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Postcolonial Directions in Education

Focus and Scope

Postcolonial Directions in Education is a peer reviewed open access journal produced twice a year. It is a scholarly journal intended to foster further understanding, advancement and reshaping of the field of postcolonial education. We welcome articles that contribute to advancing the field. As indicated in the Editorial for the inaugural issue, the purview of this journal is broad enough to encompass a variety of disciplinary approaches, including but not confined to the following: sociological, anthropological, historical and social psychological approaches. The areas embraced include anti-racist education, decolonizing education, critical multiculturalism, critical racism theory, direct colonial experiences in education and their legacies for present day educational structures and practice, educational experiences reflecting the culture and 'imagination' of empire, the impact of neoliberalism/globalisation/structural adjustment programmes on education, colonial curricula and subaltern alternatives, education and liberation movements, challenging hegemonic languages, the promotion of local literacies and linguistic diversity, neo-colonial education and identity construction, colonialism and the construction of patriarchy, canon and canonicity, Indigenous knowledges, supranational bodies and their educational frameworks, north-south and east-west relations in education, the politics of representation, unlearning colonial stereotypes, internal colonialism and education, cultural hybridity and learning in postcolonial contexts, education and the politics of dislocation, biographies / autobiographies reflecting the above themes, deconstruction of colonial narratives of civilization within educational contexts. Once again, the field cannot be exhausted.

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Papers submitted to *Postcolonial Directions in Education* are examined by at least two reviewers for originality and timeliness in the context of related research. Reviews generally are completed in 30-60 days, with publication in the next available issue.

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Ronald G. Sultana (1958- 2023): An Appreciation

Peter Mayo

Like most people in my country and many beyond, especially in the education research and sociology fields, I was shocked by Ronald G. Sultana's sudden demise at 65. I am still reeling from the phone call I received on the morning of Friday 24th November, from a mutual friend and once collaborator of Ronald's, informing me of his death.

Finding it hard to pull myself together, I begin to feel that Ronald's passing is about to represent a watershed in my relationship with social research in Malta. There is (a) when there was Ronald and (b) post-Ronald if my hourglass allows me more time to experience this fully.

I write this as I am travelling on academic work to a place, I recall Ronald telling me about, that captivated him on one of his journeys, probably from New Zealand, when he was a Commonwealth Scholar there studying Sociology of Education at PhD level, supervised by the renowned Peter D. K. Ramsay, at Waikato University. I too was studying Sociology of Education as a Commonwealth Scholar though at the University of Alberta, Edmonton, Canada, and at Master's level. On both returning to our homeland, we would meet for the first time in a kick off meeting for that year's Sociology of Education programme, as we

were both recently employed by the University of Malta Council, he on a full time basis and I, part time.

We had actually first met at a five day course in thinking, delivered by the late Edward De Bono in 1983, though Ronald never had any recollection of meeting me then. We however hit it off when lecturing at the University of Malta. We seemed to have been cut from the same sociological and political cloth. Left wing politics ran through our veins. We spoke the same language, with he being more ethnographically inclined and I more social theory driven.

We enthused about an excellent group of students we were honoured to teach, from which emerged mainstays in the local social activist, education, literary and eventually academic scenes. Ronald's superb pedagogical approach has often been highlighted. He attributes part of its origins to his being formed as an educator within the Society of Christian Doctrine. He had a healthy respect for the Society's founder, Dun Gorg Preca, a source of inspiration which persisted in Ronald's later more secular years. Wary of the danger of lapsing into hagiography, he would position Preca's pedagogical approach and politics of language against the knowledge struggles of the time, well in anticipation of Vatican II. Of course, Preca was presented as a 'person to think with', his approach juxtaposed against those of Paulo Freire and later Lorenzo Milani, with the necessary provisos in place. The piece he wrote on Preca and the Politics of knowledge, for a book I edited and which I encouraged him to

submit beforehand to the International Journal of Lifelong Education, reveals the tensions between religious class politics and constituted ecclesiastical authority.

By then Ronald had been publishing pieces on transition education and various aspects of the Sociology of Education in middle range and top tier journals, notably, in the latter case, the British Journal of Sociology of Education (BJSE). This became, in my eyes, the leading publication outlet for academic pieces in our specific areas of specialisation: ' get into it and you've arrived', or so I thought. Of course, Ronald made important inroads into Education, Guidance Counselling (his earlier postgraduate specialisation at University of Reading) and Work education and eventually Comparative Education. He combined all these by producing books, initially starting with Mireva and then PEG, before eventually moving into international book outlets, including Routledge before running his own series for Brill which had taken over Sense. Significant was his single authored study on vocational education in Malta (based on what he termed his Trade School Project), launched towards the end of 1992 which was the subject of a very favourable review Symposium in the BJSE. There is also his volume on Education in the Arab World, co-edited with his Palestinian, Canada-based friend, Andre' Elias Mazawi, and his pioneering work of co-editing (with Godfrey Baldacchino) arguably the first full scale volume on Sociology in Malta heralded as a ' big book', because of 'its admirable comprehensiveness', by Anthony Giddens in his Preface. He also published numerous short monographic studies for different

institutions such as UNICEF which enabled him to carry out research in many Arab countries, including Palestine. In addition, he launched a unique journal, the Mediterranean Journal of Educational Studies, which ran into several volumes before morphing into a book series. All this was at the heart of the work of the EURO-Mediterranean Center for Educational Research (EMCER). The main course offered by the Centre was the MA in EURO-Mediterranean Comparative Education Research in which top scholars from Malta and abroad, a whole galaxy of acclaimed international scholars, taught and supervised theses. Some of the Master's and PhD students from the Centre developed into accomplished researchers in their own right and became established faculty at our Alma Mater.

And yet for all his academic and late 80s and 90s engagement as a public intellectual, also being at the heart of a school reform project (the Tomorrow's Schools document), while serving as Faculty of Education Dean during a biannual period in the 90s, when the Faculty was given top priority by the government of the time, he jealously guarded his family time. He regulated his time well.

We, of course, had our differences and fallouts. This was to be expected as we had contrasting personalities. It did not, however, take long for our friendship to be back on track.

He was, in many respects, a quite remarkable man. I was privileged to get to know him within certain carefully delineated

boundaries. He was generous with me, as with many others, though he did not suffer fools gladly. He was certainly most generous in his citations of close Maltese colleagues, something which cannot be said of everyone in a small state like ours.

I shall miss him. I shall never forget his mantra: we are midgets standing on the shoulders of giants.

My sincere condolences to and solidarity with his spouse Rosaline and his two sons and their young families. May he rest in peace.

Peter Mayo,
Professor and UNESCO Chair at University of Malta.

