalmente femminile, era anche il simbolo di una civiltà libera dalla schiavitù alla modernità tecnologica distruttrice dell'ambiente. La postura e l'attività del Mahatma in questa immagine promuovono una femminizzazione che, sebbene rimanga in ultima analisi priva di effettivo *empowerment* per le donne, legava al benessere della nazione aspetti come domesticità, cura e *maternage*[16] (Gabriel 2013; Howard 2011), contro la retorica della necessità di recuperare una mascolinità forte. Modi è antitetico a ciò che Gandhi rappresenta: è il portavoce del capitale, dei mercati globali e della modernità tecnologica. Modi non sa filare e per lui *khādī* non indica altro che una stoffa che indossa con una certa frequenza ma non in modo esclusivo.

Come Modi, anche Gandhi parlava attraverso il suo abbigliamento e per lui adottare abiti che sapeva essere socialmente inaccettabili e provocatori faceva parte di una strategia per denunciare le ingiustizie e per mettere in imbarazzo i suoi interlocutori (Tarlo 1996: 62-93), Gandhi adottò la progressiva riduzione del suo vestiario in concomitanza con il *satyāgraha* in Sudafrica nel 1914, abbandonando l'abito all'occidentale a favore di un abbigliamento tradizionalmente indiano. Al suo ritorno in India la foggia dei suoi abiti lo identificava come un contadino, con un simbolico rifiuto della civiltà occidentale.

Nelle due foto in esame, entrambi i protagonisti indossano il proprio marchio di fabbrica, ma per Gandhi si trattava di una riduzione al corpo nudo. Infatti, appare con la *dhotī* e il suo *carkhā* è semplice, ha un aspetto dimesso. Modi invece indossa il suo "Modī kurtā", è ben curato, il suo *carkhā* è nuovo di zecca, imponente e robusto. Anche l'ambientazione è molto diversa: Gandhi è solo, propone una figura ascetica, che vuole trasmettere idee di dedizione, sacrificio, servizio, verità e non violenza. Modi, al contrario, troneggia davanti a una serie di figure femminili insignificanti sullo sfondo, tutte con il

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[16] Per esempio, Manu, la giovane pronipote del Mahatma, considerava Gandhi come sua madre, non come padre (Gandhi 2019).

carkhā. Il centro dell'attenzione è Modi che si erge come una figura ipermascolina il cui elaborato abbigliamento implica attenzione al consumo più che alla creazione.

Un uomo ha rimpiazzato un altro uomo. Un modello di mascolinità ne ha rimpiazzato un altro. Nell'immagine gandhiana la gerarchia di genere rimane ambigua; il testo di quella di Modi è decisamente poco interessato all'inclusività di genere: le figure femminili sono solo decorative e al centro ci sono il filatoio fallico e il personaggio Modi, la cui immagine è narcisisticamente celebrata anche nelle altre pagine del calendario. Comunque la si veda, le donne rimangono sullo sfondo e il fallocentrismo è esplicito.[17]

L'immagine del 2017 sconfessa decisamente la femminilizzazione gandhiana, riaffermando e rinforzando il "mandato di mascolinità" (Segato 2018: 45). La mascolinità di Modi prende le distanze dalla resistenza passiva di Gandhi, sottolineando l'importanza della tradizione hindu e della prestanza fisica per la prosperità collettiva. L'uomo dal metonimico metro e mezzo di torace si propone come capace di garantire una leadership forte e stabile e una solidità politica capaci di rappresentare la nazione su scala mondiale e di incarnare le aspirazioni dell'India economicamente liberalizzata e nuclearizzata del XXI secolo.

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[17] Nelle dodici pagine del calendario le donne rimangono perlopiù invisibili: solo quattro contengono immagini femminili e tutte suggeriscono che il posto della donna è quello della moglie in una famiglia eterosessuale patriarcale.

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Interpunctive analysis in the interlingual subtitles of *An*

(Kawase Naomi, 2015)

A comparison between Japanese and three European languages

Francesco Vitucci

This contribution investigates punctuation in the Italian prosubs of the Japanese feature film *An* (Kawase Naomi, 2015) by comparing it with the English and French versions in order to trace trends and points of contact between the three European languages and Japanese; in particular, the subject of the investigation will be the use of the full stop, comma and ellipsis. Contrary to expectations, punctuation has not always been the subject of in-depth investigations in the context of audiovisual translation studies since the phenomenon has often remained linked to idiosyncratic uses that are not always shared and shareable by broadcasters, subtitles and clients.

Keywords: prosubs, interlingual subtitling, Japanese-Italian subtitling, punctuation

1. Punctuation in interlingual subtitles

This contribution intends to investigate the punctuation marks in the Italian *prosubs* of the Japanese feature film *An* (Kawase Naomi, 2015) by comparing them with the official ones in English and French in order to trace trends and any points of contact between the versions in the three European languages and the original text; in particular, the subject of the investigation will be the use of the comma, the ellipsis and the full stop. Contrary to expectations, punctuation has not always been the subject of in-depth investigations in the field of audiovisual translation studies because the phenomenon has often remained linked to idiosyncratic uses that are not always shared and shareable by broadcasters, subtitlers and clients. In the first studies by Díaz Cintas - Remael (2007), but also in more recent ones by Díaz Cintas (2014) and Díaz Cintas - Remael (2021), it is emphasized that punctuation must be able to ensure a mostly *fluent* reading to end users. On a theoretical level – the latter suggest – smoothness would manifest itself in the two principles of *legibility* (that is, the ease with which a text is read on the screen depending on the type and size of the characters, the contrast between fonts and images in the background, as well as the speed with which they appear), and *readability* (ease in recognizing the meanings and components of the text starting from the syntactic complexity, the information density

and the semantic load). Consequently, to be fluent, the text should be able to follow the *ortho-typographic* rules of the target language, but still with some margin of freedom due to the intrinsic needs of the subtitles:

> Specific subtitling guidelines should be drafted for each language [...] to better suit cultural and linguistic idiosyncrasies. Having said that, it is evident that different national subtitling practices share some conventions, at least at the European level. [...] However, punctuation rules in other languages can differ greatly to English ones, and subtitlers ought to avoid aping the punctuation used in the English template files or the dialogue lists provided by the clients (Díaz Cintas - Remael 2021: 119-120).

Ideally, therefore, due to the impossibility of relying on a *vademecum* shared between languages, each of these should be able to develop its own punctuation identity based on its own translation 'practice.' However – according to Mastrantonio - Ortore (2019) – also in the case of the Italian language, since the interlingual subtitles are influenced by the dialogues that develop on screen, the relationship with orality appears so decisive in setting the use of punctuation that it is now legitimate to affirm that these constitute a textual typology with its own linguistic dynamics produced by texts that are linked to brevity and clarity, but which appear at the same time permeable to the influences of other varieties of writing – such as English subtitling, new forms of typed communication, spoken language (ibid 2019: 239). This presupposes, therefore, that – compared to the standard uses of the written language – the frequency and variety of punctuation marks in interlingual subtitles present peculiarities that it is useful to analyse not only in order to arrive at any guidelines for each single language, but also to delineate more clearly the *qualitative* parameters of the translation (Cronin 2012; Orrego Carmona 2018, 2019; Orrego Carmona - Lee 2017; Pedersen 2019; Vitucci 2021) not always definable in absolute terms, especially in the case of *prosubs* distributed for the home video and streaming that still today disseminate, in a paid *one-to-all* mode, anonymous and careless translations in the less frequent language pairs (Vitucci 2019, 2020). Below we will proceed with illustrating the functions of the *interpunctive* marks in Italian in the context of the dedicated literature, analyzing secondly their actual use within the subtitles of the feature film *An* (Kawase Naomi, 2015).

1.1. The comma

In the Italian language, the comma indicates a subordination or information coordination between parts of speech having the same or different rank (Mortara Garavelli 2008) and often plays the role of delimiting the various information units within the syntax (Ferrari 2018a). In recent years we are witnessing curious phenomena of over-extension in which the comma (called, serial or *passe-partout*) replaces the higher-level marks such as the semicolon, the colon, and the full stop with the aim of representing long speech without interruptions, groupings, or hierarchies (ibid 2018a: 55-61). In

addition to suggesting the syntactic-interpunctive intonation of the text, the effect of this practice is the general flattening of the semantic hierarchies as a consequence of a thought (think of the flow of consciousness) without a real global structural design: neither from the point of intonation, nor semantic-pragmatic. In the context of subtitling, it is possible to distinguish uses that adhere to the standard of the written language, from others that deviate from it in the direction of trends promoted by word processing or stimulated by contact with any proto texts in English (Mastrantonio - Ortore 2019: 223). In the context of its standard uses it is often used to separate elements of a list or to isolate discursive signals, while in the context of subtitling one can often find it in proximity to circumstantial elements that precede the focus of the sentence (time complements, for example), with the passe-partout function in the act of separating different linguistic acts or two sentences which, normally, should be divided by a colon (for example, main and subordinate explanatory or causal sentence), or also with the purpose of introducing direct speech[1]. In the written Italian language, Fornara (2011) also reports its presence during vocative expressions, parenthetical clauses and appositions just as happens in English subtitles, even if Díaz Cintas - Remael (2021) advise against their use at the end of a sentence (especially when changing frames).

1.2. The ellipsis

In the written language, the three consecutive dots occur during a textual suspension which can be followed by a resumption of the same topic or even a change of theme (Fornara 2011). It is even possible to find them at the end of lists (in this case, they eliminate the full stop). Thanks to the new forms of typed communication (email, sms, chat), in recent years there has been an important increase in the use of this mark: in the literary field, for example, it is often found in conjunction with pauses of silence within dialogues (ibid 2011: 93). In the context of interlingual subtitling, Díaz Cintas - Remael (2021) suggest inserting them where a sentence or a period is not concluded, in order to make them continue into the subsequent frames, emphasizing the following part of the sentence. The practice suggests not to insert capital letters in the next frames, even if some clients insert only two points instead of three[2]. Mastrantonio - Ortore (2019) identify it as the most representative interpunctuation mark in subtitling as it can produce multiple mimetic relationships with speech and introduce interactive values (that is, they activate processes of inference). Among the most recurrent prosodic phenomena, Pecorari (2018) reports: retracting (also called "false departure"), interruptions (homo- and, above all, heterogeneous, due to the dialogic nature of audiovisual products)[3], hesitations, and syllabic supports, not to mention

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[1] The last two cases are often due to interference produced by prototexts written in other languages (interpunctive cast).

[2] Another solution may be to completely abolish the three ellipsis (act by default) and not to insert any punctuation between the frames. In this case, the full stop will signal the completion of the period or sentence (Díaz Cintas -Remael 2021).

[3] On the screen, interruptions can also be dictated by the closure of the communication channel (for example, when you abruptly end a phone call).

purely graphic functions that do not directly affect subtitles (for example, omissions within citations) (ibid 2018: 178-179). However, unlike theatrical and cinematographic scripts where the ellipsis gives indications for acting, the opposite occurs in the subtitles: that is, for the needs of intersemiotic cohesion (Taylor 2016; Vitucci 2018) it is the dialogue, the suprasegmental traits of the speech and the extraverbal codes (mimicry, gestures, eye contact) that inform the writing, especially when the translators have the original script available (Mastrantonio - Ortore 2019: 227). This happens, for example, when the ellipsis is linked to acting pauses in speech (suspended recitative) or are produced by ongoing acting (often of an extraverbal type); among the over-extensions compared to standard written Italian, it is worth noting the use of ellipsis instead of colon in the cataphoric-presentative function (specification) or in the introduction to direct speech with a clear imbalance in favour of prosodic rendering of the spoken language (ibid 2019: 236).

1.3. The full stop

In Italian it is the least problematic mark as it points out the conclusion of a sentence or an entire text (Fornara 2011:79). In contemporary writing, a repeated use is intercepted within the so-called *style coupé* characterized by short utterances typically juxtaposed without any indication of logical connection (Ferrari 2018b). Often, the use of the *style coupé* is useful both for the juxtaposition of autonomous syntaxes and for phrasal fragmentation. From the interpretative point of view, this solution produces a triple effect: it facilitates inferential pauses, erases the syntactic-pragmatic hierarchies, and broadly focuses the semantic component of the propositional content (ibid 2018b: 87). In the context of subtitling, the use of the full stop indicates the conclusion of the line by recalling the capital letter at the beginning of the following string or the next frame (Díaz Cintas - Remael 2021). In our opinion, even the practice of the aforementioned *style coupé* seems to be useful in the context of subtitling, because it facilitates translators to abandon connectives and to favor paratactic solutions in place of hypotaxis (also favored by the internal limits of the subtitles). In addition, it fits perfectly with the need to stage some prosodic aspects of speech (think of the broken utterance due to emotional states). If it is true that some distribution companies usually abolish the full stop, it must be admitted that this choice often creates disorientation in the viewer, since in the absence of the full stop it is not possible to understand whether the line is over or not; the reason for this choice is essentially linked to the need to save characters within the single line. However, in other areas both professional, NPS (*Non-professional Subtitling*) and *pro-am* (*professional-amateur*) the full stop is reconfirmed in its original function and is inserted at the end of the sentence precisely to overcome the aforementioned problems (Vitucci 2016, 2021).

1.4. Punctuation marks in the Japanese language

The use and analysis of punctuation, unlike Italian and other European languages, has not yet found an adequate place in Japanese audiovisual translation studies. Despite the presence of a vademecum for the English translation of Japanese punctuation (*The Japan Style Sheet*) provided by the *Society of writers* in 2018, it may be useful to report below some reflections on its intrinsic characteristics for the purpose of the comparative analysis presented in this study. As Wakabayashi (2021) suggests, the concept of a sentence as a formally delimited unit did not exist in Japan until the Meiji period (1868-1912), when the introduction of European languages prompted Japanese translators, writers, and scholars to introduce marks that separated sentences. In this regard, Nohara (2018) also remembers how:

> Translating English [...] has inevitably introduced the stricter, more solid concept of the sentence, and officially authorized Japanese grammar accordingly came to recognize the bun, a unit equivalent to the sentence. The ambiguity of the sentence boundaries, however, remains a characteristic of Japanese today.

And it is precisely because of the aforementioned syntactic ambiguity that subtitlers, as well as translators and interpreters who find themselves mediating between the Japanese language and contemporary European languages, are often forced to join sentences, or - paradoxically - to split them into several units in order to be effective (Hasegawa 2012; Sato-Rossberg & Wakabayashi 2012). In this regard, in Japanese the end of the syntax is normally indicated by the round dot (。), called *maru* まる or 句点 *kuten.* However, according to Wakabayashi (2021), the use of punctuation marks often appears to be dictated by the writer's idiosyncratic choices, rather than by the actual links that develop with the grammar or prosody of the sentence. This is the case of the comma (*tōten*, 読点), for example, whose structural marker functions appear weaker than in English (ibid 2021: 71). Citing the studies of Maynard (1998) and Ikeda (1982), Wakabayashi recalls how the comma often occurs to highlight the topic when it is not immediately followed by the predicate, to separate adjacent expressions or sentences of the same hierarchy, to open and close parenthetical clauses, after phrases that express limitation, cause or condition. Again, in case of omission of postpositions, to isolate and accentuate terms within the sentence, in case of phrasal alterations that postpone the subject, to introduce direct and indirect speech, after the connectives, to indicate reading pauses, or after expressions of time or place that modify the entire meaning of the sentence (ibid 2021: 71). Similarly, the ellipsis (*tensen* 点線) – as also happens in English – in Japanese signals the change of theme, sudden interruptions of syntax, silences within dialogues, omissions in the case of citations and, finally, introduces interactive values by activating inference processes in the case of implicit clauses and unspoken.

