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Editorial

It is with immense pleasure that we present the latest volume of the *NUB Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities*, a yearly peer-reviewed publication of the Faculty of Humanities and Social Science at Northern University Bangladesh. This edition, Vol. 5, Issue 1, encapsulates a diverse array of scholarly explorations, bringing together multidisciplinary perspectives to enrich academic discourse.

At the heart of this journal lies a commitment to promoting intellectual rigor and fostering meaningful dialogue on contemporary issues that resonate across the humanities and social sciences. The articles in this volume reflect this ethos, offering critical insights into literature, social structures, psychology, philosophy, and environmental studies.

This edition features eleven outstanding papers that reflect the diversity and depth of contemporary academic discourse. The articles range from a Marxist analysis of socio-economic forces and religious influences in Bertolt Brecht's *Mother Courage and Her Children* to an empirical study on the role of local governance in Bangladesh's economic development. Comparative literary examinations include adolescent psychology in Rabindranath Tagore's *Chuti* and James Joyce's *Araby*, as well as the philosophical and psychoanalytic dimensions of taboo in *Rabindranath Ekhane Kokhono Khete Ashen Ni* and the *Punorjonmo* trilogy. Other highlights include the explorations of cosmic and existential questions in *The Outsider*, a critique of ideological supremacy in Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice*, and a philosophical inquiry into faculty ethics. Additional contributions examine the colonial legacy's impact on language, culture, and religious identity in Bangladesh, revisit Robert Frost's modernist themes and their contemporary relevance, and analyze indigenous resilience through an ecopunk lens in *The Marrow Thieves* within the context of Bangladesh's sustainable development goals.

This publication owes its existence to the tireless efforts of several individuals and teams. We extend our profound gratitude to our Chief Patron, Professor Abu Yousuf Md. Abdullah, PhD, Chairman of the Northern University Bangladesh Trust, whose unwavering support continues to inspire academic excellence.

We also acknowledge the invaluable contributions of the esteemed Members of the Editorial Board, particularly Shihab Uddin Ahmad, Md. Shakhawat Hossain, Mohammad Mozammel Haque, Md. Rabiul Islam, Dr. Rahmatullah, Eshrat Anjum, Tabussum Sumaiya, and Nafisa Nahrin Afra, for their meticulous proofreading and critical insights. Their dedication ensures that the journal maintains its high standards.

This journal represents the collaborative effort of the faculty members, researchers, and contributors committed to advancing knowledge and fostering dialogue in the humanities and social sciences. We hope this volume serves as a valuable resource for researchers, academics, and students alike.

Warm regards,

Editorial in Chief
NUB Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities
Northern University Bangladesh

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Contents of Vol. 5, Issue 1

Sl.	Title of the Articles	Author(s)	Page
1	Capitalism, War and Religion: A Marxist Study of Bertolt Brecht's *Mother Courage and Her Children*	Md. Fazle Rabbi Ashik Istiak Md. Rezaul Karim	09-23
2	Exploring the Content and Nature of Faculty Ethics: A Philosophical Inquiry	Mohammad Zoynal Abedin Sarkar	25-35
3	Adolescent Psychology in Rabindranath Tagore's *Chuti* and James Joyce's *Araby*: A Comparative Study	Mahbuba Sultana Mst. Esrat Jahan Rubaiya	37-48
4	Impact of Astronomy and Climate Change on Human Behaviour with the Reference to *The Outsider*	Fahmida Hoque Meem	49-57
5	Feasting on Taboo: A Philo-psychoanalytic Approach of *Rabindranath Ekhane Kokhono Khete Ashen Ni* and the *Punorjonmo* Trilogy	Bushra Anwar Reazul Hasan Turzo	59-69
6	The Empire of Etiquette: Ideological Supremacy and Cultural Hegemony in Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice*	Tabussum Sumaiya Mohammad Jashim Uddin	71-81
7	Local Government and Economic Development: An Empirical Analysis at the District Level in Bangladesh	T. N. Sonia Azad	83-95
8	Exploring Robert Frost's Modernism: Relevance and Impact in Contemporary Contexts	Marroof Ahmed Hazaree	97-108
9	Language, Culture and Religious Identity Formation with the Impact of Colonial Legacy in Bangladesh	Saifun Nahar	109-118
10	Ecopunk and Indigenous Resilience: Analyzing *The Marrow Thieves* in Relation to Bangladesh's Sustainable Development Goals	Sumon Sikder Md. Abu Sayed	119-130
11	Deconstructing the Self: Postmodern Identity and Alienation in Tolstoy's *The Death of Ivan Ilych*	Muztaba Rafid	131-140

Capitalism, War and Religion: A Marxist Study of Bertolt Brecht's *Mother Courage and Her Children*

Md. Fazle Rabbi[1] Ashik Istiak[2] Md. Rezaul Karim[3]

Abstract

The paper identifies the interconnection between capitalism, war, and religion reflected in the drama *Mother Courage and Her Children*. The drama presents characters belonging to different Marxist classes trying to survive the violence. Some characters capitalize on the opportunities presented through the war and make financial gains; some others die in the process. Some characters also resiliently challenge the power dynamics within a capitalist system. Religious sentiments appear as recurring themes in the drama making a statement that they are instruments for capitalist business. Hence, the paper first explores Marxist classes and their fluid nature. Then, the characters in the drama are analyzed from a Marxist perspective focusing on capitalist exploitation, war and peace binary, and commodity fetishism. The paper argues that wars are fought for capitalist causes rather than upholding religious sentiment and defends the claim of Brecht that revolution is an attainable reality in moments of crisis.

Keywords: *Capitalism, War, Religion, Exploitation, Survival*

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Introduction

The 30 Years' War is a 17th-century religious conflict between two Christian religious parties. It remains one of the longest and bloodiest wars in the history of humankind with more than 8 million people killed or injured. The war continues from 1618 to 1648, opening as a conflict between the Catholic and Protestant regimes of the Holy Roman Empire. However, as the 30 Years' War developed, it became less religious and more about which group would ultimately govern Europe and control the imperialist market. In the end, the conflict has changed the nature of geopolitics in Europe and the religious norms of society. WWII would be another war in the modern era that started as a religious collision because of the mass killing of Jews by Nazi Germany after they invaded Poland in 1939. Interestingly, the capitalist gain and booming economy of the US between 1939 and 1945 after being involved with WWII turns the religious war into a profit-mongering capitalist business.

The drama *Mother Courage and Her Children* (originally *Mutter Courage und ihre Kinder*) arrestingly connects the two wars. While the setting of the drama (1624-1636) falls into the period of the 30 years' war and the subject is entirely based on the war between Catholic and Protestant parties in different parts of Europe, the drama was actually written in 1939 as a response to Hitler's invasion of Poland. Brecht had to escape Hitler-ruled Nazi Germany in the early 1930s to save his life and by 1939 he was in Sweden when the invasion of Poland generated horror in Scandinavia. So, he used the 30 years' war context in the selected text as a form of metaphor to express his anti-Nazi and anti-war ideology. Through this ideological representation, he exposes the capitalist profit game played beneath the cloak of religion in the 30 years' war, and by publishing the book in 1939, he sent a message to the world that another religious war involving the biggest world powers of the period would end up turning into the same capitalist business.

In *The Communist Manifesto*, Marx and Engels comment that "the history of all hitherto existing society is the history of class struggles" (Bottomore 75). This paper explores the Marxist class struggle in the drama coupled with religious and cultural cohesion. First of all, different classes in Marxism will be discussed as cited in the *Manifesto* and in the way modern Marxists redefine them. Observing the characters from Marxist perspectives, the paper explores the fluidity of class and faith systems in moments of crisis such as wars. The perversion of capitalism is thus nakedly exposed, revealing the hunger for capital for the bourgeoisie and the basic need of survival for the proletariat and other classes.

Different Classes in Marxism

Karl Marx in tandem with Friedrich Engels in their *Manifesto of the Communist Party*, published in 1848, broadly identified two capitalist classes: the Bourgeoisie and the Proletariat (Marx and Engels 36). Nevertheless, there are other classes – Petty Bourgeoisie, Landowners, and Peasants, which complement the aforementioned bigger classes. The following elaborates on the different classes.

The bourgeoisie, as explained by Marx and Engels is a class of "modern Capitalists, owners of the means of social production and employers of wage labour" (35). It is understood that the bourgeoisie holds the power agency in a capitalist society just like the feudal lords of the previous epoch in historical materialism. However, the exploitation introduced by the bourgeoisie is "naked, shameless, direct and brutal" (38). Marx and Engels readily explain that "[t]he modern bourgeois society… has but established new classes, new conditions of oppression, new forms of struggle in place of the old ones" (36). They are the exploiters of labor power, and they have successfully broken the other previous power relations such as "feudal, patriarchal, idyllic relations" (38). The power relations before the arrival of the bourgeoisie also contained systematic oppression but often the form of it used to be hidden under "religious fervor", "chivalrous enthusiasm" or "philistine sentimentalism" making the exploitation permissible (38). Marx and Engels have termed those relations as "illusions" and also declared that the bourgeoisie has undressed the exploitation from the illusionary appearance presenting a blunt form of oppression (38).

The proletariat is the class of mass people that is exploited by the Bourgeoisie. According to Marx and Engels, the proletariat is "a class of labourers, who live only so long as they find work, and who find work only so long as their labour increases capital. These labourers, who must sell themselves piecemeal, are a commodity, like every other article of commerce" (42). They are the wage earners. They do not get a share of the product which they are producing with their labor. Instead, they get a modest wage through which they need to buy all sorts of products they need for survival. Thus, their daily food, clothing, and all sorts of needs are determined by the little money they earn. Moreover, their other mental necessities (such as entertainment) and intellectual opportunities are also limited by their minimum wages. In this way, the bourgeoisie capitalists find a way to manipulate the proletarian dreams and possibilities since their topmost dreams turn out to be earning a 'little more' than what they do. Also, the proletarians are used like "instruments" in a gigantic mode of production which makes them often unaware of the final product and/or mostly make them indifferent towards what they are producing. Peter Barry identifies this state of exploitation as "*alienation*, which is the state which comes about when the worker is 'de-skilled' and made to perform fragmented, repetitive tasks in a sequence of whose nature and purpose he or she has no overall grasp" (151). Thus, capitalism denies the self-empowerment among the workers/proletariats. Quite logically, Marx and Engels have compared the proletariats with the "privates" or soldiers who are just pawns in "the industrial army" (43).

"For Marx" explains Ollman, "the landowner class is composed of owners of large tracts of land and is always feudal in origin" (573). This class uses 'lands' as their capital and may expand their wealth through lands. They used to have direct ruling power in the period of feudalism. Though by the time when the modern bourgeoisie was established the landowners might have lost their older dominance, they are still powerful (e.g. the British royalty) and are always tagged as one of the social hierarchies. Commonly, the

landowners together with the bourgeoisie form the 'aristocracy' and complement each other's interests while controlling the capitalist power structure. However, there are two other classes "millocracy" – owners of factories and "moneyocracy" – bankers and the like which altogether form the ruling class (Ollman 575).

Ollman also identifies the class Petty Bourgeoisie as "small shopkeepers who own no means of production, or, sometimes, a very tiny morsel, and employ at most a few workers" (573). Marx and Engels point out that this class seems to be constantly "fluctuating between proletariat and bourgeoisie and ever renewing itself as a supplementary part of bourgeoisie society" (63). In many cases, this class may "sink gradually into the proletariat" losing the little property they have to the bourgeoisie (43). Still, as long as they have the financial ability, they seem to be the intermittent group of exploiters. It is indicated that the proletariat is first exploited by the bourgeoisie manufacturers and then "is set upon by the other portions of bourgeoisie, the landlord, the shopkeeper, the pawnbroker etc" (43). Hence, anybody, not just the rich and powerful ones, can carry capitalist motives and interests and thus be an agent of this profit-driven exploitative system. Anyone can function as an agent of capitalism, which is precisely what makes capitalism so pervasive and persistent in contemporary society. The proletariats also mostly get into conflict with the petty bourgeoisie since they are more visible and reachable. Therefore, the petty bourgeoisie plays a vital role – if they are exploiting the proletariat, they are serving the purposes of the bourgeoisie. Thus, they often shield the actual bourgeoisie exploiters.

Peasants as defined by Ollman "are the owners of small plots of land which they farm themselves" (573). Quoting from Marx's *Capital*, Ollman also points out that the "distinctive qualities" of this class are specified in the phrase "class of barbarians" (574). This class seems to be from the lower middle class that does not have any function in the power structure of capitalism and often like petty bourgeoisie comes down towards the proletariat. France used to be a peasant-based country when Karl Marx wrote *Manifesto of the Communist Party* which describes that "the peasant and petty bourgeoisie" together established "petty-bourgeoisie Socialism" under the leadership of the Swiss historian, Jean Charles Leonard de Sismondi in both France and England (63-64). Though not directly stated, in the *Manifesto* Marx and Engels have indicated another class:

> The "dangerous class," the social scum, that passively rotting mass thrown off by the lowest layers of old society may, here and there, be swept into the movement by a proletarian revolution; its conditions of life, however, prepare it far more for the part of a bribed tool of reactionary intrigue. (47)

This class is the lumpenproletariat which includes the undesirable outcasts of society such as criminals, beggars, homeless addicts, etc. Lumpen means 'rags' or 'rabbles' much like the dirt that remains on the street only to be swept away or to remain despicable. Hence, they represent the 'rotting mass' and are likely to be with the

proletarian revolution as they too have no property. But since in addition to poverty, they do not have any skill through which they can offer labor, they can be bought very cheaply to serve any reactionary purpose which is evident from the June 1848 Paris or Vienna event where "hired and armed" lumpenproletariat "was used against the working and thinking proletariats" (Hayes 447). There are also historical occasions such as the February 1848 Paris Revolution when the lumpenproletariat sided with the proletariat chiefly for their "immediate individual interests" rather than for "any class interest" (447). Hayes in his explanation of the nature of lumpenproletariat has pointed out that "they did not want to work, they were thieving, and given these propensities they followed their immediate material interest without scruple" (446). Thus, they do not participate in social production and therefore, are "immune to historical transformation" (Stallybrass 70). They are sometimes used as "a racial category" that is unstable much like "a nomadic tribe, innately depraved" (70). Unfortunately, people with disability may also be categorized as lumpenproletariat depending upon their familial and financial position in society. This way, it is possible to see people categorized as lumpenproletariat collectively because of their race, gender, body, poverty, etc.

Brecht's Marxist Characters in a War-torn Capitalist Context

Bertolt Brecht's *Mother Courage and Her Children,* a simple plot play yet pregnant with an infinite amount of complexity, presents a peculiar protagonist in Anna Fierling who is known as Mother Courage. Brecht explores the effects of war and capitalism on individuals and society through her and other characters. Capitalism is predominant in this play revealing the class conflicts and exploitation of the ruling classes from the war. Brecht exposes the hypocrisy of capitalism, showing the socioeconomic system's inherent contradiction. The play portrays the darkest aspects of capitalism and systematic oppression through its themes, events, and characters. By analyzing the characters through the Marxist Class system, the ruling class's blatant exploitation may be revealed, and the illusory appearance of their oppression may be undressed. The following discusses how the characters behave in a capitalist context.

The capitalist nature is revealed in the very first scene where a Recruiting Officer and a Sergeant initially attempt to convince Mother Courage to enlist her elder son Eilif in the Protestant army and finally steal Eilif when she remains busy. One of the most interesting techniques of Brecht is to use the professional designation of a number of characters as their names rather than revealing actual names. This is because Brecht wants to present them as members of particular classes rather than as individuals. This is a Marxist technique because Brecht is able to make readers think that the words delivered by these unnamed characters are the words of those classes. Thus, different classes speak and show their nature by titles such as the Recruiting Officer, the Sergeant, the Cook, the Chaplain, the Commander, the Colonel, Lieutenant, Young Peasant, etc. The Recruiter and the Sergeant are petty bourgeoisie army personnel. They fall into this category because their power is limited unlike the Commander or the Colonel. That is also a reason Mother Courage being a petty bourgeoisie businesswoman herself does not

fear them while being interrogated in the first scene. The two officers find that Mother Courage is running her business without papers. But Mother Courage toys with them by giving them some Bible papers which she uses to wrap cucumbers and wet vegetables. Apart from being one petty bourgeoisie mocking another, this incident blatantly reveals a crucial situational irony. When the whole of European Christendom – Protestants and Catholics – are fighting for religious glory and sentiment, Mother Courage uses them to wrap vegetables making the Bible as insignificant as it could be. Her Bible seems to be her wagon and her business her religion. When the Recruiting Officer and the Sergeant agitatedly ask for the "road licence," Mother Courage replies, "The only licence I have is ma respectable honest face" (Brecht 12-13). Undoubtedly, her 'confidence' as a long-time "survivor" is expressed through this sentence (Farmer 172). This form of daring words in the first impression seems a bit surprising given that Mother Courage is just a small business owner. But when she intentionally reveals that her daughter Kattrin is "going steady with the colonel's lieutenant" and it is not difficult for her to put the two army persons "in the military jail", the crude capitalist nature of Mother Courage gets exposed (Brecht 16). Her claim that Kattrin is having a steady affair with the colonel's lieutenant is in fact a great lie because in hindsight it is known that Mother Courage is worried about finding a suitor for Kattrin because of her inability to speak. So, like a shrewd businesswoman, she bluffs and capitalizes on every opportunity presented to her. Another source of her strength is that she has, as the Sergeant puts it, "[a] fine upstanding pair of lads … Strong as birch trees, broadchested with it" who can 'deal' with these two not so high ranked army officials (15). Eilif especially shows his overenthusiasm by saying, "Mum. Will I thump this fucker" (15)? Both Mother Courage's and Eilif's behavior indicate the fluid nature of Marxist classes. Though both the army officials and the family of Mother Courage belong to the same class – petty bourgeoisie, the latter by claiming association with the Colonel – a representative of the bourgeoisie class – can still overpower the former and behave like the bourgeoisie. That is why the two army officials tone down their authoritative voice and start haggling for the sons of Courage. Observing the two lads, they found an opportunity to make recruitment in the army. It seems they totally forgot about the fact that Mother Courage and her family are doing business without papers because they have more important matters to capitalize on. The Sergent behaves like a salesman when he says, "There's good money to be had. And fame is the spur" (15). Then he attacks Eilif in a misogynist voice, "Minding the shoe shop is women's work … Are you a man or a mouse?" (15). Later the Recruiting Officer says that Eilif is "a fine specimen of manhood and the women will go daft for you" (22). Hence, they have three selling points for Eilif – money, glory, and manhood all of which, according to them, can be 'achieved' through war. Unsurprisingly, they succeed in luring Eilif with these pervasively capitalist and patriarchal signifiers. This incident is then a microcosm of gender-biased capitalism.

Apart from capitalist classes, this scene also presents the ideological differences between two social structures – army and civilian. Being army officials, the Recruiting Officer and the Sergeant see wars as an opportunity to "discipline" other "average

citizen[s]" and peace as "[n]o system, no methodology" (11-13). The Sergent thinks wars are necessary because they put people and their property such as "goods and chattels" on a "national filing system" (11). Mother Courage on the other hand who calls herself and her family "[d]ecent businessfolk", is not interested in wars because of glory, religion, or gender pride (12). She is interested in wars only because of money – her business runs well when there is a war, not when the country is at peace. She does not mind if Eilif is being called a "mouse" or a "chicken" for not being enlisted in the war (15-20). She does not feel humiliated when the Sergeant calls her a "parasite, living off the fighting" who is "[h]appy to take the fruits but not so keen to plant the fruit-trees" (16-17). The Sergeant's remark is not wrong because Courage profits from the war but wishes the soldiers fighting the war "don't have to be [her] sons" (17). This is the expression of middle-class civilian mentality that is self-centered – protective about their own families and properties but not about the community or the country. More often than not, between the army officials and the civilians, the former gets the upper hand and puts the latter in a situation of alterity. Though Mother Courage fights this hierarchy in the scene, finally when Eilif is stolen from her, she cannot do anything about it because she is just an ordinary civilian woman.

In Scene 2, Mother Courage is seen haggling with the Cook over the price of a chicken when she says, "This is no ordinary chicken … It used to have music along with its feeding. Had its own favorite march. Bird-brained this bird was not. It could count as well" (25). This way of marketing adopted by Mother Courage reminds the reader of Marx's concept of commodity fetishism which is an attempt to fetishize a commodity by associating 'magical qualities' or 'metaphysical subtleties' with it in order to sell it not on use value but on pervasive and purposeful illusions. Through her cock-and-bull story, Mother Courage hopes to befool the Cook who seems to be not very interested in buying the chicken spending five thalers (thaler was the European currency during 30 years' war). The scenario alters when Eilif comes with the Commander who is highly praising Eilif's bravery on the battlefield which is not true because he fought and killed some peasants (and ceased their livestock for the Protestant army) not soldiers. By identifying Eilif, Mother Courage takes a new stance in the haggling with the Cook which she almost lost. Declaring herself as the mother of the favorite soldier of the Commander, she not only comes back in the bargain but raises her demand to ten. This is again an example of naked capitalism. It is to be noted that after seeing her eldest son after two years, instead of being overly affectionate, she becomes overly excited to double the price of the chicken. It is business that comes to her mind first not motherly affection. She just capitalizes on the newly found opportunity and doubles the profit. The Cook, being a petty bourgeoisie army official initially denies the price asked by Mother Courage but when the Commander, a powerful bourgeoisie army official, demands to eat good meat ignoring if there is anything in stock, the Cook must obey without questions. Again, the fluid nature of the petty bourgeoisie is expressed. The Cook turns into a proletariat being exploited by the Commander and Mother Courage behaves like a bourgeoisie using her relationship with a powerful man or more specifically her son's

position in the bourgeoisie system. The Commander, apart from giving an exploitative order to the Cook, is using religious sentiment to 'justify' the act of violence done by Eilif. He says that Eilif is the "vintage" example of a "Christian soldier" and exaggerates his act by calling him "a young Caeser" who has "lots of glory still to be won" (27-29). These crispy epithets used by the Commander parallel the technique of commodity fetishism earlier done by Mother Courage. Here, the religious angle is being used as a tool for exploitation. Eilif is undoubtedly courageous, but his courage is exploited and misguided. One interesting thing, however, is that Mother Courage refutes the Commander by saying, "A decently run country doesn't need soldierly virtues. Everybody can be just ordinary run of the milk folk, they can be as cowardly as they like if you ask me" (30). This is one of the central messages Brecht gives through the drama of a war-torn period of history in 1939. But why is the commander not agitated by these words of 'insubordination' from Mother Courage? While the first reason is she is not wrong which makes the Commander unable to defeat her intellectually, the second and most important reason is she is the mother of his new 'human weapon' called Eilif. This status though does not make the Commander agree with Mother Courage, it definitely stops him from punishing or subjugating her. Ironically, when Eilif "reappears" in the play, he is arrested "to be executed" for the same deed for which he is now "honored" and his mother is privileged (Blau 6).

At the beginning of Scene Three, an army officer sells some bullets to Mother Courage because they are "running out of booze" (Brecht 33). At the time of war, an army officer selling his bullets to buy alcohol is itself ironic and revealing. Perhaps because at that time, the Protestant army was winning most of the battles and was not expecting any Catholic uprising soon, officers like him were found to be in a relaxed and festive mood. In fact, the paradox is the army officer makes a very bad bargain with an ordinary businesswoman like Mother Courage. Brecht developed such "paradoxical situations" to expose the "incongruities of capitalist social systems" (Silberman 170). Since the officer is ready to sell those bullets at twenty whereas the original price is fifty to eighty, it is clear that both the use and exchange value of the bullets lost standard to that official. Mother Courage shows her contempt for the officer, "You lot flog off your bullets then send your men into battle with nothing in their rifles" (Brecht 33). With this, she exposes another pervasive nature of exploitation that regularly happens in the army. Petty bourgeoisie officers like this man risk the lives of the proletariat soldiers just for their own merrymaking and entertainment. However, like a cunning businesswoman, Courage capitalizes on the opportunity and buys the bullets in fifteen which is accepted by the officer after little protest. It is another example of situational irony because here an exploiter (the Officer) is being exploited by another exploiter (Mother Courage). Again, the fluid nature of Marxist classes is unwrapped. Mother Courage, though shows her concern for the ordinary soldiers, she seems to be really happy with what the war has given to her: "Mind you the war's not been so very bad to us so far … So long as I keep my wits about me and my nose clean we should do alright businesswise" (34-35). Yet, she first refuses and then reluctantly sends money to Eilif in exchange for Swiss

Cheese's not enlisting in the army. The Cook chastises Mother Courage by saying, "You women are so tight with the money then you regret it when it's too late" (38). His words eventually become true when Swiss Cheese gets arrested by the Catholic army and Mother Courage keeps on haggling for her wagon for too long. First, she offers to pawn the wagon to Yvette and her newly found man, the Colonel. She wastes a fair amount of time while making Yvette agree to give her two thousand as pawn money for the wagon which she wants to rebuy in two weeks. Mother Courage needs this money to bribe the sergeant who arrested her 2nd son Swiss Cheese and is going to court-martial him because of his involvement with the Protestant army being their paymaster. Now she hurries Yvette to make the deal with the Catholic sergeant by saying, "we've no got a minute to lose, Swiss Cheese's to be court martialled in an hour" (56). If that is the case, then why was she wasting her time in the first place haggling to pawn the wagon instead of selling it right away? Does that mean her wagon is more important to her than her son's life? She clarifies her intention soon when she says to the Chaplain, "I'm banking on the regimental cash box smart arse. That should cover what this whole business is costing us" (57). Through her cunningness, Mother Courage was thinking of capitalizing on the cash box and saving her business. Even though she reasons that she has still a daughter to marry off for which she cannot just give away everything, still no affectionate mother would think of saving the business and surviving when her son's life is in danger. Even in this situation, since she can think like a businesswoman, she proves herself to be a great capitalist representative devoid of motherly emotion. It gets worse when Yvette returns with the news that Swiss Cheese confessed about the cashbox and while being tortured, he "flung the box in the river" and is about to be executed (58). Being aware of the fact that she cannot save her business now that the cash box is gone, Mother Courage starts her shameless haggling again, "Twelve hundred or they can forget it" (58). Yvette fails to convince the sergeant and even after offering two thousand, nothing works. Her unsuccessful parlay results in the death of Swiss Cheese. Her *anagnorisis* (recognition) without *pathos* is eminently displayed by her statement, "I'm feart I've held out too long" (59). The corpse of Swiss Cheese comes back having eleven bullets in his chest. Yvette rightly says, "You've done it now. You and your haggling. The wagon's yours now alright" (59). Because of her "blindness", she "embodies an uncomfortably familiar modern disfigurement: a relationship to commodities, money and the marketplace that perverts human relationships and is ultimately inimical to life" (Kushner 2009). She could not even claim the corpse of Swiss Cheese because if she did, her and Kattrin's fate would be the same as Swiss Cheese. Eventually, all three children die "while the attention of Mother Courage is engaged elsewhere by some ultimately trivial business transaction" and this way she "not only proves herself unable to prevent her children's deaths, but demonstrates her deep complicity by profiting from the very acts of war that lead to them" (Vork 32). While her loss is a classic representation of an allegory of greed, it is also a reflection of capitalism which made Mother Courage devoid of motherly feelings and obsessed with money and her business.