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PATHWAY TO ENLIGHTENMENT: A DIMECHIAN ANALYSIS OF POSTCOLONIAL EUROCENTRIC BIAS IN MALTESE ACADEMIA

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Abstract

This article explores the existence of a postcolonial Eurocentric bias in Maltese academia and its broader implications for Maltese society. Obtaining a doctoral degree is traditionally considered to be an important rite of passage into the world of academia, rendering the choices early career academics make about *where* they pursue their studies particularly insightful. Three strands of quantitative analysis were carried out to investigate a foreign-local dynamic in the choice of awarding institutions among early-career Maltese academics. A sample of 370 publicly accessible online profiles of full-time academics at Malta's two largest higher education institutions, as well as an additional 87 profiles from two Cypriot institutions added as controls, provided compelling data to test the hypothesis that Maltese academics demonstrate an aversion to obtaining a doctoral degree at home. The findings confirmed a clear bias in favour of foreign institutions located exclusively in the United Kingdom and other Western countries. An in-depth discussion follows as to why this is so, adopting mainly a postcolonial perspective and an alternative *Dimechian* theoretical framework. The argument is developed that a postcolonial Eurocentric bias in academia ultimately reinforces persistent collective colonial inferiority and dependency complexes, silences potentially useful locally-contextualised knowledge, and sabotages the long-term educational, social,

economic, and political development of Maltese society in a contemporary neo-colonial global setting. The article mainly aims to encourage more meaningful and critical debate about the genuine decolonisation of Maltese academia, the development of a more authentic Maltese academic tradition, as well as the broader implications of continuing deference to Western academic monoculture.

Keywords: Malta, Maltese, postcolonialism, neo-colonialism, decolonisation of higher education, Eurocentrism, Western epistemology, inferiority and dependency complex, academic monoculture, Manwel Dimech, Dimechianism

Introduction

Over and above the primary responsibilities of senior academics to teach and conduct research, a so-called "third mission" (Predazzi, 2012; Compagnucci & Spigarelli, 2020) seeks to define the precise form their broader contributions to society should take, particularly where public funds are involved. This article departs from the central assumption that local academics indeed have an important social responsibility, but such a responsibility is to the majority of Maltese society and not to a select few in possession of sufficient wealth and power to direct policy and dictate prevailing narratives. More specifically, their responsibility should serve, through the creation and dissemination of knowledge, the main goal of *enlightenment*. The term enlightenment is used in the context of an alternative theoretical framework based on the pragmatic philosophy of 19th/20th century Maltese critical educationist and anti-colonial activist Manwel Dimech (1860-1921). Postcolonial Eurocentrism is taken, in this sense, as a

potentially ruinous impediment to the capacity of academics to make any genuine contribution to the welfare and long-term educational, social, economic, and political development of Maltese society.

Doctoral capital and the associated choices Maltese academics make about where to pursue their doctoral studies are employed to investigate postcolonial Eurocentrism within Maltese academia, first, on the basis of a hypothetical foreign-local divide in choice of awarding institutions, second, as an odds ratio taking Cyprus as a comparable control country, and third, using a basic statistical modelling approach incorporating various additional factors influencing the foreign-local choice distribution. Finally, in light of the evidence presented for a postcolonial Eurocentric bias in Maltese academia, some broader implications are finally discussed in the context of Malta's place in a neo-colonial global setting.

The term "Eurocentrism" is used throughout the text in reference to any worldview that centres Europe, and the West more broadly, at the global core, as the undisputed world-leading purveyor of universal values, rationality, and logic. The terms "West" and "Western" are intended to generally reference the countries of the modern European Union (EU), most of North America, and Oceania. The manner in which both terms are used, is intended to imply that *Eurocentrism* is endemic in, and indeed a key defining characteristic of, *Western* societies. "Academia" refers to the community of specialists directly engaged in knowledge creation and dissemination through research, scholarship, and other

contributions to education and the public intellectual development of society. Higher education institutions are frequently mentioned and taken as an important component within the broader totality of academia.

As a further disambiguation of terms, “colonialism” and “neo-colonialism” are used in a distinctly Maltese context. In other words, *colonialism* refers to the type exercised specifically by the British (and experienced by the Maltese), from 1800 to the years between 1964 and 1979, and *neo-colonialism* refers more specifically to the Western-dominated economic system to which a sovereign Malta has been exposed ever since gaining responsibility for its own foreign policy. It is important to note that neo-colonialism does not just refer to exploitative economic relations *between* countries, but also to the exploitative relations that must exist *within* each country to sustain the broader power structures in which global wealth is redistributed from the poor to the wealthy. “Postcolonial Eurocentrism” as a combined term is intended to specifically imply a form of Eurocentrism reinforced and exacerbated by the effects of prolonged exposure to colonial subjugation.

Finally, the term “Dimechianism” (or “Dimechian”) has been used by local scholars to describe a specific strand of anti-colonialism, anti-clericalism, and socialism in the context of early- to mid-twentieth century Maltese politics (Chircop, 1991; Callus, 2013; Zammit Marmarà, 2013), following Dimech’s own deportation by the British and later demise in exile. In this article, however, the

term is used more broadly to capture the elements of Dimech's general philosophy espoused through his writings and their subsequent interpretations that foreground education as an emancipatory form of social and political activism. This position is discussed in more detail throughout the text.

Colonialism, higher education, and academia

Postcolonial education theorists argue that Western-style universities were set up around the world in part to groom indigenous elites to help spread the values, ways of life, and general cultural norms of European colonisers (Tarc, 2009; Tikly, 2009; Andreotti, 2011; Peters, 2017). This idea is quite problematic in light of the assertion that 19th and 20th-century European colonialism, contrary to popular belief, has not ceased to exist. Colonialism can be thought of as a manifestation of a much deeper and more enduring fundamental driving force, that of *ideological imperialism*. According to Tuhiwai-Smith (2021), ideological imperialism manifests through history in new and evolving forms of global exploitation, with its current iteration commonly referred to as *neo-colonialism*. Critical scholars have argued that, on balance, capital flows from countries of the Global South to countries of the Global North through an intricate system of neo-colonial economic exploitation rooted in the global power structures established during the modern to late-modern colonial era, coinciding with the early spread of global capitalism. Furthermore, neo-colonialism ensures that global wealth inequality is reinforced through policies of international financial

institutions, which disproportionately represent the interests of the wealthiest (formerly colonising) countries (Harche, 1980; Nandy, 2005; Tikly, 2009; Obamba, 2013; Bah, 2016; Shahjahan, 2016; Smith, 2016; Zucman, 2019).

So if colonialism still exists (albeit in a revised form), a question of grave concern naturally arises; where do the Western-styled colonial universities fit in? More specifically, what role do Western and Westernised higher education institutions play today in grooming classes of elites to help spread the values, ways of life, and general cultural norms serving to sustain and reproduce contemporary forms of neo-colonial global, and associated domestic, exploitation?