2. Subtitle dataset

In order to trace the trends and characteristics of the *interpunctual* marks object of this survey, the official DVDs of the feature film *An* (2015, Kawase Naomi) were analysed in the following versions:

1. Japanese: distributed by Pony Canyon Inc. Japan including 113 minutes of audiovisual text, n. 1127 lines of captions[4] with optional audio description for the visually impaired (no interlingual subtitles in other languages);

2. English (*Sweet Bean*): distributed for the United States by Kino Lorber Inc., including 113 minutes of audiovisual text, 941 lines of interlingual English subtitles (audio descriptions for the visually impaired and English dubbing are absent);

3. French (*Les délices de Tokyo*): distributed by Haut and Court Distribution including 108 minutes of audiovisual text and 1108 lines of interlingual subtitles in French (audio descriptions for the visually impaired and dubbing in French are absent, but one can find the names of the two subtitlers: one of French nationality, one Japanese);

4. Italian (*Le ricette della signora Toku*): distributed by Cinema s.r.l., including 108 minutes of audiovisual text and 1013 lines of interlingual subtitles in Italian (there are no audio descriptions for the visually impaired, but there is dubbing in Italian and the name of the subtitler and the company for which the translation was carried out).

None of the above versions contain subtitles for the hearing impaired. After a quick search on the Internet, it was possible to observe that - apart from Japanese captions - the interlingual subtitles in the aforementioned languages have been uploaded to various sharing sites such as *Opensubtitles* (www.opensub-titles.org), *Subtitlesbank* (www.subtitles- bank.com), *Subscene* (www.subscene.com), *Subtitledb* (www.subtitledb.org) and *Sottotitolicc* (https://www.sottotitoli.cc/title/tt04298958) as well as on private forums such as *Avistaz* (https: // avistaz.to). In the search it was also possible to come across versions slightly modified in the number and internal subdivision of the lines, as in the case of the English language which presents a case of text practically identical to that of the official subtitling of Kino Lorber Inc., but with a difference of 81 excess lines produced, most likely, by amateur subtitlers.

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[4] It should be noted that the Japanese captions perfectly trace the dialogues of the feature film.

3. *An*: synopsis

An (あん) by Kawase Naomi - based on the novel by Durian Sukegawa[5] - was released in Japanese cinemas on May 31, 2015 and was also hugely successful outside Japan, so much so that it was selected to inaugurate the Cannes Film Festival in the same year in the *Un certain regard* section, also participating in the Contemporary World Cinema category at the Toronto International Film Festival 2015. The film is also the first of Kawase's films to be screened in Italian cinemas, under the title of *Le ricette della signora Toku,* and distributed in DVD format for the home video market. The story focuses on the vicissitudes of Sentarō (Nagase Masatoshi), manager of a *dorayaki* kiosk, and the elderly Tokue (Kirin Kiki), who suddenly appears in front of him asking to be allowed to work. After an initial refusal, Sentarō tastes the red bean jam she has prepared and decides to take it. Thanks to his collaboration with the woman, sales increase exponentially and the dorayaki of the kiosk become particularly popular in the neighbourhood. Sometime later, however, Sentarō learns that Tokue is actually leprous and the rumour spreads until the collapse in sales forces the man to close the kiosk.

4. Interlingual analysis of punctuation

Two scenes selected from the feature film are presented below with their subtitles in English, French, and Italian. For each scene there will be two tables: the first with Japanese captions, the second with English, Italian, and French[6] in comparison. The comparison of the subtitles with the original captions, as well as highlighting the translation solutions, intends to intercept the uses of the three punctuation marks within the Italian subtitles by comparing them with the other two European languages. The two scenes were selected by contrasting a dialogue with a monologue in order to analyse interpunctuation.

4.1. Scene 1. Mrs. Tokue shows up at the *dorayaki* shop (min. 07:04 – 09:23).

- *Description*: the protagonists of the scene are Sentarō and Tokue. The two meet for the first time and the woman asks him if she can work at the kiosk. Surprised, the man tells her that the job is not suitable for her and that the pay would be extremely low. After receiving a free *dorayaki*, Tokue walks away admiring the beauty of the cherry trees that grow in the area.

- *Quantitative analysis*: as can be seen in Table 1, the interpunctual analysis of Japanese captions immediately highlights the elimination of the comma and the full stop by the subtitler in favour of an investment in the ellipsis used both to signal short interruptions to the internal speech (lines 2,

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[5] In Italy, the novel is published by Einaudi (2018) with the title *Le ricette della signora Tokue.*

[6] The total of the two scenes examined is approximately five minutes and twenty seconds. Two minutes and twenty seconds the first, three minutes the second.

14), and to demarcate the hesitation in the final position through the suspended recitative (lines 2, 5, 19, 23, 27). On the other hand, the comparison between the three European languages highlights a tendency to maintain the three interpunctual marks with the following percentage: comma (3.2% in English, 9.6% in Italian, 9% in French); full stop (58% in English, 54.8% in Italian, 48.4% in French); ellipsis (19.3% in English, 22.5% in Italian, 18.1% in French)[7]. From a very first analysis, the English and Italian languages certainly appear more inclined to use the full stop, whereas the ellipsis, on the other hand, is more present in the Italian version. The comma, on the other hand – albeit with a percentage lower than the full stop – appears relatively more common in Italian. Below we will try to understand the reasons.

- *Qualitative analysis*: on an intralingual level, as observed by Mastrantonio and Ortore (2019), the Japanese captions confirm the statement that the ellipsis is often identified as the most representative punctuation mark in subtitling. However, as indicated in Table 2, at the interlingual level it is indicative that in the analysis of this scene the most recurring punctuation mark in the three European languages is the full stop, used to demarcate the alternation of lines between characters (especially in the case of short exchanges, as in lines 1, 2, 4, 8, 11, 12, 20, 21, 22, 34) or to favour the fluency of the text through the parataxis when the speaker himself continues the speech by juxtaposing independent syntaxes in an additional modality, or to signal the change of the speech act (12-13, 15-16, 25-26, 28-29). This use also follows the *style coupé* practice, previously mentioned in this study (Ferrari 2018). However, by comparing the captions with the three subtitles (Table 1), it is indicative to note how the ellipsis has been kept only in the case of hesitations (lines 5, 19, 27) revealing a tendency towards the translation cast especially between Italian and English, which is demonstrable through the specular use of the full stop (lines 1, 2, 8, 10b, 11, 12, 13, 15, 15b, 20, 21, 22, 25, 26, 28, 29, 34), and the comma in these two languages, completely absent in the Japanese captions (line 34). Among the various phenomena that could have influenced the punctuation of the interlingual subtitles (any previous translations, new forms of typed communication, spoken language) it is clear that, in this case, it is the previous subtitling (English language) that determines the punctuation in Italian. This statement can be supported by the analysis of the French subtitles which show, unlike the English-Italian pair, a relative 'interpunctive independence.' This can be seen in Table 1, for example in the maintenance of lines 2 and 3 on two separate strings (mirroring the Japanese subdivision) indicated in French by the use of the comma at the end of line 2 to isolate the complement of place (*Pour ce petit boulot,*), where in

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[7] The percentages take into account the actual number of subtitle lines for each language.

the English-Italian version the same two lines are merged into a single syntax ending with a full stop (*I see your notice for part-time work./ Ho visto l'annuncio per un lavoro part-time.*). The same happens in line 6 where the comma isolates the personal pronoun in the French language (*Moi,*) from the actual question (*vous ne m'accepteriez pas?*), while in the English-Italian language pair one passes to a direct interrogative mode without the use of any pronoun in the head (*Do you suppose I could? / Pensa che potrei farlo?*). A similar phenomenon is also repeated in line 13 where the French subtitle, while dividing the original Japanese line into two separate strings (13, 13b), inserts the comma after the time complement (*De nos jours,*) before the main statement (*c'est 600 yens de l'heure.*)[8] in order to stimulate inferences and support the sense of expectation in the viewer: once again, in the English / Italian pair the interpunctual solution appears to be completely specular (*Just 600 yen. / Solo 600 yen.*). In line 16, on the other hand, we note how the French language version aims to preserve the integrity of the original text while introducing the ellipsis (300 yens…), while the English-Italian language pair completely erases the line. Finally, in line 24 it is significant that in French the solution always aims at greater interpunctual and stylistic independence, since the original line is split into two successive strings (24 and 24b) characterized by the maintenance of the ellipsis as happens in the others two languages, but with a duplication of the same line (*On n'imagine pas*) which is useful for completing the syntax in the next string without using any punctuation marks (*le travail physique que ça représente.*). On the other hand, there is once again a specular solution in the English-Italian language pair in line 25 through the use of a single independent sentence, rather than the hypotaxis (*It's harder than it looks. / Più faticoso di quanto sembri.*).

Line	Captions and transcriptions	English prosubs	Italian prosubs	French prosubs
1	いらっしゃい *Irasshai*	Hello.	Salve.	Bienvenue.
2	これ...アルバイト これ... *Kore...arubaito kore...*	I see your notice for part-time work.	Ho visto l'annuncio per un lavoro part-time.	Pour ce petit boulot,
3	本当に年齢不問なの？ *Hontōni nenrei fumon nano?*	- Is there really no age limit?	Davvero non ci sono limiti d'età?	Vous acceptez tous les âges?
3b		- Yeah	-	-
4	はあ *Haa*	-	Sì.	Oui.
5	私... *Watashi...*	I...	Io...	Moi...
6	あのね 私 ダメかしら *Ano ne watashi dame kashira*	Do you suppose I could?	Pensa che potrei farlo?	Moi, vous ne m'accepteriez pas?
7	はあ？ *Haa?*	-	-	Quoi?
8	こういう仕事一度してみたかったの *Kō iu shigoto ichido shitemitakattano*	I've always wanted to do this kind of work.	Ho sempre desiderato un lavoro del genere.	J'ai toujours rêvé de fair ce genre de travail.

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[8] At the translation level, in this case one can note that the French is more precise than the original text: it translates, in fact, the temporal adverb *imadoki → De nos jours.*

9	フフッ *(laugh)*	-	-	-
10	おいくつですか？ *Oikutsu desuka?*	- How old are you?	Quanti anni ha?	Quel âge avez-vous?
10b		- I'm 76 this year.	-	-
11	満で76 *Mande 76*	-	Vado per i 76.	J'ai 76 ans.
12	うち 安いんですよ *Uchi yasui ndesuyo*	We don't pay much.	Non paghiamo molto.	Le salaire est très bas.
13	今時 600円なんですよ *Imadoki 600en nandesuyo*	Just 600 yen.	Solo 600 yen.	De nos jours,
13b		-	-	c'est 600 yens de l'heure.
14	あら…あのね *Ara…ano ne*	-	-	-
15	時給 300円でいいのよ *Jikyū 300en de ii noyo*	300 yen an hour is plenty.	Oh, 300 yen l'ora è più che sufficiente.	300 yens me suffiraient.
15b		300 yen is fine.	300 yen va bene.	-
16	300円で *300en de*	-	-	300 yens…
17	300円？ *300en?*	- 300 yen?	300 yen?	300 yens?
17b		- Yes!	-	-
18	はい *Hai*	-	Sì!	Oui!
19	いや… *Iya…*	Well…	Be'…	-
20	でも ちょっと無理だと思うんで *Demo chotto muri da to omounde*	I don't think it's possible.	Non credo sia possibile.	Mais je crois que c'est impossible.
21	私 吉井徳江といいます *Watashi Yoshii Tokue to iimasu*	My name is Tokue Yoshii.	Mi chiamo Tokue Yoshii.	Je m'appelle Tokue Yoshii.
22	腰 悪くしちゃいますよ *Koshi waruku shichaimasuyo*	You'd hurt your back.	Le verrebbe il mal di schiena.	Vous auriez mal au dos.
23	(徳江) うーん… *Mmh…*	-	-	-
24	案外ね *Angai ne*	It's harder…	È faticoso…	On n'imagine pas…
24b	-	-	-	On n'imagine pas
25	案外 力仕事なんですよ *Angai chikarashigoto nandesuyo*	It's harder than it looks.	Più faticoso di quanto sembri.	le travail physique que ça représente.
26	(千太郎) どうぞ *Dōzo*	Have one.	Ne prenda uno.	Je vous en prie.
27	あっ あの… *A ano…*	Ah…	Ah…	-
28	お金 大丈夫です *Okane daijōbu desu*	It's on me.	Offro io.	Vous ne me devez rien.
29	どうぞ *Dōzo*	Please.	La prego.	Je vous en prie.
30	(徳江) あのね *Ano ne*	Do you know…	Sa…	Dites…
31	この桜 *Kono sakura*	this cherry tree…	questo ciliegio,	Ce cerisiers…
32	誰が植えたの？ *Dare ga ueta no?*	who planted it?	chi lo ha piantato?	Qui les a plantés?
33	ここで育ったわけじゃないんで *Koko de sodatta wake janainde*	I'm not from around here.	Non sono della zona…	Je n'ai pas grandi ici.
34	また来るわね *Mata kuru wane*	Thanks, I'll come again.	Grazie, tornerò.	Je reviendrai.
35	お兄さん *Onīsan*	Sonny.	Figliolo…	Jeune homme…

Table 1. Japanese captions and European prosubs

Line	Speakers	English prosubs	Italian prosubs	French prosubs
1	**Sentarō**	Hello.	Salve.	Bienvenue.
2	**Tokue**	I see your notice for part-time work.	Ho visto l'annuncio per un lavoro part-time.	Pour ce petit boulot,
3	**Tokue**	- Is there really no age limit?	Davvero non ci sono limiti d'età?	vous acceptez tous les âges?
3b	**Sentarō**	- Yeah	-	-
4	**Sentarō**	-	Sì.	Oui.
5	**Tokue**	I...	Io...	Moi...
6	**Tokue**	Do you suppose I could?	Pensa che potrei farlo?	Moi, vous ne m'accepteriez pas?
7	**Sentarō**	-	-	Quoi?
8	**Tokue**	I've always wanted to do this kind of work.	Ho sempre desiderato un lavoro del genere.	J'ai toujours rêvé de fair ce genre de travail.
9	**Tokue (laughing)**	-	-	-
10	**Sentarō**	- How old are you?	Quanti anni ha?	Quel âge avez-vous?
10b	**Tokue**	- I'm 76 this year.	-	-
11	**Tokue**	-	Vado per i 76.	J'ai 76 ans.
12	**Sentarō**	We don't pay much.	Non paghiamo molto.	Le salaire est très bas.
13	**Sentarō**	Just 600 yen.	Solo 600 yen.	De nos jours,
13b		-	-	c'est 600 yens de l'heure.
14	**Tokue (discursive signal)**	-	-	-
15	**Tokue**	300 yen an hour is plenty.	Oh, 300 yen l'ora è più che sufficiente.	300 yens me suffiraient.
15b	**Tokue**	300 yen is fine.	-	-
16	**Tokue**	-	300 yen va bene.	300 yens,..
17	**Sentarō**	- 300 yen?	300 yen?	300 yens?
17b	**Tokue**	- Yes!	-	-
18	**Tokue**	-	Sì!	Oui!
19	**Sentarō**	Well...	Be'...	-
20	**Sentarō**	I don't think it's possible.	Non credo sia possibile.	Mais je crois que c'est impossible.
21	**Tokue**	My name is Tokue Yoshii.	Mi chiamo Tokue Yoshii.	Je m'appelle Tokue Yoshii.
22	**Sentarō**	You'd hurt your back.	Le verrebbe il mal di schiena.	Vous auriez mal au dos.
23	**Tokue (discursive signal)**	-	-	-
24	**Sentarō**	It's harder...	È faticoso...	On n'imagine pas...
24b	**Sentarō**	-	-	On n'imagine pas
25	**Sentarō**	It's harder than it looks.	Più faticoso di quanto sembri.	le travail physique que ça représente.
26	**Sentarō**	Have one.	Ne prenda uno.	Je vous en prie.
27	**Sentarō**	Ah...	Ah...	-
28	**Sentarō**	It's on me.	Offro io.	Vous ne me devez rien.
29	**Sentarō**	Please.	La prego.	Je vous en prie.
30	**Tokue**	Do you know...	Sa...	Dites...
31	**Tokue**	this cherry tree...	questo ciliegio,	Ce cerisiers...
32	**Tokue**	who planted it?	chi lo ha piantato?	Qui les a plantés?
33	**Sentarō**	I'm not from around here.	Non sono della zona...	Je n'ai pas grandi ici.
34	**Tokue**	Thanks, I'll come again.	Grazie, tornerò.	Je reviendrai.

| 35 | **Tokue** | Sonny. | Figliolo… | Jeune homme… |

Table 2. European prosubs

4.2. Scene 2. Mrs. Tokue leaves a message (min. 1:40:40 – 1:43:44).

- *Description*: the protagonist of the scene is Tokue, who before dying records a message addressed to Sentarō and to the young Wakana, a student she met at the *dorayaki* kiosk. The recording represents the woman's final greeting to her two friends and contains a message of hope and encouragement that fits perfectly into the finale of the movie.