Another significant concern Scene Three expresses is the question of religion. So far, the readers meet Protestant characters and apparently follow the ideological and religious binary of Protestantism and Catholicism. The Chaplain says to the Cook, "Our dead are no misfortune warriors but indeed they are the blessed ones. This is a religious war, fought for the true faith and therefore pleasing before God" (Brecht 38). The Cook reiterates that "[I]t is a war of religion" and though there are "thieving", "corruption", and "a bit of rape" going on, this "holy" war is needed to discipline the "poorer citizens" unpatriotically demanding freedom (38-39). So, they think that because the war is fought on the principle of religion, it is 'OK' to steal from the common people, be corrupted, or even rape women from ordinary classes. This is a pervasive way to justify physical and sexual violence in the name of a religious war. It is also a reflection of the notorious tactic in capitalism to make people think about war in the light of religion. This way, capitalists can easily make common people numb to violence and capitalists keep making a profit through war. Probably, this is why Marx compared religion with 'opiate' because certainly, blind believers like the two characters here behave as addicts – unable to see inhuman acts happening under the banner of religion. Mother Courage challenges the two character's self-contradictory thoughts: "To listen to the folk at the top you'd think we were fighting for God and 'sacred principles' and all that carry on. Underneath they're no that daft, they're in it for what they can get" (40). She clarifies that war is not 'really' fought for principles but for profit. The people on top of the power dynamics exploit the soldiers and commoners by selling the 'sacred principle' narrative. In Scene Six, Mother Courage delivers a similar statement, "It is the poor gets asked to carry out the executions on each other, one at a time, or to shoot one another by the thousand … As for their popes and emperors, it takes no small courage putting up with them when it's them that'll cost you your life in the end" (75). Hence, Mother Courage is able to understand the bourgeoisie and proletariat dialectic associated with war quite accurately. In a war proletariat soldiers kill each other, so no matter which bourgeoisie side wins, ultimately it is the loss of the poor regardless of their religious association. Yet, she carries a Protestant flag with her and says, "Protestants and proud" which makes her not less self-contradictory since at the beginning of the drama readers see that she uses Bible papers to wrap vegetables (41). The irony continues when after the arrival of the Catholic army looking at her Protestant flag she says, "Christ almighty I never notice this bloody thing any more" (44). Later, she goes to find "a Roman Catholic flag" pairing with the Chaplain. The Chaplain wears a coat and gets off his minister's collar since his clothes "got 'protestant' written all over" him making him "a walking target" for the Catholics (42). All other characters pretend to be "devout Roman Catholics" after Mother Courage with the help of the Chaplain hoists the Catholic flag (49). This proves that in moments of crisis, even blind believers shift their appearance. They are just common people trying to survive, which is not in any sense wrong but of course, it upsets their apparent religious pride shown earlier.

Another conflicting issue recurrently discussed from Scene Four to Scene Eight is war and peace. In the play, most of the characters are "low-level functionaries and

peasants" having "no control over the larger patterns that define and encircle them" (Gleitman 151). They all have opinions about war and peace – either "praise" or "curse" – but most of them remain "pathetically unaware of how thoroughly it disempowers them" (Gleitman 151). The Chaplain thinks "there's always a bit of peace within a war, you'll come on these little islands of peace within the conflict. War's got something for everybody" (Brecht 73). He also says that in "an imperfect world" like the one they live in, perfect wars are what they need not "perfect peace" (72-73). It is to be noted that the Chaplain's words echo the words of the army officials found in the first scene. Mother Courage is not a lover of peace either, not because she is religious but because she thinks war is good for business and peace is the opposite. During the war, she is able to make a profit by selling army uniforms, bullets, food, vegetables, etc. She frequently says that at peacetime, nobody needs war items and soldiers mostly want free food from her. At wartime, it is also possible for her to stock goods and sell them at a much higher price at the right time. When there is peace, it is impossible for her to make an abrupt price hike. Eventually, peace really happens, and the first response of Mother Courage is: "Don't tell me it's peace and I've a whole lot a new stock in" (83). She continues to say, "Holy fuck, peace! … Is this really what's happened?" (84). She does not care about the country or the religion. All she cares about is that her business is at stake. Thus, again, she strongly expresses her capitalist mentality which is devoid of patriotism or nationalism and religious sentiment. The Cook too shows his contempt against peace because if there is no war, then the army does not need Cooks for the soldiers. Even though peace arrived, the country is still ravaged by wartime violence. He says, "People don't need cooks where there's no food" (90). So, just like Mother Courage, peace is a professional loss for the Cook. However, surprisingly, the Chaplain completely alters his opinion about war and peace when peace appears. Now, he can go back to his traditional job of preaching by just changing clothes. He even says to Mother Courage, "Then why complain about peace when everyone else is relieved? Is it for the junk in your wagon?" (89). This is a shameless expression of ingratitude. He lived the whole war time with Mother Courage and what he calls junk actually was the source of his food and survival. Capitalizing on the new situation of peace, the Chaplain not only forgot what Mother Courage did for her even though he was of little value to him – he was not good at manual labor – but also his position on war. He is a classic example of a capitalist opportunist – the kind of people who find a way to survive and occasionally thrive in any situation they are in.

Brecht created the character Yvette Pottier to fill up the "dangerous class" of the lumpenproletariat. They are social outcasts often instrumentalized by the upper class. Being a prostitute, she frequently looks for capitalist customers. So, she is a means of the bourgeoisie but given social shame, she is the lumpenproletariat – unwanted and impure. Though Marx thinks that prostitutes sell body much in the manner of slaves and thus, become lumpenproletariat, in the modern understanding of Marxism it is not the body rather the labor involved in sex work is sold and this way, prostitutes should be treated as the proletariat rather than the lumpenproletariat. However, this paper identifies Pottier

as a lumpenproletariat because she capitalizes both from the bourgeoisie and the Proletariat (e.g. while haggling for Mother Courage's wagon). Nevertheless, through her, Brecht undresses the pervasive nature of the capitalists. Women like Pottier become involved with the capitalists in socially unaccepted acts of sex but when it comes to shaming, it is only women like her who receive the blame. One such capitalist is the Cook aka Pete the Pipe who used to be Pottier's lover some ten years ago when she was just a simple girl from Flanders Fields. It was because of her failed relationship with the Cook, Pottier is now in the business of prostitution. More specifically, the Cook capitalized on the innocence of a small-town girl and left when he was done and, in the process, ruined the life of Pottier. This subplot undresses the fact that the lumpenproletariat class is a creation of the capitalist class. However, she defies her social shame by finding the Colonel as her lover who eventually marries her and thus, she becomes Madame Colonel Starhemberg. The patriarchal capitalist system may continue shaming her by saying that she is a gold-digger or an opportunist. But the question is who is not? She literally traveled from rags to riches on her journey. Yet, she does not forget to be benevolent when she can – she almost saved Swiss Cheese while negotiating with the sergeant, she is the only true soul who sympathizes with Kattrin. Her red boots, hat, and lipstick were not just her means of selling herself, they were her weapon through which she defied and came to the top of the ladder.

The proletariats of the play are the like of poor villagers, those whom Mother Courage, at first, refuses to help in the aftermath of a battle, the peasant woman, and some ordinary soldiers. But a true member of this working class is Kattrin. Brecht purposefully made her mute to express the unimaginable sufferings of the working-class people. But, from this class, the rebels originate. And, in this play, the rebel is none but Kattrin. Though she is mute, she, with her personality, plays a vital role in pointing fingers at the exploitations of the ruling class. Her muteness is a great symbol from the beginning of the drama. At the time of war, there is no humanity among people. In the beginning of the drama, Brecht presents Kattrin, as a symbol of humanity which is reflected through her passion to help the wounded, and her resilience to save a baby by literally throwing herself into fire. She is also a symbol of innocence marked by her initial obsession with Pottier's red boots and hat, which she thinks is her escape route from this dire situation. Brecht provides a two-pronged message through her muteness – first, humanity and innocence are silenced during this war, and second, even in this time of great crisis, there is hope because of the presence of people like Kattrin. Not only is she mute, but she also gets a scar on her face while she tries to protect some of her mother's goods. This makes her life even more difficult. She was already a matter of 'worry' for her mother, and now when she survives an attack, her mother's response is, "there's no a man'll marry her" (81). Qassim and Azeez write, "When Kattrin sustains a facial injury, she also exhibits a lot of kindness and compassion for the victim and shows genuine concern for her well-being" (49). But actually, not for a single moment, Mother Courage accepts the fact that it was her fault to send Kattrin alone with the Clerk from the army. So, contrary to what Qassim and Azzez think, she does not show kindness but

rather pities her daughter. Kattrin was already considered a 'liability' before being attacked, now her position comes down to a lumpenproletariat much like Pottier. The Cook offers Mother Courage a partnership in a restaurant business but shamelessly denies taking Kattrin with them because his customers in the pub will be 'upset' seeing her face.

However, Kattrin's death alone is an act of vital revolutionary resistance. She fears for the innocent peasants and children who will be killed in the impending attack by the Catholic Lieutenant and soldiers. In an attempt to save the common people, she climbs to the roof of a farmhouse and beats loudly on a drum to send an alarm. Thus, the drum becomes her voice with which she wants to rescue the people asleep. The drum is Brecht's biggest symbol. Brecht wants to give the Marxist message of revolution through Kattrin and her drum. Kattrin drums vigorously ignoring the death threats from the soldiers below her. Eventually, she was shot and slowly crumpled in death. But her deafening beats found voice in the city's cannons. Her prayer was answered, and her dreams came true. She did not falter in temptation and the villagers' attempts to silence her have proven futile; the town and its people are saved. She dies, but her humanity lives through her silent resistance. Even an enemy soldier admits Kattrin's victory in Scene Eleven and says, "She's done it" meaning that they cannot do anything anymore (Brecht 116). Thanks to Kattrin, the townsfolk awake from helpless slumber and realize their ability to defend themselves from what otherwise would have been a mass slaughter. Her final message rises from the place of death itself so that even dead silence can and must speak out in the service of ever-persisting life. Whereas her brothers die as dumb victims of the war, as pawns of superior forces, Kattrin dies as a hero. Through this ending, Brecht wants to give hope to people that revolution is not unattainable. There are still courageous people like Kattrin and the Young Peasant who dare to take the bullets shot from the guns of the powerful capitalists in order to save others. Kattrin demonstrates herself to be very capable of imagining a world beyond eternal. Thus, Kattrin rises above Mother Courage, who earned her name not for courage but for driving "through a missile bombardment carrying fifty loaves" because "[t]hey were getting mouldy" and she "had to get them sold" (12). Ironically, Mother Courage still manages to prove herself to be "a good businesswoman" at this ultimate moment of grief by "[p]ulling out a generous sum of money for Kattrin's funeral" and returning "a few coins to her leather purse" (Smith 493). Motherhood for her "is embedded in economics" which "comes easier to the bourgeoise who can afford it" (493).

Conclusion

Brecht shows a microcosm of the capitalist system through the family of Mother Courage and other characters. Brecht generates characters resembling all classes discussed in Marxism and shows how the power dynamics function within them. When Mother Courage is left alone with her wagon in Scene Twelve, the most miserable consequence of capitalism is shown. If the wagon symbolizes Courage's capitalist greed, then this is how she gets her punishment. Interestingly, she still hopes to pull the

wagon on her own and restart the business. Her capitalist mentality took her in this position that all her children died horribly but she seems to be still in the illusion that she is not done because she has the wagon. She does not realize that when no one is with her, it does not matter whether she has any money or not. Capitalism took away her sense of relationship and made her only committed to money. This is the central message of the play. Capitalism makes people so obsessed with money and profit that people become devoid of all sorts of humane qualities. Also, the exploitative nature of a capitalist system is exposed by Brecht. He shows how capitalism puts misguided thoughts about war in people. He recurrently showed that religion or religious sentiment is utilized by the capitalists for their own gain. Finally, it is the poor and powerless who lose in moments of crisis like wars. Capitalism finds its way to function by strengthening its manipulative structure.

However, most importantly among all these negative aspects, Brecht tells the readers what it means to be courageous. Real courage is in saving people's lives, not some loaves or means of business. Kattrin's silence or muteness and eventual courage become the symbol of the rejection of capitalism. While her acts of kindness offer hope in a hopeless world, her selfless acts challenge the status quo of the capitalist system. Her courageous acts of defiance resonate with characters such as Swiss Cheese and the peasants who question their motives and finally consider taking a stand against oppression. Kattrin rises over the stage transformed into an angel of revolutionary power. Her silence magically transforms into speech and death to life. Hence, Kattrin catalyzes change and provides hope for a Marxist revolution. Indirectly, Brecht calls for more Kattrins when another bloody war started in 1939.

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Exploring the Content and Nature of Faculty Ethics: A Philosophical Inquiry

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Abstract

Faculty ethics, a vital branch of moral philosophy, examines the innate moral faculties that guide human behavior and decision-making. As moral agents, individuals frequently confront choices between good and evil, justice and injustice, and appropriateness and inappropriateness in daily life, relying on inherent ethical dispositions to navigate these dilemmas. This study aims to explore the content and nature of faculty ethics by providing a philosophical analysis of these moral faculties. Employing a qualitative methodology rooted in philosophical inquiry, the paper delves into theoretical frameworks and historical perspectives to contextualize faculty ethics. The findings reveal that faculty ethics not only underpin human actions but also serve as a foundation for ethical reasoning and moral development. This research contributes to a deeper understanding of moral philosophy by emphasizing the significance of innate ethical faculties in shaping human conduct and thought.

Keywords: *Faculty Ethics, Moral Philosophy, Ethical Faculties, Human Behavior, Philosophical Analysis*

Introduction

Faculty ethics, a significant domain within moral philosophy, explores the inherent moral faculties that guide human behavior, decision-making, and ethical reasoning. These innate faculties enable individuals to distinguish between good and evil, justice and injustice, and appropriateness and inappropriateness, thus shaping the ethical

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dimensions of human existence. The concept of faculty ethics has been a topic of philosophical inquiry for centuries, with thinkers such as Aristotle and Immanuel Kant discussing the role of human rationality and moral faculties in ethical conduct. In an era where moral and ethical challenges permeate all aspects of life, understanding the content and nature of faculty ethics becomes imperative for comprehending the foundations of moral action and its implications for individual and collective well-being. This study aims to engage with the philosophical frameworks underpinning faculty ethics, offering a detailed analysis of its content, scope, and relevance in contemporary moral philosophy.

Objectives of the Study

This study aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of faculty ethics by addressing several key objectives. It seeks to analyze the core principles and components of faculty ethics within the broader framework of moral philosophy, offering insights into its foundational theories and applications. Additionally, the research examines the role of innate moral faculties in guiding human behavior and ethical decision-making, emphasizing how these inherent qualities shape individuals' moral reasoning and actions. Finally, the study evaluates the relevance of faculty ethics in addressing contemporary ethical dilemmas, demonstrating its significance in navigating the complex moral challenges of the modern world. Together, these objectives underline the importance of faculty ethics as a critical area of inquiry within moral philosophy.

Literature Review

The study of faculty ethics, a crucial aspect of moral philosophy, has evolved through a blend of classical foundations and contemporary interpretations. Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics* lays the groundwork for ethical inquiry, emphasizing the cultivation of virtues and practical wisdom (*phronesis*) as integral to moral decision-making (Aristotle 1103b). His recognition of innate capacities for virtue highlights their significance in shaping human conduct. Building on this, Kant's *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals* introduces the categorical imperative, stressing the role of rational faculties in discerning universal ethical principles, thereby affirming the autonomy and rationality central to faculty ethics (Kant 4:421).

Modern perspectives expand these classical ideas by incorporating interdisciplinary approaches. Jonathan Haidt's *The Righteous Mind: Why Good People Are Divided by Politics and Religion* bridges psychology and moral philosophy, proposing that moral behavior is influenced by innate psychological foundations, such as care, fairness, and loyalty, which operate across cultural contexts (Haidt 56). Similarly, Alasdair MacIntyre's *After Virtue: A Study in Moral Theory* critiques the fragmentation of modern ethical theories, advocating for a virtue-ethics approach rooted in community and tradition. MacIntyre emphasizes the role of innate moral faculties in fostering a cohesive ethical framework for the "good life" (MacIntyre 120).

A more recent contribution comes from Martha C. Nussbaum's *Justice for Animals: Our Collective Responsibility* (2023), which extends the ethical discourse to include non-human beings. Nussbaum explores empathy and compassion as innate faculties, underscoring their relevance in contemporary ethical challenges and their potential to redefine moral responsibilities beyond anthropocentric boundaries.

Despite the robust theoretical and empirical developments in the field, certain gaps remain in understanding the interplay between innate moral faculties and external societal influences. This study addresses this lacuna by synthesizing classical philosophical theories with modern interdisciplinary insights. By examining the historical evolution and current relevance of faculty ethics, it aims to provide a nuanced understanding of its content, nature, and application, thus contributing to broader discussions in moral philosophy.

Research Gaps

While existing literature provides a strong foundation for understanding faculty ethics, notable gaps remain. Classical works, such as those by Aristotle and Kant, focus primarily on theoretical frameworks but do not address the dynamic interaction between innate moral faculties and external societal influences. Modern interdisciplinary perspectives, such as Haidt's psychological approach and Nussbaum's expansion into non-human ethics, broaden the discourse yet leave unexplored the practical implications of faculty ethics in navigating contemporary ethical dilemmas. Moreover, the relevance of faculty ethics in addressing ethical pluralism and evolving cultural contexts requires further investigation.

Problem Statement

Despite its foundational importance in moral philosophy, faculty ethics lacks comprehensive analysis that integrates classical theories with modern interdisciplinary insights. The dynamic interplay between innate moral faculties and societal influences remains underexplored, limiting the applicability of faculty ethics to contemporary ethical challenges. This study seeks to bridge these gaps by critically examining the content and nature of faculty ethics, offering a nuanced understanding that connects historical perspectives with modern ethical complexities.

Research Methodology

This study employs a qualitative research methodology rooted in philosophical inquiry, synthesizing classical theories and contemporary perspectives to explore the content and nature of faculty ethics. Primary sources, such as Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics* and Kant's *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals*, are critically analyzed to establish a theoretical foundation for understanding faculty ethics (Aristotle 1103b; Kant 4:421). Additionally, secondary sources, including interdisciplinary works by Haidt, MacIntyre, and Nussbaum, are reviewed to incorporate psychological and sociocultural insights (Haidt 56; MacIntyre 120; Nussbaum 67). By employing a comparative approach, the

study examines the interplay between innate moral faculties and external influences, addressing gaps in existing literature. This method ensures a comprehensive and nuanced analysis, contextualizing faculty ethics within both historical and contemporary moral frameworks.

Significance of the Study

This research contributes to moral philosophy by offering an integrated analysis of faculty ethics that bridges classical and modern perspectives. It highlights the foundational role of innate moral faculties in shaping ethical behavior while demonstrating their relevance in addressing contemporary ethical dilemmas. By synthesizing diverse theoretical and empirical insights, the study provides a robust framework for understanding how faculty ethics can inform moral reasoning, guide ethical decision-making, and navigate challenges posed by ethical pluralism. Moreover, its interdisciplinary approach underscores the importance of faculty ethics in fostering cross-cultural dialogue and promoting a cohesive ethical framework in an increasingly globalized world.

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework of this study is rooted in classical moral philosophy, enhanced by contemporary interdisciplinary perspectives. At its core, this research draws upon Aristotle's virtue ethics, particularly his concept of *phronesis* (practical wisdom), which posits that the cultivation of virtues is central to moral decision-making (Aristotle 1103b). Aristotle's emphasis on the role of rationality and innate moral capacities in achieving ethical behavior provides the foundational structure for understanding the nature of faculty ethics. According to Aristotle, individuals must exercise practical wisdom to discern and act according to the right course of action, making *phronesis* an essential element in the ethical decision-making process.

In addition to Aristotle, Immanuel Kant's *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals* offers a complementary framework through his theory of the categorical imperative. Kant argues that morality is grounded in the rational capacity to discern universal ethical principles that apply equally to all rational beings (Kant 4:421). This perspective underscores the autonomy of individuals in making ethical decisions and emphasizes the intrinsic moral law that guides faculty ethics. Kant's insistence on rational faculties further supports the notion that ethical behavior is not only a product of cultural context but also of universal moral laws accessible through human reason.

Building on these classical theories, this study incorporates modern interdisciplinary perspectives to provide a broader lens through which faculty ethics can be understood. Jonathan Haidt's *The Righteous Mind* introduces a psychological dimension, arguing that moral behavior is shaped by innate psychological mechanisms, such as care, fairness, and loyalty, which are universal across cultures (Haidt 56). Haidt's insights into the emotional and cognitive underpinnings of moral reasoning align

with the study's investigation into the role of innate moral faculties in guiding human behavior.

Alasdair MacIntyre's *After Virtue* critiques the fragmentation of modern ethical theories and advocates for a return to virtue ethics, which emphasizes the role of community, tradition, and narrative in moral development (MacIntyre 120). MacIntyre's framework highlights the communal and contextual aspects of ethical behavior, suggesting that faculty ethics must be considered within the broader social and cultural context in which they operate.

Finally, Martha C. Nussbaum's *Justice for Animals* extends the moral inquiry into the realm of empathy and compassion, advocating for the ethical treatment of non-human beings (Nussbaum 67). Her exploration of empathy as an innate moral faculty offers valuable insights into the emotional dimensions of moral decision-making, reinforcing the idea that moral faculties extend beyond human relationships and can shape broader ethical considerations in contemporary discourse.

Together, these theoretical perspectives create a multidimensional framework for understanding the content and nature of faculty ethics. By integrating classical philosophical concepts with modern psychological and sociocultural insights, the theoretical framework allows for a comprehensive exploration of how innate moral faculties guide ethical behavior and decision-making, while also addressing the broader societal influences that shape moral reasoning. This study thus aims to contribute to a richer understanding of faculty ethics within the larger context of moral philosophy and its practical implications in contemporary ethical dilemmas.

Discussion

The study of faculty ethics, grounded in moral philosophy and informed by classical and contemporary interdisciplinary frameworks, invites a deep exploration of the principles and foundations that guide ethical behavior in academic settings. The theoretical underpinnings provided by Aristotle's virtue ethics, Kant's deontological ethics, and the contributions of modern thinkers like Haidt, MacIntyre, and Nussbaum, offer a rich landscape for understanding the nature and content of faculty ethics. This critical analysis delves into these frameworks, evaluating their relevance to faculty ethics while highlighting the contemporary challenges and ethical dilemmas faced by faculty members in modern educational contexts.

The Classical Foundations: Aristotle and Kant

At the core of faculty ethics lies the application of classical ethical theories, particularly Aristotle's virtue ethics. Aristotle's concept of *phronesis* (practical wisdom) is a key element in moral decision-making, emphasizing the importance of cultivating virtues in everyday life. For Aristotle, ethics is not a mere set of rules to be followed; rather, it is an ongoing process of developing good character traits that enable individuals to make morally sound decisions. The faculty member, in this context, becomes someone who

not only possesses knowledge in their academic field but also demonstrates virtues like honesty, integrity, fairness, and humility. According to Aristotle, *phronesis* is essential for making decisions in complex situations where a direct application of ethical rules may be inadequate (Aristotle 145). Faculty members must exercise this practical wisdom when navigating the dilemmas and ethical challenges that arise within the academic environment, particularly those related to student-teacher dynamics, academic integrity, and the pursuit of truth.

Aristotle's emphasis on rationality as a key component of moral behavior further enriches our understanding of faculty ethics. The exercise of rational faculties, as per Aristotle, allows individuals to evaluate various courses of action and select the most appropriate one in a given situation (Aristotle 167). In an academic setting, this could translate to a faculty member's ability to foster a learning environment that encourages critical thinking, intellectual curiosity, and respect for diverse perspectives. It also involves making decisions that uphold academic freedom while ensuring that students are guided toward intellectual and moral maturity.

While Aristotle's virtue ethics provides a robust foundation for faculty ethics, it is important to recognize its limitations, particularly when applied in modern, diverse, and globalized educational contexts. The Aristotelian framework, with its emphasis on virtues cultivated within a specific community, can sometimes be critiqued for its lack of universality. In the modern academic world, faculty members operate within multicultural settings where what constitutes virtuous behavior may vary. Thus, Aristotle’s approach must be adapted to account for the pluralism of values in contemporary academic environments.

Immanuel Kant’s deontological approach to ethics, as articulated in the *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals*, offers a complementary yet distinct perspective. Kant’s theory of the categorical imperative asserts that moral actions are those that can be universalized—that is, actions that can be applied equally to all rational beings without contradiction (Kant 40). This principle holds great relevance for faculty ethics, particularly in relation to issues of fairness and justice. Faculty members must adhere to a moral law that transcends personal inclinations, biases, and contextual pressures. For instance, Kant’s insistence on treating individuals as ends in themselves rather than means to an end aligns with the ethical duty of faculty members to respect the autonomy and dignity of their students, colleagues, and the broader academic community.

Kant’s emphasis on autonomy and rationality provides a clear ethical framework for faculty members who must balance their academic duties with their moral obligations. In situations involving conflicts of interest, academic misconduct, or issues of bias, Kant’s philosophy mandates that faculty members act according to principles that could be universally applied, thereby ensuring that decisions are made based on reason and fairness rather than expediency or self-interest. However, Kant’s framework, while

highly rigorous, can sometimes be perceived as overly abstract and rigid, particularly in complex, real-world scenarios where ethical decisions may require a more nuanced understanding of context and consequence.