Collective inferiority and deference to the West

In colonising not just territory but also hearts and minds, a sense of inferiority was reinforced in colonised peoples, with the ultimate effects of normalising oppressive colonial exploitation and promoting unquestioning acceptance of unjust power hierarchies as a central and entirely natural feature of human relations (Tarc, 2009; Tuhiwai-Smith, 2021). Traditional colonial universities subtly and effectively reinforced European and Western hegemony by galvanising a Eurocentric Western epistemology as the central, universal, objective, and value-free source of all great knowledge (Goonatilake, 2005; Andreotti, 2011; Tuhiwai-Smith, 2021). Heleta (2016) and Cupples (2019) maintain that Western-style universities continue to serve as sites for the reproduction of

Eurocentrism and Western superiority well into the 21st century. In the context of post-apartheid South Africa, Heleta (2016) argued that Western worldviews have remained entrenched in higher education at the expense of more inclusive global perspectives, experiences, and epistemologies, ultimately serving to universalise the West and provincialise the rest.

It can be claimed with little controversy today that many Maltese people openly identify as Europeans, or as Westerners. It is interesting to note, in this sense, unapologetic attempts by some Maltese historians and scholars to reproduce metropolitan renditions of Maltese history, accentuating Maltese European-ness while actively whitewashing, for instance, significant Arab influences on Maltese genealogy, culture, and language (Goodwin, 2015). Historically, Montebello (2009) traces Maltese Eurocentrism at least as far back as the 16th century, when the islands were in the possession of the Knights of St John and fashioned as a last line of defence against the Ottoman threat, or a Southernmost bastion of Christian Europe. Indeed, it can be argued that Malta continues to this day to identify in the face of the irregular migration "threat" as a Southern "edge" of the European continent (Baldacchino, 2016). Fulfilling the role of intermediary between the more "developed" European mainland and "developmentally arrested" worlds to the South and East (Grima, 2016), Malta's self-identity seemingly remains pre-determined by its position in a colonial-racist hierarchy. Initiatives aimed at progress are thereby reduced to little more than vain attempts to become *more* European, *more* Westernised. But like the burdened mythical

Sisyphus repeatedly pushing a large boulder up to the top of a hill only for it to roll back down again, acting out Eurocentric biases is, by definition, an exercise in futility. To accept natural inherent European superiority is to also accept the colonial hierarchy itself, along with its immutability and mutually constitutive superior *and inferior* categories.

Dimechianism for a postcolonial Malta

Well over a century ago in British colonial Malta, Manwel Dimech recognised that the Maltese were suffering from an inferiority complex (Callus, 2013), or a "mental block", keeping them restrained in a child-like state of dependency (Montebello, 2009), hopelessly and chronically unable to improve their lot. He resented, for instance, Maltese kowtowing to the British and showed particular concern about Maltese cheerleading for British military-colonial conquests in South Africa. Considering the support shown among various strata of Maltese society for more recent US-led, Western-sanctioned wars in the Near East, North Africa, and elsewhere (as evidenced by typically pro-Western local mainstream media coverage), we can only wonder what Dimech would make of Maltese inferiority and dependency today. According to Vella (1994), in spite of annual celebrations of Maltese freedom taking place since 1979, the economic boundaries surrounding that freedom remained, and arguably still remain, largely unexamined.

McLeod (2010) explained how a native bourgeoisie typically emerges in newly independent nations victimised by modern to late-modern colonialism, to replicate previous colonial patterns of exploitation that, on balance, favour foreigners and local elites more so than the majority of members of its local population, ultimately preserving political and economic dependency on former colonial masters. It is illogical to assume that Malta somehow escaped all possible adverse postcolonial conditions after over a century and a half of direct exposure to British colonialism (as the prevailing narrative often seems to imply). Of course, local elites thriving in post-colonial Malta are unlikely to challenge the very same narratives that help reproduce their own privilege. In a classic case of what Herman and Chomksy (2002) call "manufacturing consent", Malta curiously retains a sense of nostalgia and pride about its "special" ties to Britain and Europe. Maltese apologists for British colonialism maintain that *Malta's* colonial experience was mostly positive, while conveniently ignoring the well-documented contemporaneous atrocities and general brutality exhibited by the British Empire elsewhere (Hanes & Sanello, 2002; Anderson, 2005; Bender, 2016; Tharoor, 2016; Gordon, 2017; Kelly, 2018; Lindqvist, 2018; Tudor, 2019; Docherty, 2021; Dalrymple, 2022; Elkins, 2022; Menger, 2022). Historical revisionism surrounding Britain's dark colonial past eliminates crucial context, and risks blindsiding former colonies like Malta to the predictable cultural and socio-economic aftermath of colonialism, along with continuing injustices under neo-colonialism.

Public sentiments that just so happen to support the interests of elites, and help reproduce the status quo, as Herman and Chomsky (2002) argue, exist not by coincidence but by design. For a population capable of internalising a sense of gratitude to former colonial masters, it is not much of a stretch to fathom similarly gracious acceptance of blatant nepotism and corruption, daylight robbery of public resources, and rapacious, unadulterated neo-liberal capitalist greed as a prerogative among a tiny minority of untouchable economic elites. It was Dimech who unexpectedly presented a credible threat to the prevailing exploitative order in his day. By forcing public emancipatory discourse in late 19th/early 20th century colonial Malta, he promoted the bold claim that the Maltese people were capable of handling their own affairs, respecting themselves and each other and being responsible for their own security and protection (Montebello, 2014). Callus (2013) emphasised that Dimech's legacy is one to be sustained and nourished. It should not be allowed to fall into historical obscurity, but rather, to serve as a catalyst for positive change at any point in history. It is in this same spirit, that academics in the 21st century find themselves well-placed, in light of their responsibility to society, to challenge systemic exploitation, corruption, environmental destruction, and the entrenched, largely unexamined mentalities that enable them.

Dimechianism as a research philosophy

According to Montebello (2009; 2014), while Dimech recognised unjust conditions in society, he was less interested in theorising

about them as he was in acting to change them. Montebello posits that Dimech developed a comparable form of philosophical pragmatism contemporaneously with John Dewey (1859 - 1952). Both were evolving and applying earlier forms of utilitarian British empiricism in their own unique educational and political contexts. In lieu of an original formally consolidated treatise by Dimech, Montebello presents a masterful abridgement of this practical, non-speculative philosophy of action, described by Dimech himself as "ħsieb għall-għemil," or "thought for action". In summary, actions are good when they make a positive practical contribution to emancipation, otherwise, they are bad. Emancipation is intended in a utilitarian sense, in terms of the greatest happiness and contentment for the most individuals in a community. When knowledge, which contains within it a propulsive form of power, leads to emancipation, it is "dawl" (light).

Montebello specifically defines knowledge in Dimechian terms as, "useful information for the personal, social and/or political emancipation of all people." (2009, p 55). Knowledge acting to the contrary is, by extension, "dlam" or darkness. Light, therefore, is not to be understood in the traditional Eurocentric/Copernican sense of Enlightenment as liberation from ignorance through reason but rather as the process of useful knowledge propelling people into *emancipatory* action for the greater good. The propulsive quality of knowledge is a key concept because, for Dimech, knowledge contains intrinsic power, and *access* to it discharges such power towards the attainment of emancipation. The issue of access to knowledge essentially highlights the

important role of education in Dimech's logic, as well as, more broadly, the responsible exchange of ideas and information in society through a free press unencumbered by coercive power (be it corporate or state power). The Dimechian conception of knowledge, and by extension, of knowledge-creation, therefore, has profound implications for contemporary academic researchers in Malta.