- *Quantitative analysis*: as can be observed in Table 3, the analysis of the Japanese captions once again highlights the almost total abandonment of punctuation marks, except for the double quotation marks used to introduce direct speech (lines 10, 20, 31, 32) and for a vowel lengthening indicated by a dash to reproduce the length of the original spoken sound (line 16). On the other hand, the analysis of the three European languages (Table 4) highlights a tendency to maintain the three interpunctive marks with the following percentage: comma (60.7% in English, 41.3% in Italian, 31. 7% in French); full stop (64.2% in English, 65.5% in Italian, 43.9% in French); ellipsis (absent in English, 3.4% in Italian, 4.9% in French). Also in this case, the highest percentage shows the clear presence of the full stop in the English and Italian versions, as well as in the significantly greater use of the comma in English, a more agile mark to be used within a monologue, focused more on hypotaxis. Some passages of the scene are analyzed below.

- *Qualitative analysis*: as shown in Table 4, at the interlingual level the alternation of the full stop and comma in the English and Italian versions is particularly indicative. In fact, the calm rhythm of the elder Tokue's speech allows the subtitlers to establish an almost mimetic relationship with the soundtrack by privileging the actor's pauses with the full stop, and respecting the hypotactic structure of the text by means of the comma. This can be seen, for example, in the almost mirror-like relationship of lines 6, 7 and 8 where the first statement of apology is marked by the dot (*I have to apologise to you./ Devo scusarmi.*) whereas, after a recitative pause, the following line introduces a period containing the main and subordinate contrastive phrase interspersed with a comma (*I promised to take care of Marvy, but in fact I quickly let him go./ Avevo promesso di prendermi cura dì Marvy, e invece l'ho liberato quasi subìto.*) Although consistent with the standard uses of the comma, also in this case, in the Italian subtitling there is a clear tendency to utilize the interpunctive cast that contrasts with a completely different management in the French language. Here the translation involves the discursive signal contained in line 5 followed by a comma (*D'abord, Wakana,*) and then

evolves towards the main speech act contained in line 6 (*je dois te demander pardon.*). French interpunctual independence certainly aims to privilege the *readability* (Díaz Cintas - Remael 2021), that is, the recognition of semantic contents in compliance with the syntactic complexity typical of spontaneous speaking: it is also found in the different phrasal and interpunctive articulation of the strings 7, (*Je t'avais promis de m'occuper de Marvey*), 8 (*mais en fait,*) and 8B (*je l'ai rapidement lâché dans la nature.*). Still in French, the original rhythm of the speech is also respected in line 13 (*Watashi gozonji noyōni kodomo ga inakattanone*) which is divided into three distinct moments to better accord with the time of the narration: 13 (*Moi,*) with a focus on the personal pronoun at the top followed by a comma, 13b (*comme vous le savez,*) with a parenthetical clause always followed by a comma, and 13c (*je n'ai pas eu d'enfant.*) containing the main clause ending with the full stop. Also in this case, the Italian-English pair offers a single phrasal solution that, even though it remains in line with the Japanese string (*As you know, I didn't have any children. / Come sapete, non ho avuto figli.*), appears weaker in terms of speed and camouflage with the soundtrack[9]. The lively relationship with orality also emerges in the French language from the use of ellipses which, not surprisingly, appears more frequently than in the other two European languages. Ellipsis occurs to suspend speech and stimulate inferential processes: this is the case of lines 27 (*Si j'avais pu...*) and 27b (*mettre cet enfant au monde,*) that introduce the hypothetical subordinate, or of 29 (*Vous savez, patron...*), which introduces a discursive signal. Also in this case, in the continuation of the monologue, one can trace a tendency towards the interpunctual cast by comma from English to Italian: in fact, in lines 27- 28 (*If my child had been born, it would now be about your age, boss./ Se il mio bambino fosse nato, ora avrebbe all'incirca la sua età, principale.*) there is not only the insertion of the hypothetical sentence with a final comma, but also the introduction of the same noun at the end of the sentence indicated by the comma (*, boss./, principale.*). On the other hand, in our opinion, the almost total reorganization of the French language that splits the two original lines (*Moshimo watashi ni ano toki no kodomo ga itara/ Tenchō san anata gurai no nenrei ni natteiru darō natte...*) in four separate strings is peculiar: 27 (*Si j'avais pu...*), 27b (*mettre cet enfant au monde,*), 28 (*patron,*) and 28b (*il aurait le même âge que vous.*). The effect is to promote immersion in film diegesis while remaining in sync with the soundtrack. In this case, the insertion of the noun *patron* takes place by means of a parenthetical clause (delimited by commas) and no longer in the final position. What, on the other hand, unites all four languages are the double quotes that introduce direct speech, used with the exact same purpose in lines 31 (*"Omae ni mite hoshikatta ndayo" / "I wanted you to see me". / "Volevo che mi guardassi". / "Je*

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[9] In our opinion, there would have been plenty of time to invest more at the intersemiotic level in translation.

voulais que tu me regardes.") and 32 (*"Dakara hikatteita ndayo" tte/ "That's why I was shining."/ "Per questo brillavo". / "C'est pour ça que je brille.").*

Line	Captions and transcriptions	English prosubs	Italian prosubs	French prosubs
1	(徳江の声）これで録れてるのかな？ *Korede toreteru no kana?*	Is it recording?	Sta registrando?	Est-ce que ça enregistre?
2	動いてる はい *Ugoiteru hai*	It seems to be.	Pare dì sì.	Ça fonctionne, oui.
3	これが届くことになるのかどうか *Kore ga todoku koto ni naru no kadōka*	I'm not sure that this will get to you,but I hope so.	Non so se riceverete questo, ma lo spero.	Je ne suis pas certaine que ce magnétophone
4	私には自信がないんですけど *Watashi ni wa jishin ga naindesu kedo*	-	-	arrive entre vos mains.
5	まず ワカナちゃん *Mazu Kawana chan*	First, Wakana.	Innanzitutto, Wakana.	D'abord, Wakana,
6	あなたには謝っておかないといけないんです *Anata ni wa ayamatteokanai to ikenaindesu*	I have to apologise to you.	Devo scusarmi.	je dois te demander pardon.
7	私 マーヴィーちゃんを飼うと約束したのに *Watashi Māvī chan wo kau to yakusoku shita noni*	I promised to take care of Marvy,	Avevo promesso di prendermi cura dì Marvy,	Je t'avais promis de m'occuper de Marvey
8	実は早くに放してしまいました *Jitsu wa hayakuni hanashite shimaimashita*	but in fact I quickly let him go.	e invece l'ho liberato quasi subìto.	mais en fait,
8b		-	-	je l'ai rapidement lâché dans la nature.
9	マーヴィーちゃんの声を聞いているうちに *Māvī chan no koe wo kīte iru uchini*	As I listened to him sing,	Sentendolo cantare,	Quand je l'entendais chanter, je comprenais:
10	"ここから出してよ"と *"Koko kara dashite yo" to*	I realised he was telling me, "Let me go."	ho capito che mi diceva:	"Fais-moi sortir d'ici."
10b		-	"Lasciami andare".	-
11	言われていることに気づいたんです *Iwarete iru koto ni kizuitandesu*	-	-	J'avais le sentiment d'entendre ça.
12	ごめんなさい *Gomen nasai*	Forgive me.	Mi dispiace.	Pardonne-moi.
13	私 ご存知のように子供がいなかったのね *Watashi gozonji noyōni kodomo ga inakattanone*	As you know, I didn't have any children.	Come sapete, non ho avuto figli.	Moi,
13b		-	-	comme vous le savez,
13c		-	-	je n'ai pas eu d'enfant.
14	授かったのに産むことを許されなかったの *Sazukatta noni umu koto wo yurusarenakattano*	I became pregnant, but I wasn't allowed to have the baby.	Rimasi incinta, ma non mi permisero di avere il bambino.	J'ai été enceinte
14b		-	-	mais on m'a interdit de mener ma grossesse à terme.
15	私が店長さんを初めてお見かけしたのは *Watashi ga tenchō san wo hajimete omikake shitano wa*	When I first saw you, boss,	Quando l'ho vista la prima volta, principale,	Patron, la première fois que je vous ai vu,
16	甘い匂いに誘われたー *Amai nioi ni sasowaretā*	it was on my weekly walk, drawn by the sweet fragrance in the air.	facevo la mia passeggiata settimanale, e mi ha attirata l'aroma dolce nell'aria.	j'avais été attirée par la bonne odeur sucrée
17	週に一度の散歩の日でした *Shū ni ichido no sampo no hi deshita*	-	-	alors que je faisais ma promenade hebdomadaire.
18	そこに あなたのお顔がありました *Soko ni anata no okao ga arimashita*	There I saw your face.	Poi l'ho vista in volto.	À cet instant,
18b		-	-	j'ai vu votre visage.

	Japanese captions	English	Italian	French
19	その目がとても悲しそうだった *Sono me ga totemo kanashisō datta*	Your eyes were very sad.	Aveva degli occhi tristissimi.	Dans vos yeux, il y avait une peine immense.
19b		-	-	Votre regard était si triste
20	"何そんなに苦しんでるの"って聞きたくなるような *"Nani sonnani kurushinderuno" tte kikitakunaru yōna*	It was a gaze that made me want to ask you,	Tanto che avrei voluto chiederle	que j'ai failli vous demander
21	眼差しをされていました *Manazashi wo sarete imashita*	"'Why do you suffer so?'"	cosa la tormentasse.	ce qui vous faisait souffrir à ce point.
22	それはかつての私の目です *Sore wa katsute no watashi no me desu*	Because I once had a gaze like that.	Perché anch'io una volta avevo uno sguardo così.	Vos yeux
22b		-	-	ressemblaient aux miens.
23	垣根の外に出られないと覚悟した時の *Kakine no soto ni derarenai to kakugo shita toki no*	It was the look I had when I thought I'd never go outside the fence.	Era lo sguardo che avevo quando pensavo che non sarei mai uscita dal recinto.	Lorsque je me suis résignée
24	私の目でした *Watashi no me deshita*	-	-	à ne plus jamais franchir la haie, J'avais ce regard.
25	だから 私は吸い寄せられるように *Dakara watashi wa suiyoserareruyōni*	It was as if I was drawn to your shop,	Era come se fossi stata attirata nel suo negozio,	C'est pour cette raison
25b		-	-	que j'ai été attirée jusqu'à votre boutique.
26	店の前に立っていたのだと思います *Mise no mae ni tatteita no da to omoimasu*	when I found myself standing there.	quando mi ritrovai lì davanti.	-
27	もしも 私にあの時の子供がいたら *Moshimo watashi ni ano toki no kodomo ga itara*	If my child had been born,	Se il mio bambino fosse nato,	Si j'avais pu...
27b		-	-	mettre cet enfant au monde,
28	店長さん あなたぐらいの年齢になっているだろうなって... *Tenchō san anata gurai no nenrei ni natteiru darō natte...*	it would now be about your age, boss.	ora avrebbe all'incirca la sua età, principale.	patron,
28b		-	-	il aurait le même âge que vous.
29	ねえ 店長さん *Nee tenchō san*	You know, boss,	Sa...	Vous savez, patron...
30	あの日の満月は私に こうつぶやきました *Ano hi no mangetsu wa watashi ni kō tsubuyakimashita*	the full moon whispered to me that day,	quel giorno la luna piena mi ha sussurrato:	ce jour-là, la pleine lune
30b		-	-	m'a murmuré ceci:
31	"お前に見てほしかったんだよ" *"Omae ni mite hoshikatta ndayo"*	"I wanted you to see me".	"Volevo che mi guardassi".	"Je voulais que tu me regardes."
32	"だから光っていたんだよ"って *"Dakara hikatteita ndayo" tte*	"That's why I was shining."	"Per questo brillavo".	"C'est pour ça que je brille."

Table 3. Japanese captions and European prosubs

Line	Speakers	English prosubs	Italian prosubs	French prosubs
1	**Tokue**	Is it recording?	Sta registrando?	Est-ce que ça enregistre?
2	**Tokue's friend**	It seems to be.	Pare dì sì.	Ça fonctionne, oui.
3	**Tokue**	I'm not sure that this will get to you,but I hope so.	Non so se riceverete questo, ma lo spero.	Je ne suis pas certaine que ce magnétophone
4	**Tokue**	-	-	arrive entre vos mains.
5	**Tokue**	First, Wakana.	Innanzitutto, Wakana.	D'abord, Wakana,

6	**Tokue**	I have to apologise to you.	Devo scusarmi.	je dois te demander pardon.
7	**Tokue**	I promised to take care of Marvy,	Avevo promesso di prendermi cura dì Marvy,	Je t'avais promis de m'occuper de Marvey
8	**Tokue**	but in fact I quickly let him go.	e invece l'ho liberato quasi subìto.	mais en fait,
8b	**Tokue (laughing)**	-	-	je l'ai rapidement lâché dans la nature.
9	**Tokue**	As I listened to him sing,	Sentendolo cantare,	Quand je l'entendais chanter, je comprenais:
10	**Tokue**	I realised he was telling me, "Let me go."	ho capito che mi diceva:	
10b	**Tokue**	-	"Lasciami andare".	"Fais-moi sortir d'ici."
11	**Tokue**	-	-	J'avais le sentiment d'entendre ça.
12	**Tokue (discursive signal)**	Forgive me.	Mi dispiace.	Pardonne-moi.
13	**Tokue**	As you know, I didn't have any children.	Come sapete, non ho avuto figli.	Moi,
13b	**Tokue**	-	-	comme vous le savez,
13c	**Tokue**	-	-	je n'ai pas eu d'enfant.
14	**Tokue**	I became pregnant, but I wasn't allowed to have the baby.	Rimasi incinta, ma non mi permisero di avere il bambino.	J'ai été enceinte
14b	**Tokue**	-	-	mais on m'a interdit de mener ma grossesse à terme.
15	**Tokue**	When I first saw you, boss,	Quando l'ho vista la prima volta, principale,	Patron, la première fois que je vous ai vu,
16	**Tokue**	it was on my weekly walk, drawn by the sweet fragrance in the air.	facevo la mia passeggiata settimanale, e mi ha attirata l'aroma dolce nell'aria.	j'avais été attirée par la bonne odeur sucrée
17	**Tokue**	-	-	alors que je faisais ma promenade hebdomadaire.
18	**Tokue**	There I saw your face.	Poi l'ho vista in volto.	À cet instant,
18b	**Tokue**	-	-	j'ai vu votre visage.
19	**Tokue**	Your eyes were very sad.	Aveva degli occhi tristissimi.	Dans vos yeux, il y avait une peine immense.
19b	**Tokue**	-	-	Votre regard était si triste
20	**Tokue**	It was a gaze that made me want to ask you,	Tanto che avrei voluto chiederle	que j'ai failli vous demander
21	**Tokue**	""Why do you suffer so?"	cosa la tormentasse.	ce qui vous faisait souffrir à ce point.
22	**Tokue**	Because I once had a gaze like that.	Perché anch'io una volta avevo uno sguardo così.	Vos yeux
22b	**Tokue**	-	-	ressemblaient aux miens.
23	**Tokue**	It was the look I had when I thought I'd never go outside the fence.	Era lo sguardo che avevo quando pensavo che non sarei mai uscita dal recinto.	Lorsque je me suis résignée
24	**Tokue**	-	-	à ne plus jamais franchir la haie, J'avais ce regard.