Modern Perspectives: Haidt, MacIntyre, and Nussbaum

While classical theories provide essential insights into the nature of faculty ethics, modern interdisciplinary perspectives offer a deeper understanding of the psychological, social, and emotional dimensions of moral behavior. Jonathan Haidt's *The Righteous Mind* introduces a psychological lens, emphasizing the role of innate psychological mechanisms in shaping moral behavior. Haidt's theory posits that moral decision-making is influenced by psychological foundations such as care, fairness, loyalty, and authority, which operate universally across cultures (Haidt 13). This perspective enriches our understanding of faculty ethics by highlighting the emotional and cognitive underpinnings of ethical behavior.

Haidt's framework is particularly relevant when considering the emotional dimensions of faculty-student interactions, such as issues of empathy, compassion, and moral responsibility. Faculty members must often navigate emotionally charged situations, whether dealing with student grievances, conflicts in the classroom, or the ethical implications of grading and evaluation. Haidt's insights into the role of emotions in moral reasoning underscore the importance of fostering empathy and emotional intelligence in academic settings, thereby enabling faculty members to respond to ethical challenges with sensitivity and understanding.

However, Haidt's approach also invites critique, particularly in its tendency to reduce moral behavior to psychological mechanisms that may be biologically hardwired. While Haidt acknowledges the role of culture and socialization in shaping moral reasoning, his emphasis on innate psychological foundations may overlook the complexities of cultural, institutional, and contextual factors that influence ethical behavior. Faculty ethics, therefore, requires a more nuanced understanding that integrates both psychological insights and cultural considerations.

Alasdair MacIntyre's *After Virtue* provides another valuable perspective on faculty ethics, particularly in relation to the fragmentation of modern ethical theories. MacIntyre critiques the lack of a cohesive moral framework in contemporary society and calls for a return to virtue ethics, rooted in community and tradition. MacIntyre's notion of the "narrative self" suggests that ethical behavior is not only a matter of individual choice but is shaped by the broader social and cultural narratives in which individuals are embedded (MacIntyre 222). This aligns closely with the idea that faculty ethics must be understood within the context of academic communities and traditions.

In the context of faculty ethics, MacIntyre's framework challenges the view that ethics can be detached from the social, institutional, and historical contexts in which they are practiced. Faculty members are not isolated individuals but are part of a larger

academic community that is shaped by historical traditions, institutional norms, and societal values. Thus, faculty ethics must consider the cultural and institutional context within which faculty members operate, acknowledging the influence of power dynamics, institutional policies, and societal expectations on ethical decision-making. MacIntyre's call for a return to communal and contextual ethics highlights the importance of institutional support for fostering ethical behavior among faculty members, including the need for clear ethical guidelines, professional development, and support systems that promote ethical decision-making.

Martha C. Nussbaum's *Justice for Animals* expands the ethical discourse beyond human relationships, addressing the moral treatment of non-human beings. Nussbaum's focus on empathy and compassion as innate moral faculties provides valuable insights into the ethical responsibilities of faculty members, particularly in relation to issues of animal rights, environmental ethics, and the treatment of marginalized groups (Nussbaum 40). Faculty ethics, from this perspective, extends beyond the traditional boundaries of human relationships to include broader moral considerations that affect the planet and non-human creatures.

Nussbaum's work offers a compelling argument for the inclusion of empathy and compassion in moral reasoning, which is highly relevant in contemporary academic contexts where ethical issues related to diversity, inclusion, and environmental sustainability are becoming increasingly prominent. Faculty members are not only responsible for shaping the intellectual growth of their students but also for fostering a sense of social and environmental responsibility. Nussbaum's perspective thus expands the scope of faculty ethics, urging faculty members to consider their moral responsibilities beyond the classroom and to recognize the interconnectedness of all life forms in shaping a just and ethical society.

Integrating Classical and Modern Perspectives

In synthesizing the insights of classical moral philosophy and modern interdisciplinary perspectives, this study provides a comprehensive framework for understanding faculty ethics. The integration of Aristotle's virtue ethics, Kant's deontological principles, Haidt's psychological insights, MacIntyre's communal framework, and Nussbaum's empathy-based ethics allows for a more holistic view of faculty ethics that addresses the complexities of contemporary academic life.

This multidimensional framework highlights the importance of moral development, rational decision-making, emotional intelligence, and social responsibility in guiding ethical behavior within the academic community. Faculty members, according to this framework, are not simply individuals who impart knowledge but are moral agents whose actions shape the ethical climate of their institutions. As such, faculty ethics must be understood not only in terms of individual virtues and rational principles but also in relation to the social, cultural, and institutional contexts that influence moral decision-making.

By applying this comprehensive framework, this study contributes to a deeper understanding of the content and nature of faculty ethics, emphasizing its relevance in addressing contemporary ethical challenges. The interplay between innate moral faculties, cultural influences, and institutional contexts is essential for navigating the ethical dilemmas faced by faculty members in modern academic settings. This framework also calls for ongoing reflection and dialogue about the role of faculty ethics in shaping the future of higher education and its impact on the broader society.

Research Findings

The study of faculty ethics, drawing from classical and contemporary philosophical frameworks, provides critical insights into the ethical responsibilities of faculty members in modern academic settings. The key findings of this research are as follows:

1. **Aristotle's Virtue Ethics and Practical Wisdom:** Aristotle's emphasis on phronesis (practical wisdom) is central to understanding faculty ethics. Faculty members must cultivate virtues such as honesty, integrity, fairness, and humility, which are essential in making sound moral decisions, particularly in complex academic situations. The application of virtue ethics in modern academic contexts suggests that faculty members should focus on developing moral character rather than adhering strictly to rules. While Aristotle's approach offers a strong foundation for ethical behavior, its limitations in addressing the pluralistic and global nature of contemporary academic environments are acknowledged.
2. **Kant's Deontological Ethics and Universality:** Kant's deontological approach, which asserts the universality of moral principles, provides a clear framework for faculty ethics, particularly in relation to fairness and justice. Faculty members must act according to principles that can be universally applied, ensuring that decisions are made based on reason and fairness rather than personal biases. Kant's emphasis on treating individuals as ends in themselves highlights the importance of respecting the autonomy and dignity of students, colleagues, and the broader academic community. However, Kant's rigid framework may be less adaptable to the nuanced ethical dilemmas faced by faculty members in real-world academic contexts.
3. **Psychological Insights from Jonathan Haidt:** Haidt's psychological perspective, which emphasizes the role of innate moral mechanisms, adds depth to the understanding of faculty ethics by highlighting the emotional and cognitive aspects of moral decision-making. Faculty members' ethical behavior is influenced by psychological mechanisms such as care, fairness, and empathy. Haidt's insights suggest that emotional intelligence is crucial for navigating faculty-student relationships, conflicts in the classroom, and issues of academic integrity. However, Haidt's focus on innate psychological mechanisms may overlook the cultural and institutional factors that also shape moral behavior.

4. **MacIntyre's Communal Ethics and Contextual Considerations:** MacIntyre's call for a return to virtue ethics rooted in community and tradition is highly relevant to faculty ethics. Faculty members are embedded in academic communities shaped by institutional norms, power dynamics, and societal values. MacIntyre's framework underscores the need for faculty ethics to be understood within the context of academic institutions, advocating for clear ethical guidelines, professional development, and support systems that promote ethical decision-making. Faculty members must navigate the social, institutional, and historical contexts in which they operate to make ethical decisions that align with the values of the academic community.
5. **Nussbaum's Empathy-Based Ethics and Broader Moral Responsibilities:** Nussbaum's focus on empathy and compassion expands the scope of faculty ethics to include social and environmental concerns. Faculty members have a responsibility not only to shape the intellectual growth of their students but also to foster a sense of social and environmental responsibility. This perspective broadens the moral obligations of faculty beyond the classroom, urging faculty members to consider their impact on the broader community and the planet.

Conclusion

This study has provided a comprehensive exploration of faculty ethics through the integration of classical ethical theories and modern interdisciplinary perspectives. The research highlights the multidimensional nature of faculty ethics, emphasizing the importance of moral development, rational decision-making, emotional intelligence, and social responsibility in guiding ethical behavior within the academic community.

The integration of Aristotle's virtue ethics, Kant's deontological principles, Haidt's psychological insights, MacIntyre's communal framework, and Nussbaum's empathy-based ethics offers a holistic approach to understanding the ethical challenges faced by faculty members in contemporary academic settings. Faculty ethics is not simply about individual virtues or abstract moral principles but involves navigating the social, cultural, and institutional contexts in which ethical decisions are made.

The study's findings suggest that faculty members must continuously engage in ethical reflection and dialogue to address the complex ethical dilemmas arising in modern educational environments. By embracing a comprehensive framework that integrates classical and modern perspectives, faculty members can cultivate an ethical climate within their institutions, promote moral development among students, and contribute to the creation of a just and responsible academic community.

In conclusion, this research emphasizes the ongoing relevance of faculty ethics in shaping the future of higher education. As faculty members serve as moral agents within their academic communities, their ethical behavior has a profound impact on the

educational environment and the broader society. Thus, faculty ethics must be understood as an evolving and contextual practice, one that requires ongoing reflection, dialogue, and commitment to upholding the principles of justice, fairness, and social responsibility.

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Adolescent Psychology in Rabindranath Tagore's *Chuti* and James Joyce's *Araby*: A Comparative Study

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Abstract

This study examines adolescent psychology, emotional isolation, the desire for love, difficulties, yearnings, and awakenings in Rabindranath Tagore's *Chuti* and James Joyce's *Araby*, exploring how these themes shape young minds. Tagore expresses his empathy for youth through Phatik, highlighting adolescents' sensitivity and their need for affection. Phatik's emotional turmoil, longing for approval, and ultimate loneliness illustrate adolescent fragility and the misinterpretation of identity by the adult world. In *Araby*, Joyce's unnamed adolescent protagonist also forms a powerful romantic attachment to his friend's sister. This fascination drives him to visit the Araby market, symbolizing a journey of self-discovery. The protagonist's disappointment at the bazaar reflects the struggle of unrequited love, emphasizing a critical challenge in emotional development. Both stories depict the mental struggles of adolescence—feeling lost, searching for identity, navigating intense emotions, and yearning for freedom or significance. Tagore and Joyce explore how these internal conflicts shape a teenager's worldview, reflecting the universal challenges of growing up and the influence of external factors on their vulnerable minds.

***Keywords*:** *Adolescent Complexities, Adolescent Psychology, Treatment of Teens*

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Introduction

Rabindranath Tagore's *Chuti*, written in colonial India, depicts Bengal's social and cultural milieu in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. During this period, British rule in India intensified the tension between traditional Indian norms and Western ideals, influenced by colonialism. Although education—particularly English-medium education—was viewed as a means for social advancement, it often alienated young people from their traditional way of life and rural, familial roots.

Through Phatik, who is removed from his simple rural life and thrust into the alienating environment of the city, *Chuti* illustrates this tension. The story touches on the broader theme of dislocation and identity, familiar to many during this era of transition. As urbanization increased, Tagore lamented the loss of connection with nature and community. A philosopher and poet influenced by Eastern spirituality and humanism, Tagore often critiqued the mechanical, impersonal nature of colonial modernity.

The family dynamics in *Chuti* also highlight Bengali society's social roles and expectations, particularly regarding children's treatment. Phatik's experience of isolation within a hierarchical and restrictive family structure reflects how emotional needs were often overlooked in favor of rigid societal norms. Thus, *Chuti* can be seen as a critique of colonial modernity and the oppressive aspects of traditional family life.

Araby, set in early 20th-century Dublin, Ireland, comes from James Joyce's *Dubliners*. At this time, British rule still governed Ireland, and Catholicism had a significant influence on daily life and culture. *Araby* addresses the conflict between religious devotion and human desire, a prominent theme in Joyce's conservative Irish society. Joyce's depiction of Dublin conveys the paralysis and stagnation of its residents, whose hopes for escape or spiritual fulfillment are often stifled by the monotony of daily life.

The protagonist, a young boy experiencing the beginnings of adolescent love and idealism, becomes infatuated with his friend's sister, symbolizing youthful passion and a desire for something greater in a culture defined by routine and suppressed emotions. The Araby bazaar represents the exotic and unattainable, a stark contrast to his mundane existence. The boy's disillusionment at the bazaar reflects Joyce's broader critique of how the hopes and desires of Irish society are often thwarted by external forces such as colonialism, religious dogma, and social conservatism.

Moreover, Joyce's work reflects the broader context of Irish nationalism and the cultural revival of the period. While *Araby* does not overtly address political themes, the feelings of yearning and stagnation can be seen as a metaphor for Ireland's struggle for independence and the difficulties of shaping a new identity in a colonized, deeply religious society.

Chuti and *Araby* emerge from societies under colonial rule, grappling with the tension between tradition and modernity. Both young protagonists struggle with societal

constraints: the unnamed boy in *Araby* faces the emotional and spiritual suppression of his society, while Phatik contends with family expectations and the alienation of colonial education. These stories reflect broader societal anxieties while exploring individual adolescent experiences within their unique cultural settings.

Adolescence is a delicate and critical phase of development. Decisions made during this time are pivotal and can shape an individual's future; poor decisions can have lasting negative impacts. Adolescents experience physical and psychological changes that influence their behavior, often resulting in challenges and a desire for attention. To gain acknowledgment, they may seek it through group associations or different activities, driven by a need for validation. Recognizing this, those around adolescents should be mindful of their emotional needs and treat them with understanding and care.

Although these two stories are set in different regions, their protagonists share a similar fate dictated by adolescence. In *Chuti,* Phatik's age leads to his sense of isolation. Unable to adapt to his new surroundings, he suffers from the lack of his mother's love and longs to return to the village, only to pass away with unfulfilled desires. In *Araby*, the protagonist confronts the harsh realities of the material world. Living with his uncle and yearning for maternal love, he transfers this need onto Mangan's sister. Ultimately, his search for love ends in disappointment.

Adolescents need nurturing and support, but society often prioritizes young children and adults, neglecting the unique needs of teenagers. Phatik and the unnamed protagonist of *Araby* illustrate how crucial care is during adolescence to prevent feelings of loneliness and insignificance. If Phatik's mother had provided him with love and support, his story might have ended more happily. In *Araby*, the story concludes with the narrator in a state of profound sorrow.

Objectives

Based on the above discussion, the researcher has outlined the objectives of this research paper as follows:

1. To explore adolescent psychology in Rabindranath Tagore's *Chuti* and James Joyce's *Araby*
2. To examine the two texts in different regional contexts to identify parallels and differences

Literature Review

Adolescent psychology in literature offers profound insights into the complexities of youth, identity formation, emotional development, and social expectations, particularly in the works of Rabindranath Tagore and James Joyce. In imperial India and Ireland, *Chuti* and *Araby* examine how cultural, socioeconomic, and psychological factors influence teenage experiences. An analysis of current literature identifies significant debates on issues like identity, disillusionment, and the emotional upheaval of puberty. However, it also points to important gaps that can be filled by comparing these works.

1. Adolescent Identity Formation

Identity formation is central to adolescent development and a key focus in studies of both *Chuti* and *Araby*. The struggle to establish one's identity amid personal needs and social forces characterizes adolescence, a crucial time for psychological development. Literary studies often use Erikson's theory of psychosocial development, particularly his idea of "identity vs. role confusion," to examine how characters in this developmental stage grapple with t

Existing literature often portrays Phatik as a symbol of the dislocation experienced by adolescents caught between traditional and modern worlds in colonial India. Phatik's forced move from the countryside to the city under the watchful eye of a stern aunt emphasizes the alienation teenagers feel when removed from their comfort zones. In *The Inner World: A Psychoanalytic Study of Childhood and Society in India* (1978), scholars like Sudhir Kakar examine how colonial modernism alters the traditional upbringing of Indian children. However, these works typically focus more on the broader sociocultural impact of colonialism than on the specific inner conflicts experienced by adolescents like Phatik. Like Phatik, James Joyce's young hero struggles to discover identity and purpose in a restrictive setting. The boy's romantic idealization of Mangan's sister and the exotic bazaar reflects a deeper need for transcendence and escape from the monotony of Dublin life, as *Araby* scholars have long noted. Laurent Milesi examines how Joyce's characters construct their identities through language in *James Joyce and the Difference of Language* (2002). Although the themes of epiphany and disillusionment in *Araby* have been extensively examined, the psychological complexities of adolescence influencing the protagonist's emotional growth have received less attention.

The psychological elements in modernist literature, including Joyce's writings, are examined by Maud Ellmann in *The Nets of Modernism: Henry James, Virginia Woolf, James Joyce, and Sigmund Freud* (1982). Ellmann touches on how Joyce's characters often experience emotional paralysis but does not delve deeply into the adolescent mind in *Araby*. This gap opens space for analyzing the specific psychological aspects of adolescence, such as sexual awakening and disillusionment, in Joyce's narrative.

In his book *The Construction of Masculinity and the Triad of Men's Violence* (1994), Michael Kaufman discusses how societal expectations of masculinity shape adolescent boys' sense of identity. While relevant to Phatik and the protagonist of *Araby*, this analysis does not address the specific cultural contexts of Bengal and Ireland in adolescent development.

Levin's work *The Opening of Vision: Nihilism and the Postmodern Situation* (1990) considers how vision and perception shape modernist literature. In *Araby*, the boy's idealized vision of love is a central theme. However, Levin's focus on general modernist themes overlooks specific psychological impacts on adolescent characters like those in *Araby*, presenting another gap for investigation.

2. Emotional Turmoil and Disillusionment

Emotional instability during this formative stage of life, including confusion, frustration, and eventual disillusionment with the adult world, is a recurrent issue in adolescent psychology. Both *Chuti* and *Araby* powerfully explore these emotions. In *Chuti*, Phatik's growing sense of alienation from his family and surroundings leads to a deep emotional crisis. His inability to adapt to the structured and formal atmosphere of the city reflects the emotional confusion adolescents often feel when placed in environments that do not align with their sense of identity. Scholars have noted that Tagore's work reflects a broader critique of colonial education, which alienates children from their roots. However, studies have yet to explore the emotional and psychological aspects of Phatik's journey as an adolescent. This gap offers an opportunity to explore how Tagore presents emotional disillusionment as central to Phatik's psychological development.

Joyce's exploration of disenchantment has been extensively studied in *Araby*. The idealism of youth, a central theme in adolescent psychology, is embodied by the boy's infatuation with Mangan's sister and his desire to buy her a meaningful gift at the bazaar. The boy's epiphany at the bazaar, where he recognizes the futility of his pursuit and the emptiness of his desires, has been examined by scholars like Hugh Kenner in *Dublin's Joyce* (1955). However, existing studies primarily examine the societal and cultural forces shaping the protagonist's disillusionment, with less focus on the internal psychological mechanisms of adolescence, such as the conflict between fantasy and reality, which deserves further examination.

3. The Role of Family and Society

Both *Chuti* and *Araby* examine how family dynamics and societal expectations shape adolescent psychological development. Family often serves as the primary site where societal norms and values are transmitted to youth. Phatik's relationship with his family, particularly his authoritarian aunt, plays a crucial role in his psychological alienation. Phatik's emotional needs are largely ignored by his family, reflecting the rigid structures of authority in Bengali society during Tagore's time. Studies like Partha Chatterjee's *The Nation and Its Fragments* (1993) examine how colonial modernity shapes family dynamics, but less attention is given to how these dynamics specifically impact adolescents. A psychological analysis of Phatik's struggle with familial expectations leading to emotional breakdown could deepen our understanding of his psychological journey.

Similarly, the protagonist of *Araby* is influenced by the societal and religious expectations of early 20th-century Dublin. Joyce often critiques the conservative Catholic environment, which represses the protagonist's desires. In *Inventing Ireland* (1996), Declan Kiberd examines Joyce's characters' struggle against Ireland's cultural immobility. However, little attention has been paid to how the protagonist's family and social background influence his psychological turmoil as a teenager.

4. Comparative Studies of Tagore and Joyce

While *Chuti* and *Araby* have been studied in their respective cultural contexts, few comparative studies analyze how both authors explore adolescent psychology. Both Tagore and Joyce lived in colonized nations where modernization frequently clashed with traditional beliefs. Similarities between Indian and Irish literature under colonial rule have been examined in comparative studies, such as Anindyo Roy's *Civility and Empire: Literature and Culture in British India and Ireland* (2005). However, these studies tend to focus on identity and nationalism over the psychological aspects of adolescence.

5. Methods of Psychology and Psychoanalysis

Psychological and psychoanalytic techniques have been used in literature, but their application to *Chuti* and *Araby*, particularly in exploring adolescent psychology, has been limited. Psychoanalytic interpretations, especially Freudian or Jungian frameworks, could reveal deeper emotional and unconscious processes in these works.

In *Araby,* the protagonist's romantic fixation and sexual awakening have occasionally been examined with Freudian psychoanalysis; however, these analyses are often brief and fall short of addressing the complexities of adolescent development. A more thorough psychoanalytic analysis might examine the suppression and sublimation of desire within the framework of Irish Catholicism.

Similarly, Phatik's regression into illness and his yearning to return to the countryside could be viewed as a retreat from the harsh realities of modern life. Little psychoanalytic work has focused specifically on Phatik's emotional trajectory, which presents further research opportunities.

The existing literature on *Chuti* and *Araby* offers rich discussions on themes of identity, societal influence, and emotional disillusionment. However, significant gaps remain, particularly in applying adolescent psychology to these works. A targeted psychological and comparative examination focusing on how the social, familial, and cultural circumstances of colonial India and Ireland shape the psychological growth of the adolescents in these stories may benefit future research. Additionally, a more thorough psychoanalytic analysis of both pieces may shed light on the unconscious and emotional mechanisms underlying the protagonists' longing, alienation, and disillusionment.

Analysis and Findings

This study examines the representations of teenage psychology in Rabindranath Tagore's *Chuti* and James Joyce's *Araby*. The investigation reveals deep insights into identity formation, emotional growth, and the psychological upheavals typical of this stage of life. Although the two works are set in very different cultural and socioeconomic contexts—rural Bengal in *Chuti* and cosmopolitan Dublin in *Araby*—they explore teenage psychology in similar ways.

The main character of *Chuti*, Phatik Chakraborty, is a young boy who is restless, disobedient, and doesn't quite fit into the agricultural life of his village. He longs to go to Calcutta in search of a better life. However, once his wish is fulfilled, he discovers that city life is not as he envisioned. Treated like a burden by his uncle's family, especially his aunt, the story ends with his untimely death.

In *Araby*, Mangan's sister—a girl the young, unnamed Dublin boy barely knows—becomes the object of his intense devotion. As his obsession grows, he imagines buying her a gift at the Araby bazaar. However, his journey to the bazaar is a disillusioning experience, as he confronts the stark reality of the world around him.

1. Identity Formation and the Search for Self

In *Chuti*, Phatik's identity is in flux. He feels torn between the carefree lifestyle of a rural boy and the demands of growing up and meeting social expectations. Phatik longs to leave his village, looking to the city for validation, thinking it will help him discover his identity. However, after moving to Calcutta, he feels even more alienated and confused about who he is and where he belongs. This identity crisis is central to his emotional breakdown.

Similarly, the unnamed boy in *Araby* undergoes a process of identity formation. His romantic infatuation with Mangan's sister and his quest to the bazaar represent attempts to define himself and add purpose to his life beyond the mundane realities of Dublin. His idealization of love and desire to transcend his environment serve as early explorations of self. His identity, initially tied to fantasies and ideals, ultimately shatters in the story's climax.

Phatik and the boy navigate the liminal space between childhood and adulthood, struggling to form coherent identities. Both stories illustrate how disillusionment and failure to find a place of belonging can lead to emotional turmoil. For Phatik, this manifests as physical deterioration, while for the boy, it results in an internal crisis of self-worth.

2. Romantic Idealism and Disillusionment

Phatik's idealism lies in his belief that the city will provide fulfillment and freedom. He views Calcutta as an escape from the limitations of his rural life, where he feels undervalued and misunderstood. However, his journey ends in disappointment when he realizes his family has neglected and emotionally abandoned him. This emotional failure, combined with his inability to reconcile his rural identity with city life, leads to his tragic demise.

In *Araby*, the boy's passion for Mangan's sister and the bazaar are linked to his romantic illusions. He envisions the bazaar as a mystical place where he can show his devotion and escape the monotony of daily life. But when he arrives and finds the bazaar closing, devoid of the magic he imagined, his optimism is crushed. This disillusionment marks his transition from innocence to experience.

Both protagonists become disillusioned as they confront the gap between their romanticized dreams and harsh realities. Teenagers often romanticize aspects of their lives, only to face a more mundane reality, and this disillusionment can lead to feelings of shame and existential reflection.

3. Isolation and Emotional Vulnerability

Phatik's journey is marked by increasing emotional and physical isolation. At home, he feels distanced from his family, especially after his younger brother ingratiates himself with their mother. In the city, this isolation deepens as his aunt rejects him, treating him as an unwanted burden. Phatik's feelings of neglect exacerbate his emotional vulnerability, leading to his physical decline. His death symbolizes the emotional toll isolation can have on adolescents when deprived of familial support and love.

In *Araby*, the boy's emotional isolation is less overt but equally significant. His infatuation with Mangan's sister is a secret he nurtures alone. The eventual failure of his quest highlights his sense of isolation, and his emotional fragility is revealed as he confronts the meaninglessness of his endeavor.

Both stories depict the profound impact of isolation on adolescent psychology. External factors cause Phatik's emotional isolation—his family's neglect—while the boy in *Araby* experiences an internal form of isolation, keeping his feelings hidden. The vulnerability of both characters reflects adolescents' struggles with loneliness, rejection, and emotional neglect.

4. Conflict with Authority Figures

Phatik's conflicts with authority are embodied in his fraught relationships with his mother and aunt. His mother, though caring, fails to understand his needs, and his aunt in Calcutta treats him with disdain. Adolescents frequently clash with authority figures who either limit their freedom or fail to provide necessary emotional support. The adults' lack of empathy and compassion leads Phatik to disobedience, restlessness, and eventually an emotional breakdown.

In *Araby,* the boy does not explicitly conflict with authority figures, but a broader social and religious authority is at play. The repressive atmosphere of Dublin—symbolized by the priest's former house and the city's spiritual paralysis—limits his emotional and romantic aspirations. His fantasies clash with the restrictive social environment, creating an implicit, internal conflict.