Axiologically, a Dimechian framework for researchers presupposes studies with a scope for enlightenment that accrue value in their capacity to precipitate emancipation through knowledge. The present study problematises the presence of a postcolonial Eurocentric bias in Maltese academia by considering it a source of darkness in Dimechian terms. By conceptualising thought teleologically with an emphasis on action (thought for action), as well as differentiating his emancipatory, material form of enlightenment from European-Enlightenment rationalism, Dimech's ideas justify epistemological positions for research based on empiricism and materialism. Quantifiable, publicly accessible data sourced from real-world settings are therefore weighed as evidence in the broader discussion on the role of local academics in this work. Finally, Dimech's own historical struggles permit various theoretical perspectives for interpreting the material effects of, among others, imperialism, religious conservatism/post-secularism, and class conflict, underpinning, for instance, what Camilleri (2018) calls the three traditional "pillars" of material exploitation in Malta, namely, the British colonial government, Catholic Church, and privileged local elites. Within a Dimechian

framework, therefore, the question can be posed; is Maltese academia complicit in the enculturation of a class of elites whose thoughts and actions, even if inadvertently so, contribute to the perpetuation of unjust neo-colonial patterns of exploitation in Malta? More specifically, *is* there a postcolonial Eurocentric bias at play in Maltese academia, and if so, is it fundamentally innocuous or insidious?

Doctoral capital in Maltese academia and the foreign-local dynamic

The choices early career academics make can reveal much about the prevailing cultures, attitudes, and beliefs within the academic communities they aspire to join. Walker and Yoon (2016) specifically discuss the notion of “doctoral capital” as a significant factor influencing the development and enculturation of academics. Obtaining a doctoral degree, or more commonly, a Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) degree, is widely considered a “rite of passage” into the world of academia (Amran & Ibrahim, 2012). In practical terms, PhD programmes often share universal features that transcend individual institutions, faculties, and disciplines, varying not so much according to their structure (Leshem, 2020) but more so according to perceptions of prestige surrounding their different awarding institutions. Bedeian et al (2010) showed that PhD graduates from more prestigious institutions enjoyed better career success and more recognition for the same work than those who studied at less prestigious institutions. Early career academics must therefore make important decisions about where they intend to pursue doctoral study and in the process, likely

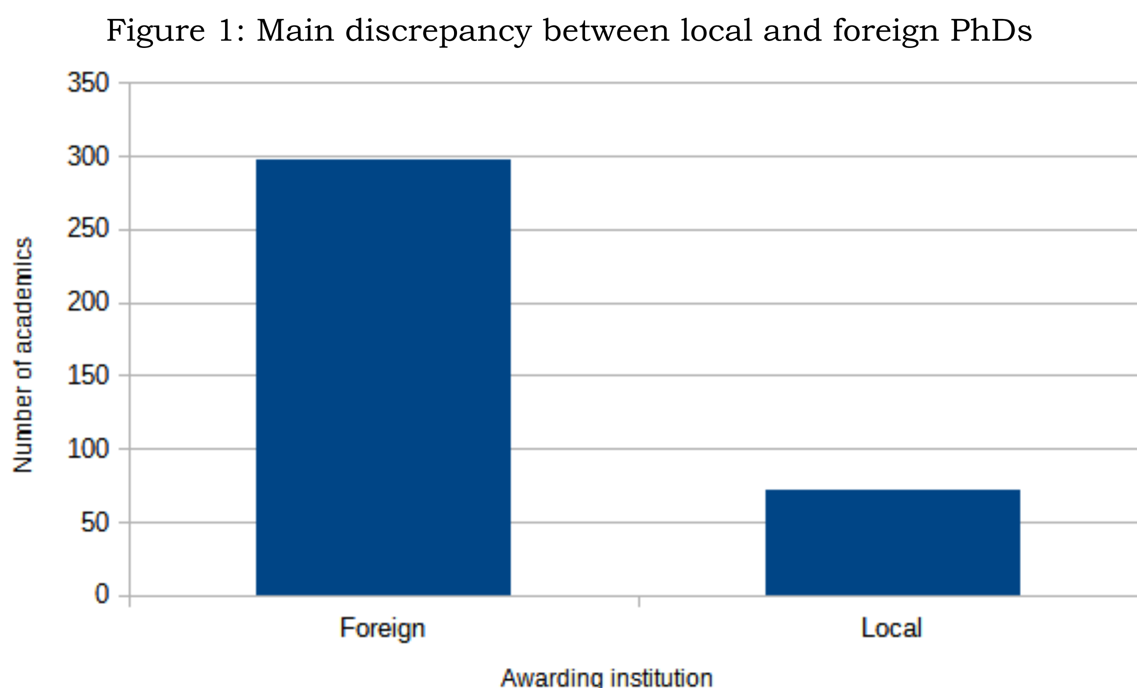
entertain extant assumptions and perceptions, as well as recommendations from already-established academics, similarly reflective of their respective academic cultures.

In South Korea, where a local doctoral degree programme has existed since the 1980s, Jung (2018) showed that a foreign-local dynamic emerged with regard to the choice of awarding institution, as evidenced by a persistent dependency on foreign PhDs (mostly from the US), particularly in elite institutions. Jung attributed this dependency, at least in part, to pressure on academics to write and publish in English (and in Western journals). In Malta, however, where a local PhD programme has existed since 1974 (Leshem, 2020), English-medium instruction is prevalent (Sciriha, 2001), so the pressure to write and publish in English would not necessarily discourage local Doctoral study as it has in Korea. Considering also the logistical, practical, and financial advantages of pursuing a PhD locally as opposed to abroad, one would expect, all things being equal, local doctoral study to be a relatively popular choice among early career Maltese academics. An analysis of 370 publicly available full-time academic staff at the two largest further and higher education institutions on the islands (the University of Malta [UM] and Malta College of Arts, Science & Technology [MCAST]), however, suggests otherwise. The foreign-local dynamic in the context of doctoral qualification selection represents an understudied phenomenon in the Maltese academic literature, so three strands of analysis were carried out for a more in-depth examination of the choice distribution.