25	**Tokue**	It was as if I was drawn to your shop,	Era come se fossi stata attirata nel suo negozio,	C'est pour cette raison
25b	**Tokue**	-	-	que j'ai été attirée jusqu'à votre boutique.
26	**Tokue**	when I found myself standing there.	quando mi ritrovai lì davanti.	-
27	**Tokue**	If my child had been born,	Se il mio bambino fosse nato,	Si j'avais pu...
27b	**Tokue**	-	-	mettre cet enfant au monde,
28	**Tokue**	it would now be about your age, boss.	ora avrebbe all'incirca la sua età, principale.	patron,
28b	**Tokue**	-	-	il aurait le même âge que vous.
29	**Tokue**	You know, boss,	Sa...	Vous savez, patron...
30	**Tokue**	the full moon whispered to me that day,	quel giorno la luna piena mi ha sussurrato:	ce jour-là, la pleine lune
30b	**Tokue**	-	-	m'a murmuré ceci:
31	**Tokue**	"I wanted you to see me".	"Volevo che mi guardassi".	"Je voulais que tu me regardes."
32	**Tokue**	"That's why I was shining."	"Per questo brillavo".	"C'est pour ça que je brille."

Table 4. European prosubs

5. Final remarks

The interpunctual comparison of the Italian prosubs with the English and French ones, and with the Japanese captions of the two above-mentioned scenes provided some useful insights into the use of the comma, the full stop and the ellipsis in interlingual subtitling. First, what emerges from this analysis is the exclusive use of Japanese punctuation which – unlike European languages – almost completely disinvests in the rendering of punctuation marks in the subtitled texts: in the feature film *An*, the almost total lack of the comma and the full stop contrasts with a scant use of ellipsis, and with a by now standardized use of quotation marks to introduce only direct speech. This disinvestment can certainly be traced back to the late entry of punctuation marks in Japanese writing (Wakabayashi 2021), as well as an unusual development of these within Japanese interlinguistic subtitles (Nakamura 2013; Ōta 2007). On the other hand, the three European languages analysed here seem to express themselves through an interpunctual identity that inevitably links them to the practice of subtitling, as emerges from recent professional audiovisual translations. Nonetheless, distribution policies of audiovisual products in Europe seem to have pushed even the subtitlers of *An* towards rather specular interpunctual practices that do not contribute to the development of distinct identities for each single language. The risk, already reported in the research by Díaz Cintas - Remael (2021), is also confirmed in this study. In fact, regardless of the textual genre analysed (be it dialogic or monological), it was possible to trace a somewhat sustained interpunctual dependence by the Italian prosubs on the English ones, whereas – on the other hand – the French ones show a very marked independence, produced by a more articulated textual segmentation which appears often in sync with the prosodic development of the original soundtrack.

In our opinion, the reasons for this discrepancy are not to be found in the internal causes of the translation (Díaz Cintas 2012; Von Flotow & Josephy-Hernández 2018) such as, for example, the space and time of subtitles, but rather in external ones, including the conditions under which the various subtitles were produced (the French version was developed by two people, while the Italian version by only one), the hypothetical experience of the subtitlers in the translation of feature films from the Japanese area, as well as the source texts provided by clients. In particular, this latter element - in our opinion - seems to produce a deep impact in quantitative and qualitative terms on the interpunctual practice of Italian. In fact, although the occurrence of each interpunctual mark is different in the three languages and in the two textual genres analyzed here[10], the practice of the translation cast between Italian and English raises problems at a stylistic, but also at an ethical and qualitative level (Díaz Cintas 2012; Dwyer 2019; Vitucci 2021)[11].

Regarding the interpunctual marks presented here, the analysis of the first dialogue shows that the most common mark in the Italian version is not the ellipsis, but rather the full stop, used to demarcate the succession of lines between the characters, to facilitate the fluency of the text through the parataxis (when the same speaker approaches independent syntax in an additional modality), or to signal the change of the speech act. As for the monologue, however, there is a very high frequency of the full stop with an exponential increase in the comma, used to signal parenthetical clauses, circumstantial elements that precede the focus of the utterances, or to separate the subordinate sentences before the frame change. As regards the ellipsis, on the other hand, this study shows how Italian more often resorts to the full stop to express the suspended recitative. This aspect would disavow part of a previous study conducted by Mastrantonio - Ortore (2019) in which they state that Italian subtitles show a greater tendency than English to express the suspended recitative through the ellipsis. In our opinion, the reason for this contradiction could be precisely the practice of the interpunctual cast.

As recalled at the beginning of this study in the quote from Díaz Cintas - Remael (2021), the rules of punctuation differ considerably from one language to another and the subtitles - for the purposes of fluency and readability - should avoid imitating punctuation practices that do not belong to the target languages. Above all, by aping the punctuation of the captions or relying on presumed vademecum

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[10] As already reported, in the first dialogue, English and Italian opt more for the full stop, while the comma is represented with a much lower percentage in all three languages. The ellipsis, on the other hand, is the second most represented mark in the Italian subtitled version, where French is the language with less occurrences. On the other hand, in the case of the monologue, a clear presence of the full stop in the English and Italian versions is reconfirmed, together with an exponential increase in the comma in English and Italian, whereas the ellipsis is more represented in the French subtitle.

[11] In the case of the film analyzed here, the author, after asking the Italian distributor and only after the drafting of this essay, was confirmed that the Italian subtitles were produced on the basis of the English ones.

shared between languages drawn up by the clients[12]. In our opinion, subtitling that does not start from the original source texts and that – while respecting the translation practice – refuses to make use of punctuation, assuming that what must be translated is the mere syntactic-semantic content of the texts, is not sustainable. The almost mirror-like practice of punctuation of Italian subtitles found in this study also raises the problem of training in the field of audiovisual translation, often debated among the scholars of this sector (Pedersen 2019; Orrego-Carmona 2018, 2019; Orrego-Carmona & Lee 2017; Vitucci 2021). In our experience, the subtitling from Japanese, for example, appears still qualitatively poor in Italy. Probably due to an endemic lack of training not only in interlingual subtitling, but in particular in this source language. In conclusion, punctuation, in addition to having to guarantee the fluency of the text, should be able to preserve in each target language the taste for diegetic immersion which is itself the result of the semiotic interaction between written texts and images. The fact that the subtitles render a pseudo-spontaneous speech constructed by the scriptwriters in such a way as not to be redundant and to always keep the information density and effectiveness high (think of the so-called *illusion of orality* cited by Bruti in her bibliography), should help us to reflect on the importance of the diamesic dimension of subtitling, and on the consequent repercussions in the interpunctual rendering. However, further research in the field of Asian audiovisual translation and the collaboration of all the actors involved during the translation process will be necessary to further investigate this issue.

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Biomachines, metal bodies and masochistic masculinity in post-war Japan

Luca Capponcelli

Advances in technoscience and biotechnology have blurred the boundaries between body and matter, emphasising the urgency of rethinking the intertwining of anthropocentrism, Eurocentrism and androcentrism. This repositing also involves the relationship between the subject and technological otherness. For example, in the representation of cyborgs, Donna Haraway identifies the metaphor of overcoming biological determinism. Simultaneously, in cinematic and literary imagery, cybernetic bodies end up representing contemporary society's changes, fears and desires, exploring new paradigms of subjectivity.

This paper focuses on cyborg identities in Japanese imagery through the novels *Kachikujin Yapoo* (*Yapoo* the Human Cattle, 1956) by Shōzō Numa, *Nippon Apacchi Zoku* (The Japanese Apache Tribe, 1964) by Komatsu Sakyō and the film *Tetsuo* (Iron Man, 1989) by director Tsukamoto Shin'ya. Each of these works presents the search for transhuman and post-human subjectivities in Japanese science fiction imagery from the post-war to the postmodern period and share a masochistic representation of male bodies deeply interwoven with the question of identity. Starting from Tatsumi Takayuki's theorization of «creative masochism» and referring to the Deleuzian view on masochism, the aim of this paper is to investigate the connections between male masochism and Japanese cyborg imagery of the post-war period.

Keywords: post-war Japan, male bodies, cyborg identity, Japan's science fiction imagery, posthuman subjectivity, creative masochism, Deleuze, body without organs, masochism, abjection

1. Introduction

Edward Said (1978: 140, 183, 204, 218) highlights how Otherness represented by the non-Western ends up being characterised under categories of passivity, femininity, and peripherality, to the point of implying sub-human traits in diversity. If the differences are configured as a racial datum, sexualised, and territorialised, the body is then the main place of their demarcation, reduced under the hierarchical binarisms between West and East, male and female, white and non-white, human and non-human. Within this dialectic, advances in technoscience have blurred the boundaries between body

and matter, emphasising the urgency of repositioning humanistic knowledge to overcome the intertwining of anthropocentrism, Eurocentrism, and masculinism. Braidotti (2013) explores the possibility of overcoming the unitary definition of the subject based on the dualism between nature and culture, proposing a decentralisation of the human in favour of a transversal conception of the subject.[1] This decentralisation also involves the relationship between the subject and technological Otherness.

In examining the interconnections between human and machine, Donna Haraway identifies in the cyborg the metaphor of a relationship between identity and body that can undermine the hierarchical oppositions between human and non-human, male and female, body and mind, primitive and civilised. Cybernetic identity, for Haraway, thus overcomes biological determinism (1991: 163, 177).

Thus, if the body can be the marker of differences, it may also be the signifier of a process of identity transformation. From this perspective, these pages offer a reflection on cyborg identities in the Japanese imagery through the novels *Kachikujin Yapoo* ("Yapoo, the Human Cattle," 1956) by Numa Shōzō, *Nippon Apacchi Zoku* ("The Japanese Apache Tribe," 1964) by Komatsu Sakyō (1931-2011) and the film *Tetsuo* ("Iron Man," 1989) by director Tsukamoto Shin'ya (b. 1960). Each of these works anticipates the search for transhuman and posthuman subjectivities in Japanese science fiction imagery from the post-war period to the postmodern. These three works are also part of a larger analysis by Tatsumi Takayuki through the the keyword of "creative masochism."[2] He conceives it as a category of postwar Japanese mental history connected to the trauma of defeat and the postwar reconstruction. Tatsumi's «creative masochism» is a precious tool for understanding the dynamics of power, race and subjectivity entailed in the relationships between East and West from postwar to postmodernism, especially because his study goes beyond the polarity of Orientalism and Occidentalism.

Perhaps, since masochism is a plastic category allowing plenty of analytic possibilities across a wide range of disciplines from psychoanalysis to philosophy, Tatsumi does not specify the theoretical frame of his usage of the word. However, its combination with the idea of creativity should allow us to understand it not just as a death drive, but also as a generative force. On this premise, as regards

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[1] 'The post anthropocentric shift away from the hierarchical relations that had privileged "Man" requires a form of estrangement and a radical repositioning on the part of the subject' (Braidotti 2013: 88).

[2] In his book *Full Metal Apache* (2006), "Creative masochism" and "Synchronicity" are the keywords of Tatsumi's representation of Japan's post-war to postmodern cultural transition. The former indicates a kind of warped aesthetic aroused in reaction to the reconstruction unilaterally modelled on the United States, while the latter indicates the stage of mutual influence and cultural contamination between the United States and Japan since the 1980s.

masochism, this paper will mainly make reference to Deleuze's study on the subject, looking with particular favour upon his nondual mode of thinking.

Through the works of Numa, Komatsu and Tsukamoto, the aim of this paper is to explore the connection between "masochism" and "body" representations in Japanese cyborg imagery of the post-war period, and how they interact with the subjectivities stemming from the categories of gender, ethnicity, and sexuality.[3]

"Cyborg" was a term coined in 1960 to describe the union of human organism and machine in the context of space exploration (Clynes and Kline 1960: 26–27). However, the term has become increasingly popular only since the 1980s, with the emergence of science fiction and films, especially US and British science fiction. *Blade Runner* (1982), *Terminator* (1984), and the *Robocop* series depict cyborgs as war machines or genetically replicated creatures in the human image, in dystopian scenarios of the future. Hollywood, particularly, has represented cyborgs as embodiments of strength and hypermasculinity, associated with positive values such as heroism. A hegemonic and monolithic masculinity, therefore, which is the mythopoesis of an ideal humanity, corresponds to the categories white, male, and Western. These characters are an example of how even in the artistic imagination, cyborg identities contain a confirmation of traditional models of power and authority based on gender binarism (Balsamo 1996: 9-11).[4] Tomas (1995: 21) argues that cyborg identity is a radical vision of what the term 'human' represents in the Western world towards the end of the twentieth century.

Based on this premise, the discourse relating to the new paradigm of subjectivity, given technological progress, remains self-referentially anchored to the Western context. In this way, the other cultural realities, by definition lagging behind the West and already excluded from the Western model of Cartesian subject, are placed in a marginal position with respect to the identity transition imposed by techno-scientific progress.

From this perspective, Japan represents an interesting case study, since it is a non-Western reality that boasts a copious production of cyborg imagery and creatures since the immediate post-war

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[3] Although none of the works examined here are pornographic, we can identify markedly sexualised aspects (in particular *Kajikujin Yapoo* by Numa Shōzō and the film *Tetsuo* by Tsukamoto Shin'ya) that are open to critical investigation from the perspective of porn studies. In this study, we frame these aspects as modes of representation of the body in connection with the identity positioning that emerges from the text of belonging.

[4] The Alien trilogy does not escape this paradigm. Lieutenant Ripley, while embodying humanity in the battle against the alien creature, affirms the gender stereotypes in relation to the themes of rape, fertilisation, and motherhood, which run through all the films in the trilogy.

period.[5] As will be seen, this aspect is not simply a matter of technological progress; it is also intertwined with cultural factors and identity discourses.

2. Yapoo biomachines and Japanese ethnic identity

Before and during the Pacific War, the idea of a specific Japanese subjectivity had donned the features of an ideological, political, and historical construction aimed at opposing Japanese uniqueness to Western universalism. In this effort, the Kyoto school of philosophy distinguished itself, with the philosopher Nishida Kitarō (1870–1945), as one of its most authoritative exponents. In a 1942 conference titled *Kindai no chōkoku* (overcoming modernity),[6] the favourable evolution of the Japanese expansionist project posed intellectuals with the problem of reconciling the local and particular dimension of Japanese identity with the new role the country was assuming in the changing world order.[7] This contradiction required a reconfiguration of Japanese subjectivity capable of synthesising the two opposites, namely the cultural (and spiritual) uniqueness of the East against the technological materialism of Western modernity.[8] The attempt to recreate a cognitive map in these terms of Japanese subjectivity foundered along with the fate of the conflict. Japan was occupied by the Allied Forces, which, through the Supreme Command of the Allied Forces (SCAP), exercised political, economic, and social control over the country until 1951. Even after the US occupation, the film industry and the Western consumerist model prevailed across Japan. Through television, cinema, and advertising

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[5] For example, *Tetsuwan Atomu* (1952–1968) by Tezuka Osamu. Set in a future where humans and robots live together, Tetsuwan Atomu is a robot child with human feelings and superpowers that he uses to uphold law and order. In 1956, Yokoyama Mitsuteru created the cartoon series *Tetsujin 28 gō* (1956–), or *Iron-man* or *Super Robot 28* in Italy. It is the story of a remote-controlled robot created just before the end of the war to fight the Allies. The war ends before the robot becomes operational, and the robot is used to defend law and order. The work inaugurates the long and successful series of mecha (short for mechanical), featuring giant anthropomorphic robots usually piloted by a human hero. The line of cybernetic superheroes and mecha fighting evil scientists or aliens would be successfully exploited in the following decades, establishing itself as an important aspect of the Japanese cultural industry.