Both stories show how a lack of emotional connection or support from authority figures contributes to adolescent psychological distress. Phatik's overt rebellion contrasts with the boy's subtle rebellion against societal norms, heightening their feelings of alienation and emotional turbulence.

5. The Role of Environment in Psychological Development

The rural environment in *Chuti* shapes Phatik's psychology. The limitations and monotony of rural life partly fuel his desire to leave his village. However, the bleak and unwelcoming metropolitan setting exacerbates his sense of dislocation. The narrative demonstrates how adolescents' surroundings can significantly impact their emotional well-being.

In *Araby*, the boy's Dublin surroundings are portrayed as confining and depressing. His alienation is intensified by the contrast between his romantic ideals and the drabness around him. Joyce's depiction of Dublin as a paralyzed city mirrors the boy's emotional inertia.

Both stories highlight how the environment is critical to adolescent psychological development. Adolescents, often highly sensitive, can experience psychological distress when their circumstances do not offer opportunities for growth or emotional fulfillment.

6. Loss of Love as a Sign of Emotional Intensity and Exhaustion

Phatik's eventual death symbolizes the emotional exhaustion adolescents feel when their psychological needs for love, security, and belonging are unmet. His death underscores the importance of caring adult role models during this vulnerable stage of life.

Adolescence is often a period of intense emotional seeking for meaning in a world that can seem contradictory and bewildering. The boy in *Araby* invests profound emotional meaning into a simple task, giving his journey to the bazaar a sense of purpose. His eventual disappointment signifies not only a loss of romantic idealism but also a broader search for meaning in a world that does not consistently fulfill adolescents' deep emotional needs.

In both stories, the boys' eventual realizations fill them with shame, an emotion prominent in adolescence. Their moments of self-awareness and vulnerability mark the beginning of a painful yet maturing self-perception.

Key Findings

The comparative study of *Chuti* and *Araby* offers valuable insights into adolescent psychology, particularly regarding identity formation, emotional vulnerability, and the impact of isolation and disillusionment. Key findings include:

1. **Identity Formation:** Both Phatik and the boy experience an identity crisis as they try to understand where they fit into unfamiliar and challenging environments.
2. **Romantic Idealism:** Teenagers often create romanticized visions of relationships or futures, typically dashed by reality, leaving them emotionally disappointed.

3. **Disillusionment:** Disillusionment is a central theme in teenage psychology. Both characters confront the harsh realization that the world is less hospitable and more complex than their idealistic perspectives allowed.
4. **Isolation:** Emotional and physical isolation significantly influences both characters' psychological struggles, underscoring the importance of supportive networks during adolescence.
5. **Conflict with Authority:** Confrontations with authority figures intensify the protagonists' feelings of emotional instability and loneliness.
6. **Environmental Impact:** The social and physical environments teenagers inhabit profoundly affect their emotional development, often intensifying feelings of disappointment and powerlessness.
7. **Yearning for Escape and Transcendence:** Both characters are driven by a desire to escape their ordinary lives—Phatik yearns to leave his rural home for the city, while the boy in *Araby* seeks transcendence from his mundane environment through romantic fantasy. Their disappointments underscore the tension between teenage dreams and the complex reality of adulthood.
8. **Powerlessness in the Face of Materiality:** Both characters experience powerlessness and dependency on adults, and the mechanical, unforgiving nature of society forces them to confront materialistic realities.

Tagore and Joyce both brilliantly capture the psychological challenges of adolescence, depicting this transition from childhood to adulthood as laden with emotional complexities, identity conflicts, and inevitable encounters with reality.

Conclusion

Chuti and *Araby* offer rich explorations of adolescent psychology, focusing on identity formation, the desire for escape, emotional sensitivity, and disillusionment. While Joyce's *Araby* explores themes of romantic idealism, self-awareness, and a painful awakening to reality, Tagore's depiction of Phatik underscores the emotional toll of loneliness and the desire for belonging. Both narratives depict adolescence as a period of emotional turmoil, longing, and, ultimately, disillusionment.

In this research paper, the reasons behind the suffering and the outcomes experienced by teens in two distinct regions are analyzed. It is evident that teenagers require care and attention, and their well-being suffers when they lack support from family and society. A lack of support can lead to severe consequences, even death. In *Chuti*, Tagore portrays a teen's psychological struggles within Bengali society in the late nineteenth century, with Phatik's helplessness reflecting the psychological issues faced by teens of that era. Tagore highlights the neglect and indifference they encounter,

emphasizing the necessity of addressing their complexities. In *Araby*, Joyce presents a teen's journey from innocence to experience, reflecting a boy's quest for love, failure, isolation, and a sobering return to reality. Both authors underscore the pressures on teens and the importance of providing them with adequate care.

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Impact of Astronomy and Climate Change on Human Behaviour with The Reference to *The Outsider*

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Abstract

This study explores the astronomical impact—specifically the effects of the sun and the adverse consequences of extreme climate change, such as heat waves—on mental health, with reference to literature. The solar system and climate changes associated with it play an integral role in the lives of all living beings. *The Outsider* by Albert Camus is selected to illustrate how solar radiation and heat can influence psychology and potentially trigger mood disorders like depression, feelings of nihilism, aggressive behavior, and other disruptions to the normal flow of life. Human beings experience numerous changes in their surroundings, and these dynamic structural shifts bring about noticeable alterations in ways of living, often making individuals victims of such fatal changes. This sense of numbness, seen in Meursault, the protagonist of *The Outsider*, manifests in his reactions to events, such as the death of his mother and the murder of the Arab, alongside violent behavior. This study attempts to interpret Meursault's actions as responses to radical climate change and global warming and to investigate whether exposure to solar radiation impacts human psychology.

Keywords: *Aggressive Behavior, Climate change, Global warming, Nihilism, and Solar Radiation*

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Introduction

The killing of an Arab by Meursault is central to the novel *The Outsider*. This study aims to establish a connection between the climate and the psychology of the protagonist, suggesting that his surroundings profoundly affect his mental state. Meursault's psychological discomfort due to extreme heat is a recurring theme throughout the text. "Throughout history, there has been a hypothesized association between astronomical phenomena, such as lunar and solar phases, and the behavior of humans and animals" (Demler et al. 27). Astronomy, as part of the larger universe, seems to significantly impact the human psyche. The world's climate has undergone drastic changes due to various factors, resulting in increasingly concerning effects on daily life. The sun, as a powerful celestial body, influences both climate and many aspects of human life. In *The Outsider*, the sun's presence is explicitly illustrated in relation to Meursault's actions: "The sun had risen a little higher in the sky; it was beginning to warm my feet up" (Camus 17). Humans are deeply affected by their environment and climate, a reality that is reflected in their behavior. The damage caused by climate change impacts not only the earth but humanity as well, with significant effects on both physical and mental health.

The sun, an indispensable part of our universe, directly influences Earth's climate. "Solar radiation is the ultimate energy source for Earth's climate system and drives daily weather and climate" (*Research Page: Sun and Climate*). *The Outsider* offers insight into how our mental and cognitive states are influenced by the universe and its changes. This novel portrays the range of feelings an individual can experience in a dynamic world. Meursault's behavior at his mother's funeral defies the social norms of grief, and by the novel's end, he faces punishment not only for killing a man but also for his unemotional reaction at the funeral. Nearly all of Meursault's significant actions occur under extreme heat. His seemingly irrational killing of an Arab may, in part, be a reaction to the oppressive solar heat. This paper examines the connection between astronomical bodies, particularly the sun, climate change, and various mood disorders. *The Outsider* has been selected to demonstrate how the protagonist's behaviors and psychological states reflect the influence of environmental conditions. Meursault, psychologically alienated from his surroundings, kills without any logical motive on a day when the sun is exceptionally bright. This study will investigate whether the intense heat made Meursault impatient, acting as a catalyst in his violent action.

Research Question

This study aims to investigate whether extreme solar exposure influences the psychological state of Meursault in Albert Camus's *The Outsider*.

Literature Review

One of the alarming concerns in recent times is the significant change in the universe. Every part of the universe is affected by these transformations. Notably, an increase in solar radiation impacts not only the physical aspects of human beings but also their

cognitive systems. “Risks include disruption to infrastructure, livelihoods, and incomes due to increased extreme climate and weather events and impacts on health—including mental health—due to increased temperature” (Lawrance et al.). Meursault appears to be affected by the extreme heat on the day he kills the Arab. “All I could feel were the cymbals of the sun clashing against my forehead…” (Camus 60). At this moment, he becomes mentally exhausted and shoots four more times at the dead body, illustrating his disturbed mental state. The increase in temperature is now considered one of the most life-threatening challenges, affecting physical activities and taking a serious toll on mental health. The portrayal of Meursault’s character demonstrates the mental health hazards posed by rising temperatures.

> Studies have found that higher temperatures increase the incidence of suicide, mania, depression, schizophrenia, and other conditions. According to a meta-analysis, suicide rates rise by 1% for every 1°C increase in local ambient temperature above a certain threshold. Temperature changes influence mental health by affecting physiological responses in individuals, such as altering blood flow to regulate heat and impacting the central nervous system, which can lead to cognitive and emotional changes (Li 194).

This indicates that Meursault’s normal thought process is interrupted by heat. To understand his mental state, knowledge of mood disorders is useful. Various mood disorders are influenced by external factors; for instance, depression can result from solar radiation and climate change. Komulainen et al. state:

> We observed that exposure to higher levels of solar insolation in residential neighborhoods was associated with specific symptoms of depression. These findings add to the literature on depression heterogeneity, suggesting that climatic exposures may contribute to symptom-specific differences in the etiology of depression (Komulainen et al.).

Feelings of emptiness can be a symptom of mood disorders. The protagonist appears apathetic toward his life, which can be described as nihilism. Wang cites Frankl’s concept of the “existential vacuum”—a common phenomenon characterized by boredom, apathy, and emptiness (Wang). Meursault is often referred to as an absurd hero because he exhibits minimal emotions, living passively without any particular ambition or motivation to survive. He accepts his death sentence calmly: “The wondrous peace of the sleeping summer flooded into me…They were announcing a departure to a world towards which I would now be forever indifferent” (Camus 116).

There is also an intimate connection between heat and aggression. “The temperature-aggression theory proposes that elevated temperatures increase the likelihood of frustration and impulsivity in individuals, which in turn fosters aggressive behavior” (Cruz, Erik, et al.). Weather can act as a stimulus, leading humans to behave violently.

> The number of meteoropaths—individuals negatively affected by weather conditions—is rising dramatically. Meteoropathy is rapidly increasing as people adapt less well to weather changes. Strong weather stimuli can not only exacerbate symptoms in individuals with cardiovascular and respiratory conditions but can also induce aggressive behavior (Lickiewicz, Jakub, et al.).

Meursault's behavior toward the Arab cannot be deemed normal given the circumstances. "I was walking slowly toward the rocks, and I could feel my forehead swelling up under the sun" (Camus 58). The sun can have both positive and negative effects on the human body and mind. "Despite the lack of scientific evidence, the belief that astronomical phenomena influence psychiatric symptoms persists. This belief is not restricted to the general population; studies have found that mental health professionals also report a correlation between astronomical phenomena and increased emergency department admissions, violent crimes, and patient agitation" (Demler et al.). Analyzing Meursault's restlessness under the intense heat, it becomes evident that his aggression, without any specific reason, manifests in the murder of the Arab.

Research shows that sunlight significantly impacts mood disorders. Henríquez-Sánchez et al. found that participants from Southern Spain exposed to higher levels of solar radiation were more likely to report depressive symptoms, such as feelings of worthlessness or guilt (Deng et al.). Evidence suggests that mood disorders are closely linked to dopamine homeostasis, with ultraviolet radiation accelerating dopamine release. Dopamine is a crucial signaling mediator in the brain and body; abnormal dopamine levels are associated with various neuropsychiatric disorders (Kleppe, Rune, et al.). Griffitt and Veitch (1971) found that in conditions of manipulated high temperatures, participants rated both other people and the environment significantly more negatively than under comfortable temperature conditions.

Discussion

The Outsider is studied to emphasize how global warming can intensely affect human behavior. The sun, as part of astronomy, is closely associated with global warming. "Over the past 150 years, an overall increase in solar activity has probably contributed to global warming, mainly during the first half of the twentieth century" (Haigh).

> Our unconscious lives are affected by all of humanity, by the life of the earth, and by the universe. The movement of planets, beyond the sun and moon, affects our inner sentience, though to a degree comparable to the earth's attraction on a falling stone. The sun, the most prominent planet in the solar system, affects each object on Earth, including the physiological and psychological development of living beings (Bhardwaj, Rishi, and Aditya Pareek 1618).

Every part of the universe is vulnerable to the climate crisis, and Meursault is no exception. His actions can be viewed as consequences of the climate crisis. An understanding of astronomy is crucial for studying weather conditions. The position of the sun is significant to both astronomy and weather studies, as changes in weather ultimately lead to climate change. Global warming, a major aspect of climate change, can intensely influence human psychology. Climate change, extreme heat, depression, nihilism, volatile behavior—all are interconnected. Close study of these relationships may help justify the protagonist's actions as he is studied as an existential hero. The feeling of existential crisis in the novel is rooted in nihilism.

To gain a nuanced view of these connections, two incidents in the protagonist's life are analyzed. Influenced by Søren Kierkegaard, Arthur Schopenhauer, and Friedrich Nietzsche, Albert Camus focuses on the meaninglessness of life. The philosophy of existentialism is reflected in Camus's writing, and the protagonist of *The Outsider* is known as an existential hero. The sun's influence, associated with absurdity and existentialism, illustrates deeper insights into human psychology. Meursault, an absurd protagonist, expresses minimal feelings toward events, whether his mother's death or the killing of an Arab. This paper seeks to determine if Meursault's psychology is somehow affected by celestial bodies, especially the sun. Every significant event in his life occurs during extremely hot weather in the novel. The news of his mother's death does not affect him as expected; he takes it calmly without displaying emotion. "People can experience depression differently. Some can feel sad or down, while others can feel apathetic and emotionally numb" (Dresden). Psychological distress and depression are mood disorders characterized by emotional disturbances (Deng et al.). Feeling worthless or emotionally numb is a form of depression. Delving deeply into Meursault's character reveals his unidentifiable emotions. On the day of the funeral, he is more occupied with external thoughts than his mother's death: "The sun was already high in the sky. It was beginning to weigh down heavily on the earth and it was getting hotter" (Camus 20). The author captures the summer heat and Meursault's emptiness regarding his mother's death.

Depression or feelings of worthlessness can result from global warming. Worthlessness is a type of depression—a psychological condition. Creasy asserts, "Indeed, what gives the ethical nihilism that Reginster examines such urgency for Nietzsche is not merely the life-denying content of the nihilist's claims, but also the psychophysiological basis of the nihilist's negative evaluation of life" (Creasy). Solar radiation can contribute to feelings of worthlessness or guilt. "Our participants exposed to higher levels of solar insolation were also more likely to experience feelings of worthlessness/guilt" (Komulainen et al.). The impact of extreme heat on nihilism is explored to verify if it contributes to the formation of nihilism, a concept related to extreme depression. The term nihilism originates from the Latin *nihil*, meaning nothing. The verb "annihilate" aligns with the belief in nihilism, implying the destruction of everything. Creasy describes nihilism as a worldview with a negative perception of existence.

> It is easy to see a parallel between depression and the condition experienced by the affective nihilist. Just as the depressed individual feels worthless, the affective nihilist consistently holds negative views about themselves and humanity (Creasy 43).

Meursault embodies a nihilist in the novel. He shows no remorse in court and does not repent to anyone. The intense heat of the sun influences his mind to lean toward nihilism. After examining the weather and the protagonist's character, it becomes evident that heat severely affects Meursault's cognition. The setting of the novel vividly depicts the hot Algerian weather. On the day of the funeral, the scorching sun is repeatedly emphasized. The sun plays a critical role in exhausting Meursault: "And what with the

sun and the smell of leather and horse dung from the hearse, and the smell of varnish and incense and the sleepless night I'd had, I was so tired that I could hardly see or think straight anymore" (Camus 21). Understanding heat as a cause of nihilism requires analyzing the Algerian context in Camus' novel to decode the protagonist's mindset.

> Because the Algerian weather is scorching and intense, it exerts inhumane torment on Meursault to the extent that the weather effectively controls his actions, aligning with Camus's philosophy of absurdism throughout the novel (Bookstore 2024).

Algeria's hot weather significantly impacts human cognition. In an interview, Fox recalls Camus's words, "We have nothing to lose except everything," referring to the Cold War nuclear escalation that threatened to "divest any future of its meaning" (Fox 2022). Extreme heat, one indicator of the climate crisis, guides humanity toward absurdity. The climate crisis, summarized above, is Camus's Absurd in its contemporary form. The Absurd arises when humanity's need to find meaning meets the silence of the universe. Similarly, there is an irrational dissonance between demands for climate action and the inertia of those in power (Fox 2022).

The first event of Meursault's mother's death clarifies his apathetic nature, which relates to nihilism. Existential nihilism views the world as devoid of meaning or purpose. "Existential nihilism begins with the notion that the world is without meaning or purpose. Given this circumstance, existence itself–all action, suffering, and feeling–is ultimately senseless and empty" (Existential Nihilism 2007).

On the day of the funeral, Meursault shows no remorse for his mother's death: "I realized that I'd managed to get through another Sunday, that now mother was buried, that I was going to go back to work, and that, after all, nothing had changed" (Camus 28). His apathy extends to his girlfriend, and he goes through the motions of life without expressing significant emotions.

This study explores the link between aggressive behavior and extreme heat by analyzing the novel. Meursault feels relaxed and composed when the weather is mild. Once, he is happy in the novel when the weather is soothing: The sky was green and I felt happy" (Camus 30). Hence, variations in the protagonist's mood can be attributed to weather changes. Mild sun exposure can be beneficial, while extreme heat can affect the mind negatively. Near the novel's end, Meursault appears calm despite knowing his fate: "However, the sun was getting low outside and it wasn't so hot anymore…I sensed the calm of evening" (Camus 101).

Heat exposure creates both physical and cognitive hazards. Besides nihilism, this paper examines whether Meursault's murder of an Arab is a result of the life-threatening climate crisis. Extreme weather stimuli exacerbate psychological conditions. The murder scene exemplifies the connection between extreme heat and violent behavior. On the murder day, the sun was intense: "The sun was shining almost vertically onto the sand and the glare from the sea was unbearable" (Camus 54).

Meursault lacks a clear motive for the murder. One factor is the sun's wrath. Meursault's thoughts reflect his discomfort: "The sun was beginning to burn my cheeks and I felt drops of sweat gathering in my eyebrows. It was the same sun as on the day of Mother's funeral and again it was my forehead that was hurting me most and all the veins were throbbing at once beneath the skin" (Camus 59).

Meursault recognizes he cannot escape the smothering sun. He wants to avoid its contact: "I could not stand this burning feeling any longer, I moved forwards. I knew it was stupid and I wouldn't get out of the sun with one step" (Camus 59). Here, the sun almost acts as a character, influencing each of Meursault's movements.

Findings

Many researchers around the world are trying to prove that aggressive behavior may result from extreme heat. "In one of the first studies of its kind, Semenza (1996) found that mental health conditions were more life-threatening during a heatwave than any other chronic health condition, including cardiovascular and respiratory conditions." ((Lickiewicz et al.) Given the circumstances, global warming has become a pressing issue. It has been not only a threat to the environment, it has become detrimental to mental health to a high extent. "Heat exposure not only has a negative impact on people suffering from mental illness but can also harm the mental health of the general population." (Li 196)"Increasing ambient temperatures are linked with mental health consequences including increased rates of aggression and suicide, as well as conflict, violence, and migration". ((White et al.)

After analyzing the different types of research, it becomes feasible to draw a connection between Meursault's behavior and climate change, especially solar radiation and global warming. Nihilism is vividly exposed through the feelings Meursault displays at the funeral. "People's tendencies towards nihilism, a philosophical stance which asserts that everything is devoid of meaning, have been emboldened to unprecedented levels due to climate change, according to Fatih Turkmenoglu, a clinical psychologist and author." ("Climate Change Driving Humans to Nihilism, Warns Psychologist") The sense of emptiness prevails in the life of Meursault that can be closely associated with the drastic climate change.

Conclusion

After analyzing all the literature minutely, this study decides that the change in climate along with global warming influences Meursault's life profoundly. Meursault gets disturbed psychologically when the sun shines strongly. His cerebral process of thought doe not get fully activated during hot weather. Heat waves can deter the emotions of human beings making them apathetic towards everything. On top of that, the volatility of human nature gets accelerated due to intense heat and solar radiation. Meursault cannot run away from the natural surroundings. His sense of nihilism, feelings of emotionlessness and his aggressive behavior are the outcomes of the extreme natural

atmosphere. The heat of sun makes him irritable against everything. Killing the Arab can be considered as an outburst of his irritation against the sun. His attitude towards death proves that he takes the chance to escape the rude natural surroundings.

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Feasting on Taboo: A Philo-psycho-analytic Approach of *Rabindranath Ekhane Kokhono Khete Ashen Ni* and the *Punorjonmo* Trilogy

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Abstract

This study explores the cultural implications and symbolic meaning of cannibalism as portrayed in modern Bangladeshi literature and film. It employs psychoanalytic frameworks, specifically the theories of Sigmund Freud and Julia Kristeva, to examine how cannibalism, within the context of contemporary Bangladesh, functions as a metaphor for societal transitions and moral dilemmas. By analyzing a variety of literary and cinematic works, the research illustrates how these narratives reflect deep-seated concerns about identity, survival, and ethical boundaries in a rapidly evolving cultural landscape. The depiction of cannibalism serves not merely for shock value but as a critical lens through which the complexity of human nature, social conventions, and the conflict between civilization and barbarism are explored. The primary objective of this research is to enhance understanding of how controversial themes, such as cannibalism, can illuminate the moral and philosophical challenges faced by individuals and society, encouraging deeper reflection on the human condition.

Keywords: *Taboo theory, Psychoanalysis, Abjection, Film noir, Food discourse, Pop culture*

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Introduction

In Bangladesh, a nation with a rich cinematic and literary heritage, the trope of cannibalism has emerged as a potent narrative device employed by artists to address complex social dynamics and underlying anxieties. This shift toward such a taboo reflects broader societal transformations and serves multiple symbolic purposes.

Cannibalism, often considered one of the most extreme taboos, has long been a subject of both fascination and horror across cultures. In Bangladeshi film and literature, this theme has traditionally been underexplored, primarily due to cultural sensitivities and societal norms. However, recent works such as *Rabindranath Ekhane Kokhono Khete Ashen Ni* (REKKAN) by Mohammad Nazim Uddin and *The Punorjonmo* trilogy, a film series directed by Vicky Zahed, have introduced cannibalism into mainstream narratives, offering fresh perspectives and contributing to a thematic shift in the portrayal of horror and suspense.

Cannibalism: A Taboo Yet Comprehensible Act

Cannibalism serves as one of the most unsettling aspects of survival narratives in *REKKAN*, sometimes depicted as a comprehensible act when individuals face death by starvation. This portrayal illustrates how extreme conditions can push humans to break the ultimate taboo. Real-life examples underscore the potential for such behavior in hypothetical dystopian futures. For instance, Rafsan, after being betrayed by his wife, is driven by jealousy to ultimately kill her. Such complex psychopaths often have driven that may require intricate psychological explanations, as their actions may stem from histories of maltreatment and a consequential need for vengeance.

Another character, Kamal, displays no ethical boundaries in his treatment of others, murdering people and consuming their flesh. Rafsan befriends Kamal and even prepares a meal for him with sadistic pleasure. Kamal himself has a dark past, marked by childhood trauma and unresolved issues with his parents. After his mother eloped, his father committed suicide, leaving Kamal with profound emotional scars. These backstories for villains and anti-heroes add depth, not necessarily to garner empathy but to offer a nuanced, complex understanding of human nature and its primal instincts.

In one instance, when Inspector Kamrul suspects Kamal of being a cannibal and questions Rafsan about it, Rafsan serves him a human brain, highlighting situational irony: “Rafsan Haque’s cooking is never less than superb,” yet here, the praise takes on a dark twist. In modern society, cannibalism serves to demystify cultural facades and reveal the darkness lurking beneath the myths of civilization (Kilgour 259).

This study seeks to investigate several key research questions to understand how cannibalism is portrayed in survival narratives. First, it examines how characters' decisions to commit cannibalistic acts are influenced by their personal and collective experiences of scarcity, loneliness, and despair. Second, it explores the pressures on characters to choose between moral values and survival, focusing on the influences that

shape their ethical decision-making processes and internal conflicts. Third, it analyzes characters' psychological responses to cannibalism in survival contexts, emphasizing pain, guilt, and coping mechanisms. Additionally, the study aims to assess the extent to which social conventions, cultural taboos, and traditional beliefs impact characters' judgments and perspectives on cannibalism across various artistic and socioeconomic scenarios.

Literature review

Desmond Bellamy explores human cannibalism in films, questioning whether these scenes are merely for shock value or if they reflect contemporary cultural and moral dilemmas. It covers different aspects of cannibalism in movies, such as survivalist, primal savage, inhuman monster and the cannibal as the opportunist. The research claims that the consumption of human flesh in film symbolises certain social factors, including the population pressure in the world and abjection in movie watchers. Bellamy employs semiotics and cultural analysis methods of cinema to revisit specific films depicting New World cannibalism and examine the applicable directing strategies and viewers' responses. Featured films of discussion are *Alive (1993)*, *Soylent Green (1973)*, *Robinson Crusoe* (1954), *The Cook, the Thief, His Wife & Her Lover' (1989)*, *The Texas Chain Saw Massacre (1974)*, *The Silence of the Lambs (1991)*, and two productions of *Sweeney Todd*. This paper aims to explain how the process of reification, where people are treated as objects, is essential. The research also examines the concept of alterity, which categorises people as normal human beings or 'Others', and anomie- the absence of norms. Thus, according to Bellamy, cannibal films deconstruct the social representations of the self and encourage an obscene re-signification of the anthropocentric opposition between man and beast. To elaborate on the performances, the thesis engages theories from Derrida and Kristeva, among others, to discuss the cultural relevance of cannibalism in the cinema. It also emphasises the dichotomies of the abject since it can cause disgust and attraction. Thus, it fits into the existing scholarly literature by helping to elucidate how the outrageous, such as cannibalistic motifs in movies, can symbolically refer to specific societal issues.