First strand of analysis – Simple ratio

Noting the postnominals reported by full-time academics at UM (n = 350) and MCAST (n = 20) on their public online profiles (UM, 2022; MCAST, 2022), a foreign-local choice distribution emerges as shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1: Main discrepancy between local and foreign PhDs



Of the Maltese academics sampled, 298 (81%) had a foreign PhD, as opposed to just 72 (19%) with a local PhD. At a ratio of 4.14, we can say that Maltese academics working in local higher education were just over four times as likely to have a foreign as opposed to a local PhD. Based on the standard error formula from Bland and Altman (2000), a 95% confidence interval was constructed around the ratio (*95% CI* = 3.20, 5.36) to infer statistical significance. Given the prior assumption of an expected equal foreign-local split (H_0 = *Ratio* = 1), a clear trend emerges in favour of studying abroad. The

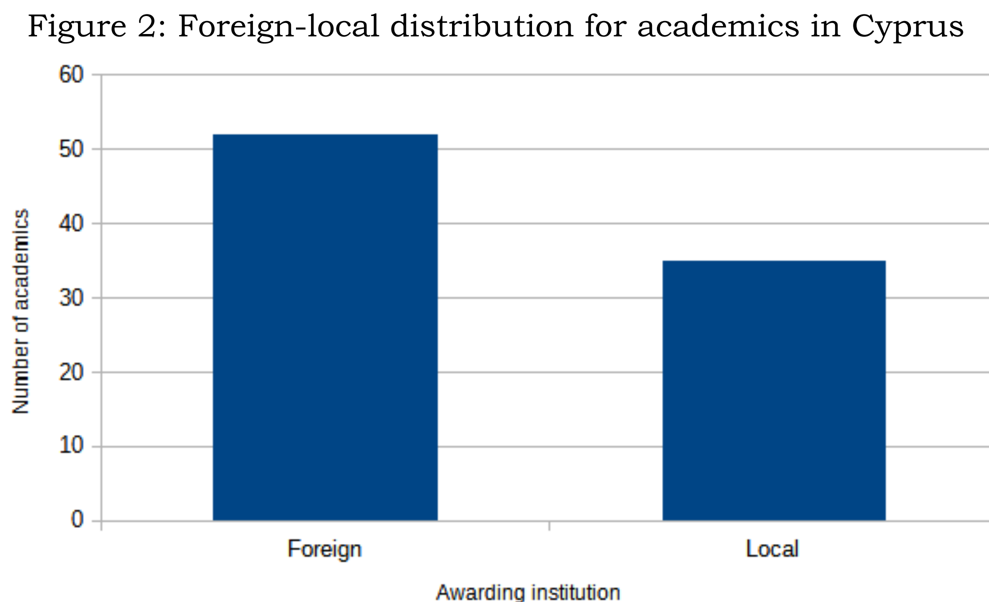
prior assumption of an even split, however, is arguably somewhat arbitrary. In other words, is it reasonable to begin from the assumption that Maltese academics *should* be equally likely to pursue doctoral study either locally or abroad?

Second strand of analysis – Odds ratio; Fellow small state as a control

An element of control was therefore added to the analysis. Starting instead from the assumption that foreign-local discrepancies should be roughly equal across two comparable countries and taking Cyprus as that comparable country, 87 additional publicly accessible academic profiles from the official websites of the University of Cyprus (n = 71), and the University of Nicosia (n = 16), were included in the dataset to generate an odds ratio. Malta and Cyprus (excluding the Northern part of the island designated *the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus*) are by no means "identical twins", but the two microstates do share some striking similarities (Pace, 2020). They are the only two islands in the Mediterranean, following long histories of imperialist domination, to become independent states. Both were ruled by Romans and Arabs, as well as Knights (although Cyprus was a possession of the Templar as opposed to Hospitaller Knights). Like Malta, Cyprus was also exposed to the British colonial mission. Albeit over a shorter period, British colonialism left far more enduring scars on Cyprus, however. Both countries later assumed policies of non-alignment during the height of the Cold War (Cyprus doing so with arguably greater dedication), and both experienced stints of Euroscepticism in the 1990s (Ozmatyatli & Ozkul, 2013; Ioannides, 2014; Pace,

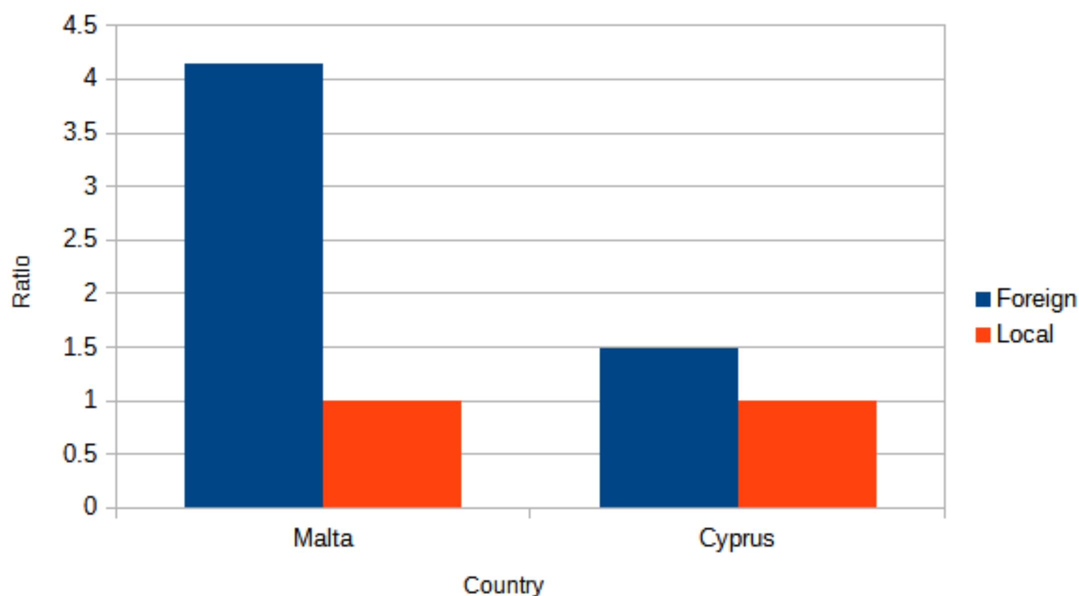
2020). Ultimately, however, both countries have been part of the EU since 2004, having been prior members of the Bologna Process, rendering the Cypriot comparison as a second strand of analysis, more compelling than a mere hypothetical equal foreign-local split. The Cypriot data yielded the distribution shown in Figure 2 (University of Cyprus, 2022; University of Nicosia, 2022).

Figure 2: Foreign-local distribution for academics in Cyprus



According to the data, foreign (*n* = 52) outnumbered local (*n* = 35) PhDs among Cypriot academics, at a (non-significant) ratio of 1.49 (*95% CI* = 0.97, 2.28). Taking into account the odds ratio between foreign and local PhDs in Malta as opposed to Cyprus (*OR* = 2.79, *CI* = 1.69, 4.59), early career academics in Malta were almost three times as likely to favour doing a foreign PhD than their Cypriot counterparts. In other words, we can confidently make the claim that Maltese academics were significantly more likely than Cypriot academics (nearly three times as much), to choose doctoral study abroad rather than at home. Figure 3 shows a direct visual comparison between the two ratios.

Figure 3: Difference in foreign-local ratios in Malta and Cyprus



Tables 1 and 2 show a more detailed breakdown of the most popular countries for doctoral study (attended by at least two local academics), in both Malta and Cyprus.