[6] The proceedings of the symposium were published in the July 1942 issue of the journal *Chūō kōron* ("The Central Review").

[7] Japanese armed forces had occupied the British colonies in India, Singapore, and Southeast Asia. Taiwan and the Korean peninsula had been annexed to the empire since 1910, Manchuria was a protectorate, and since 1931, a war of invasion was ongoing in Chinese territory, with bloody episodes. In a sort of reverse Orientalism, Japan attributed to itself the mission of unifying and guiding the Asian continent, implementing a political and cultural project that had already emerged in the early twentieth century, and that was known as Great Asia or Pan-Asia, in which non-Japanese intellectuals and politicians, such as Rabindranath Tagore and Sun-Yat-Sen, also showed interest.

[8] For a detailed account of the 1942 symposium, see Harootunian (2000: 34–44). Ian Buruma and Avishai Margalit (2004: 4-12, 24) highlight the recurring idea among Asian cultures that the West lacks a spiritual culture, and that the materialism of modernity poses a threat to the spirituality of the East.

campaigns white men and women represented a model of superior technology and charm. However, they also represented an otherness that had to be neutralised through exoticising projection because they were potentially dangerous to Japanese integrity (Creighton 1995: 143-144).

It was in this scenario that Numa Shōzō published the novel *Kachikujin Yapoo*. The work initially appeared as episodes in the magazine *Kitan Club* ("Club of Bizarre Tales"), and then became a quadrilogy of which there is also a *manga* version that the same author continuously revised until 2000. Pauline is a princess of the future from the Galactic Empire of a Hundred Suns. Forced to make a crash landing with her spaceship, she falls, without realising it, into the the twentieth century, specifically during the sixties. Here she meets a couple: Clara, a rich German girl, and her fiancé Rin'ichirō, a young Japanese man who is a brilliant academic and martial arts expert. Pauline is from a society where white women dominate and are obeyed by males of the same ethnicity. In the society of the future, black women and men are semi-human and enslaved. Due to an atomic conflict, Asian peoples are all but extinct, except for the Japanese who are considered sub-human creatures, generically called *yapoo.*[9] They are beings with human intelligence, but they are treated like cattle or biomachines. Their bodies are genetically manipulated to transform them into living furnishings, musical instruments, machinery components, carpets, urine absorbers, vomit collectors, and even vibrators. Believing herself to be in her own era, Princess Pauline is horrified by Clara's humane treatment of Rin'ichirō. She embarks with the two of them in the spaceship, and leads them to her palace, where the man undergoes genetic modifications that make him Clara's pet. The latter then reveals that she likes the mutation of her fiancé, finding herself at ease in the erotic gynocracy of Aryan women on which the social organisation of the Empire is based.

The story, especially in the *manga* version, is apparently aimed at an audience sensitive to the sadomasochistic fantasies aroused by the numerous scenes of extreme eroticism. However, the plot is deeply intertwined with the issue of Japanese identity, when contextualised in the immediate post-war period. The country had been defeated and occupied by the Americans after the double atomic bombing. The emperor had been forced to publicly renounce his divine prerogatives. *Kachikujin Yapoo* is in its own way a satire on Japan's post-war identity, staging a racist dystopia in which the Japanese people are degraded to the level of sub-human creatures. The author demolishes the Japanese identity from its foundations when he narrates that the cult of the Japanese ancestral deities themselves is said

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[9] The name clearly alludes to the foul *yahoo* creatures of Jonathan Swift's short story, *Gulliver's Travels.* At the same time, *yapoo* is a further mispronunciation of the term *jap*, used derogatorily in the U.S. during the Pacific War to refer to both the enemy and the Japanese (including those with U.S. citizenship) interned in American prison camps between 1942 and 1945.

to have arisen due to the arrival, from the future, in protohistoric Japan of a princess from the Empire of a Hundred Suns (Numa, Ishinomori and Satō 1984: 49-53). Even the elf of the rivers, Kappa, a recurring creature in Japanese folklore, is said to be a *yapoo* that accidentally ended up in the past. In this way, Numa represents the very same Japanese identity as an exogenous (namely Western) construction. Moreover, this identity is much closer to the contemptuous 'Orientalist' representation offered by Pierre Loti in *Madame Chrysanthème* (1887) than the exotic and alluring Otherness depicted in the works of Lafcadio Hearn. Numa reaffirms and radicalises the Eurocentric Orientalist paradigm according to which the category of the human is essentially Western and of white ethnicity. Through the canons of science fiction and eroticism, the novel stages the overturning of Japanese ethnocentrism, which, between the 1930s and 1940s, had crossed the political, ideological and cultural spheres of Japan.[10] Numa's story fits into the void left by the political and ideological discourse around Japanese subjectivity before and during the Pacific War; it is a demonstration of how popular culture replaced philosophical discourse in its reconfiguration. In *Kachikujin Yapoo,* technological advancement and capitalist consumerism turns against the Japanese, representing them as masochistic consumer goods (Tatsumi, 2006:57), downgraded to an evolutionary stage in which the margins between human and animal, flesh and matter, are absent. Christine Marran, focusing on Rin'ichirō's perspective, analyses the *yapoo*'s text in terms of male abjection (2009: 261). Indeed, the exploration of the boundaries of male subjectivity through the violation of body and its scatological and fluidic dimension is a suitable foundation for a Kristevian approach to *Kachikujin Yapoo.* Nevertheless, shifting the focus onto the creative process of Numa Shōzō, we may stress that the Japanese *yapoos* represent a form of masochistic desubjectification. In the chapter *Kachiku ka no shōsetsu ron* ("Theory on the Domestication Novel") of his essay *Aru musō ka no techō kara* ("From the Notebook of a Dreamer," 1956), Numa Shōzō explains why he chose to create subhuman and masochist characters such as the *yapoos.*

> Commonly, the sense of inferiority arises from the frustration due to the impossibility of fulfilling the desire of an egalitarian relation with the Other. Then, in order to delete this forced inferiority complex, it will be sufficient to abandon the pretence of an egalitarian

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[10] The postwar perspective of Japanese cultural nationalism has since been assimilated into the set of studies known as Nihonjinron (theories about the Japanese). This is a generic definition that heterogeneously lumps together works by Japanese and Western scholars that aim to identify specific traits of Japanese culture, social behavior, language, and psychology. Thus, Nihonjinron is broadly understood as a cultural discourse on Japanese identity. However, it is undeniable that this approach is not always neutral and that sometimes, it tends to define the Japanese national character in an essentialist way based on the concept of determinism and ethnic homogeneity, whereby specific traits of Japanese culture and people would be unique and immutable.

relationship. By actively affirming the superiority of the Other, the problem of the inferiority complex will disappear. The simplest way for an effective affirmation of the Other's superiority consists in ascribing the Self and the Other to two distinct groups ordered in terms of inferiority and superiority (Numa 1975: 139).[11]

This literary device of a social system where masochists do not just pretend to be, but actually become human cattle is strikingly reminiscent to what Deleuze and Guattari wrote about masochism as a process of transforming, with the example of becoming a horse (Deleuze and Guattari 2005: 155-56). The *yapoo*'s transformation into cattle enacts a process of displacement of anthropocentrism.

This bestiary created through the biological manipulation of Japanese male bodies is then oriented, according to Numa, towards preserving a sense of the identity from an unbearable inferiority complex stemming not only from the defeat in war, but also from the cultural subordination to the new order established by the United States. Thus, the masochism staged in Numa's *Kachikujin Yapoo* is a negotiation with the symbolic and social order of post-war Japan. As such, even if abdicating control, this mechanism still retains a sphere of masochist agency consisting in the configuration of a new order. By relinquishing human status, Numa employs masochism as a device to repositing Japanese subjectivity. The self-annihilation staged through the dissolution of the body's boundaries offers a way to exist as a decentered subject.

3. The Metallivore Apaches and the Extinction of the Japanese

In Numa's novel, the transformation of Japanese bodies into transhuman creatures launched a narrative vein characterised by the intertwining of the human, animal and inorganic matter. The work *Nippon Apacchi Zoku* by Komatsu Sakyō, although unlike *Kachikujin Yapoo* in being devoid of explicit sexual connotations, represents a further evolution of Numa's bodies imagery. The story is set in an imaginary Japan in the 1960s, governed by a military dictatorship. With the abrogation of constitutional rights, work is no longer a right, but an obligation. Therefore, the crime of unproductivity (i.e. unemployment) is punished with exile in the vast area of a disused arsenal on the outskirts of Ōsaka.[12] The area is deserted, and its borders are controlled by the military. The deportees,

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[11] Unless otherwise stated, translations are mine.

[12] It was the base with the largest weapons production facility in Asia during World War II. On 14 August, 1945, it was destroyed by a B29 bombing raid. The history of the Ōsaka war arsenal can be viewed at

https://www.ndl.go.jp/scenery/e/column/kansai/osaka_army_arsenal.html (Japanese National Library website. Last accessed 23 October 2021)

having nothing to eat, are destined to die. The protagonist, Kida, who lost his job because of an altercation with his boss, also ends up in this place of exile. In the arsenal area, Kida meets Yamada, exiled for his revolutionary activism. He managed to survive for weeks by eating stray dogs. The dogs, in turn, maul the deportees and feed on them. Yamada has a plan to escape. Kida decides to join him, but the attempt fails and ends in Yamada's death. Kida is left alone and is on the verge of being attacked by a pack of dogs. He is saved by the intervention of a member of the *Apache* tribe. Kida had heard from the guards who had led him to the arsenal that the *Apaches* are creatures that feed on metal.

In the name of the tribe and in the setting of the story, there is an intertextual reference to a novel by Kaikō Takeshi (1930–1989), *Nihon no sanmon Opera* ("The Japanese Threepenny Opera," 1959), which describes with a neo-realistic slant the underworld of the Korean community in Japan. Settled on the margins of society and the law, the Korean *Apaches* of Kaikō are called thus because of the raids they conduct on the old arsenal of Ōsaka, during which they steal war debris to sell on the black market. The *Apache* appellation associated this ethnic minority with the Native Americans. Through the eyes of the Japanese protagonist, Fukusuke, Kaikō Takeshi offers several accurate descriptions of the filthy environment where they live, the disgusting and stinky food (i.e., cow stomach and bowel immersed in a bucket of foaming blood, or raw pig's uterus and placenta; Kaikō 1964: 51, 100) they can afford, and their smell of garlic. All these aspects emphasise their otherness compared with the civilised social frame of the city, only six minutes by train from Osaka Station. Before the end of the war, Korean citizens were subjects of the Empire. With the Treaty of S. Francisco (1952) they lost Japanese citizenship and became a foreign minority living outside the law and the civilised world, but inside Japan.

The *Apaches* in Komatsu's science fiction story have no explicit Korean identity and speak in Kansai dialect. But they still retain the traits of a minority, living on the fringes of the civilised world. Their metallivore diet too, just like the food of the Korean *Apaches,* is a signifier of their otherness. Through a mutation caused by the test of a military weapon, the survivors became able to eat only the things available in the area, specifically the wreckage of abandoned cars and military vehicles. Their bodies have taken on a metallic consistency, and they are endowed with extraordinary strength. Their digestive system works like a steel plant and can produce pure steel dung, which would be used to support national industry, after a war against the dictatorship that ended with its overthrow. Their nerves work as electric conductors and empower them with lightning-fast reflexes. Mutant *Apaches* can survive underwater without breathing for one hour, and when injured they can repair the damaged part of the body. They are at the same time monstrous creatures and a new superior species.

Kida, the only human in the group of mutants, participates in the events of the tribe and is at the right hand of their leader, Nige Jirō (Geronimo),[13] who leads the revolution that puts an end to the military regime. The new government recognises the autonomy of the *Apaches*, but another military coup triggers a conflict that leads Japan and its inhabitants to destruction. In the epilogue, the author writes that the *Apaches* who survived the Japanese represent a higher evolutionary stage of humanity (Komatsu 1964: 375).

Tatsumi (2006: 56–57) associates Numa's and Komatsu's novels with the paradigm he calls "creative masochism." The masochistic urge that snakes through Japanese culture is not simply a reaction to wartime defeat, but the expression of an aesthetic sensibility produced by conflicting tensions around national identity: the presumption of racial superiority (which reached its peak during the years of nationalist militarism but was never really assuaged), and the sense of inferiority and humiliation. The sense of inferiority could be attributed to technological backwardness, which, from the second half of the nineteenth century, transformed the country's transition towards modernity into a process of Westernisation. The sense of humiliation, on the other hand, derives from wartime defeat. These tensions would be, for Tatsumi (2006: 28), the way the dualism between the East and West is staged when the post-war reconstruction generation meets the consumerist lifestyle and the Western cultural industry. But it should be pointed out that *Nippon Apacchi Zoku* stages also the othering of an endogenous minority. Like the Korean *Apaches* of Kaikō Takeshi, the mutants of Komatsu represent the Japanese *lumpenproletariat* left behind by the industrial and economic growth of the 1960's, when the country was also going to host the 1964 Olympic Games. These rejected segments of society, including Koreans, Okinawans and Japanese outcasts, enact a violent insurrection against the social and economic system of Japan. In this setting, it is possible to see the echo of the political discourse in the context of the new left, namely Tanigawa Gan's theorisation of all society's destitute, like coal mine workers, rural communities, *burakumin* and ethnic minorities, as the new driving forces of the revolution against capitalism (Tanigawa 1961: 209-210). The idea of revolution gained new attention in the public discourse when, during the 5th National Congress of 1955, the Japanese Communist Party rejected armed revolution in favour of a democratic path towards communism. As a result, the radical current quit the Party two years later and formed the *Revolutionary Communist League*. The interest of Komatsu Sakyō for his contemporary political background is also a relevant aspect of

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[13] In the novel, the surname Nige is written with synographs that can also be read Nimō. For the Japanese audience, the allusion to Geronimo must have been obvious. The Native American chief was well known in Japan by the 1950s through John Ford's films such as *Fort Apache* and *Rio Grande*.

Nippon Apacchi Zoku. At the end of the story, the figure of the leader Nige Jirō is partially a parody of Stalin. In the epilogue of the novel, the protagonist Kida reports that, after the news of the supreme leader's death has spread, the new government criticised his cult of personality (like the destalinization process started by Khrushchev in the Soviet Union), and the Apache people destroyed his effigies in the country (Komatsu: 541-542). The fact that the Apache revolution ended up with a totalitarian regime reveals the pessimism of Komatsu, dissatisfied with the inequality of the Japanese social system and not believing in real socialism as an alternative. Komatsu expresses in the story of the metal Apache disappointment in his country where pre-war institutions, such as the Emperor, still existed in combination with the political and cultural subordination to United States, while Japanese leftist organization were incapable of changing society.

In the preface to *Nippon Apacchi Zoku*, Komatsu writes that the *Apache* outcasts absorb a sort of anarchist energy from the ruins of the Ōsaka war arsenal where they live. He also states that the novel deals with another possible future for the chaotic force arising from these ruins (Komatsu: 10-11). Indeed, the whole story seems to originate from the ruins of the old war arsenal. That anarchist energy embodied by the social outcasts is clearly antithetical to the symbolic order of the civilised Japanese society. The othering of these social outcasts takes place not only in their confinement to the war arsenal, but also in the representation of their bodies as markers of alterity.