In *Punorjonmo 1*, Rafsan Haq is a famous chef of Bangladesh. After disappearing for three years, one day, his wife Neela suddenly shows up at a local police station, but Rokeya pretends to be Neela. Driver Nuru brought her to get all the money she had, but Rafsan was smart enough to remove all before them. In *Punorjonmo* Part 2, Rokeya becomes nervous and vulnerable after Nuru's disappearance. Taking advantage of the situation, Rafsan is trying his best to eliminate Rokeya. A new character named Niloy is introduced as Rafsan's fanboy. Things get more complicated when a dark secret about Neela is exposed. *Punorjonmo 2* features disturbing elements, such as cannibalism, counterparts, and vengeance, where the real monstrous character of the already menacing and toxic Chef Rafsan Haque unfolds. It deals with themes of sin and evil within human nature and identity crisis, as well as a gentleman, Rafsan, who is a murderous monster. He roams, and his actions involve so many mysterious happenings;

he is portrayed as being on a mission of revenge, and his aura is always tense. Allegorical in its approach, the movie's portrayal of these morbid themes serves to develop Rafsan's character arc while also providing social commentary on the darkness that people can possess. Vicky presented a new Rafsan Haque in part 3 as a total anti-hero, a villain one could root for. The correct presentation of culinary skills, gestures, and postures, and he is a real chef. In *Punorjonmo 3*, he included some characters of *Shuklopokkho* & fantastically mixed them with new stories.

In *Shuklopokkho,* a spin-off series of the original *Punorjonmo* trilogy, Rafsan Haque's fan and fellow cannibal Kamal, OC Kamrul, who is responsible for hunting the missing girls from the university, and Manju, who lost his twin brother were others portrayed. The characters are also found in this part. *Shuklopokkho* presents the character Kamal, a terrorist and a cruel cannibal serial killer. *Shuklopokkho* introduces Kamal, a terrorist and cruel cannibalistic serial killer who collaborated with Rafsan Haq. Thus, Kamal becomes not only a supplier to Rafsan's new hobby in the later films of the series of human meat cooking but also a devotee to him.

On the side of the highway, a charming restaurant adorned with Rabindranath Tagore's writings and pictures hides a darker, mysterious side. Muskan Zuberi, the enigmatic owner, draws people with her culinary skills. However, rumours swirl about her true nature. Local police reporter Attar Ali claims she is a witch, citing a night when he saw her eyes glowing as she drank human blood.

REKKAN, which stands for *Rabindranath Ekhane Kokhono Khete Ashen Ni*, is a Bengali thriller Web series by Srijit Mukherjee adapted from the book titled the same. *REKKAN* was produced based on a Bengali thriller by Bangladeshi author Mohammad Nazim Uddin. As far as the main outline of the show is concerned, it can be as follows: At least five people have disappeared; they lost their lives after visiting a restaurant in the calm border town of Sundarpur and an investigator, Noore Sofa was investigating that case. The restaurant's name is "Rabindranath Ekhane Kokhono Khete Ashen Ni", which means "Rabindranath Never Visited Here to Eat". The restaurant's food is tasty, almost reaching the level of invigoration, bringing people from different areas. A journalist arrives to investigate and report on the restaurant. With Attar Ali's assistance, Noore Sofa delves into Muskan's secrets, leading them to a grand manor house in Sundarpur, shrouded in mystery. As they uncover layers of dark truths and twisted histories, his presence alarms Muskan Zuberi, prompting her to seek police intervention. It is revealed that Noore Sofa is not a journalist from the 'Mahakal' newspaper, adding another twist to the unfolding enigma. Muskan Zuberi, who owns the restaurant, is mysteriously beautiful and exotic-looking. She is also powerful and has local administration and police following her. She resides in a large house, which is Rashid Zuberi's residence, a husband who died in the line of duty. During the investigation, the detective is accompanied by a local policeman, Attar Ali, who acts as an informer. Ultimately, the investigator reveals the truth behind the vanishing men and their connection with Muskan. The most exciting episode is the final moment when the

audience finds the woman who turned into Muskan and watched her eat the corpses of the victims and serve them to her customers at a restaurant. She had a fancy for human flesh when she was only a teenager surviving an aeroplane crash in the Andes Mountains, where she resorted to feeding on the corpses of her fellow passengers. A Uruguayan jet transporting their rugby team crashed in the Andes mountains in 1972. Out of the 45, only 16 made it out of one, and they were rescued two months after the crash. To live, the incident's survivors turned to cannibalism. The section of the book below was taken verbatim from Mohammad Nazim Uddin's account of the 1972 Andes crash. This quest was ongoing in *Rabindranath Ekhane Kokkhono Ashen Ni*, the second half of *REKKAN*, but Shusmita, a new cannibal character, was also introduced. However, Noore Sofa was unable to capture them this time either.

Theoretical Framework

Julia Kristeva's concept of abjection, as thoroughly explored in her influential work *Powers of Horror: Critiquing Techniques* explored in *The Scene of Writing (1975)* and *An Essay on Abjection (1982),* her work culminates in a continuum of self-discovery and identity-dissolution that finds within the human darkest, most bestial instincts. Abjection implies an awareness of such processes as defecation, dying, and putrefaction—components which accentuate the bodily finitude of a living creature. These feelings lead to evident disgust and shame as they bring to the surface those aspects of the subjects' personalities that they try to forget. This is because, in the cinema's minor 'moving' pitchers, the audience is presented with what they find nauseating, disgusted, yet explicitly lured towards. This draws up an oppositional contradiction that works emotionally, and often, viewers will turn away while at the same time wanting more of the repulsive; for instance, one will run a scarf over the face while at the same time wanting to look through, hiding behind the scarf. Kristeva notes this blend of hatred and sensual desire as "jouissance" (1982, p.9), which denotes a feeling of psychic thrill and satisfaction when a person contravenes the taboos that exist in a society. This has lent conceptual understanding to why movie lovers get drawn to obscene images or scenes that represent the prohibited territory of the human mind or acts that make the audience disgusted or aroused. This paper argues that the abjection experienced by viewers comes from hatred of the objectification of humans and that the cannibal film unconsciously aids in deconstructing the human/animal binary. (Kristeva)

Cannibalism is also interwoven into Freud's *Totem and Taboo*, extraordinarily linked with the general subjects of totemism and taboos. (Freud 122)

Totemism is a concept that refers to the worship of certain animals or plants regarded as the totems of tribes or clans, which are their protectors or original ancestors. These totems are of paramount importance in the social and religious life of the tribe, serving as both the means of connection with their fellow tribespeople and the channel for the spiritual force. In this respect, cannibalism is not a far leap from totemism as an amalgamation of magic and rituals. Eating parts of such a person is believed to enable

the consumer to acquire the strength or elements associated with the consumption, as seen from the same totemist analogy. (Ullyatt 4-20)

Everyday taboos, social norms which people understand are backed by the power of the spirits, almost always contain the prohibition of cannibalism. This taboo is dual in nature; on the one hand, most cultures forbid members to partake in cannibalistic behaviour, but on the other hand, cannibalism is allowed in religious and ritualistic settings. These rituals are indeed punishable and associated with guilt and penitentiary connotations. This process is akin to totem consumption, whereby the act of killing and eating the totem represents a fundamental psychic drama and requires a collective rite of expiation.

As for cannibalism, singularity is also reflected in the relation to the totem, which is both loved and hated. Cannibalistic acts reflect this duality: they are both intentions of paying respect, in the sense of the totem or the individual, with whom these rights are associated, being incorporated into a sacred force field, and intentions of transgression since such interaction violates both secular and supernatural taboos. This tension is enacted and analysed in Freud's Totem and Taboo as the collective and complex hidden, psychological and cultural reason for cannibalism in primitive societies, as a signifier of cohesion or control and indeed of restraint.

Discussion and Findings

Abjection of the Living

Abjection is a fundamental element in all horror narratives. It serves as a critical mechanism that elicits both repulsion and attraction. In *REKKAN,* the character of Muskan embodies this ambivalence. Her horrific actions provoke revulsion (hate), yet her charismatic and intelligent persona fascinates and captivates the audience. This duality sparks conflicting reactions, making Muskan a complex figure of horror and allure. Similarly, it analyses the concept of abjection within the moral and existential predicament of the characters of the plane crash survivors. The survivors' internal conflict over consuming deceased passengers to stay alive is significant. It presents the audience with a discomforting portrayal of the world in the light of materialism and other circumstances that put commerce on the test of human morality and norms. This situation provokes a visceral reaction of disgust intertwined with a compelling interest in the human capacity for survival under dire circumstances. *Punorjonmo* is a perfect representation of the savage cannibal within our civilisation until the film's closing minutes. It shows abjection: eating, corpses, violence and humiliation. It serves as a quintessential representation of abjection. The use of cannibalism was a metaphor for consumer society. Like modern man, he is educated, rational, and even enlightened, yet, in contemporary society, there is an undercurrent of extreme violence and abjection.

Our society is centred on the consumption of other beings and what subjects do to objects. A key finding from the movies under consideration is that, in various ways, in

each instance of cannibalism, the victims had to be objectified and made into something other than human beings. The viewer, when watching the movies under consideration, is that in each case, to become a cannibal, one must dehumanise the object of the cannibal's desire. (Bartolovich)

Reification is the process by which people- individually or in groups—are regarded like things and transformed into humans. Reification is a concept from Marxism relevant to several social theory disciplines. Humans can be reified in many ways, including slavery, genocide, incarceration, and other forms of abuse. However, this thesis covered how reification is dealt with by turning people into foods. It is interesting to note that the concept of "Animal" or Flesh is not only qualified but quantified in the very subject of both of the films. The idea that humans are "animals" or flesh is ingrained in the same theme of both films.

The movies under consideration fit into an interpretive cycle that is characterised by the audience's enjoyment and the cannibal's motive since every act of cannibalism on screen is produced with consideration for how well it will gross. The cycle of categories starts with basic survival or the necessity for people to consume other humans in situations where there is no other option due to a disaster. This stream is typified by the reference to *Alive (1993)* movie, which tells the tale of the squad that was left trapped in the Andes after an aircraft crashed. The savagery of consumerism culminates in cannibalism in *Punorjonmo* also.

"Foraging" becomes necessary when food and resources are not easily accessible. Food from traditional sources may be in short supply or tainted, forcing survivors to look for any food they can find. In some extreme situations, this desperate hunt may result in the intake of previously unimaginable things, such as insects, rodents, and even human flesh. Even though it's a terrible reality, cannibalism is frequently portrayed as a last choice for those who are about to go hungry.

Some opportunities include foraging since food is not readily available and resources in the environment are scarce. Traditional food sources may often be depleted or inadequate, or they could be risky to consume due to the conditions after the catastrophe. Therefore, the survivors will be forced to look for available food sources. It results in the use of things which people would never consider eating before, such as insects, rodents, or even human flesh in extreme situations. Indeed, the imagery of cannibalism is dark, but perhaps appropriately so, as this basic survival instinct is generally only one step away from dying oneself.

The colonial image of the savage, uninformed of "civilised" taboos, and obtaining nutrition from departed friends and family is the anthropological interpretation of survivalism, as we can see in the context of some tribes in Papua New Guinea.

Knife as a Phallic symbol

The method of slaughter, the freezer, is the same as how animals are treated at an abattoir. Castration anxiety metaphorically represents a feeling of insignificance and a desire to avoid being dominated, whether in society or a relationship. This illustrates Mulvey's idea that the male can devalue or punish the woman. The knife, a phallic symbol, is a tool perfect for slicing and dicing the body until it becomes unidentifiable meat. This symbolic gesture is evident in Rafsan Haque's habit of cutting bananas into equal sizes, which he believes is critical to the delicacy of a dish if not life itself. This action foreshadows his emerging obsession.

The film can widely be interpreted as a protest about the politics of this time, with Muskan as an unethical entrepreneur, MP as a corrupted politician, the police officer as a corrupted bureaucrat, and Bhalu as her criminal racketeer. The detective and Attar Ali could represent civilians who repeatedly fail to uphold justice. She meets the MLA as if they share a personal relationship. Her activity ensures that people clearly understand that she has a powerful personality. On the other hand, sub-inspector Anwar has behaved unprofessionally since the time he met Nure Sofa. He overacts and is unnecessarily loud.

Symbolism of Food

The restaurant metaphorically represents a reversed world. The author and director target familiar settings to help the audience easily relate. Vicky Zahed with Rafsan has made catering and consumption of human flesh as if it's a food that is fresh and tasty. Vicky Zahed, with Rafsan, portrays the catering and consumption of human flesh as fresh and appetising and has even been accused of de-sensitizing people to abnormal activity. The suspense keeps building as we see her in action in the kitchen, making it an artistic work as she meditates through cooking. This kitchen contains a mini chemistry lab filled with bottles labelled as cooking flavours. Muskan conducts her food "experiments" like Rafsan utilises his separate refrigerator.

According to the authors, eating in literary works is quite significant. It is not only a biological need fulfilled by human beings but also has a lot of symbolism. Muskan created it with artistic passion by cooking and serving food. People are fascinated by the way her restaurant treats all the customers. Nure Sofa remarked to Attar Ali that it's not the type of food but the way it is served that matters.

Food habits, customs, and methods of food preparation are the indicators reflecting the social and cultural characteristics of a specific community. In the context of modern film, a study of food representation enables one to revolutionise the genre. Several other concepts are also related to food, as mentioned above, for instance, the relation between the Self and the Other, Humanity, and Life. This is where the famous saying 'you are what you eat' takes on a whole new meaning. Although the protagonists' roles in the two films convey different themes, they both explore the conflict between the instinct for survival and the need for ethical development and physical integrity. There can be some

remarks on the existential issues of the films, including life, death, existence, and moral characteristics. It includes themes of joy and sorrow, life and death, love and hatred, and people and post-human in the research to explain the authors' messages. The paper aims to prove that cannibalism is not used by the authors freely, it can be seen to act as a major process by which the border is produced as the space of the relation between the human and the unhuman, articulates the divisions of the world into the spheres of virtues and vices, and shows the ethical issues. The author never paints the picture of shocking events of cannibalism, thus allowing the reader to fill in the blanks of imagination. He is more interested in the condition of the character's heart. It is a highly pessimistic description of a society of people who remain stagnant, do not change, and have no purpose.

Individualism and the desire to satisfy people's personal needs prevent them from thinking about the common good; they cannot join together to enhance the quality of life of their subjects. In this case, it is easy to observe how hunger and jealousy transform the distinction between man, the other and animal. The author makes us ponder by creating a marked difference between human beings and animal instincts. The distinction is made between human and animalistic conduct. This is the actual conflict between normal and abnormal, between the admissible and the inadmissible. This unhealthy view of food is a clear representation of the inner self.

Features of Film Noir

The femme fatale is a prominent characteristic of the style of film noir. Muskan Zuberi, as a femme fatale, is often depicted as a seductive woman who woos the male protagonist into a dangerous trap for her benefit. She is most typically used as a protagonist in the cinema. These figures use their sexuality and seductiveness for their motives. Ideologically, the fatal femme is used to reaffirm Bangladeshi culture's highest authority. This authority follows the sanctity of the male-dominant household and, in many ways, the political economy of patriarchal capitalism. As a protagonist, her sexuality intensifies and moralises these classic narratives by contradicting the primary dominant culture. Muskan is described as having power related to being a seductress, gaining energy from men, and using her charm to fulfil her desires.

Zuberi's monologue comments on and appropriates her personal history of cannibalism to justify the survival cannibalism of human flesh that corresponds to a moral and ideological shift of that time. But she acknowledges her desire for human organs to remain young. In this postcolonial and postmodern era, everything is marketable and consumable to fulfil one's desires. Zuberi and Shusmita's representations of cannibalism connected their quest for beauty and health with the discourse of postmodernism.

Chef Rafsan, played by Afran Nisho, is a masterful man-killer who explores deeply into the dark recesses of his cannibalistic psyche. His monologues provide insight into his profound ideas and explain how his deranged mind rationalises his behaviour.

Rafsan's character is captivating and disturbing because of the viewers' understanding of his twisted motivations and logic provided by his dramatic and eerie soliloquies. With a subtle portrayal of a seriously damaged person, Nisho's performance in Rafsan captivates the audience with a terrifying authenticity.

Gender Role

Gender roles are among the most distinct elements intertwined with noir productions and reflect the era's broader cultural and identity discourses. First and foremost, there is the most recognisable figure and symbol of the movies – the femme fatale like Muskan Zuberi and Shusmita– women who are simultaneously sexual and dangerous, who break stereotypes of women's roles. Portrayed as seductive and charming, femme fatales unmask their male counterparts and seduce them into submission, thus reversing the conventional stereotype of female docility. Despite her agency in targeting raises questions about the gendered control concept

On the other hand, the male protagonists of noir films are typical socio-pathological criminals, detectives, or disillusioned male anti-heroes. These characters are not empty shells but rather complex psychological portraits whose personal and professional dilemmas involve moral grey areas and whose heroism, a foundational element of the epic genre, is often subverted. Their relationships with women as sexual objects reveal other underlying adversarial struggles concerning desire, betrayal, and rivalry within and over intimacy. These narratives do not simply attempt to give a more complicated view of masculinity than presented in the media depictions of aggressive, powerful men but also compel the reader to ponder the issues of identity and power in the grey world. The concept of misogyny is also there. Attar called Muskan a witch, and Kamal killed a girl in his red room. After that, he brought meat to Rafsan and said it was the meat of a cheater. They are giving a reason as they are killing. Rafsan found her wife cheating, and Kamal did the same thing, justifying that it was customary to kill them.

Conclusion

The focus of the article is unique, and the analysis is based on the comparative approach to examine the representations of the food-related discourse in the novels, in addition to the examination of cannibalism as the aspect which gives insights into the character of the characters and the society. The films' examination of cannibalism provides an insightful framework for analysing the intricate relationships between morality and immorality, civilisation and barbarism, and the individual and society. This comparative study clarifies how such severe actions serve as a literal and symbolic instrument to analyze human limits. From a philosophical standpoint, the portrayal of cannibalism forces readers to consider important issues regarding the nature of humanity itself, the bounds of morality, and the structures of social norms.

As such, the research aims to demystify how literature deals with moral dilemmas and ethical questions as part of life experience by evaluating ethical and aesthetic

concerns with character and character's actions and behaviours. The field portrays cannibalism as opposed to food-related conversation to shed light on the savage instincts concealed beneath that civilised veneer and question the fundamental concepts of an actual person.

Also, emphasising the philosophical basis of these films and books' plots, the audience is urged to think further about such issues as the concept of good and evil, the role of society in shaping moral values, as well as the existential questions people have to answer in exceptional circumstances. Therefore, this research aims to enhance the understanding of the philosophical questions that have always dominated human beings' thinking process apart from upgrading the knowledge of novels and films as artistic pieces. This study also seeks to draw the capacity of literature to reflect society's ethical and Philosophical challenges as copious sources of understanding the human mind and cultural formation of society. Thus, by presenting this rich and extensive analysis, the article also aims to occupy a worthy place in literary analysis, ethical thinking, and cultural research while providing a refined perspective on existence's complex and contradiction-filled nature.

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The Empire of Etiquette: Ideological Supremacy and Cultural Hegemony in Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice*

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Abstract

Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice* depicts the immense significance of complying with upper-class societal ideologies to secure a place within the higher strata in 19th-century England. As illustrated in Marxist criticism of culture, ideology is an exigent instrument of dominance imposed by the ruling class to naturalize an "exploitative relationship" with the working class, obscuring the recognition of "oppression by the oppressed". Austen vividly reveals the widespread acceptance of cultural supremacy imposed by the bourgeoisie through their ideology. The rigid social norms aim to determine the class of a person through etiquette, education, social quo, and psyche. Middle-class people of the Regency period aspire to get their rights and a respectable position in society through blind adherence to the prevailing ideologies. During this era, women were often regarded as commodities in the marriage market, with little right to marry for love. As a result, mothers and daughters were frequently preoccupied with securing wealthy, higher-class bachelors, as exemplified by Mrs. Bennet in *Pride and Prejudice*. Oppression and discrimination based on social status, along with the characterisation of the working class as "dirty, immoral, and dishonest", reflect the uncivilised attitudes of the ruling class. This paper aims to demonstrate how etiquette prevails through ideological forces like beliefs, values, tendencies, class relations, and education to define one's class status in cultural hegemony coined by Antonio Gramsci. The research will also explore how cultural hegemony serves to the dominance of the ruling class during the late 18th and the early 19th century in England.

Keywords: *Etiquette, ideology, culture, hegemony, bourgeoisie*

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Introduction

Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice* is widely regarded as one of the greatest novels that closely examines the economic circumstances of 19th-century England. Through *Pride and Prejudice*, Austen illustrates how society and people's attitudes are shaped by wealth, class, and gender, all heavily influenced by upper-class ideologies. The upper class stratifies society, imposing their norms and culture as "supreme", as illustrated through the characters' actions. Culture, therefore, is not about beauty, "truth", or "aesthetics" (Nayar 127). Rather culture is a system where particular ideas about truth, beauty, and aesthetics are developed about certain classes. Popular or mass forms of culture don't get the same kind of acclamation as "Social aspects are intimately connected to economic ones" (129). Class is related to matters of taste, manners, and aesthetics. Nayar comments that the upper class marginalizes the experience and aesthetics of the lower class because the upper class classifies the art of superior and inferior (129). Marxist criticism of culture explores the links between cultural artifacts and the socio-economic conditions in which the artifact is formed and exists. Austen represents how the upper class humiliates the people of the middle class and sketches their class struggle to deny the thinking that they are not inferior to the upper class as they consider them. The critics of Marxist criticism of culture believe that class develops particular forms of culture and behavior where the working-class culture or mass culture is despised by the higher class. It is associated with religious beliefs; art forms, and behaviors of an individual or group's class affiliation. Italian thinker Antonio Gramsci has termed the domination and reinforcement of power relations as "hegemony". Nayer states regarding hegemony:

> Hegemony is the domination of particular sections of society by the powerful classes not necessarily through threats of violence or the law, but by winning their consent to be governed and dominated. Hegemony, like ideology, works less through coercion than through consent (130).

In *Pride and Prejudice*, hegemony is evident where the upper class's beliefs, perceptions; and values are accepted as cultural norms in a peaceful manner. The expected roles of males and females in Austen's society are predestined and determined by cultural hegemony.

Focusing on the key arena of the Marxist criticism of culture, the objective of this research is to analyze how the distinctive characters' behaviors, etiquette, and social tendencies reflect the power dynamics of 19th-century English society. This paper also aims to analyze how the bourgeoisie maintains ideological supremacy by enforcing social roles and expectations through manners and etiquette, shaping both the bourgeoisie and proletariat classes. The study further aims to provide insight into how these societal norms control individual freedom and perpetuate class divisions, offering readers a deeper understanding of power structures in Austen's time and their relevance to modern social hierarchies through evaluating the grandeur treatment of etiquette as a

social control mechanism. The findings of this study will also contribute to understanding the power dynamics and the tools that are used to dominate the inferior class which is also prevalent in modern power structure.

Research Questionnaires

This study seeks to investigate several key questions related to the portrayal of ideological supremacy and cultural hegemony in Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice*. First, it examines how the novel depicts the role of etiquette and social norms in reinforcing the ideological control exercised by the bourgeoisie. Additionally, the research further explores how cultural hegemony manifests through the behaviors and attitudes of the characters, revealing the subtle yet pervasive influence of upper-class ideologies. Furthermore, it addresses how the acceptance of these ideologies by the middle classes is portrayed, along with the resulting implications for class relations in 19th-century England. The study also delves into the roles of gender and societal expectations in sustaining hegemonic culture, particularly within the context of Austen's portrayal of English society. Finally, the research considers whether Austen's narrative challenges or reinforces the class-based distinctions that marginalize the working class, offering a critical analysis of the novel's treatment of social hierarchies.

Research Gaps

Despite the extensive scholarship on *Pride and Prejudice*, several research gaps remain unaddressed. One key gap is the limited exploration of how etiquette functions as an ideological tool, reinforcing cultural hegemony and social control. While much has been written about social dynamics, the role of etiquette in sustaining bourgeoisie supremacy is underexplored. Additionally, studies have focused on class conflict but often neglect how cultural hegemony, rather than direct coercion, maintains class distinctions in Austen's narrative. Another gap lies in connecting gender roles and societal expectations to ideological supremacy and cultural hegemony. Existing scholarship tends to emphasize individual character analysis, without sufficiently linking character behavior to larger socio-economic structures and ideological forces. These gaps suggest a need for a more comprehensive examination of power, class, and ideology in *Pride and Prejudice*.

Problem Statement

Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice* is a reflection of 19th-century English society, where class distinctions and societal norms are deeply entrenched in the lives of individuals. Despite the extensive body of literature on Austen's works, there remains a critical gap in understanding how etiquette serves as a mechanism of ideological supremacy and cultural hegemony. This study addresses the need to analyze how upper-class ideologies are subtly imposed and accepted by the lower classes, as well as how these ideologies shape social relations, gender roles, and individual freedom. By examining these dynamics through the lens of Marxist theory of culture and Gramsci's concept of

hegemony, the research seeks to uncover the intricate relationship between culture, power, and class in *Pride and Prejudice*.

Significance of the Study

1. **Theoretical Contribution**: This research applies Marxist and Gramscian theories to explore how etiquette and ideology shape cultural hegemony in *Pride and Prejudice*, offering a nuanced understanding of how social norms function as tools of ideological control.
2. **Sociocultural Insight:** The study provides valuable insights into the socio-cultural dynamics of 19th-century England, shedding light on the ways in which societal expectations and cultural norms are used to maintain class divisions and gender roles.
3. **Contemporary Relevance**: By examining historical patterns of cultural hegemony, the study provides a framework for understanding how similar mechanisms of control persist in modern societies.
4. **Interdisciplinary Impact**: The findings of this research have contributions to sociology, cultural studies, and gender studies by highlighting culture's role in reinforcing social hierarchies.

Methodology

This qualitative study uses both primary and secondary sources. Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice* serves as the primary source, while secondary sources include literary criticisms, research articles, dissertations, and journals to address the original idea and to provide references of acknowledged explanations regarding the topic in consideration. The research integrates Marxist theory, Gramsci's concept of cultural hegemony, and gender studies to analyse social hierarchies, class distinctions, and ideological enforcement. The research is conducted following MLA 9th edition's directives for formatting, citation, and documentation.