Table 1: Breakdown of origin of foreign PhDs in Malta including locations within the UK

Country of institution	***N***
UK	237
(England)	(214)
(Scotland)	(17)
(Wales)	(4)
(Northern Ireland)	(2)
Italy	14
United States	8
Ireland	7
Germany	5
France	4
Canada	3
UAE	3
Portugal	2

Table 2: Breakdown of origin of foreign PhDs in Cyprus including locations within the UK

Country of institution	***N***
UK	22
(England)	(21)
(Scotland)	(1)
United States	13
Greece	5
Austria	2
France	2
Canada	2
Crete	2

Both Maltese and Cypriot academics appeared to favour studying either in the UK or US first and foremost, followed by their closest EU neighbour/s (Italy and Greece respectively), *before* considering their own respective local option/s. Foreign countries in both cases were exclusively comprised of "Western" (or "Westernised") countries. The Malta-Cyprus comparison is worthy of more study in its own right, but for the purpose of this discussion, Cyprus was considered simply as a control, or a means of further contextualising and grounding the Maltese data.

Third strand of analysis – Statistically modelling the foreign-local dynamic

Table 3 shows further analysis of the additional factors contained in the data extracted from the Maltese profiles. These included resident institutions (UM or MCAST), academic fields of study (social sciences [humanities, public health, education, economics, business], or "hard" sciences [earth and physical sciences,

medicine, ICT, engineering]), assumed gender, and location of Master's degree (if reported). The counts, odds ratios, and weighted odds ratios for all variables were included in this part of the analysis to understand their combined influence. The weighted odds ratios were derived using the Cochran-Mantel-Haenszel equations (Cochran, 1954; Mantel and Haenszel, 1959), and generally approximate the exponentiated coefficients in a logistic regression model, with all explanatory variables included (without interaction terms).

All effects on PhD location

		PhD awarding institution				
		Foreign	Local	Totals	OR	WOR
Institution	MCAST	18	2	20		
	UM	280	70	350	2.25 (.51, 9.93)	2.25 (.92, 5.54)
Field	Social	175	40	215		
	Hard	123	32	155	1.14 (.68, 1.91)	1.08 (.79, 1.47)
Gender	Male	202	46	248		
	Female	96	26	122	.84 (.49, 1.44)	.83 (.60, 1.14)
Master's	Foreign	128	19	147		
	Local	87	38	125	2.49 (1.59, 5.44) *	2.93 (2.04, 4.22) *

Table 2: Counts, totals, odds ratios, and weighted odds ratios complete with 95% confidence intervals
* Denotes statistical significance at the 95% confidence level

From a modelling perspective, with the foreign-local divide taken as the endogenous variable, and the above four factors as exogenous, only one had a statistically significant effect (while controlling for all others in the model), according to the confidence intervals of the weighted odds ratios. Reporting having done a

foreign Master's degree, had a significant effect on choosing a foreign or local PhD. In other words, holding resident institution, field of study, and gender constant, academics were nearly three times (*OR* = 2.93, *95% CI* = 2.04, 4.22) more likely to do a foreign PhD, if they reported already having done a foreign Master's degree. If there exists any such continuity in the overall postgraduate pathway, then it becomes all the more important to understand why Maltese academics are more likely to initiate this pathway abroad in the first place, specifically inside institutions in mostly British or other Westernised countries. The model also indicates, given the non-significance of the remaining three factors, that the bias is ubiquitous in local academia. In other words, women and men, academics employed at UM and MCAST, as well as researchers in the social as opposed to hard sciences, are all equally as likely to study abroad in Western countries as opposed to locally.

Discussion – An innocuous or insidious trend?

Before a deeper, more critical analysis of the findings can be undertaken, initial reactions to a prospective postcolonial Eurocentric bias in doctoral institution selection, are worthy of examination. More specifically, a proper critique is in order, of the apathetic position that the foreign-local discrepancy can be explained in simple and purely innocuous terms, and is the result of a perfectly reasonable, rational, and indeed *only possible*, reaction to the practical and inescapable realities of contemporary life. Maltese academics might overwhelmingly overlook the option

of studying at home due to major structural or administrative problems in the provision of local PhDs. Such an explanation, however, necessitates, in turn having to identify what factors could have possibly allowed the systems surrounding local PhD provision to fall into such an obviously dire state of neglect. Perhaps it is more realistic that local institutions simply suffer from a lack of important material resources or facilities. But if this was the case, given the higher costs traditionally associated with research in the hard sciences, we would expect to see a higher proportion of foreign PhDs in this category, but according to the third strand of analysis, we do not.

Further to Jung's (2018) focus on the prestige of awarding institutions, it can be argued that many foreign institutions available for doctoral study are ranked higher on international university league tables than local alternatives, presenting another possible explanation for the bias. However, the legitimacy of such league tables is questionable, given their obvious bias towards the standards and values of Western institutions (Hamm, 2005). This reasoning would consequently engender a further analysis of precisely why local academics embrace such rankings so uncritically. The fact that Maltese academics would be so swayed by appearances of apparent prestige in Westernised institutions furthermore betrays the false colonial logic of submission to natural, inherent, and unquestionable Western superiority (and inferiority). Also, the data show that having a local or a foreign PhD does not vary significantly across the two largest higher education institutions on the islands, rendering the prestige aspect (in terms

of eventual appointment in elite institutions) of doctoral capital as argued by Bedeian et al (2010) and Jung (2018), inconsequential in the context of Malta's smallness.

Perhaps early career academics are overwhelmingly targeting specific universities abroad because particular experts in their chosen fields just happen to be affiliated with those institutions. This seems perfectly reasonable at first, but it exposes the more disconcerting underlying problem that so few local potential supervisors and their areas of expertise would be considered relevant by Maltese early career academics in the first place. A lack of interest in the specific expertise of local academics suggests a devaluing of local academics and a lack of interest in locally-contextualised research problems that would most likely require a local supervisor. In such a scenario, it is difficult to see how a lively and engaging locally-contextualised body of knowledge and authentic academic tradition could ever even get off the ground. The bias in the data appears increasingly symptomatic of an inferiority complex when the discussion centres less around an affinity for studying abroad but rather an antipathy for studying in Malta. Is it, as Dimech might have thought, a mix of lingering inferiority and child-like dependency on imperial masters?

The dark, insidious nature of the bias tends to reveal itself in dismissive, angst-laden, knee-jerk reactions against the very proposition of adopting more locally-contextualised stances, more inclusive global perspectives, and alternative epistemological positions. The current "end of history" state of affairs, a status quo

to which there is no reasonable alternative, appears on the one hand far more preferable to complete catastrophe, disconnectedness, and epistemological collapse on the other. But if these are really the only possibilities, then virtually any attempt, however modest, to create more emancipatory, useful knowledge, or more just, equitable, and sustainable socio-economic policies, can be immediately and conveniently dismissed outright by those in whose interests it is for things to remain exactly the way they are. Irrational fear or suspicion of alternatives exemplify, to quote European Enlightenment-inspired philosophical parlance, the classical Greek logical fallacy of *reductio ad absurdum*.