This is how Kida describes his first encounter with a mutant Apache:

> At first sight, it looked like a bumpy iron plate. If I'd knocked on it, it would surely have sounded like a bell. Moreover, with a better look, what I believed was a bronze glow was just reddish rust. The coldness of the skin was not human. The scene of this apparition was still imprinted on my eyes. Long loose dark hairs falling on the shoulders, a band on the forehead, a bow carried on the naked torso. Wasn't that exactly the style of the Apache tribes, the brave Indian Americans I used to watch in Western movies? (Komatsu: 79-80).

The story clearly presents a dualism between Japanese identity, which is human, and the inhuman identity of the Apache. Moreover, if human beings adopt the metallivore diet, they can become Apache mutants too. Nevertheless, the leader Nige Jirō is not trying to make human Japanese become like them. He conceives the transition from human to Apache as a personal and free choice:

> The choice of those who are changing from human to metal deserves deep respect. If we protect them, on the contrary, we do not pay honour to their decision. Whether becoming Apache or remaining in the society of humans is up to them. (Komatsu: 292)

As already seen in *Kachikujin Yapoo*, as well as in *Nippon Apacchi Zoku* the dissolution of Japanese identity goes through a process of dehumanisation, or cyborgisation. In this case, the metallic inhumanity of the mutant Apache conveys the dream of the evolutionary transition towards a posthuman identity. If so, the ruins from which the chaotic energy leading to the revolution stems, represent not only the memory of the devastation of World War II, but also a primordial status, or pre-symbolic space, a precondition for producing new meaning and a renewed subjectivity.

In both *Kachikujin Yapoo* and *Nippon Apacchi Zoku*, the crossing between the categories of human and non-human produces creatures that are signifiers of Japanese national identity in the era of post-war reconstruction. The trauma of war generates an ambivalent response in which collective cohesion necessitates a process of erasing the past. In other words, imagining the destruction of Japan and the Japanese is a necessary step in the reconfiguration of the country's identity under a new symbolic order.

If it is possible to identify a continuity between Numa Shōzō's and Komatsu Sakyō's novels in the explicit ethnic implications of the yapoo biomachines and the Apache metallivores, on the other hand, the annihilation of identity through the metallic metamorphosis of the body underpins *Nippon Apacchi Zoku* and Shin'ya Tsukamoto's film *Tetsuo* (Iron Man 1989).

4. *Tetsuo*, technological abjection and masochism

Winning an award at the 1989 Rome Fanta Festival,[14] *Testuo* is nevertheless a low-budget independent film. Unlike *Kachikujin yapoo* and *Nippon Apacchi Zoku*, the story does not focus explicitly on the question of Japanese identity. Yet, as suggested by Tatsumi (2006: 154-155), it was its reception in the Western world that lent it an ethnic connotation. The depiction of oriental cyborgs attracted Western audiences in the wake of the success of Vietnam War films, along with an ambiguous attraction to the yellow peril. It should also not be forgotten that in American science fiction literature of the early 1980s, a standardisation of Japanese imagery had already emerged in the cyberpunk vein,[15] creating a strong

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[14] *Tetsuo* is now universally recognised as the founding work of Japanese cyberpunk. The success of this independent work, outside the circuit of large Japanese film production and produced at low cost, was followed up with the films *Tetsuo II* (1992), and *Tetsuo, The Bullet man* (2009).

[15] In *Neuromancer* (1984) by William Gibson, the protagonist Henry Dorsett Case is in Chiba, near Tokyo, to heal his central nervous system and be able to connect to the global network of cyberspace (the matrix) again. The novel also features a ninja bodyguard (Hideo) and Molly Milions, a recurring cyborg character in Gibson's stories, a mercenary bodyguard who is also called street samurai or razorgirl. Futuristic scenarios inspired by overcrowded Japanese megacities recur in the film *Blade*

connection between cyborg identity and cultural elements of Japan, and which was known as techno-orientalism.[16] It is therefore possible to argue that the international success of this film was fostered by a cultural context sensitive to the combination of cyborgs and exoticism.

The plot, while not linear, is relatively simple. Yatsu (played by the director) is a man who is turning into a cyborg and is taking revenge on a couple (a *salaryman*[17] and his partner) who ran him over. The story unfolds through nightmares, visions, and analepses, along with highly symbolic details. Yatsu is endowed with mysterious psychic powers, and television screens are a prosthesis of his mind, making his memories visible. In response to a childhood trauma, the man inserts industrial metal scraps into his body to become more powerful. Among the memories displayed on the screen is the bloody beating with an iron bar suffered by an adult male figure.[18] In another memory, a doctor appears and, with an amused air, tells him that he has a shard of steel lodged in his brain. The place where the man performs the metal grafts is a disused industrial shed amid a pile of scrap metal. On a grate in the shed, the words *New World* appear, which recurs in several frames of the film. Yatsu, with his psychic powers, will show the *salaryman* (and the viewers) the new world, a chaotic expanse of wires and metal objects with no organic presence.

The grafting of a rusty steel rod provokes a rejection by his leg, which goes rotten. At the sight of the maggots devouring his own flesh, Yatsu runs in terror, and it is at this point that he is hit by the couple's car. The two decide to get rid of him in a forest, where they have sex, while the woman is aroused by the fact that the dying Yatsu is watching them. Eros, violence, and voyeurism are intertwined with the dominant motif of the story, the contagious force of metal that produces the metamorphosis from human to cyborg.

The *salaryman*'s first sign of contagion is the discovery of a tiny metal capacitor sprouting between his beard hairs. This is followed by an encounter on the subway with a woman who, contaminated by

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Runner (1982). Here, in Los Angeles in 2019, replicants are produced for extraterrestrial colonies on behalf of a corporation that recalls the economic penetration by Japanese multinationals of the United States during the 1980s.

[16] Among the first essays to use this definition was *Techno-Orientalism: Japan Panic* by David Morley and Kevin Robins, which compares the Western fear of losing technological supremacy, fundamental to its relations of force with the East, to the fear of the cultural emasculation of the West. In the same essay, it is explained that the Japanese threat, unable to be dehumanised as it was at the time of the Second World War, has been revised from an exoticising perspective that simultaneously acknowledges and neutralises Japan's economic power in the 1980s and 1990s (Morley and Robins 1995: 166-167).

[17] In Japan, the term indicates an employee in the tertiary sector, impeccably dressed, socially integrated, equivalent to the concept of a white-collar employee in Anglo-Saxon countries. In the years of the economic boom, the role of salarymen in Japanese society was rhetorically associated with that of the samurai, corporate warriors, the embodiment of a socially, culturally, and institutionally hegemonic model of masculinity (Hidaka 2010: 2).

[18] In the credits the character is referred to as *nazo no furōsha* ("unknown homeless").

Yatsu, turns into a cyborg and tries to kill him. After this terrifying encounter, the man goes to his partner's house. Here, he dreams of being sodomised by her, as she has become a metallic creature with a snake poking out of her genitals. Upon awakening, the metamorphosis progresses, and the *salaryman*'s penis becomes a giant electric drill. Terrified, the woman tries to castrate and stab him. The struggle culminates in an embrace that kills her. The man watches in horror as his body gradually becomes hypertrophic and deformed, with metal pieces, wires, conductors, and other metal fragments merging with his own flesh. At this point, Yatsu reveals his intent to complete his revenge. The *salaryman is* forced to face him in a surreal combat in which hyperkinetic phases alternate with others of intense physical contact. The fight becomes an embrace[19] when the *salaryman* repeatedly penetrates Yatsu with his mechanical phallus until he wraps his metal tentacles around him. At that point, their human likenesses float into an amniotic womb-like space. In the next scene, merged with each other, they form a gigantic phallus-shaped metallic creature. This is the final, and only, dialogue between the two characters:

> *Salaryman*: Oh, I feel so good!
> Yatsu: So, let's turn the whole world into a pile of metal!
> *Salaryman*: ah.
> Yatsu: And then we'll rust it, you and I, and return it pulverised to the universe.
> *Salaryman*: Sounds like fun…
> Yatsu: Come on, let's make the world horny with our love!
> *Salaryman:* Ah…
> Yatsu: Let's fuck it over and over again! [20]

The elements of continuity between the film *Tetsuo* and Komatsu's story Sakyō *Nippon Apacchi Zoku* lie in the metallic imagery and the devastating force of the intertwining of the organic and the inorganic. However, if Komatsu's *Apaches* feed on metal to survive and their steel droppings sustain the nation's production system, in Tsukamoto's film, metal is characterised by being a destructively infectious force and its overt sexualization. Considering the context of the 1980s in which the screenplay was born, it is inevitable that the link between sexuality and contagion recalls the spread of AIDS (Orbaugh 2007:

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[19] In the first edition of the film this aspect is even more explicit in a scene, later deleted, in which Yatsu whispers in the man's ear the physical attraction he feels for him (Mes and Miike 2005: 66).

[20] *Salaryman: aah, tottemo ii kibun da; Yatsu: yoshi! Kō dattara sekaijū o kōtetsu no katamari ni shimaō ka; Salaryman: ah…; Yatsu: sōshite, sekaijū o sabikusarashite, uchū no mokuzu ni kaeshite yarō ka; Salaryman: omoshiroi na; Yatsu: Saa, oretachi no aijō de sekajū o moeagarashite yaru ze!; Salaryman: ah…; Yatsu: yarimakuru zo!*

181). Although such a reading risks being reductive, the underlying themes of subjectivity, the body, and its vulnerable boundaries, certainly constitute a central aspect of the film, as they do in much cybernetic fantasy in postmodern Japan.

In the 1980s, Japanese society was hyper-technological and hyper-consumerist, to the point of inspiring in Western cyberpunk, even before local cyberpunk, with the image of Japan as a future topos (Sato 2004: 339-340). In Tetsuo, the devastating proliferation of metal and cyborg bodies, a collection of chaotically assembled metal pieces (as opposed to the perfect cybernetic bodies of the Hollywood industry), can be seen as a reaction to the technological bulimia that runs through Japanese consumerist society and its impact on human centeredness.

Cadzyn (2002: 242-243) points out that while in the post-war years the Japanese identity question was about what kind of subjectivity to pursue, in the years of globalisation the question is about what subjectivity is, and how to transcend it. Tsukamoto Shin'ya's film seems to follow this question. The story presents a continuous trespass between unconsciousness and consciousness, organic and inorganic, male and female. Yet, the theme of human centrality unfolds through a confirmation of traditional gender binarism. The only female figures, the salaryman's companion and the woman in the subway, are passively involved in the dynamics of revenge and combat between the two male characters. Their transformation is brought about by Yatsu's intervention and the companion's dream activity. In both cases, they become creatures that threaten the existence of the salaryman, the banner of masculine hegemony in Japanese society (*supra*, note 19).[21] In this way, an overlap between female and metal otherness is delineated. Thus, the recurrence of phallic images in the film expresses the castration fear of postmodern masculinity generated by technological otherness and the collapse of the symbolic order. The metal that invades and transforms bodies eliminates any distinction between subject and object, determining, in Kristeva's terms, the collapse of meaning (Kristeva 1981: 9) and a regression into pre-Oedipal and maternal territory. Reinforcing this reading is the scene in which Yatsu and the salaryman return to a foetal state and float in the amniotic bubble, before regenerating into the phallic cyborg,[22] a manifestation of an artificial priapism overflowing with destructive libido, which replaces the lost centrality of the male penis in his corporeality.

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[21] Barbara Creed (1993: 2, 5, 105, 110-111, 159), in her study devoted to a critical reinterpretation of the Freudian Oedipus complex, interprets female monstrosity in film iconography in relation to male castration anxiety, seeing in it a translation of the myth of the vagina dentata.

[22] Somehow resembling one of those big phallic sacred palanquins on parade during the *Shintō Kanamara Matsuri* ("Festival of the Steel Phallus").

The Kristevian category of abjection, along with the feminine threat, allow the motif of castration to be linked with the metallic maternal territory pervading the reality in the film Tetsuo. This, in turn, makes possible a connection with the Deleuzian understanding of masochism, which is untied from the theory of Oedipal order and conceives the mother's figure as the threat and the object of love for the masochist. According to Deleuze, the masochist expiates father's likeness through tortures to undergo a second birth from woman alone, like in a parthenogenesis (Deleuze 1991: 99-100). Elements like the feminine threat, the emasculation of male hegemony (the father's likeness), the rebirth of the salaryman and Yatsu, and the dissolution of modern subjectivity in Tetsuo's story, match the view of Deleuze on masochism.

5. Conclusion

The masochistic portrayal of the transition of the body from human to non-human unites the yapoo, the Apache metallivore, and the salaryman of the film Tetsuo. Numa Shōzō reverses the evolutionist perspective by regressing Japanese identity to a sub-human stage. Komatsu characterises the political and economic system of Japan in the years of economic growth as plagued by inequality. Tetsuo reveals a decline in the theme of technophilia and Japanese future shock[23] through a traumatic destabilisation of the symbolic order.

The three works outline models of identity that are far removed from modernity's ideal of physical perfection. The representation of the bodies in each of them reveals subjectivities overwhelmed by the internalisation of dialectically irreconcilable categories in the identity discourses of their respective eras. Their hybridisation metonymically encapsulates the binarism between human and non-human, Japanese specificity and Western universalism, male and female, thus generating an identity aporia that reflects the transition from unfinished modernity to postmodernism.

The characters of the yapoos, the metal Apaches, the *salaryman* and Yatsu, epitomise a masochistic process of desubjectification and dehumanisation as a suspension of the reality where they are respectively placed. According to Deleuze and Guattari, "the masochist uses suffering as a way of constituting a body without organs and bringing forth a plane of consistency of desire" (Deleuze and Guattari 2005: 155). The Deleuzian "body without organs" opposes any specifically codified network of organs. Therefore, the act of becoming an animal with a yapoo body as depicted by Numa Shōzō

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[23] Expression coined by Alvin Toffler (1970: 1-4) to indicate the disorientation of individuals exposed to the acceleration of social changes brought about by technological progress.

represents the eschewal of the dialectic between Japanese ethnicity and a totalising model of society culturally shaped by Western hegemony. The social outcast Apache bring forth the opposition to a militarily organised capitalism. The cybernetic bodies of *Tetsuo*'s protagonists are a disordered cluster of organs beyond the control of human techno bulimia.

Thus, the masochistic identities that emerge in the works examined are as much a product of their respective cultural contexts as they are a reaction to them. Numa, Komatsu and Tsukamoto amplify the fractures of their respective eras without the search for a suture; instead, through transhuman and posthuman imagery, they negotiate a different relationship to the symbolic and social order as a suspension of the conflicting dualisms they internalize.

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Reviews

Svenja C. Dirksen and Lena S. Krastel (eds.). 2020. *Epigraphy through five millenia: Texts and images in context* ("Sonderschriften des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts, Abteilung Kairo 43"). Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz. xii + 315. Hardbound. € 98. ISBN 978-3-447-11384-7

The publication to be discussed here offers the contributions of two conferences of the *Deutsches Archäologisches Institut Kairo*, which were organized in the years 2013 und 2016. The volume analyses Egyptian epigraphic monuments whose time frame stretches from the palaeolithic to Islamic times.

In the introduction, the editors introduce the topic. The articles focus on two main theoretical concepts: a) the notion of landscape in the context of the inscriptions and rock pictures, and b) interaction and communication between inscriptions/depictions and their recipients (: x-xi).

Mohamed A. Abd el-Latif Ibrahim ("An archaeological and cultural study of three Islamic sandstone stelae recently discovered on Elephantine Island, Aswan;" 1-12) publishes three fragmentary Islamic sandstone stelae recently unearthed on Elephantine Island, Aswan. Most Islamic funerary stelae dating from the 8th -12th century CE bear a consistent formula that is usually initiated by the Basmalah (: 2). The oldest known engraved Islamic funerary stelae from Egypt can be dated to the year 31 AH/652 CE (: 3). The oldest dated funerary stela from Aswan stems from the year 71 AH/691 CE, being the oldest known documentary evidence for Muslims in Aswan (: 4). The first new stela belongs to a woman, the inscription pointing to a Shiite background (: 7). The stela shows the influence of Shiism already in Abbasid Aswan (: 7). The owner of the second new stela is a man, while the third new stela gives a new phraseology using the expression "the ancient time" (: 8-9).