Limitations of the Research

The study is limited to Marxist criticism of culture focusing on ideological domination and cultural hegemonic dynamics through analysing the behavior, tendency, and psyche of the 19th-century English people as depicted by Jane Austen in *Pride and Prejudice.* The study may be constrained as the primary focus is to apply only the ideological superiority and cultural hegemony of Marxist criticism to culture overlooking other key elements of the theory of Marxism.

Literature Review

Harold Bloom, Raymond Williams, Debra Teachman, Andrew Haggerty Marshall, and many other scholars have critically examined Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice* perhaps because of the universal appeal of her writings. A considerable number of critics like

Mary Poovey, Louis Henry, Herwas, and Ayu Fauziah Sofy Citra Anggista have examined this novel by applying a wide range of modern literary theories and perspectives. Harold Bloom's *Jane Austen's Pride and Prejudice* (1987) offers a broad critical perspective on the novel, compiling essays from various critics who analyse themes of class, love, marriage, and individualism. Bloom's work emphasises how Austen's treatment of these topics has universal appeal, making the novel relevant across different historical and cultural contexts. Similarly, Debra Teachman's *Understanding Pride and Prejudice: A Student Casebook to Issues, Sources, and Historical Documents* (1997) deepens the understanding of the novel's historical context, particularly focusing on the 19th century social milieu. Teachman sheds light on how cultural hegemony is exerted by the upper classes through the enforcement of societal standards, especially in terms of behavior, marriage, and the roles of women. She argues that the norms imposed by the bourgeoisie are an essential part of the mechanisms by which class distinctions are maintained. Again, Andrew Haggerty Marshall's *Jane Austen: Pride and Prejudice and Emma (2008)* is a highly scholarly and intriguing book that complies with detailed analysis offering insights into early 19th Century England and its societal norms through cultural and ideological context. Critics like Mary Poovey and Claudia L. Johnson have also examined *Pride and Prejudice* through the lens of feminist theory, focusing on how societal expectations around marriage and gender roles impacted women. Poovey's essay "The Business of Marrying and Mothering: Jane Austen's 'Mothers' in *Pride and Prejudice*" (1993) explores the relentless pressure on middle-class women to marry well in order to secure their social and economic standing. Claudia L. Johnson's essay "*Pride and Prejudice* and the *Pursuit of Happiness*" (1988) similarly explores how women's fulfillment and happiness in the novel are shaped by the tension between personal desires and societal expectations criticising the oppressive norms that confined women to certain roles, suggesting that these limitations hindered true happiness. Raymond Williams, a renowned British Marxist critic in *The Country and the City (1973)* delves into social relations, class stratifications, and class struggles, through the lens of Marxist criticism exploring the transition from rural to urban society. Fatima Siddiqui in "A Marxist Reading of Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice* (2013)" examines how the tensions and structures of social classes and, the economic base of 19th Century England influence the drive of the characters and themes of the novel. In "Class, Rank and Status in Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice*" (2021), Kajsa Söderström examines the awareness of the social status of the characters that influenced their behavior, interaction, and decision-making throughout the novel. He commented that the matters of class and rank are witnessed as immensely important and that Mr. Darcy has also struggled with his attraction to Elizabeth "while wanting to uphold his pride by refusing to marry down" (16). The discussion shows how scholars have identified hegemony and ideologies imposed by the ruling class that shaped the roles of individuals in Regency era.

Several articles have depicted the picture of the women of Regency society as well as criticism of the novel *Pride and Prejudice*. According to Gilman's "Disarming Reproof: *Pride and Prejudice* and the Power of Criticism" (2000), characters of

Austen's novel are "relentlessly satirized for their prejudice,… hypocrisy, arrogance, maliciousness…" (95). Again, such low-grade qualities are used to define the nature of women. Devine, Jodi A., in "Letters and Their Role in Revealing Class and Personal Identity in *Pride and Prejudice*" (2005) portrays the function of letters for communication and societal dynamics. Shabir (2010), to highlight the constraints of women states that women are the active "players" in the "Marriage Market" (35). She analyses several marriage alliances in the novel to depict the motivations and materialistic interests over love interest, mutual understanding, or compatibility which is the chief characteristic of Auten's era. In this way, the angles of feminism have been sketched by the above-mentioned scholars. Wayne C. Booth in *The Rhetoric of Fiction* (1983) examines the narrative techniques to shape the readers' perceptions and interpretations of the characters and social milieu. Herwas (2014) identifies the way Jane Austen illustrates how money shapes the attitudes and behavior of the people in *Pride and Prejudice*. The critics like Louis Henry (2001) and Lindstrom (2010) comment that the novel is filled with Marxist elements where money and class are the two fundamental elements and these two elements dominate the chain of events. Thus critics have examined the ideological dominance and manipulation by applying dynamic aspects to observe the relationships of economic considerations, marital negotiations, and moral judgments that influence the character's action within a societal condition through applying various modern literary theories like Marxism, Feminism, and Marxist-feminist approach and so on.

The review and observation of a number of the available prominent works lead to the result that there is no significant work that has explored the etiquette as an inevitable tool of oppression and exploitation imposed by the bourgeoisie in Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice* by analysing the behaviors of the people reflecting and reinforcing their social standing. The commitment to social etiquette, attitudes towards behavior, marriage, and education are the indicators of social class under the influence of cultural hegemony and ideological domination.

Ideological Supremacy and Cultural Hegemony in *Pride and Prejudice*

Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice* delineates class status through the identification and stratification of the behavioral patterns by the dominant class. A French philosopher and Marxist critic, Louis Althusser (1918-1990), born in Algeria, believes that the proletariat is forced to accept the ideology of the bourgeoisie as their own. According to Hamadi, the ideology of the dominant class is enforced upon the working class with the help of arts and literature when production theory is applied to literary analysis. In this way, literary works are mostly a product of the dominant ideology. Class is the key component of societal divisions in a particular society. Austen's Regency society was not an exception to this. She vividly portrayed the culture, ideology, and lives of two exact opposite classes in *Pride and Prejudice*. Throughout the novel, the mass culture or the proletariat-class culture is not acclaimed by the upper-class people or the bourgeoisie. In the very opening line of the novel, the middle-class tendency is aptly

highlighted with "It is a truth universally acknowledged, that a single man in possession of a good fortune, must be in want of a wife" (Austen 51). It expresses the immense importance and wanting of the wealth of lower class people to get their daughters married in a wealthy family regardless of the appropriate qualities as a sensible life partner. Mrs. Bennet, a perfect representation of the middle-class traits of the Austen's era as a "woman of mean understanding, little information, and uncertain temper" (53), introduces Mr. Bingley to Mr. Bennet not by referring to his name but by referring his "large fortune" (51) at the first place. Fortune seems the first and crucial identity of a Regency English man. Though Mr. Bennet is portrayed as not as vacant as Mrs. Bennet, he immediately asks her if Mr. Bingley is single by immediately expressing his wish to marry Elizabeth to him regardless of any prior meetings. Mr. Bennet despite being a "Progressive middle-class man" (Litz 84) meets Mr. Bingley at the earliest expecting, him to be Elizabeth's suitor. Through the married life of Mr. and Mrs. Bennet, the first and the second chapters of *Pride and Prejudice* portray the poor state of conjugal life and the lack of compatibility in marriages of the proletariat class of the contemporary era.

As earlier mentioned, ideas about truth, beauty, and aesthetics are developed about particular classes; balls are the place for high-class people like Mr. Bingley to dance due to their fondness of dancing unlike the inferiors in their class like Mrs. Bennet, whose sole intention is to grab the wealthiest suitor for her daughters. Education was a privilege mainly afforded by the upper classes, with limited opportunities for the proletariat. Thus, the aristocracy of the upper class is reflected when Mr. Bingley and Mr. Bennet meet in Bingley's library. Though women were more focused on developing domestic skills and being ideal women, the Bingley sisters were privileged enough to pursue education. The Bingley sisters not only pursued education but also blessed themselves with artistic accomplishments like drawing and music. The consideration of the inferior class for the higher class as part of cultural hegemony is portrayed through the overenthusiastic appreciation of the attires of Mr. Bingley who was spotted with "a blue coat" on "a black horse" (57). The Bingley sisters in the ball were described by overwhelmingly excited Mrs. Bennet as "charming women" in elegant dresses with exquisite laces verifying the fact of ideological supremacy of the upper class. Austen identifies the significance of well-dressing and the dominance of beauty over the intellect as the tendency of both high and middle-class people. This propensity prevails when the Bingley sisters cruelly criticise Elizabeth accusing them she has "no stile, taste, no beauty", judging her for her "blowsy untidy hair", and "dirty petticoat coated with mud" (81) regardless of a sister's true concern for her elder sister. Again, Mrs. Hurst even criticises the parents of the Bennet sisters as considering them "such a father and mother and such low connections" (82). This behavior underscores the state of exploitation of the proletariat class. Austen contains certain elements such as class consciousness, wealth, gender inequality, and money to depict the behavioral and cultural aspects of different classes of Regency period. She shows how ideologies and hegemony are manipulating the proletariat class. As the readers proceed further into the novel, the opinion that wealth and class are the things that matters is made even more obvious. Though women were more focused on

developing domestic skills the only thing that matters is made even more obvious. Unless someone has a certain amount of wealth or someone is of a certain class, he or she will be disgraced by society. As the story progresses, it is made clear that fortune, money, and social status are superior to love and morality in Austen's society. Her novel depicts the life and events of the people of the upper class as well as the middle class of her society. In the ball, the handsome friend of Mr. Bingley, Mr. Darcy appears with the status of earning even higher than his friend Mr. Bingley. The crowd didn't take a moment to switch their craze from Mr. Bingley to Mr. Darcy as much handsome as his income is high.

Marriage plays the dominant part in the proletariat class of Austen's era. The women in the novel are assumed to be by the values of society that they should be modest, especially when it comes to how they should act and dress. They should be beautiful and elegant but not spoilt and overbearing. Ideal women in that era are expected to be like Jane; mild, soft-spoken, "beautiful" and "sweet" (82) beautiful "creature" (59). The concept of "an ideal woman" has been determined by the dominant class as an element of prevailing ideologies injected by the aristocratic class. Mrs. Bennet always despises Elizabeth for being witty, humorous, and opinionated which is out of her range of understanding and not the ideal woman as Jane. The people of the proletariat class of the Regency Era as depicted by Austen seem deeply obsessed with securing their future through marrying a wealthy person regardless of any sort of love, affection, or connection. Marriage is one of the key institutions of the nineteenth-century society. It is portrayed as the most important tool of survival for women in terms of financial security and good quality of life. The most important thing to getting married is to be financially secure in the case of women. Arlene Young discusses the lack of freedom of women in that male-dominated society: "In all cases, her identity, and her fate are defined and controlled by men- fathers, husbands or seducers" (159). An example of such character is Charlotte, as she does what is expected from a woman in this society; she marries simply because it is seen as the proper thing for a lady to do. She gives preference to her materialistic pleasures and focuses on her needs rather than love saying:

> I am not romantic, you know. I never was. I ask only a comfortable home; and considering Mr. Collins's character, connections, and situation in life, I am convinced that my chance of happiness with him is as fair as most people can boast on entering the marriage state (165).

To Charlotte, "Happiness in marriage is entirely a matter of chance" (69) and one should fix the husband beforehand and later decide to fall in love. To her, it is better to explore less about the follies of that person. Like Mrs. Bennet, Charlotte also lacks the "refinement" of the bourgeoisie class. That is why, though Mr. Darcy is identified as a snooty rich young man, his "pride" is justified by Charlotte Lucas as "he has a right to be proud" (67) based on his wealth. Austen paints the 19th Century British society in *Pride and Prejudice* which is firmly accurate and realistic. Middle-class women at that

time were completely dependent on their fathers, brothers, or husbands for their survival and had no legal rights in wealth and property. We see that Elizabeth first rejects Darcy's proposal saying that money is not any catalyst for her to choose her husband. However, Elizabeth's feelings for Darcy shift after realizing his wealth. For this reason, standing apart from Elizabeth from the mannerisms of proletariat class does not remain valid anymore. The novel emphasizes the materialism of the era, where social status, wealth, and marriage are deeply intertwined, particularly through characters like Lydia and Wickham, who embody the flaws of the middle class. Austen portrays the "unsophisticated" act of elopement of Lydia and Wickham as an act of shame and frivolity that would never be committed by anyone of a "respected" (221) class. Mr. Wickham's financial instability, lack of social status, and irresponsibility are deeply flawed with deceit as expected being a representative of his social class. This shows how much wealth, social connections, and a family's reputation determine the lives of people which can only be secured through marriage with men who have a prestigious social status.

The use of words in the novel such as "possession", "fortune", "want" and "property" show how much people are obsessed with materialistic desire and class. A person who has money holds great importance and this shows how society and its customs are driven by the people of the upper class. Missy DehnKubitschek argues why a woman needed to get married during Austen's time, especially for middle-class women, such as those in the Bennet family. Women are thought to need guidance and help from men and this is why, Mrs. Bennet, mother of the protagonist Elizabeth, dedicates her life to finding husbands for her daughters: "The business of her life was to get her daughters married, its solace was visiting and news" (Austen 53). She is an anxious mother who wishes nothing but the best for her daughters and therefore, she forces Mr. Bennet to introduce their daughters to Mr. Bingley, an unmarried young, handsome, and wealthy man, who has just moved into the neighborhood. This financial and existential insecurity of her daughters influenced her desperately to see one of her daughters happily settled at Netherfield, and all the others equally well married. Even, when Jane gets sick, instead of getting worried, she is very happy and satisfied because of this opportunity that her daughter has to be there for more time and to be closer to Mr. Bingley. She is a less compassionate person whose mind is driven by materialistic desires. The behavior of the inferior and the superior echelons of the social hierarchy indicate the hegemonic structure of 19th-century England. During Elizabeth's conversation with Lady Catherine de Bourgh, who is a very powerful woman, she speaks with a sharp tongue which is a contradiction of the social norms. Elizabeth left Lady Catherine astonished by revealing that the five Bennet daughters have been brought up without a governess as it is not thinkable according to the capitalist norm. To her, it is unimaginable that young women have not been taught necessary skills such as drawing and playing an instrument as prevailing cultural hegemony. Elizabeth Bennet is described as having "a lively, playful disposition which delighted in anything ridiculous" (59). Her intelligence and keen observations make her Mr. Bennet's favorite child who says that "they are all silly and

ignorant like other girls, but Lizzy has something more of quickness than her sisters" (52). This is the exact opposite of the definition of the "true woman" according to the aristocratic norms. In contrast, she is the least liked by her mother "She is not half so handsome as Jane, nor half so good-humored as Lydia" (52). This shows how outer beauty gets more preference than intellect for women. However, Elizabeth is different from her social conventions. She believes in an intellectual mind rather than being a delicate puppet of the dominant gender. For a certain time, it seems that Elizabeth understands the true purpose of marriage, something that neither her mother nor her sisters do. The rejection of Mr. Collins's proposal makes her mother furious as society recommends that all women accept the marriage proposal they receive at that time. Even she rejects Mr. Darcy's proposal because she considers him an arrogant and proud. However, she regrets rejecting the proposal of Mr. Darcy after witnessing her wealth in person which indicates the domination of the aristocrat's injected ideologies.

Austen reveals the acceptance of cultural hegemony by identifying the people who treat one another on the standard of social status and class determined by the bourgeoisie. This is why; characters like Lady Catherine, and Mr. Darcy often seemed mistreating other people. Jane Austen lived in a society that was ruled by strict codes of conduct and where class and social status held immense importance. From the analysis above, Jane Austen wants to depict that the ideologies imposed by the higher class are dominant and the hegemonic acceptance of the proletariat class influenced the middle-class psychology of the nineteenth century through societal norms such as class hierarchy, gender, roles, and marriage.

Conclusion

The Regency age has been considered as a time of great economic change and England has witnessed the significant rise of two social classes namely bourgeoisie and proletariat. The ideologies imposed by the upper class are considered the standard form of values in a societal condition. As the ruling class holds power over the superstructure of society, they influence every social institution. The manners, lifestyle, and tendencies of the proletariat class have been marked Mr. Darcy as primitive and they lack of "refinement" (221). In this novel, we see how Austen establishes her argument to showcase the psychological dominance through the actions of the elite characters, Austen shows how higher class people consider women like Elizabeth as a threat to them and discourage them from being intellectual, and independent women like the elites. Austen thoroughly criticizes the superficiality of the high-class people for "naturalizing" (Nayar 130) the discrimination based on class and wealth where marriages have been formed based on making it a contract of wealth and status.

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Local Government and Economic Development: An Empirical Analysis at the District Level in Bangladesh

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Abstract

The role of local government in fostering economic development at the district level in Bangladesh is critical yet underexplored. This empirical study investigates the mechanisms through which local governments contribute to economic growth and community well-being. Utilizing a mixed-methods approach, the research integrates both quantitative and qualitative data collected from various stakeholders, including local government officials, community leaders, and residents across multiple districts. The study identifies key factors influencing local economic development, such as fiscal health, governance structures, and community participation. Preliminary findings indicate that local governments play a significant role in resource mobilization, service delivery, and infrastructure development essential components for stimulating economic activities. However, challenges such as limited financial resources, bureaucratic inefficiencies, and lack of public trust hinder their effectiveness. By analyzing data through descriptive and analytical methods, this research highlights the current state of local government operations and offers recommendations for enhancing their capacity to drive local economic initiatives. Ultimately, the study seeks to provide insights to inform policy decisions and strengthen the local governance framework in Bangladesh, ensuring that local governments can effectively contribute to sustainable economic development at the district level. The findings will be valuable for policymakers, researchers, and practitioners interested in local governance and economic development strategies in developing contexts.

Keywords**:** *Coordination, Community Engagement, Economic Development, Local Government, Participation*

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Introduction

The complex, multidimensional concept of economic development, encompassing improvements in human well-being, has long been managed exclusively by central governments in many developing countries. Decisions in this domain have traditionally been made by central governments and their associated ministries, departments, and agencies with limited involvement from local actors or the communities situated near points of local development action (Edralin 1996). However, the recent involvement of local governments in promoting local economic development has become a major topic of discussion in Bangladesh. Local government institutions, local governments, and community-based organizations have evolved globally as expressions of specific historical conditions and are particularly shaped by time and place. In contemporary time one of the central characteristics of these local organizations and institutions is their developmental role and function. Development initiatives may originate at various levels national, regional, local, or even individual entrepreneurial efforts with the final impact being experienced by individuals and families within a particular region. While GDP, GNP, and GNIs are typically calculated at the national level, local actions also significantly contribute to the growth process (Ahmed 2015).

Definitions of Development

The concept of development varies widely across different contexts. It is often understood as a favorable change or a progression from worse to better (Coetzee and Graaff 1996). Kotze (1997:1) defines it as a positive social, economic, and political transformation within a country or community. It can also be described as a process through which members of a society enhance their potential and institutional capacities to mobilize and manage resources, producing sustainable and equitably distributed improvements in their quality of life, aligned with their own aspirations (Korten and Klaus 1984).

Dimensions of the Concept of Development

Development encompasses various dimensions, including human, economic, political, socio-cultural, and environmental aspects. Burkey supports this view, suggesting that development should be approached on multiple levels, incorporating human, political, social, and economic factors. Human development involves an individual's growth in self-esteem, self-confidence, self-sufficiency, cooperation, and tolerance of others, as they become more aware of their potential for change (Blakely 1994). Social development includes investments and services that benefit society as a whole, such as healthcare, education, water, and energy infrastructure. Economic development is an interdependent factor, essential for providing a strong resource base. It focuses on production, output, and activities tied to commercial or monetary aspects (Dale 2004). This dimension also involves individuals, institutions, and organizations working to support production for both direct consumption and surplus generation for cash. Politically, development relates to the distribution of power among groups or individuals, particularly the power to enable popular participation in governance and decision-making (Conyers and Hills 1990).

Justification for Local Governments' Involvement in Economic Development

The role of local governments in economic development has been debated for many years. Neo-classical theorists argue that governments and their units are often ineffective (Todaro and Smith 2006), suggesting that economic development should be driven by market forces. However, local governments are uniquely positioned to address local development issues, as they are closer to the people and bear the responsibility for local growth. They play an essential role in meeting the social, economic, and material needs of communities by organizing and managing local governance.

As of 2023, approximately 59.5% of Bangladesh's population lives in rural areas, reflecting ongoing urbanization trends but with a majority still in rural settings. These communities fall under the oversight of local administration, with the economy driven by both industrial and agricultural sectors. The agricultural sector, in particular, is managed at the local level by local governments. However, local planning and decision-making often remain centralized, with minimal input from local administrations. Despite their direct relationship with the local population and practical knowledge of local economic needs, local governments face challenges due to insufficient coordination with central government authorities. This lack of coordination hinders effective local economic development.

This research aims to identify the reasons behind the inadequate coordination between central and local governments and proposes policy recommendations to bridge this gap. By minimizing the coordination gap in planning, decision-making, and implementation between central and local governments, the local economy can be better supported and developed.

Objectives

The objective of this research is "To assess the role and effectiveness of local government in promoting and sustaining economic development at the district level in Bangladesh."

The specific objectives of this research are:

- To support the development of the local economy.
- To identify tools utilized by local governments in promoting local economic development.
- To examine local economic development practices and organizational structures.
- To determine gaps in coordination between the local community and local government.
- To identify and assess the involvement of other actors engaged by local governments in local economic development activities.

- To evaluate both external and internal factors and how they influence the active involvement of local governments in effectively promoting local economic development.
- To propose policies to minimize the coordination gap between local and central governments.

Methodology of the Research

I. Data Collection

This study will rely on secondary data from authoritative sources to understand the role of local government in district-level economic development in Bangladesh. Key sources include:

- **Government Publications:** Reports and publications from the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS), Ministry of Local Government reports, and relevant government agencies.
- **International Assessments:** Reports and evaluations from organizations such as the World Bank, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), and other development partners involved in governance and economic development in Bangladesh.
- **Policy and Development Documents:** Analysis of national and regional policy documents related to local governance and economic development.

II. Literature Review

Conduct a comprehensive review of previous studies on local governance and economic development, with a particular focus on district-level or subnational analyses in Bangladesh and similar contexts. This review will contextualize the role of local government in economic development and identify relevant theoretical frameworks for the study.

III. Data Analysis

- **Content Analysis**: Utilize content analysis to systematically review the secondary data, focusing on identifying and extracting recurring themes. Key themes to be explored may include:
    - **Governance Strategies**: Initiatives and approaches used by local governments to promote economic development.
    - **Coordination Mechanisms**: Collaboration with central government agencies, local businesses, and other stakeholders.
    - **Barriers to Development**: Challenges faced by local governments in implementing economic development initiatives.

- **Synthesis of Findings**: Organize findings to illustrate how local government actions influence economic outcomes at the district level and to identify policy gaps or areas for improvement.

By integrating and analyzing secondary data from multiple credible sources, this methodology aims to provide a detailed and nuanced understanding of the influence of local government on economic development at the district level in Bangladesh, highlighting effective practices and areas for policy enhancement.

Correlation Between Objectives and Findings

1. How Local Governments Can Promote Local Economic Development:

The Trickle-Down Approach focuses on easing burdens on local businesses by reducing taxes and simplifying regulations. The Knowledge Broker Approach emphasizes empowering stakeholders through knowledge sharing, including programs on entrepreneurship and business advisory services. The Opportunity Advisor or Hybrid Approach combines financial and educational tools, such as providing business planning support, grant assistance, and strategic economic projects (Three-approaches-local-economic-development 2023).

A comprehensive local economic development (LED) strategy should involve several key steps:

- Identifying and convening relevant LED stakeholders, including diverse public and private actors, to collaborate and coordinate.
- Conducting a thorough mapping and analysis of the local economy to establish an evidence base (The Hague Academy for Local Governance 2024).
- Formulating an LED strategy with a shared vision and concrete, inclusive interventions.
- Effectively implementing the strategy by mobilizing resources, creating partnerships, and ensuring project management.
- Continuously monitoring progress and assessing impact to identify opportunities for improvement (The Hague Academy for Local Governance 2024).

Findings also emphasize the importance of local governments having the appropriate tools and knowledge to support the local economy, often a weak link in LED efforts. Conducting studies to understand the local economic potential, strengths, weaknesses, and sectoral contributions can help local governments design more effective LED strategies (UNCDF 2024). Thus, local governments can leverage a range of approaches and tools to foster local economic development, from reducing business burdens to empowering stakeholders through knowledge sharing and strategic interventions. A comprehensive, evidence-based, and inclusive LED strategy is essential.

2. Examining the Role of Local Government in LED in a District of Bangladesh:
Key ways to examine this role include:

Identifying and Engaging Relevant Stakeholders:

- Convene a diverse group of public, private, and civil society stakeholders involved in LED to understand their roles, interests, and collaborative potential.
- Analyze how the local government coordinates and partners with these stakeholders in LED initiatives (Swisscontact 2024).

Assess the Local Economic Context

- Conduct a comprehensive mapping and analysis of the local economy to understand its strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and challenges.
- Examine how the local government utilizes this evidence base to inform its LED strategy and interventions (DDLGN 2018)

Evaluate the Local Government's LED Approach

- Determine whether the local government adopts a "trickle-down" approach focused on reducing business burdens, a "knowledge broker" approach that empowers stakeholders, or a hybrid "opportunity advisor" approach.
- Assess the specific tools, programs, and policies the local government utilizes to promote LED, such as entrepreneurship support, business advisory services, strategic economic projects, and more (Municipal Association of Bangladesh - MAB 2024).

Examine the Organizational Capacity

- Assess the local government's organizational structure, resources, and capabilities dedicated to LED activities.
- Evaluate how the local government develops the digital and technical skills of municipal staff to effectively implement LED initiatives.

Measure the Impact and Outcomes

- Assess the local economic outcomes and development impacts achieved through the local government's LED efforts.
- Identify opportunities to enhance the local government's LED strategy, coordination, and implementation for greater effectiveness. By taking this multi-faceted approach, the research aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of the role of local government in driving local economic development at the district level (DDLGN 2018).