A global fetish for Western epistemology

Scholars and researchers in peripheral, semi-peripheral, or non-English-speaking countries are already expected to not only publish their work in English (Curry and Lillis, 2015), but also tailor its very essence to fit the scope of high-impact journals located in Western countries (Hamm, 2005). According to Hamm, like universities in international league tables, journals assume a hierarchical structure, with top spots on international rankings invariably occupied by publications based in Western countries. In short, academics who do not follow and engage with North American/Western literature are dismissed as parochial (Smandych, 2005). This is especially ironic since parochialism implies narrow-mindedness, insularity, and a rejection of cultures and ideals other than one's own. As part of their civilising missions, colonial powers like the British Empire saw fit to reject a world's worth of diverse cultures, worldviews, and ideas and

simply impose their own. Yet, while this could be considered one of the most gargantuan demonstrations of insularity in World history, accusations of provincialism and narrow-mindedness are, to this day, rarely levelled at Western academics publishing research relevant to Western countries in Western journals.

Fearing false charges of parochialism, Maltese academics are, like those in other partially or fully peripheral countries, diverted away from working on locally-contextualised research problems that matter to the majority of members of their own society, in attempts to conform to whatever high-impact Western journals decide is relevant. Dimech's conception of knowledge emphasises the importance of its *usefulness* as a function of the attainment of enlightenment through emancipation. The question becomes, therefore, *who* is the knowledge created by Maltese academics supposed to be useful for, exactly? Could it be that "parochialism" really just means useful to the "wrong" people? Long after the supposed decline of colonialism, academics on the periphery are still compelled to look at themselves, and their societies, through the eyes of their former colonisers. The resulting silencing of local indigenous knowledge constitutes what Spivak (1999) calls "epistemic violence". According to Dotson (2011), acts of epistemic violence privileging Western worldviews are effective at concealing social, cultural, and, ultimately, economic activity that, on balance, favours the West in real material terms.

Spivak (1999) argued that, far from being objective or atheoretical, mainstream Western science endorses an ideology of

consumerism, parading as the philosophy of a classless society, ultimately serving to advance a global neo-liberal, neo-colonial agenda. Epistemic violence is thereby positioned at the very heart of neo-colonialism. Dimech demonstrated an early sensitivity to this epistemological character of colonialism. He understood, for instance, that dangerous patterns of thinking could be reinforced by habits as simple as the use of certain proverbs in everyday speech (Zammit Marmarà, 2013). The interplay between thought and action for Dimech, as such, appears to be dialectical, and intimately related. For researchers today, Dimech's *thought for action* suggests that created knowledge must be *useful*, and if it is to contain a propulsive emancipatory force, then its utility must, by default, serve and be accessible by those in need of emancipation. A bias towards Western institutions for doctoral study among Maltese early career academics, and the broader encroachment of academic monoculture it represents, is problematic because a postcolonial Eurocentric bias at the very heart of Maltese academia essentially compromises thought, and severs the dialectic. Without emancipatory knowledge-creation, the synthesis of thought and action is impossible.

Conclusions - Towards enlightenment

Sultana (1994) argued that Maltese society tends to lack collective class consciousness, with its members more likely to try and improve their lot individualistically through the accumulation of status symbols (level of education, type of work, material possessions, etc.) associated with more prestigious or *higher*

classes. An inherently hierarchical structure in Maltese society is thereby reproduced, as people prefer to exist within its constraints, rather than disrupt it. This is not surprising following such a long history of exposure to a doctrine of submission and acquiescence preached by colonial masters and the considerably influential local Catholic Church (Montebello, 2009). In Dimech's day, ecclesiastics were the peoples' intellectuals, and their message was loud and clear, to continue to "serve [their] masters quietly and honestly" (Chircop, 1991, p 54). Consequently, Maltese society has traditionally lacked any meaningful collective penchant for solidarity, liberation, revolution, or radicalism of the kind embodied by Dimech. It seems poignant to ask, therefore, *if* academics really can consider themselves people's intellectuals today, has the message changed at all? Are the predominant values being propagated still ultimately reinforcing colonial mindsets, a sense of submissiveness, and a collective will to serve an unjust system quietly and "honestly"?

The evidence presented here suggests that academics in Maltese academia today are just over four times as likely to have done their PhD in the UK or some other Western country than they are to have done it locally (where they ultimately end up working). Furthermore, taking Cyprus as a valid comparable country, Maltese academics are nearly three times as likely to do this as their Cypriot counterparts. Also, the bias appears to be ubiquitous across gender, field of study, and resident institution. These findings support the idea that Maltese academics are adopting a biased, postcolonial Eurocentric worldview while negotiating one

of the first and most important decisions of their academic careers. This lends unfortunate credence to the claim that contemporary higher education institutions in Malta, continue to serve the aims of traditional colonial higher education, grooming indigenous elites to promote the values and ways of life of (neo-) colonial masters.

So while on the surface, the robes of the peoples' intellectuals may have changed, it would appear their central message has not. If academics hold any social responsibility whatsoever, a more rigorous engagement with the theoretical and philosophical underpinnings of contemporary Maltese and international research and science is warranted, without fear of dismissal on the grounds of parochialism, myopia, or failure to adhere to the kind of methodological orthodoxy endorsed by top-ranked Western journals (Chamberlain, 2000). Just as Heleta (2016) has argued in the case of South African higher education, a thorough decolonisation of Maltese academia is in order, to rethink, reframe and reconstruct it around a centre of Maltese interests and affairs. A crucial step to this end must involve a more honest examination of how early career academics, at the very highest qualification levels in Maltese education, are being "groomed" by virtue of their choices about where to study, as well as more serious consideration of the potential dangers of failing to provide an effective alternative to Western academic monoculture. By embracing more Maltese, Mediterranean, and global perspectives, experiences, and epistemologies, Maltese academics may perhaps become truly empowered, to cease looking at themselves and their

own society through the eyes of global imperial masters, and instead pursue, in Dimechian terms, a pathway to enlightenment.

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SIKOLOHIYANG PILIPINO: AN INDIGENOUS FILIPINO APPROACH TO COMMUNITY ADVOCACY FOR REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH

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Abstract

This paper looks into the adult education strategies and tactics employed by Likhaan, a civil society organization in the Philippines, in incorporating the perspectives of urban poor women in the reproductive health discourse. We argue that in advocating for reproductive health rights, activists are aware of the need to navigate the parameters of inclusion and exclusion among the marginalised segments of society. To prove this, the researchers use the Sikolohiyang Pilipino, or Filipino psychology, framework, defined as the "psychology born out of the experience, thought, and orientation of the Filipinos." Through this, we discuss how Likhaan works to empower poor urban women to improve their lives, particularly in the aspect of reproductive health. This paper elaborates on the concept of *kapwa*, a shared inner self, which was demonstrated to be innate in Filipino culture. *Kapwa* is a part of one's being (your fellow is you and me), and

because of this, Filipinos believe that everyone deserves a good quality of life.