Linda Borrmann-Dücker ("Men at work. Textless rock inscriptions in the Aswan Area;" 13-32) investigates dynastic rock images in the Aswan area. The motifs of these images are mostly restricted to striding male figures and often resemble depictions accompanying pharaonic rock inscriptions (: 14). The textless rock inscriptions can be found predominantly on the surface of granite rocks situated on the Nile islands, the banks of the Nile and the east bank to the south of modern Aswan (: 15). The main motif and general design of the textless images in Tabyat al-Sheikh can be compared to the representation of inscription owners often accompanying the text tableaus of the area (: 20). Most of the textless images can be observed on surfaces that could easily be reached from ground level or from rock plateaus (: 22). The images of Sehel share with the ones of Tabyat al-Sheikh one or more standing male figures as main motif (: 26). The overwhelming majority of the images from Sehel do not have a direct relationship with the religious function of the island (: 26).

Linda Borrmann-Dücker ("Royal stelae revisited. Neue Überlegungen zu altbekannten Texten;" 33-60) presents four royal stela of the New Kingdom from Aswan. The traces of the transformation on

a stela of Ramsesses II. (ASW/ROY/001) give an impression of the design process of a state monument (: 40). The main text of the southern stela of Amenhotep II (ASW/ROY/005) very clearly sets out the doctrine of Egyptian foreign policy (: 47). The royal stelae in South Aswan may have marked a passage in the fortification wall between Schellal and Assuan (: 57).

Jitse H. F. Dijkstra ("Of fish and vendors. The Khnum Temple Graffiti Project;" 61-72) provides a first overview of the project to record and publish the figural and textual graffiti from the forecourt of the Chnum temple at Elephantine. The graffiti are all incised into the horizontal surface of the pavement (: 63). Half of the graffiti can be dated to the Roman or Christian Period (: 63). The graffiti contain the first attested topos-inscription in Demotic (: 68).

Rebecca Döhl ("Of signs and space. Rock art in Wadi Berber, Aswan;" 73-92) treats rock art in Wadi Berber, Aswan. The initial assessment of the landscape and the distribution of rock art in Wadi Berber demonstrate a special relationship between the geographical setting and the types of rock art or inscription (: 80). The probable hunting scenes and sequential depictions of animals could have served as a graphic memory aid or graphic narrative (: 88).

Jochen Hallof ("Meroitische Inschriften im Gebiet des Ersten Katarakts;" 93-100) reflects upon Meroitic inscriptions in the area of the First Cataract. In Philae, 31 meroitic inscriptions are known (: 94). The most important inscription can be seen in the two royal inscriptions at the Hadrian gate (: 95).

Salima Ikram ("Rock art and the transformation of landscape in the Kharga Oasis;" 101-112) deals with rock art and the transformation of landscape in the Kharga Oasis. In Wadi Bershama depictions of giraffes do not appear, suggesting that the site was probably not actively used prior to the Dynastic Period, when this species vanished from the region (: 102). In Khargan rock art, snakes play an important role (: 106).

Tim Karberg ("The rock art landscape of the Wadi Abu Dom, Northern Sudan;" 113-128) tackles the rock art landscape of the Wadi Abu Dom in the Bayuda Desert of the Sudan. The richest rock art station identified thus far is formed by "Site 29" (: 115). The highest density of rock art turns up in the lower Wadi Abu Dom (: 124).

Adel Kelany ("Epipalaeolithic rock art from the east bank near Aswan. Types, landscape, and meaning;" 129-144) explores Epipalaeolithic rock art from the east bank near Aswan. The Epipalaeolithic rock art appears there at Wadi el-Aqaba el-Saghira and Wadi Abu Subeira (: 131). The Epipalaeolithic rock art sites can be found in the main wadi and in tributary wadis (: 138). In the Epipalaeolithic rock art on the east bank near Aswan, human figures, animals, and geometric patterns are depicted (: 139).

Holger Kockelmann ("The epigraphy of Philae;" 145-156) gives an overview of the categories of epigraphic material found in the temples of Philae.

Tobias Krapf ("Vom Hofpflaster zur dritten Dimension. Der Kontext der Graffiti des Chnumtempelvorhofs von Elephantine;" 157-168) surveys the context of the graffiti in the forecourt of the Chnum temple at Elephantine. Sculptures from the New Kingdom were also used to furnish the Ptolemaic and Roman forecourt (: 158). The sculptural equipment of the temple court indicates its accessibility to laypeople (: 165).

Lena S. Krastel ("Words for the living and the dead. The Coptic inscriptions of Deir Anba Hadra;" 169-194) studies Coptic inscriptions of Deir Anba Hadra. The Coptic inscriptions in the monastery consist of funerary stelae, graffiti and dipinti as well as ostraca (: 176). The first and oldest type of the main formula of the funerary stelae is only dated after the indiction year, while the second type adds a date according to the Era of Diocletian (: 178). In the Coptic epigraphic sources in Deir Anba Hadra, about 300 graffiti and dipinti from the second half of the 10th century onwards are documented (: 179). The oldest dated Coptic inscription in the monastery from the 10th century contains the only reference to the Nubian king Zachari (: 182).

Ewa Laskowska-Kusztal ("Tightrope dancing. Research on religious building decorations on Ptolemaic-Roman Elephantine;" 195-210) describes religious building decorations in Ptolemaic-Roman Elephantine. Fragmentary texts and iconographic motifs confirm the interpretation of the Ptolemaic temple of Satet as a structure dedicated to the returning goddess (: 200).

Ludwig D. Morenz ("Cross-cultural contact reflected in rock-art from Rod el-Air, south-western Sinai;" 211-224) looks for cross-cultural contacts in the rock art from Rod el-Air, south-western Sinai. In Rod el-Air, almost no depictions of kings or gods can be detected (: 211).

Hana Navratilova and Ian Rutherford ("Religion and epigraphy at Elephantine in the Graeco-Roman Period. The case of the deity Neilammon;" 225-234) interpret religion and epigraphy at Elephantine in the Graeco-Roman Period. In the Roman Period, at least four cult complexes were operating at Elephantine (: 226). In graffito I.ThSy 277/G 26 an otherwise unattested deity Neilammon is named (: 229).

Maria Nilsson and John Ward ("Rock art through the ages. Rupestrian memoranda at Gebel el-Silsila;" 235-254) elucidate the stylistic, technical, and chronological variability of pictorial designs at Gebel el-Silsila. On the east bank of Gebel el-Silsila, 22 rock art locations are situated (: 236), while at Gebel el-Silsila West 52 rock art sites exist (: 239). A high number of giraffes is recorded in the predynastic petroglyphs of the west bank (: 241).

Pawel L. Polkowski ("World of images or imaginary world? Rock art, landscape, and agency in the Western Desert of Egypt;" 255-284) sheds light on rock art, landscape, and agency in the Western Desert of Egypt. The largest category of drawings is represented by prehistoric rock art (: 258). The foremost group of figures consists of zoomorphic depictions, the second most common group being anthropomorphs (: 258). In the Ptolemaic-Roman period, the "horned altar" was invented as a new rock art motif (: 260).

Cornelia Römer ("Walking up Hermupolis high street: lost in translation? Script in public spaces of Hellenistic Egypt and beyond;" 285-294) addresses the evidence for script in public spaces in Ptolemaic Egypt, Pompeii and Latin literature. In Ptolemaic times, many villages with a Greek population of a certain percentage possessed a gymnasium, which was allowed in the Roman time only in the metropoleis (: 286-287).

David Sabel ("Who carved first? A methodological approach for analysing the stratigraphy of intersecting and interacting rock art at the 'resting-place' of Rod el-Air, south-western Sinai;" 295-315) suggests a methodological approach for analysing two rock art palimpsests at the so-called "Resting Place" of Rod el-Air. In Rod el-Air, marks related to scoring with a sharp-edged tool and marks connected to carving with a chisel and a hammer-like tool can be distinguished (: 300). Rock images that copy other images with altered lines belong in Rod el-Air to the most common forms of compositional interaction (: 305).

The book can be rated positively. In general, the remarks are clear and the details are put forward with the necessary conciseness. I recommend the book to the reader.

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Gerald Horne is one of the most original thinkers in the United States. By trade he is both lawyer and historian, holding a juris doctorate from the University of California, Berkeley, and a history doctorate from Columbia University in New York. Over the course of his long career, he has written about the politics, economics, and cultural ramifications of race and the history of racial discrimination and liberation. But he has also lived these things. As a former practicing attorney and activist, Horne has worked against racism, apartheid, and other forms of oppression from his home base in the United States (Horne holds the John J. and Rebecca Moores chair in history at the University of Houston), but within an ever-widening personal and intellectual network which now spans virtually the entire globe, encompassing Latin America, Africa, East Asia, Europe, and beyond. Horne is the author of dozens of books and more than one hundred academic papers, ranging in scope from jazz to slavery, boxing to revolution, Ben Davis (1903-1964) to W.E.B. Du Bois (1868-1963).

What makes Horne an original thinker is not the range of his output (although I know of no one who can match it). Horne is original because he is unideological. To be sure, Horne has his commitments, and he wears them on his sleeve in all the work by him that I have read. Horne is anti-racist, sympathetic to communism (of the Soviet, and not the Chinese, variety), and dedicated to the dismantling of white supremacy. But each of Horne's books and essays is a new departure for him. One can sense his thrill at discovering new things as he researches and writes his thousands upon thousands of pages of text. Horne apparently has few preconceived notions and looks with fresh eyes on each new scholarly vista he surveys. For that reason, Horne is an original thinker. He relies on a wide array of archival and other documentary (and oral) sources in writing his histories and analyses, and not on ideological filler to bridge gaps or shoehorn facts into a preset narrative.

Horne's great insight, the one which has most defined his career, is what has come to be known as "the Horne thesis," namely that:

> white supremacy and anticommunism were the major forces shaping post-World War II life and politics in the United States, with significant implications for African-descended and colonized people globally. Locked in a Manichean struggle with the Soviet Union for global supremacy, U.S. cold warriors, [Horne] argues, realized that legal or Jim Crow segregation was the 'Achilles heel' for Washington's propaganda campaign to win the 'hearts and minds' of people throughout the emerging 'Third World'. As a result, U.S.

> government officials brutally suppressed [...] African American leftists who pursued an anti-racist, anti-imperialist, proletarian internationalist agenda. Simultaneously, the U.S. ruling class acquiesced to civil rights reforms for African Americans and other people of color out of fear that legal racial segregation would invalidate the U.S. claim to being the leader of the 'democratic free world' (McDuffie 2011: 236)

This, in a nutshell, is the thrust of much of Gerald Horne's work. This insight, into the kind of quantum entanglement of American empire and American racism, and of American anti-racism and anti-racisms overseas, has caused Horne to cast his vision globally to make sense of the past and present.

In one of his most recent books, *White Supremacy Confronted*, Horne tracks down the welter of personal, political, and thematic connections among North Americans and Africans, specifically over the fate of southern Africa and the anti-colonial struggles there. South African political and moral leader Nelson Mandela (1918-2013) was elected president of South Africa in 1994, and for a few years prior to that apartheid had been systematically negotiated away by the last apartheid-era president, F.W. de Klerk (1936-2021), and his counterparts in the African National Congress (ANC) and other anti-apartheid bodies. But as Horne shows, this is just one small part of the story. Missing from this snapshot of modern history are two key elements: the deeper story of conquest and racial oppression running worldwide for centuries before de Klerk or Mandela were born, and the pulsing currents of communism and other internationalist, anti-imperialist movements and ideologies animating much of the resistance to racial oppression in southern Africa.

To put it another way, it is no secret that Nelson Mandela was a member of the South African Communist Party (SACP) (: 215, 220), but few historians have allowed this fact to reshape their view of southern African and global anti-racist history overall. Horne's approach to writing the history of South Africa, by contrast, is to take this affiliation seriously, foregrounding the history of communist actors in the history of modern Africa. In doing this, Horne is able to rethink the longer history of Africa, the "settler colonialism" (Horne 2018) leading up to the official declaration of apartheid in 1948 and the tortuous relations among various groups of Africans, and later among Africans and their collaborators around the world.

This is a lot of history and a lot of theoretical reconfiguring. The reason that other historians have shied away from the task of writing communism back into the history of anti-racism may be that it requires a lot of work. *White Supremacy Confronted* is proof of this. The volume is 834 pages of text, but even so the reading is dense, crowded with facts, names, movements, and dates. Over twenty-two chapters, Horne takes in not only the history of southern Africa but also of the wider Atlantic world, and more.

Even so, *White Supremacy Confronted* tells just part of the story of racial liberation in southern Africa. While in some of his other work Horne reaches back to the Atlantic slave trade to help narrate the saga of race and empire, in *White Supremacy Confronted* Horne glances at this dark period in the first few pages (: 39-41, for example) before picking up the trail at the end of the nineteenth century, as Americans began arriving in southern Africa for mining or missionary work (: 41-42, 46, 48), and, later, took sides in the First (1880-1881) and Second (1899-1902) Boer Wars (: 48-52). The special affinity between white Africa and white America is one key element in Horne's history. "It was as if one umbilical cord tied together the U.S. and Southern Africa," Horne writes (: 53). The Boers' fight for independence against the British was redolent of the American colonists' fight against the same some hundred and twenty years before, so many white Americans felt an affinity with the Boers' plight. Many Black Americans, meanwhile, had much more complicated views. "Ethiopianism," a religious- and race-informed movement tinged with pan-Africanism (: 56), was just one part of an ongoing rediscovery and renegotiation of identity among various parts of the African diaspora which white powers had scattered via the slave trade and other forms of oppression for centuries before we arrive at the time of the subject of Horne's book.

This endless competition between power and resistance Horne frames in many places in a classically Marxian way, seeing capitalism as the adjunct to, or rather the paradigm for, oppressive profiteering around the world. This is less programmatic than it sounds. History bears Horne out turn after turn, and so in many ways Horne appears to be correct in his diagnosis that capitalism was central to the darker dramas of the African past. The braided thread of capital and race runs through *White Supremacy Confronted.* For example, while mining and other industries in southern Africa were often clearly predatory, relying on racial subjugation, colonial power structures, and gross violations of labor and other rights to extract the maximum yield in resources and cash from the southern part of the continent, a similar pattern—perhaps the same pattern—of unequal relationships and unjust enrichment continued through the Cold War. During and before World War II, Horne shows, many whites in South Africa were not only openly racist—that much is clear—but avowedly pro-Nazi (see generally Chapter Four, "Pro-Nazi Sabotage in Pretoria, 1940-1945" : 137-168). This continued after the war, with South Africa offering refuge to unapologetic fascists from Europe (: 189-191). Even in this Nazi haven, however, American businessmen were not averse to making money. Major American corporations overlooked the violence and oppression in southern Africa, both the history and the ongoing reality of these, turning a blind eye to human suffering in order to increase profits.

It is in this milieu that Horne makes another major intervention. The Cold War, he argues, produced a peculiar tension between the American sphere and the Soviet sphere, with race as one of

the major sites of geo-political friction. This Cold War tension is the flywheel for much of Horne's narrative, driving, for example, Chapter Five, "Washington Midwifes Apartheid's Birth, 1945-1952" (: 169-207) and Chapter Six, "'Where are the Militant Non-Communist Whites?' 1952-1956" (: 209-241). Americans in general, and white Americans in particular, Horne argues, were shy about confronting apartheid, and this appears to have been, in part at least, a product of the contradictions which Horne sees inherent in the burgeoning American empire. On the one hand, the Americans felt that they had to win the Cold War propaganda battle with the Soviet Union, positioning the American way of life as the way of freedom for all around the world. On the other hand, America was sandbagged at home by Jim Crow and addled as well by the need to supplant the British Empire with its own array of global power. In the middle of all this stood the African diaspora. "U.S. Negroes and Africans were a kind of odd couple that had managed to forge close ties," Horne writes. "But the postwar environment provided a stiff challenge to this union, as Washington moved contradictorily to ease Jim Crow while seeking to elbow aside London and co-opt liberation movements for the ends of anticommunism" (: 195). Just as Americans often do not know what to make of Mandela's communism, Americans often do not know what to make of Cold War racism. Both things upset pat narratives, and Horne has done a great service in exposing where such narratives break down in the face of much more complex historical processes.