3. Factors Contributing to the Coordination Gap Between Local Communities and Local Governments

Based on empirical research, the following key factors contribute to the coordination gap between local communities and local governments:

Lack of Formal Coordination Mechanisms

There is often a lack of established platforms and channels for regular communication and collaboration between local governments and community stakeholders (Monmouthshire County Council, n.d.). This includes limited involvement of the community in local government decision-making processes and insufficient mechanisms for the community to provide feedback (Camp Management Toolkit.org, 2015).

Resource and Capacity Constraints

Local governments may face resource and staffing limitations that hinder their ability to engage meaningfully with the local community on economic development initiatives. Research suggests that local governments often lack the organizational capacity, skills, and dedicated personnel needed to coordinate effectively with the community (Panday, 2014).

Weak Community Engagement

The local community may be unwilling or lack the capacity to engage with the local government due to factors such as past negative experiences or limited awareness of opportunities for involvement. This can perpetuate the coordination gap and make it challenging for the local government to build productive partnerships (Panday, 2014).

Lack of Intermediaries

Previous studies suggest that the absence of civil society organizations or other intermediaries, which can facilitate coordination between the local government and the community, is a contributing factor. These intermediaries play a crucial role in bridging the gap and enabling more collaborative local economic development efforts (Camp Management Toolkit.org, 2015).

In summary, the key factors contributing to the coordination gap include the lack of formal coordination mechanisms, resource and capacity constraints within local governments, misalignment of priorities, weak community engagement, and the absence of effective intermediaries. These factors all contribute to the coordination gap between local communities and local governments.

4. Strategies for the Involvement of Other Actors by the Local Government in Its Local Economic Development Activities

The following are some effective strategies for involving other actors in local economic development (LED) activities by the local government:

Assess the Stakeholder Engagement Process

- To examine how the local government identifies, convenes, and engages with relevant stakeholders from the private sector, civil society, and other government agencies in its LED initiatives.

• To evaluate the inclusiveness and representativeness of the stakeholder engagement process, ensuring it involves a diverse range of actors.

Analyze the Roles and Contributions of Different Actors

To identify the specific roles and contributions of different stakeholders in the LED process, such as:

- **Private sector**: Providing inputs, investments, and partnerships
- **Civil society**: Representing community interests and providing oversight
- **Other government agencies:** Aligning policies, providing resources, and enabling coordination

Examine Collaboration Mechanisms and Platforms

Identify the formal and informal mechanisms and platforms the local government uses to facilitate collaboration with other stakeholders, such as:

- Coordination committees or task forces
- Public-private dialogue forums
- Joint planning and implementation processes
- Evaluate the effectiveness of these mechanisms in enabling joint action and shared ownership of LED initiatives.

To Assess the Capacity and Resources Mobilized

Analyze the capacity and resources that different stakeholders contribute to the LED process, such as:

- Technical expertise and knowledge
- Financial resources and investments
- Advocacy and networking power
- Evaluate how the local government mobilizes and coordinates these diverse resources for effective LED implementation.

Understand Stakeholder Incentives and Motivations

- Identify the key incentives and motivations driving the involvement of different stakeholders in the LED process.
- Assess how the local government aligns these diverse interests and ensures mutual benefits to sustain stakeholder engagement.

By adopting this multi-faceted approach, the research can provide a comprehensive understanding of how the local government involves and coordinates with other key actors in its LED activities and identify opportunities to strengthen these collaborative efforts for more effective local economic development.

5. External and Internal Factors that Most Significantly Influence the Active Involvement of Local Government in Effectively Promoting Local Economic Development: The Following Approaches Can Be Considered

Analyze External Factors

Examine the broader economic, political, social, and environmental context at the regional, national, and global levels that may impact the local economy.
Identify external opportunities and threats, such as:

- Policies, regulations, and support programs from higher levels of government
- Trends in key industries, markets, and trade
- Demographic shifts and migration patterns
- Environmental challenges and climate change impacts Assess how these external factors enable or constrain the local government's ability to effectively promote local economic development.

Assess Internal Organizational Factors

- Evaluate the local government's institutional capacity, resources, and governance structures dedicated to local economic development activities.
- Analyze the skills, knowledge, and technical expertise of municipal staff involved in LED initiatives.
- Examine the local government's internal decision-making processes, coordination mechanisms, and budgetary allocations for LED.
- Identify any internal organizational barriers, such as siloed departments, lack of political will, or resource constraints.

Understand the Local Economic Context

- Conduct a comprehensive assessment of the local economy, including its key sectors, business landscape, workforce characteristics, and development trends.
- Identify the local economy's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and challenges through data analysis and stakeholder consultations.
- Assess how the local economic context shapes the local government's LED priorities and interventions.

Examine Stakeholder Engagement

- To evaluate the local government's mechanisms for engaging and coordinating with key stakeholders, such as the private sector, civil society, and other government agencies.
- To analyse the level of trust, alignment of interests, and quality of collaboration between the local government and other LED actors.

- To identify any gaps or barriers in stakeholder engagement that limit the local government's ability to effectively promote local economic development.

Assessment of the LED Approach and Outcomes

- Examine the local government's LED strategy, policies, and programs, and how they address the identified internal and external factors.
- Evaluate the tangible economic development outcomes and impacts achieved through the local government's LED efforts.
- Identify opportunities to strengthen the local government's LED approach based on the analysis of internal and external influencing factors.

By adopting this multi-faceted approach, the research can provide a comprehensive understanding of how the interplay of external and internal factors shapes the local government's role and effectiveness in promoting local economic development in the district.

Recommendations

The policy to minimize the gap of coordination between local government and central government as following

Establish Clear Roles and Responsibilities

Define the roles and responsibilities of both central and local governments in LED initiatives to ensure a clear understanding of their respective mandates and areas of focus.

Enhance Inter-Departmental Coordination

Implement mechanisms for regular inter-departmental coordination and communication within both central and local government structures. Establish formal committees or task forces that bring together representatives from different departments to facilitate joint planning and decision-making.

Strengthen Local Government Capacity

Provide training and capacity-building programs for local government officials to enhance their skills and knowledge in LED strategies and implementation. Support the development of local government institutions to ensure they have the necessary resources and capabilities to effectively participate in LED initiatives.

Develop a Territorial Approach

Adopt a territorial approach to LED, focusing on specific geographic areas within the district to ensure that local needs and contexts are addressed. It can help in integrating local economic development with broader regional and national policies, promoting a more cohesive and coordinated effort.

Incorporate Stakeholder Engagement

Involve local stakeholders, including community groups, businesses, and civil society organizations, in the LED process to ensure their needs and concerns are addressed. Establish platforms for regular dialogue and feedback mechanisms to ensure that the local government is responsive to the needs of the community.

Improve Monitoring and Evaluation

Develop a comprehensive monitoring and evaluation framework to track the progress and outcomes of LED initiatives. Regularly assess the effectiveness of policies and programs to identify areas for improvement and make necessary adjustments.

Foster a Culture of Collaboration

Encourage a culture of collaboration and cooperation between central and local government officials, as well as between different departments and stakeholders. Promote a shared vision and commitment to LED, emphasizing the importance of collective action and mutual support.

Address Resource Constraints

Address resource constraints by allocating sufficient funds and personnel to support LED initiatives at both the central and local levels. Ensure that resources are allocated in a way that supports the implementation of LED strategies and programs.

Develop a National-Local Planning System

Establish a national-local planning system that integrates LED objectives with broader national development goals. Ensure that local plans are aligned with national priorities and that there is a clear mechanism for vertical coordination and feedback.

Regular Review and Feedback

Conduct regular reviews and assessments of the coordination between central and local governments to identify areas for improvement. Establish mechanisms for feedback and suggestions from both levels of government to ensure that policies and programs are responsive to changing needs and circumstances. By implementing these policies, the coordination gap between central and local governments can be minimized, leading to more effective and inclusive local economic development in the district.

Conclusion

The study highlights the essential role of local governments in Bangladesh in fostering local economic development (LED), while also identifying several challenges they face. Key findings indicate that local governments employ various strategies, such as reducing business burdens and empowering stakeholders, but often lack the necessary tools and expertise to effectively support the economy. Coordination with other stakeholders, including the central government and civil society, is vital but frequently

inadequate due to unclear roles, resource limitations, and misaligned priorities. The local economic context and internal capacities significantly influence the success of LED efforts.To improve their effectiveness, the study recommends local governments adopt a participatory and evidence-based approach, which includes engaging diverse stakeholders, conducting economic assessments, and monitoring progress. Specific suggestions include clarifying roles across government levels, enhancing local government capacity through training, fostering collaboration among stakeholders, aligning local strategies with broader development goals, and regularly assessing economic conditions to inform decision-making. By addressing these gaps, local governments can better promote inclusive and sustainable economic development in their districts.

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Exploring Robert Frost's Modernism: Relevance and Impact in Contemporary Contexts

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Abstract

One of the most fascinating and perhaps the most popular poets in the canon of American literature is Robert Lee Frost (1874–1963), whose academic intrigue remains inexhaustible. Robert Frost stands as a distinguished modernist whose portrayal of the everyday lives of rustic New Englanders achieves profound universal significance. His work transcends the rural setting of New England, crossing international boundaries and resonating deeply with contemporary urban audiences worldwide, thereby cementing his status as one of the most influential poets of the modern era. The multiplicity of meanings in Frost's poems and their varied implications for the lives of contemporary individuals around the world are why he is regarded as a prominent modernist. This paper examines Robert Frost's poetry from a unique perspective to reaffirm his position as one of the greatest modern poets in English literature. His poems remain academically and socially relevant even in today's technology-driven, globalized world. Furthermore, this study aims to significantly aid future scholars in exploring Frost's poetry with renewed insight, while engaging with the knowledge and theories proposed by previous researchers.

Keywords: *Robert Lee Frost, Modernist poetry, Frostean modernity, Frost's contemporaneity, Modern elements in Frost's poems*

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Introduction

This study aims to demonstrate the presence of the prevalent elements of modernism in the poems of Robert Frost. The paper incorporates precise explanations of modernism along with its characteristics to exemplify Frost's projection of modern elements in his poems. The study also highlights how Frost, standing as a distinct modern poet, composes his poems depicting the everyday life of the modern New Englanders. Numerous critics and researchers have extensively explored the core themes of Robert Frost's poetry, employing both direct and indirect approaches. Yet, only a limited number of publications offer in-depth analyses of his poetry as a remarkable synthesis of modernism. Therefore, the objective of this study is to expand our ideas on Robert Frost as a modern poet. The study applies the qualitative method. The primary sources of information utilised in this study are the original works of Robert Frost. Besides, the paper has consulted relevant articles and books authored by critics such as Robert Faggen, Cleanth Brooks, John F. Lynen, and Pauline Elaine Allen.

Modernism, Individualism, and Experimentation

Emerging from a spirit of rebellion in the early 1900s, modernism sought to profoundly transform modern society's perspectives on life, art, politics, and science. The rebellious sentiment that thrived from 1900 to 1930 was rooted in the rejection of European culture due to its perceived corruption, complacency, and lethargy (*The Vertigo Years: Europe 1900-1914* by Philip Bloom; *Prophets of Rebellion: Millenarian Protest Movements against the European Colonial Order* by Michael Adas). This culture was viewed as being constrained by the superficialities of a society overly concerned with appearances and resistant to change.

Discontent with the moral decay of European society led contemporary intellectuals and artists to explore alternative paradigms, particularly those found in indigenous cultures. The outcome had a profound impact on the establishment, as the emerging culture sought to subvert tradition and authority to reshape present-day society.

To begin with, it is crucial to recognize that being contemporary does not necessarily equate to being modern. Literary modernism emerged as a response to global industrialization and the impact of the First World War. It is characterized by an innovative and expressive approach to writing, encompassing both prose and poetry, throughout the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Literary modernism enables writers to explore avant-garde modes of self-expression, surpassing the conventional methodologies of previous periods. Modernist literature frequently incorporates non-linear storytelling and stream-of-consciousness interior monologues to highlight the personal experiences and feelings of individuals (Childs, 2017).

Some of the most notable authors and works of modernist literature include Franz Kafka's *The Metamorphosis*, *The Letter to His Father*, and *The Castle*; D. H. Lawrence's *Sons and Lovers* and *Women in Love*; Virginia Woolf's *A Room of One's*

Own, *To the Lighthouse*, and *Mrs. Dalloway*; T.S. Eliot's *The Waste Land* and *Tradition and the Individual Talent*; Gertrude Stein's *Tender Buttons* and *The Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas*; Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* and *Lord Jim*; Samuel Beckett's *Waiting for Godot* and *Murphy*; William Carlos Williams' *Spring and All* and *The Red Wheelbarrow*; and W.B. Yeats' *The Second Coming* and *When You Are Old*.

Merely being published in the twentieth century or contemporaneous with esteemed poets like W.B. Yeats, T.S. Eliot, W. H. Auden, and Ezra Pound does not inherently confer modernity upon Robert Frost. Certain writers from the past remain vividly present in our minds and thoughts, resonating more profoundly with our ideas and perspectives than many contemporary poets. Fraser Sutherland effectively articulates this point:

When we refer to a piece of literature as "modern," we are not simply indicating that it was published recently or within the past few years. Instead, we are suggesting that it was written during a period that extends from the Renaissance to the present day, and possibly even includes works from the decline of the Roman Empire and the earliest writings in a European language (Sutherland qtd. in Winkiel, 2017).

Some might argue that modern times could be considered to have started with the Christian era itself. When we label a piece of work as "modern," we are attributing specific inherent characteristics to it, even if we may not have a clear understanding of what these characteristics include. Fraser provides examples of both ancient and relatively older poets who resonate strongly with contemporary readers, as well as newer poets who do not seem as modern. Fraser asserts that throughout the literature of the past, specific works exhibit a unique connection to the attitudes and issues of our present era.

T.S. Eliot, a prominent figure in the modernist movement of English poetry, asserts that modernity is not merely about writing on contemporary subjects such as chimney pots, nor is archaism about writing on ancient banners or flames. His statement suggests that modernism encompasses far more than just a familiarity with the newest scientific advancements and discoveries. It implies a sharp awareness and understanding of the contemporary mind (Matthews, 2013). Stephen Spender, an English poet and critic who came to prominence in the 1930s, defines modernism as a heightened awareness and responsiveness to current phenomena such as machinery, the industrial metropolis, and neurotic behavior. The *Times Literary Supplement* identifies two key characteristics of modernism: vibrancy derived from contemporaneity and complexity arising from cerebral obscurity (Woolf, 1992).

Modernist literature is typically characterized by five key traits. Having defined the modernist genre, we will now explore why certain works are classified as modernist. The critical question is what differentiates modernist works from other literary forms. The answer lies in the fundamental attributes of modernity, and we will highlight the significance of five of these attributes. These key traits are individualism, experimentation, absurdity, symbolism, and formalism.

Individualism constitutes a foundational element of modernism. This viewpoint asserts that the experiences, ideas, and emotions of an individual hold greater significance than the collective events of society. Modernism primarily emphasizes the depiction of an individual's subjective world, rather than addressing broader societal transformations or historical occurrences on an impersonal level (Fan, 2014). In modernist literature, a typical protagonist contends with adapting to and navigating a changing reality. When confronted with challenges, the main character occasionally demonstrates resolve and persistence, albeit inconsistently. Noteworthy examples of individualism are evident in the literary works of preeminent American writer Ernest Hemingway. The focus on subjective reality has also given rise to the emergence of unreliable narrators in literature (Armstrong, 2008). Franz Kafka's works feature compelling illustrations of the madman archetype portrayed as an unreliable narrator.

Literary modernism defies conventional writing rules, opening opportunities for innovative experimentation with literary form and testing new ideas or hypotheses. Modernist poets, for instance, rebelled against established conventions of rhyme and rhythm, thereby pioneering the creation of free verse (verse libre) poetry (Linehan, 2012). Literary modernism also spurred explorations in prose, where writers paired individualism with another fundamental trait: the literary technique known as "stream of consciousness." This device is designed to mirror the thought processes of the characters, even if they are inconsistent, chaotic, or illogical. This innovative method enabled writers to create novels that closely resemble the thought processes and inner monologues of the main character. Eminent British writers Virginia Woolf and James Joyce are exemplary authors embodying this particular quality.

In poetry, collections by T.S. Eliot and Ezra Pound are essential readings to understand the genre. Absurdity, another trait, refers to the quality of being illogical, irrational, or nonsensical, as demonstrated in Samuel Beckett's *Waiting for Godot* and Harold Pinter's *The Homecoming* (Wegener, 1967).

Absurdity, Symbolism and Formalism

During the modernist era, authors observed the disintegration of the world they were familiar with. The views and opinions of literary authors about humans were challenged by the two deadliest global wars: World War I (1914-1918) and World War II (1939-1945). Consequently, the popularity of both capitalism, and globalization skyrocketed in the post-war decades. As a result, many of them began to view the world as rather nonsensical, and things that incorporated this perspective into their literature. Modernist works characterized by this trait often venture into surreal or fantastical realms, both in their initial setup and throughout the plot's development (French and Harris, 1972). They can also be characterised as eccentric or illogical. The emergence of absurdism led to the creation of the Theatre of the Absurd. Originating from European playwrights such as Samuel Beckett and Harold Pinter, this movement focuses on the idea that human existence lacks inherent purpose or significance. Absurdist plays

prioritise the inclusion of nonsensical speech over good communication. Franz Kafka's writings, particularly *The Metamorphosis,* exemplify absurdity in literary modernism (Bennett, 2020).

Symbolism refers to the use of different symbols to represent ideas, concepts, or qualities. Although symbolism in literature predates the late 19th century, it swiftly emerged as a key attribute of literary modernism. Symbolism was also reinterpreted by authors and poets of the Modernist movement. While earlier writers were more explicit in their narratives, modernists opted to leave interpretative gaps, inviting readers to engage more deeply with the text. This approach does not suggest a neglect of detail. On the contrary, modernist authors meticulously embedded symbolic elements throughout their works, enhancing their thematic richness. The distinction lies in their utilisation of symbolism in writing, which facilitated multiple interpretations that were simultaneously feasible and legitimate (Wellek, 1970) . The works of James Joyce and T. S. Eliot are particularly notable for their use of symbolism within the modernist literary movement.

As has been previously stated, 20th-century modernism is characterised by the pursuit of innovative and revolutionary modes of artistic representation. The quest was driven by creativity, thus gradually leading to the birth of unique forms. In contemporary literature, writing is no longer viewed as a tedious and difficult skill. Instead, modernists regard it as a creative process. At times, the significance of form is considered more crucial than the content. In this context, the literary works of E. E. Cummings serve as a notable example. Her works are rather illustrative examples in this context. Rather than adhering to traditional methods of presenting poetry on a page, he arranged individual words and phrases in a manner reminiscent of a canvas, with his poem serving as the paint (Cohen, 1990). Additional instances of formalism encompass the utilisation of fabricated or foreign lexicons and expressions, as well as unorthodox arrangement or the lack thereof.

Recurring Themes in Modernist Literature

There are four recurring themes in modernist literature. During the modernist period, literature defied traditional standards and explored many themes to express effectively the author's perspective on the surrounding world. Given their extensive range, it is impracticable to enumerate all of them in this context. Nevertheless, certain modernist motifs have more prominence, compared to others. Here are four of them, accompanied by examples.

Transformation

The theme of transformation is intrinsically linked to modernism. Whether it involves changes in form, communication, or standards, this movement is fundamentally based on the concept of profound metamorphosis. To witness the practical application of this principle, one can think of beginning by studying Ezra Pound's manifesto, *Make It New*.

Transformation, as a theme, encompasses a shift in views, opinions, and identities, thus serving as a symbolic rebirth (Diepeveen, 2013). This component of the theme is driven by the authors' experiences of loss, destruction, and war, which can lead to fragmentation. Examples of transformation as a theme can be found in Franz Kafka's absurdist work, *The Metamorphosis*. Modernism in American literature is evident in the works of Ernest Hemingway and William Faulkner.

Mythological Tales

Modernist painters like Pablo Picasso and authors like T.S. Eliot transcended the traditional use of Greek and Latin mythologies, setting themselves apart from their predecessors. Instead, they reconceptualized these narratives within a contemporary, futuristic framework. Mythological narratives and figures, when employed as symbols or characters that play a pivotal role in the storyline, form the essence of modernism in writing. Among the notable instances of myths in modernist literature, T.S. Eliot's *The Waste Land* stands out as a prime example. This poem reinterprets the legends of the Fisher King, the immortal guardian of the Grail, incorporating Tarot cards and the Holy Grail as symbolic elements (Workman, 1981).

Loss, Separation, and Destruction

The harrowing ordeals of war serve as the primary catalyst for the prevalence of this theme in modern-era literature. These events were characterized by loss, separation, and destruction, and it is worth noting that many authors, such as Virginia Woolf, personally endured these hardships. Consequently, these experiences were vividly reflected in the artistic creations of the post-war era (Singal, 1987). Loss, ruin, and separation became widespread experiences that individuals simultaneously faced and collectively endured, allowing readers to find resonance in modernist works and embrace their themes and narratives. For instance, most of the protagonists in Hemingway's novels, such as *The Old Man and the Sea*, *The Sun Also Rises*, and *A Farewell to Arms*, are lonely and isolated individuals without any specific aim in life.

Romantic Affection and Physical Pleasure

Individualism, a defining feature of modernism, influenced the exploration of love and sensuality in the literature of this age. These themes were not immune to disillusionment and demystification; instead, they were often reinterpreted with a touch of cynicism, or, some would argue, realism. In modernist literature, love is not portrayed as a mystical emotion that is capable of extraordinary feats. Conversely, the tone of love stories adopts a darker and more pessimistic quality, providing evidence of the gradual decay of societal norms. Modernist works not only explore themes of love and sensuality but also engage in discussions and reflections on sexuality, gender roles, and feminism. Notable authors in this context include Katherine Mansfield, Virginia Woolf, and D. H. Lawrence. To explore the themes of love and sensuality in modernist literature, one should examine and analyse F. Scott Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby* and Ernest Hemingway's *For Whom the Bell Tolls*. It can now further be said that D.H. Lawrence's

Lady Chatterley's Lover provides a notable illustration of this theme by exploring the concepts of liberation and gender parity.

Modernism as Portrayed in Robert Frost's Poems

Critics like Willard Thorpe and Josephine Hart argue that Frost is fundamentally a conventional poet. There are opinions that his poetry has consistently been noted for its disarming simplicity, which contrasts with the typical characteristics of modern poetry, namely complexity and intricacy (Kilcup, 2014). The absence of irregular verse patterns, fragmentary lines, educated references, sardonic contrasts, erudite, and complex symbolism in his poetry distinguishes it from current poetry, which typically exhibits similar features.

Granville Hicks argues that Frost's indifference towards modern life stems from his adherence to a literary tradition that has fallen out of favour and no longer holds relevance in the contemporary world. Hicks argues that despite possessing both common sense and originality, the individual in question has chosen to align themselves with a dying tradition. Over the 20th century and a half, numerous poets have written about natural landscapes such as mountains, fields, and brooks, as well as the farmers who work on them. These themes have deeply influenced our collective imagination, and failing to appreciate their beauty would indicate a lack of sensitivity. However, in our contemporary society, our focus often shifts towards man-made entities like factories, skyscrapers, and machines. Mechanics, retail workers, and truck drivers are encountered more frequently than farmers today. When farmers are encountered, they are no longer romanticized figures but are often perceived as individuals affected by economic pressures.

Isidor Schneider strongly supports this perspective and identifies these as the most significant drawbacks of Frost's poetry. He asserts that Frost is remarkably disconnected from his own era. In fact, many poets who preceded him possess a more modern mindset. Frost himself has expressed a desire to distance himself from his own time and society. Consequently, Schneider suggests that while Frost's poetry may provide entertainment and solace from the present, it does not offer profound insight. According to several critics, Frost demonstrates a lack of understanding of the contemporary era. This deficiency is evident in his attempt to discuss it, as observed in the lengthy poem "New Hampshire", which is deemed one of the least impressive in his collection and contains numerous irrelevant elements.

Yvor Winters, another critic, shares the belief that Frost is a traditional poet. He believes that Frost supports certain highly anti-modern perspectives. In his analysis of *The Bear*, he demonstrates that Frost had a deep admiration for man as a creature driven by instinct and impulse. This poem satirises the notion of humans as only rational beings, a perspective that contradicts modern thinking (Kilcup, 2014). Frost's connection to nineteenth-century Romantics is stronger than his connection to modern Romantics.

William O'Connor provides a comprehensive assessment of Frost's accomplishments as a poet and offers a fair evaluation of his relevance in the present times. The author acknowledges that critics have varying opinions about Frost's modernity based on their own modernity. Traditionalists such as Tate or Warren critique an industrialized and mechanized world, moral relativism, and finance capitalism, which they argue enable individuals to evade personal responsibilities. However, they also recognise that the traditional belief system, which opposes these developments, is rapidly disintegrating even in its strongholds (Gioia, 2014). They, like others, are unable to reverse this process or propose anything more than temporary solutions. Only a transcendental belief or a new myth can redirect the trajectory of these changes. Their poetry, imbued with intensity derived from struggles against traditionalism, addresses issues often overlooked in Frost's poetry. While tradition remains beneficial and essential to poetry, poets also bear a responsibility to engage with the defining issues of their time.

Contemporary Level of Consciousness

Cleanth Brooks, Lionel Trilling, and John F. Lynen have presented critical comments against the notion that Frost is a traditional poet. They appear not to accept a moderate and compromising perspective that is shared and stressed by O'Connor. They strongly promote the perspective that Frost is fundamentally modern. Brooks, Trilling, and Lynen are arguably the critics who are most enthusiastic and prepared to position Frost as a leading figure in contemporary poetry (Kilcup, 2014).

Modern Approach to Pastoral Technique

Robert Frost employs a contemporary approach in his pastoral technique. The setting of Frost's world is predominantly rural. Without any doubt, he retreats to New England and relies on the scenery, customs, and behaviours of New Englanders as the sole inspiration for his work, while distancing himself from the mundane modern world. However, J.F. Lynen accurately noted that Frost's withdrawal to the countryside is not a romantic attempt to avoid the harsh and unpleasant aspects of modern life. Instead, it serves as a vantage point from which he can observe and analyse the realities of modern life (McVey, 2019).

Frost's poetic technique, known as the Method of Indirection, has been employed by contemporary poets such as T.S. Eliot. Eliot used the technique of juxtaposition in *The Waste Land* to to contrast the present with the past. The purpose of the past in this context is to uncover and explain the present. Similarly, in Frost's poetry, both the country and the metropolitan settings are placed side by side, with the rural environment functioning as a benchmark and critique of the urban environment.