As Horne spends much of *Confronting White Supremacy* relating (and much of his other books as well), it was the communists on the ground in Africa who were really fighting for freedom. But not only in Africa. In Chapter Fourteen, for example, "Copernican Changes in Portugal, 1973-1974," Horne writes that, "it is difficult to overstate the importance of the overthrow of fascism in Portugal in 1974 as a factor in laying the groundwork for democratic elections in South Africa two decades later" (: 493). The turmoil in Portugal was, of course, connected with the unrest in her African colonies of Angola and Mozambique. Here, too, race and politics were fused. And communism keeps bubbling to the surface of the historical narrative despite Cold War myths of American freedom-fighting, with Cuba, for example, sending troops and weapons to the anti-colonial rebels in Angola.

Cuba was a major irritant to the anticommunist forces in Washington. But it was not the only consideration which the Americans were nursing. The collapse of the Holden Roberto-led *Frente Nacional de Libertação de Angola* (FNLA) and allied forces to the Cuba-backed *Movimento Popular de Libertação de Angola* (MPLA) in 1976 (: 544) caused headaches in Washington, and National Security Adviser Henry Kissinger expressed a desire to intervene, ostensibly to counter Cuban and other communist influence in Africa. Horne, though, thinks that the status of the Republic of Rhodesia, which was experiencing its own crisis of white rule over Black Africans, was what was really on Kissinger's

mind (: 545). And yet, Washington was not to get its way in the crumbling Portuguese colony. "Angola was a game-changer, a transformational development," Horne writes (: 547). It was not only Cubans in Africa, but also Chinese communists, as well as Soviets and those from other communist states, who were on the ascendant. Militarily, and culturally too. And as Angola and Mozambique were roiled by anti-colonial agitation, the United States was pushed into narrower and narrower straits over its partner, Pretoria. South Africa was isolated even more by the fall of Angola and the eventual fall of the white-ruled Republic of Rhodesia. (See here also Chapter Fifteen, "Will Cuban Troops Invade Rhodesia, Namibia and South Africa, 1975-1976?" : 527-562). Communists, Horne spells out on page after page, were the real players in the liberation struggle in Africa.

Turning to the United States, Horne reserves some of his harshest criticism for the National Association for the Advancement of Colored Persons (NAACP), which Horne accuses of being more concerned with maintaining a united anticommunist front at home than with confronting racism head-on at home and abroad (: 33, 497). The NAACP, Horne recalls, adopted the "Sullivan Principles," a "corporate code of conduct" for American firms operating in South Africa which involved a pledge not to engage in discriminatory practices on shop floors or in boardrooms (: 638, 762-763). The Sullivan Principles were named for Black American pastor Leon Sullivan (1922-2001), whom Horne sees as having "sidelin[ed] the radical left [in America] by dint of minor concessions to desegregation," thus exemplifying the more passive approach to apartheid adopted by many American Blacks (: 635). The NAACP, by following a similarly concessionist line as Sullivan, Horne avows, helped South Africa put off the confrontation with white supremacy which communists and other radicals in the United States, Africa, and elsewhere were advancing. If only Americans had taken the path laid out by early Cold War-era progressives like Paul Robeson (1898-1976), Horne implies, things might have gone differently in southern Africa (: 172-174).

But even the NAACP eventually had to get behind the swelling tide of anti-apartheid-ism in the United States. Much of this anti-apartheid work was carried forward in America by activists such as Malcolm X (1925-1965) (: 424), but also by athletes and entertainers such as Sammy Davis, Jr. (1925-1990) (: 728-729), tennis ace Arthur Ashe (1943-1993) (: 659, but see also 627 on Ashe's earlier apparent indifference to South African Blacks), Tony Bennett, Bill Cosby, actor Ossie Davis (1917-2004) (: 659) and many others. When the Reverend Desmond Tutu won the Nobel Peace Prize in 1984, it signaled a turning of the tide, a point of no return in American consciousness (: 710, see also generally Chapter Eighteen, "The Tide Turns, 1980-1984"). The Comprehensive Anti-Apartheid Act, passed over President Ronald Reagan's (1911-2004) veto in 1986 (: 707), signaled a further shift in American policy, and probably apartheid's doom. Without the work of Americans of all races to call attention to apartheid

(Horne himself was among the activists in America working to bring down the South African regime), the tide would surely have turned much more slowly. The NAACP was well behind the curve, then, but the NAACP was hardly representative of all Black opinion on the apartheid question, and was indeed increasingly out of touch with prevailing views on the subject.

As the tide against apartheid swelled in the United States, and as anti-colonial wars continued in Africa, it was arguably the fall of the Soviet Union in 1991—and thus the removal of Washington's pretense for backing the virulently racist, but anti-communist, white regime in Pretoria—which sounded the real death knell for apartheid. Mandela had already been freed from prison in early 1990 (: 775), and after that it seemed to be just a matter of time before the racist South African state turned over a new historical page. Fittingly, perhaps, Horne writes that "by December 1991 President de Klerk himself was in Moscow, one of the last heads of state to visit the imploding Soviet Union" (: 778). In surprising ways, communism and apartheid, race and politics, class and color, paralleled.

Horne thus reframes the major questions of African and trans-Atlantic history to foreground race, yes, but race under the rubrics of Marxian class analysis and anti-capitalist historiography. In doing so, Horne is clearly on the side of the SACP, and against one of their main rivals in Africa, the Pan Africanist Congress (PAC) (: 518). This is an important corrective for non-specialists in African history who may be tempted to see Africa in terms of racial affinity, without the complicating factors of politics and class laid overtop. Horne notes, for example, that Leopold Senghor (1906-2001), then the leader of Senegal, backed *União Nacional para a Independência Total de Angola* (UNITA) leader and Angolan revolutionary Jonas Savimbi (1934-2002) in the latter's fight against communist forces in Angola. This is retrograde for Horne, for whom liberation from colonialism is conceptually married to liberation from racial oppression.

For Senghor and Savimbi, though, Horne points out that the fight in Africa was about race, an affinity that Senghor once articulated to a State Department official in terms of "Negritude" (: 751). Horne does not accept Senghor's interpretation, following one of Horne's early research subjects and major influences, W.E.B. Du Bois, in insisting that in order to understand Africa in the modern world, we must thinker much bigger. Race is important, but it does not fully explain, Horne argues, the African story. For that, we must look to class and politics, which help us get much closer to the bottom of motivations and successes. White supremacy was confronted, Horne says. But not by racial sentiment, but rather by movements led and inspired by the radical, global left, in particular communism in its various iterations.

Confronting White Supremacy tells the story of this complex history in a commanding way. It is a towering achievement, but it is not without its flaws. The most challenging aspect of this book is its *in*

media res quality. Horne's paragraphs are hardwood and often require several reads to bore through, so tightly packed are they with information. Sometimes the information is sparsely contextualized.

For example, Horne mentions the 1984 Mozambique-South Africa Nkomati Accord on a good half-dozen occasions (: 650, 678, 702, 740, 756, 783, 816, and 827). The first time it appears, it is simply described as "ill-considered" (: 650). The second time, it is described as "the disastrous Nkomati Accord which led to the ouster of ANC cadre and, ultimately, the death of [Mozambican] President Samora Machel [(1933-1986)]" (: 678). The third time, we get a rough sketch of the Accord in the words of American politician and Republican adviser Patrick J. Buchanan: "'the South Africans have done a deal with Machel—he kicks out the ANC; they cut off the anti-Machel guerrillas'," which Horne avers to be "a bargain Pretoria was not bound to uphold" (: 702). Next, we learn that the Nkomati Accord was an agreement "whereby Maputo [the capital of Mozambique] thought it had a deal with Pretoria in which the expulsion of ANC militants would lead to a cessation of the war against FRELIMO [Front for the Liberation of Mozambique]" (: 740). Similar tidbits dribble out over the subsequent mentions, but it would have been helpful to have a gloss of the Accord at the first mention, as very few readers are likely to know the details.

Also, while the front cover of the book features a fairly good map of southern Africa, additional maps in the volume would have been greatly appreciated. Photographs, too, of some of the key figures in the book would have been good. There is a lot going on in Horne's narrative, a lot of names and places to remember. Even the most attentive reader may struggle to keep up.

But these flaws are perhaps inevitable side effects of Horne's archival mastery. It is difficult to think of another historian who ranges so broadly and freely across sources. Opening a page at random (: 439), I find Horne citing the Mary Louise Hooper Papers, the *African Communist* newspaper, and the George Houser Papers. Opening to another page (: 491), we have the William Rusher Papers, the Herb Shore Collection, an oral history source found at Columbia College in Chicago, a "Memorandum of Conversation with T.T. Letlako" from February 22, 1969, and a 2017 essay from *Cold War History*. Horne has used the presidential libraries of Reagan, Lyndon B. Johnson, and several other chief executives, the archives of the African National Congress, a wealth of oral histories, archives from the United States Department of State and many other American government agencies, country files from the AFL-CIO, and more newspapers, books, essays, and other materials from Africa and North America (including *Granma* in Cuba) than I can reasonably count. Horne's archival work is richer than virtually any other scholar in his field. As such, however, there is a steep learning curve when reading a Gerald Horne book. This one is especially demanding. Readers should expect to keep the Internet handy, because they will surely be looking a lot of things up (I certainly did).

But the Internet alone is hardly enough. Readers of *White Supremacy Confronted* should resolve to read other Gerald Horne books in concert with the volume under review. Horne is prolific and his thinking is mosaic and deeply multi-dimensional. Even across more than eight hundred pages in this volume, he is still very far from exhausting what he has to say. To get an understanding of Horne's history, it is imperative that multiple books of his be carefully read through and understood. Horne is not just an historian, he is also an original thinker. In *Confronting White Supremacy* we find new angles to "the Horne thesis," perhaps his biggest big idea. But this is just an introduction. There is still so much about the history of race and communism in Africa and the trans-Atlantic that we have yet to discover.

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Veronica Ghirardi. 2021. *Postmodern Traces and Recent Hindi Novels.* Wilmington: Vernon Press. 234 pages. Hardback. 52 Euros. ISBN 978-1-62273-880-9.

Postmodernism is a category that developed in the 1960s, even if the term had been used before with regard to the crisis of the western civilization. Political, social and cultural radical movements came into being, that had liberation as their goal, meant as liberation form any intellectual, social and sexual constraint. The deconstruction of hegemonic culture reflected new lifestyles, civil rights movements and new political aspirations, with an exuberant creative production, an ironic and playful attitude, and the disaggregation of the logic of integration and cohesion. There are many definitions for the postmodern condition, all characterized by the end in the dominance of meta-discourses and gran récits. Pluralism, fragmentation and constant mutation are the keywords of a phenomenon about which I wrote in my study on the Hindi literary field (Consolaro 2011). Veronica Ghirardi has searched for an answer to the question "What kind of post- is suitable to the Indian case?" In fact, postmodern and postcolonial do not necessarily coincide, and the debate about modernism, postmodernism and postcolonialism developed only in the past three decades in the Hindi literary field. Yet, the anxiety to define oneself 'postmodern' is not a novelty.

The mainstream Hindi critics have long ignored the issue: in the 1980s only the eminent critic Namwar Singh discussed postmodernism, in order to reject it. Postmodernism is often discredited as a Western fashion and Sudhish Pachauri, one of the first critics who took the issue seriously, faced a lot of opposition for that reason. In his path breaking work *Uttar-ādhunik sāhityik vimarś* ('Postmodern Literary Discourse'), first published in 1996 (Pacaurī 2010), Pachauri argues that new factors such as the market, information technology and the media have entered Hindi literature and they have raised new questions that even writers have to deal with. Ghirardi investigates the features that include the Hindi novel into the larger context of postmodernism, showing to what extent they build up to the conventional definitions of postmodernism, as defined by Western models. She demonstrates the usefulness of exploring the traces of postmodernism in a literary and cultural context that is still largely unknown to Western readers and scholars, where most of the knowledge of Indian literature is drawn by Anglophone works. Building on Pachauri's interpretation of postmodernism and Sanjay Chauhan's *Uttar-ādhuniktā aur hindī upanyās* ('Postmodernism and Hindi Novels'), published in 2011, Ghirardi investigates in the growing disillusionment with established institutions and social structures and how this became an influential factor in the Hindi literary field after the neoliberal turn in Indian

economic policy in the early 1990s. She introduces to the international audience a less known debate among India's intellectuals on postmodernism and how this notion can be put into use in the Indian literary field, specifically in the literature in Hindi. Today, younger Hindi writers show that Hindi literature has developed the ability to accept multiple narrative structures and many reject the idea of a purist truth and a prescribed theory. At the turn of the century, there was a considerable number of new voices that express in very different ways the impact of contemporary life on Hindi literature, from fiction to poetry to criticism to non-fiction. The new generations of Hindi writers are very familiar with world literature, but they also know everything about the Hindi tradition. And they are familiar with the web, blogging and discussing the relationship between literature and the internet.

The volume is structured in five chapters. The first chapter sets the methodological frame of the work starting from the Hindi novel that is considered "a postmodern zero-point," *Hariyā 'Harkyūlīz' kī hairānī* by Manohar Shyam Joshi (1994). Chapter two discusses the possibility to accept the notion of postmodernism in the Indian context examining the positions of a number of Hindi literary critics. The next two chapters carry on the discussion on a textual basis, using as sources a remarkable number of contemporary relevant Hindi novels, such as Virendra Jain's *Ḍūb* (1991), Prabha Khaitan's *Chinnamastā* (1993), Jay Prakash Kardam's *Chappar* (1994), Manohar Shyam Joshi's *Ṭ-ṭā profesar* (1995), Manzoor Ahtesham's *Dāstān E Lāptā* (1995), Mridula Garg's *Kaṭhgulāb* (1996), Vinod Kumar Shukla's *Dīvār meṁ ek khiṛkī rahtī thī* (1997), Geetanjali Shree's *Hamārā śahar us baras* (1998), Alka Saraogi's *Kali-kathā: vāyā bāipās* (1998), and Uday Prakash's *Pīlī chatrīvālī laṛkī* (2001).

Ghirardi discusses issues such as ontological plurality or instability, emphasizing the presence in the mentioned works of otherworldiness, metafiction and particularly historiographic metafiction. She analyzes the impact of these notions on the text's structure and style, producing multi-layered texts and intertextual games, multiplication and fragmentation. On an aesthetic level, these features challenge the realist imperative of much Hindi literature, giving space to the poetic of small things and the literature of pleasure. Last but not least, there is a discussion of literature as a medium to challenge traditional totalizing powers, as can be observed in the subversion of conventional gender roles in women's writing, and in stories of marginalization from Dalit and non-Dalit accounts.

I have been working with the author of this book for quite a few years, as I supervised her PhD thesis at the University of Turin. I have seen the research process that is behind this volume, and I can state that Postmodern Traces and Recent Hindi Novels is based on a solid methodological ground and it is the result of an ongoing rich and fruitful debate between the author and the best scholars in the field. Veronica Ghirardi created a seminal study that provides thought-provoking reading not only to

scholars and students specializing in South Asian studies, but to all those who are interested in literary criticism, postcolonial and comparative literature, and world literature.

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