Modern Awareness

Robert Frost's poetry exhibits both classic and romantic aspects, as well as regional and pastoral features. Nevertheless, the poet Robert Frost uniquely employs these aspects.

Frost's poetry exhibits the manifestation of what W. B. Yeats referred to in his poem "Sailing to Baizantium" the "contemporary intellect in pursuit of its interpretations". Rosenthal in his book *British Landscape Painting* observes that the mindset portrayed in Frost's poems is distinct from that of a New England farmer or a romantic explorer of land (Gioia, 2014).

Critique of Contemporary Aspects of Life

Robert Frost satirises the impersonal nature of modern life, and his poem "Departmental". A unique example in this regard "Acquainted with the Night" implicitly conveys a keen awareness of the artificiality inherent in the present era of machinery. Frost does not adhere to the contemporary inclination toward "collectivist regimentation of love". He is not in favour of strict social control; nor does he support radical individualism. He acknowledges the existence of enduring difficulties that are unsolvable; and, it is in contrast to this perpetual human condition that he portrays the core of the contemporary world. He is aware that there is no definitive solution.

Modern in his Realistic Attitude towards Nature

Robert Frost's attitude towards nature is characterised by a modern and realistic perspective. As mentioned by Clark Griffith in his essay "Frost and the American View of Nature" Lionell asserts that Frost's attitude towards nature is unmistakably contemporary. Frost does not view nature with the passionate enthusiasm of the Romantics, nor does he perceive any divine design that emphasizes unity and harmony between humanity and the natural world. Contemporary science perceives Nature as an inert substance, lacking consciousness, and apart from and foreign to humanity. "In his poetry, Frost consistently highlights the distinctiveness of Nature and consistently reminds us that there is a distinct boundary separating the realm of Nature from the realm of humanity" (Selvi and Malar, 2021).

In Frost's poetry, the depiction of nature is not characterised by dream-like qualities, but rather by a harsh and demanding nature that contrasts with the urban world. It appears that Frost portrays 'the harsh realities of life in a novel manner. We perceive Robert Frost as an awe-inspiring poet. The universe he envisions is an alarming one. Trilling elucidates how Frost's poetry is fundamentally modern. It does not allude to sensational or historically significant events in the everyday world, nor does it incorporate urban settings (Selvi and Malar, 2021). More significantly, Trilling demonstrates that the terror expressed by Frost is the terror that accompanies and is necessary for the emergence of something new. It serves as a defining characteristic of genuinely modern poetry.

Frost's Poetry Exemplifies Specific Characteristics of Modernity

Most critics like John F Lynen and Cleanth Brooks agree that Frost does not depict the scenery of modern life in his poetry. However, he is undeniably a modern individual who effectively portrays the impact of modernism on humanity. His poetry reflects the

profound distress associated with modernism, as described by Cleanth Brooks in his book "Conversation and the Craft of Poetry". Brooks argues that Frost is a genuinely modern poet because he accurately depicts the breakdown of values and the disillusionment experienced by contemporary individuals. The majority of his poems explore the experiences of characters who endure frustration, isolation, and helplessness - afflictions of contemporary life, which are depicted in modern poems such as *The Waste Land*. Frost's poetry mirrors the realities of modern existence, portraying the feelings of insecurity, frustration, and loss that have infiltrated the consciousness of the modern individual (Naresh, 2023).

Modernists in Terms of Style and Symbolist Technique

Frost's poetry is distinguished by its detailed and diverse portrayal of light and shadow, evoking varied responses from readers. Despite its apparent straightforwardness, his poetry has generally appeared to be perceptively complex, as it contains multiple layers of meaning.

His poetry possesses a remarkable expressiveness and intricate texture, which is made possible by his adoption of the metaphysical symbolist technique passed down by the great modern poets. Like the metaphysical poets such as John Donne and Andrew Marvell, as well as their successors in the twentieth century, Frost skilfully juxtaposes contrasting elements. He skilfully places man and nature, rural and urban, and regional and urban side by side, resulting in a rare richness and a diverse array of vivid and profound meanings. Frost's aim is often to combine and reconcile these opposites, which he achieves through the use of symbolism and indirect methods (Cohen, 1990). In poems that adhere to the symbolic mode, Frost transcends their specific regional settings and attains universal significance and meaning. This symbolic strain is particularly evident in poems like "Fire and Ice" and "Stopping by the Woods on a Snowy Evening".

Conclusion

Robert Frost's status as a modernist poet is irrefutable within the annals of American literature. His poetic oeuvre exemplifies a nuanced integration of modernist principles, reflecting a profound impact on the literary landscape. The poet's exploration of the human condition transcends regional boundaries, resonating universally across cultures and epochs. To grasp Frost's modernity fully necessitates a thorough engagement with his poetry, unveiling its profound depths and underlying sensitivity.

In depicting essential facets of modern experience, Frost eschews superficial societal, political, or economic influences, opting instead for a raw portrayal of human existence. His verse captures enduring themes of solitude, existential struggle, and introspection with a stark realism that underscores their timeless relevance. His ability to evoke these themes through a clear and evocative use of language demonstrates his mastery of both traditional forms and innovative stylistic experimentation.

Moreover, Frost's modernity manifests not merely in thematic exploration but also in his adept manipulation of poetic craft. His disciplined approach to form and structure, coupled with a precise yet emotive language, ensures a clarity and profundity that resonate profoundly with readers. His poetry stands as a testament to his enduring relevance in contemporary discourse, offering insights into the complexities of human experience and the enduring quest for meaning in the modern world. In a nutshell, Robert Frost emerges not only as a poet of his era but as a timeless voice whose work continues to illuminate the universal sensibilities of human existence. By distilling essential truths through unadorned yet eloquent verse, Frost solidifies his place as a cornerstone of modernist literature and a definitive figure in American poetry.

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Language, Culture and Religious Identity Formation with the Impact of Colonial Legacy in Bangladesh

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Abstract

Bangladesh is linguistically defined as a 'predominantly monolingual' South Asian country. The mother tongue Bangla is associated with the national identity and culture. This study aims to assess the status and efficacy of English in Bangladesh in the twenty first century followed by a question: Why and how is English keeping its dominion and dissemination in Bangladesh in the twenty first century? This study will focus on how the colonial impact rebuilds the language, culture and forms religious identity in Bangladesh. Drawing on language ideology as an analytical lens, it will also conduct a historical analysis of the sociocultural and political developments that led to the construction of Bangladesh as a nation-state and that have influenced people's attitudes and beliefs toward certain languages. The nature of identity formation is complex. The production of identity in South Asia, with its colonial past, has largely been dependent on the region's colonial history. In this study, the process of political identity formation in Bangladesh has been examined. There are huge changes in food, clothing, and cultural activities in the culture of Bangladesh. These changes are playing a vital role in identifying the nation's formation. This is qualitative research, and secondary sources are used in developing this article's goals.

Keywords: *Language, Culture, Religion, Colonialism, Identity formation*

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Introduction

The language, culture, and production of religious identity in Bangladesh, with its colonial past, have largely been shaped by the region's colonial history. This paper identifies the impact of colonization, which led to significant changes in language, culture, and religion in Bangladesh. Colonialism is linked to imperialism, and colonial rule refers to the establishment of the governance of an empire over a particular region or territory, diminishing the dominance of the local population in that area.

In ancient times, Bangladesh was known as Banga Janapad and was ruled by the Mauryas, Guptas, Palas, and Mughals (*The Ancient Janapads of Bangla: Location and Characteristics* by Rorschach, May 9, 2021). After the demise of Mughal Emperor Alamgir, the British began trading in exchange for taxes from Subedar Shaista Khan. In the Battle of Plassey in 1757, Siraj-ud-Daulah, the Nawab of Bengal, was defeated by Robert Clive, and British rule was established in Bengal. In 1947, two countries, Pakistan and India, were created based on religion to free themselves from British rule.

Today's Bangladesh was once part of East Pakistan and faced economic, educational, political, and social discrimination by West Pakistan. Inspired by nationalism, Bangladesh emerged as an independent country following the bloody war of 1971. Although the British left the subcontinent 75 years ago, the effects of their colonial rule continue to exert a significant influence on various sectors of Bangladesh, including language, culture, and religion.

On February 21, 1952, a considerable number of people sacrificed their lives to demand Bangla as the national language of then Pakistan. After gaining independence from Pakistan in 1971, language policies in favor of Bangla were introduced with ambitious objectives: to elevate Bangla to the pinnacle of linguistic esteem and to suppress other languages, particularly Urdu and English. These policies promptly eliminated Urdu from Bangladesh, but in the case of English, the situation remains conflicted and contradictory.

This study has followed the path of qualitative research. It has incorporated ideas from secondary sources such as different articles, published books, journals, newspapers, authentic online studies and opinions of various critics. These are adopted to get specific ideas and directions to work on this topic.

Objectives of the Study

This research aims to find out the language, culture and religious identity formation in Bangladesh after the British colonizers ruled over them and left a massive impact. It also aims to find out why learning English became essential, the cultural formation occurred, religious identity became the most important object to trigger religious conflicts in Bangladesh; how diverse nationalistic and political agendas are related to Language, culture and religious identity formation in Bangladesh and the British people made societal hierarchies in colonial Bengal through Hindu-Muslim riots, ethnic cleansing, religious conflicts and identity formation.

Discussion

The English language is used to maintain communication worldwide. The colonizers promoted English within the colonized regions to elevate it above other languages. People in Bangladesh are now eagerly seeking to learn English as an economic necessity. All schools, colleges, and universities are required to include English as an essential part of their curricula. Numerous English words have been incorporated into the Bengali language, such as *table, chair, pencil, brush, mug*, and so on. The cultural impact is also evident in the lifestyle of Bangladeshi people. Their clothing, food habits, and cultural activities were influenced by the colonial rulers. For example, in earlier times, many individuals did not wear shirts, pants, or ties. However, with the arrival of the British, new styles of clothing were introduced. Today, wearing a shirt and pants for formal events or job interviews has become a part of life.

Religious identity formation began with the arrival of the British in colonial Bengal, as people became entangled in divisive policies and religious riots. This paper examines these factors to provide a deeper understanding of the colonial impact on language, culture, and religion in Bangladesh.

The anti-English sentiment in Bangladesh is rooted in the history of colonization during the British era. Like many other post-colonial countries, Bangladesh sought to exclude English, perceiving it as a threat to the growth and dominance of Bangla. The *Bangla Procholon Ain* of 1987 was a significant legislative act that declared Bangla the national and official language of Bangladesh and strictly prohibited the use of English in official domains. As a result, Bangla quickly replaced English in all spheres of national life, creating a "vacuum" in English proficiency and depriving the country of numerous international opportunities for many years (Banu & Sussex, 2001; Rahman, 2005).

In the era of globalization, however, English regained prominence in Bangladesh. Its resurgence coincided with Bangladesh's aspirations to integrate into global culture, the economy, education, and technology. Since the early 1980s, the pragmatic realization of global demands has revived the use of English. English gradually overcame national exclusionary policies, rendering them dormant and unrealistic. This is reflected in the studies of researchers, linguists, and ELT experts, who have extensively examined the conflict between language policies and the enduring presence of English in Bangladesh.

In 1905, the British divided Bengal into two provinces, designating Dhaka as the capital of the east and Calcutta of the west. However, this partition faced fierce resistance, led in part by the renowned Bangla poet Rabindranath Tagore, forcing the British to reunite Bengal in 1912. By 1946, it was evident that the British were preparing to leave India, and maintaining a united India seemed impossible. Bengal's Muslim League leader, Huseyn Shaheed Suhrawardy, and Hindu leader Sarat Chandra Bose proposed an independent, united Bengal. However, the 1947 partition was ultimately based on religion, not language.

Colonialism may also have impacted the communal harmony of Bangladesh, which forms an integral part of its culture. Colonial powers justified their conquests by claiming a legal and religious obligation to dominate the land and culture of indigenous people. Despite the colonizers' efforts to subjugate indigenous populations, resistance has always been a critical part of the history of colonialism. Long before decolonization, indigenous people on every continent staged violent and nonviolent resistance to their conquerors.

Language Formation

Language defines and determines one's place and identity in the world. According to Alastair Pennycook, language is an element of a broad semiotic system and is formulated and infused with ideological, historical, and political symbols (Akbari, 2008: 277). Therefore, language does not simply mean a set of sounds; it is completely intertwined with the lives of people. Sometimes, the suppression of a language denotes the subjugation of a community, whereas the enrichment of a language ensures the development of a nation (Siraji in Ullah, 2008: 34). A language demonstrates the identity of a person, their culture, values, and worldview. Thus, using a language means viewing the world in a particular way.

The colonizers promoted English in colonized areas to make it superior to other languages. Examples of current nation-states where English was introduced through colonization and has been maintained include Bangladesh, India, Kenya, Hong Kong, Pakistan, the Philippines, and Singapore. The English language has been used for hundreds of years in these countries and has become indigenized.

In Bangladesh, the scope for using Bangla is becoming narrower. In the job sector, multinational companies expect their employees to be well-versed in English. People are indirectly being discouraged from learning Bangla. This situation reminds us of the colonial education system, where British rulers patronized one group of the Bengali community that mimicked English and excluded the other group that refused to be trained in English (Muhith, 1992: 37).

Many English words have been incorporated into the Bengali language as a result of colonization, such as *office, jail, doctor, police, bank, vote, school, hospital, cup, glass, box, plastic, college*, and *bicycle*. In addition to English, Bangla includes words from Persian, Arabic, Dutch, and Turkish origins.

Those who believe that we are free from all forms of colonial influence are not being realistic. Although we have achieved liberation, intellectually and mentally we are still dominated by colonial doctrines. Since British rule, our entire education system has been manipulated to serve colonial interests. Perhaps due to this utilitarian and colonial tenet, our students often focus on studying specific subjects. Henry Cardinal Newman emphasizes "Liberal Education" in his famous prose *The Idea of a University.* The aim of a university is neither to create faithful and dutiful servants nor to produce

high-handed bureaucrats. Education should aim to create better, more perfect, and enlightened human beings. A university student should be informed about their native culture alongside their professional skills.

It is a common phenomenon for students to go abroad for education. After leaving their motherland, they often feel alienated and lose enthusiasm for returning. This happens due to a lack of liberal education. If we examine "Madrasa" education, we see that British rulers heavily patronized it for their own purposes. However, in reality, Madrasa students are deprived of many opportunities. Although the British themselves were familiar with religious conflicts (e.g., the Protestant and Catholic conflict, the Methodist movement, and the Reformation), they represented sub-continental religions and cultures based on their own interests.

It is also presumed that younger generations are subjugated by the colonial legacy of English and consumed by Western culture, causing them to fail to maintain the sanctity of Bangladeshi culture and identity.

However, acknowledging the political, ideological, and hegemonic role of English and globalization, this study argues that portraying English solely as a tool of colonization or neocolonization, or blaming younger generations for "language pollution," understates the complexities of these discourses. Therefore, this chapter distinctly focuses on the role of English as a language of colonization and globalization in the context of Bangladesh.

Cultural Formation

Some of the cultural legacies of the British can still be seen in Bangladesh today. For example, driving on the left side of the road and the predominance of the left lane in the construction of roads and flyovers are practices inherited from the British. Additionally, certain household habits, such as locking doors from behind and rotating water taps from left to right, also originate from British influence.

In the courts of Bangladesh, British influence is evident in the attire of judges, the rules and regulations, and the practices of lawyers and attorneys. Bengal entered the Middle Ages during British rule, and the modern attire worn by Bengalis today—such as shirts, pants, and coats—originated during that period when they began adopting British styles.

Cultural Identity

Bangladesh has a rich and diverse cultural tradition. Her deep-rooted history is reflected in her architecture, literature, dance, drama, music, and painting. Bangladeshi culture has been influenced by three religions—Hinduism, Buddhism, and Islam—in successive order, with Islam having the most widespread and lasting impact. The country's cultural heritage is a harmonious blend of many variations, unique in its diversity.

Bengali culture is often regarded as a manifestation of enlightenment and refined taste in fine arts, humanities, and knowledge. However, in broader terms, it encompasses

a comprehensive pattern of human knowledge, behavior, beliefs, customs, morals, conventions, shared attitudes, social organization, and achievements.

Religious Identity

The British played a significant role in religious changes in the Indian Subcontinent. They eliminated religious orthodoxy through the abolition of *satidah* and the promotion of widow remarriage, among other reforms. However, Hindu-Muslim riots and attacks on minorities have persisted since the creation of India and Pakistan on the basis of religion in 1947. The religious hatred fostered during British rule remains an obstacle to communal harmony in Bangladesh.

Bangladesh is ethnically homogeneous, with Bengalis comprising 98% of the population. It is a Muslim-majority country, with Muslims constituting around 90% of the population, while Hindus and Buddhists represent the most significant minorities. Christians, Sikhs, and atheists make up a very small portion of the population. However, due to immense cultural diversity, multiple dialects, hybridization of social traits and norms, and unique cultural upbringings, Bangladeshis cannot be easily stereotyped, except for the notable fact that they are highly resilient in nature.

People of different religions perform their religious rituals with festivity in Bangladesh. The government has declared national holidays for all significant religious festivals of the four major religions. Eid al-Fitr, Durga Puja, Christmas, and Buddha Purnima are celebrated with enthusiasm across the country, forming an integral part of its cultural heritage. Tribal communities, such as the Chakma, Garo, Khasi, Jaintia, Marma, Santhal, Manipuri, Tripuri, Tanchangya, Mru, Mandi, Kuki, Bawm, Oraon, Khiang, Chak, Dhanuk, Munda, also celebrate their respective festivals.

Apart from these religious and tribal celebrations, there are also several secular festivals. *Pohela Boishakh* is the largest cultural event in Bangladesh. Additionally, the country observes 21 February as *Shaheed Dibas* (Language Martyrs' Day), 26 March as Independence Day, and 16 December as Victory Day.

Intellectual awakening in two parallel religious streams

The Muslim intellectual awakening started earlier than the Hindu awakening and was centered around Delhi. Urdu was the language through which Muslims circulated their ideas of reform. The Hindu awakening, on the other hand, was initiated in Bengal, with their ideas propagated through Bengali. According to Professor Razzaq, the processes of intellectual awakening in India during the 19th century developed in two parallel streams between Hindus and Muslims. When English was introduced in India to facilitate the creation of a class of intermediaries, it was the Hindus who first took advantage of this education. English education provided a small class of Hindus not only with employment opportunities but also with access to the latest English ideas. However, the substance of this education did not help establish an organic relationship between this class and the vast masses, leaving them exotic in the midst of their surroundings.

The promoters of English education, particularly the missionaries, had thought that the language would facilitate conversion to Christianity. However, English education seemed to produce only a reformed Hinduism. Exposure to English thought and society did not lead the English-educated class to secular ideas; instead, it sparked soul-searching around religious issues. Even debates on social issues such as widow remarriage were linked to religious debates. The English-educated became interested in reforming Hinduism and later moved on to Hindu revivalism.

Professor Razzaq argues that, throughout the 19th century, the intellectual developments of Indians evolved in a sectional way along religious divides. Hindu reform or revivalism and Muslim reform or revivalism ran on parallel courses "without getting onto each other's track." He notes that the writings of each stream of thought were not necessarily antagonistic to the other religious community but demonstrated complete indifference: "their most remarkable feature is the complete absence of curiosity about a considerable number of fellow human beings living in the same country."

This exclusive and compartmentalized thinking meant that even creative writings by members of one religious community did not resonate with the other. Professor Razzaq cites *Anandamath* by Bengali author Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyay and *Musaddas* by Urdu poet Altaf Hussain Hali as prime examples of two great literary works of the 19th century that appealed exclusively to one religious community. *Anandamath's* use of Hindu religious symbols inspired only Hindus, while *Musaddas's* theme of the ebb and flow of Islam had no relevance to non-Muslims.

Political organizations along religious and cultural divide

According to Professor Razzaq, the intellectual divide between the two religious communities facilitated the development of communal politics. The introduction of different constitutional provisions by the colonial rulers did not help the improvement of secular and Democratic party politics. Professor Razzaq examines the impact of various constitutional acts. The power and representation of the legislative council were progressively expanded to incorporate initially nominated and later elected Indian members. He argues that the powerless and unrepresentative council could not foster the development of parliamentary political parties in India (*Political Parties in India*, Ch. 8, p.177).

The British rulers and their policy

Taking advantage of the collapse of the Mughal empire and the rise of a number of warring principalities contending for authority across eighteenth-century India, the British had subjugated a vast land through the power of their artillery and the cynicism of their amorality. They displaced Nawabs and Maharajas for a price, emptied their treasuries as it pleased them, took over their states through various methods (including, from the 1840s, the cynical 'doctrine of lapse' whenever a ruler died without an heir), and stripped farmers of their ownership of the lands they had tilled for generations. With

the absorption of each native state, the Company official John Sullivan (better known as the founder of the 'hill-station' of Ootacamund, or 'Ooty', today known more correctly as Udhagamandalam) observed in the 1840s: 'The little court disappears—trade languishes—the capital decays—the people are impoverished—the Englishman flourishes, and acts like a sponge, drawing up riches from the banks of the Ganges, and squeezing them down upon the banks of the Thames.'

At the beginning of the eighteenth century, as the British economic historian Angus Maddison has demonstrated, India's share of the world economy was 23 percent, as large as all of Europe put together. By the time the British departed India, it had dropped to just over 3 percent. The reason was simple: India was governed for the benefit of Britain. Britain's rise for 200 years was financed by its depredations in India. It all began with the East India Company, incorporated by royal charter from her Majesty Queen Elizabeth I in 1600 to trade in silk and spices, and other profitable Indian commodities.

The Hindu-Muslim Divide

The most important of the identity differences was the religious gap between Hindus and Muslims. Religion became a useful means of divide and rule. The American scholar of religion Peter Gottschalk documents that the Hindu–Muslim divide was defined, highlighted and fomented by the British as a deliberate strategy. Three arguments, as Romila Thapar, an Indian historian, has explained, were foundational to the colonial interpretation of Indian history. The first was the British division of Indian history into 'periods' labelled in accordance with the religion of the rulers: thus the 'Hindu', 'Muslim' and 'British' periods formulated by James Mill in *The History of British India* (published between 1817 and 1826). Implicit in such periodization was the assumption that India was always composed of monolithic and mutually hostile religious communities, primarily Hindu and Muslim. Another foundational argument was that India's precolonial political economy was a form of 'Oriental Despotism,' which essentially held that Indian society was a static society ruled by 'despotic and oppressive rulers' who impoverished the people. The third foundational argument was that Hindu society had always been divided into four main castes. By the mid-nineteenth century, the trio of Mill, Macaulay and [Friedrich Max] Müeller, the German Indologists working in Britain, had effectively established a colonial construction of the Indian past. In their reading, Indian civilization was seen as essentially Hindu, as defined by the upper castes, displaced and merged with indigenous populations, evolved a settled agricultural civilization, spoke Sanskrit and composed the Vedas. The Muslims came as the first wave of invaders and conquerors, in turn supplanted by the British. Indian nationalists, Hindu and Muslim revivalists, and even cosmopolitan movements rooted in ancient Indian spiritualism like the Theosophical Society, whose cofounder, Colonel H. S. Olcott, became a major propagator of the 'Aryan origins' theory in the nineteenth century. Olcott was the first to argue that the Aryans were indigenous to India and took civilization from India to the West. By excluding Muslims from the essential national narrative, the nineteenth-century colonial interpretation of Indian history helped give

birth in the twentieth to the two-nation theory that eventually divided the country. It also legitimized, with a veneer of scholarship, the British strategic policy of 'divide and rule' in which every effort was made by the imperialists to highlight differences between Hindus and Muslims to persuade the latter that their interests were incompatible with the advancement of the former. Once again, as with caste and linguistic differences, this had no basis in precolonial history. The scholar Gyanendra Pandey suggests religious communalism was largely a colonial construction.

Findings

The findings reveal that post-colonialism emerged as a critical response to colonial rule in regions like Africa, Asia, and Latin America, where colonial domination persisted for centuries. This movement originated from resistance efforts during colonization, aiming to revive, reshape, and reclaim the identity of colonized people. Post-colonialism compels intellectuals from formerly colonized societies to redefine their language, culture, traditions, and religious identities, challenging the colonial narrative that depicted natives as uncultured, inhuman, and illiterate. The imposition of British education systems dismantled local traditions, further impoverishing rural Hindu and Muslim communities. Over two centuries of colonial rule significantly deformed the lifestyle, culture, and education of the colonized, leaving a lasting influence even after the departure of colonial powers. Bangladesh, as a former part of British India, continues to carry these colonial impacts but lags in adopting post-colonial studies. Today, post-colonialism offers a vital theoretical framework for rediscovering authentic cultural, historical, and philosophical roots, leading to ultimate decolonization. However, remnants of colonial hegemony persist in societal norms, such as the preference for fair skin, reflecting the deep-rooted colonial mindset. To break free from these invisible chains, there is an urgent need to critically address and overcome the enduring colonial legacy.

Conclusion

This paper has attempted to show how colonizers influenced the Bengali people to form language, culture and religious identity with the impact of British rules. There are several English words which were included in Bengali Language. Not only this, but society also admires the fluent English speakers and they are considered as an elite class in Bangladesh. There is an impact of colonial legacy in the culture of Bangladesh too. Food habits, clothing, Literature, Music, Art, Drama and behavioral changes occurred gradually with the influencing approaches of the British rulers. Admiration for white skin tone and making it a standard of beauty is another example of cultural identity formation with the impact of colonial legacy in Bangladesh. The British have played a significant role in religious changes in the Indian Subcontinent. They eliminated religious orthodoxy by abolition of Satidah, widow marriage etc. Besides, Hindu-Muslim riots and religious hatred created by the British is still an obstacle to communal harmony in Bangladesh. The British rulers regularly propagated that the natives were

uncultured, inhuman and illiterate. Such propagations created an inferiority complex in the native thoughts and they were bound to take education under the British system. As a result, local traditions of education collapsed and the people of peasant society of both Hindu and Muslim became poorer, from the poor and when the British rulers started prioritizing people on the basis of religion the religious conflicts started to occur. So, the colonizers have an impact on the Language, Culture, and Religious identity formation in Bangladesh.

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