Abstrak

Ang papel na ito ay tumitingin sa mga estratehiya at taktika sa adult education na ginamit ng Likhaan, isang organisasyon ng lipunang sibil sa Pilipinas, sa inkorporasyon ng pananaw ng mga maralitang kababaihan sa lungsod ukol sa diskurso sa kalusugang reproduktibo. Pinapangatwiranan namin na sa pagtataguyod ng karapatan sa kalusugang reproduktibo, batid ng mga aktibista kung paano inavigeyt ang mga parametro ng inklusyon at eksklusyon ng mga marhinalisadong uri. Ginamit ng mga mananaliksik ang Sikolohiyang Pilipino bilang balangkas, na tumutukoy sa "sikolohiyang nagmula sa karanasan, kaisipan, at oryentasyon ng mga Pilipino." Tinalakay namin kung paano umaakto ang Likhaan para bigyang-kapangyarihan ang mga maralitang tagalungsod na mapabuti pa ang kanilang buhay, partikular sa aspekto ng kalusugang reproduktibo. Nagawa rin ng papel na ipaliwanag ang konsepto ng kapwa bilang bukal ng kulturang Pilipino. Ang kapwa ay bahagi ng ating pagkatao (ang kapwa mo ay ikaw at ako), at dahil dito, naniniwala ang mga Pilipino na marapat lamang nilang tamasahin ang maayos at de-kalidad na pag-iral.

Keywords: reproductive health, Likhaan, Sikolohiyang Pilipino (Filipino psychology), kapwa

Introduction

Filipinos face various reproductive health risks due to unprotected and/or unwanted sexual activity. A 2019 UN report states that "[a]mong the six major economies in the ASEAN region, the

Philippines has the highest rate of teenage pregnancies. [...] Likewise, according to recent reports, the Philippines has the fastest-growing HIV epidemic in the world" (United Nations, 2019). Adolescent girls are particularly vulnerable to unintended pregnancies and maternal mortality, and those who became parents at an early age often have to face the negative consequence of halting their education. These limit their prospects for a better future, not just for themselves but also for their children. This is the reason why measures that ensure appropriate sexual and reproductive health education and services are well-crafted and properly implemented towards the poor.

The Philippines finally enacted the Responsible Parenthood and Reproductive Health Act in 2012. Commonly known as the RH law, it guarantees universal access to methods of contraception, age-appropriate sexual education, and maternal health care. The legislative process that brought fruition to the said law was filled with heated debates that spurred divisiveness among religious, political, and academic figures in the country.

The passage of the law was considered a landmark victory for advocates of women's rights in a predominantly Catholic country. It meant that when people organise themselves to work for a common agenda, it is possible to defeat the hegemonic influence of the Church. There was vehement opposition to the law on the side of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines (CBCP), a powerful institution that has had a huge influence over the social and cultural life of Filipinos (Natividad, 2018, p. 37).

Campaigning for the RH law was a multisectoral initiative. It was waged by a diverse and broad coalition that encompassed the entire political spectrum. The Reproductive Health Alliance Network (RHAN), composed of several government agencies, legislative committees on population and development, and non-government organisations (NGOs), took the lead in many of the mobilisation and consultation activities in relation to this campaign. One of the members of the network is the Likhaan Centre for Women's Health (also known as simply Likhaan), whose experiences and lessons in waging a successful bottom-up approach to legislative advocacy provide insight, especially on the role of urban poor women in impacting policymaking at different levels.

This paper is an attempt to look into the adult education strategies and tactics employed by Likhaan in incorporating the perspectives of Filipino women in urban poor communities in the reproductive health conversation in the country. Guided by the framework of *Sikolohiyang Pilipino*, or Filipino psychology, we argue that activists and advocates in the Philippines are conscious of the need to navigate the parameters of inclusion and exclusion among the marginalised segments of society, as well as the social identity issues that arise in attempting to create social change.

Methodology

In this paper, we explored the phenomenon in context without having to generalise beyond that knowledge. It needs to be said that we are more interested in describing and making sense of Likhaan's activities in light of *Sikolohiyang Pilipino* than in identifying their shared patterns and behaviour. As such, an *exploratory* case study was deemed useful as our chosen tradition of inquiry. Creswell (2015, p. 469) defined a case study as "an in-depth exploration of a bounded system (e.g., activity, event, process, or individuals) based on extensive data collection."

In this case study, we decided to conduct a focus group discussion (FGD) with two community organisers within Likhaan: Ms Ellen San Gabriel and Ms Lina Bacalando. A purposive sampling technique was used to recruit the participants, who were engaged through referrals by the Likhaan's management, who responded positively to the letter request made by the researchers. The discussion was made in Filipino, the language which the participants found most convenient to use. We have to make clear that the two community organisers who participated in the FGD merely served as resource persons for this paper and that other sources, such as books, local and international journal articles, and media publications, were given equal weight in our analysis.

Through the FGD and our analysis of the secondary sources, we constructed the reproductive health advocacy in the Philippines as a successful case of pursuing policy changes through active

involvement at the grassroots level. This is widely regarded as a landmark victory that combated the well-funded opposition of a highly influential Roman Catholic Church.

Bearing in mind the core concepts present in *Sikolohiyang Pilipino*, central to our discussion is how their movement explored various strategies in order to improve the reproductive health situation of Filipino women and to create safe spaces for them, particularly those coming from disadvantaged backgrounds. Our perspective is implied by a strong acceptance of the idea that social actors proposing interventions aimed at social change continuously construct meaning in every aspect and stage of their advocacy work, from service delivery to political organising.

We prepared a semi-structured interview guide for the FGD, making sure that the questions will encourage participants to discuss personal stories that are of enduring and deep relevance to them. Sample questions are as follows:

1. What are the main activities of Likhaan?
2. What is the role of Likhaan in the passage of the Philippine Reproductive Health Law?
3. What were the challenges you encountered during your involvement in the Reproductive Health Law legislative campaign?
4. What do you think are the perspectives of women, particularly those from marginalised sectors, about the Reproductive Health Law?

Sikolohiyang Pilipino as an emancipatory social science

In the 1970s, a movement towards the indigenisation of the social sciences blossomed in the Philippines. The proponents of this movement were three professors from the University of the Philippines Diliman: Zeus Salazar (Department of History), Prospero Covar (Department of Anthropology), and Virgilio Enriquez (Department of Psychology). These scholars, representing various social science disciplines, promoted indigenisation, asserting that Western theories and models may not directly fit the Philippine sociocultural context.

Virgilio Enriquez, a social psychologist who obtained a PhD at Northwestern University in the United States, is considered the proponent of Sikolohiyang Pilipino. Part of his indigenization efforts was translating various psychological instruments into the Filipino language and modifying their content to suit the local context (Aguilar, 2016). However, most of these instruments were not readily applicable to local culture since each culture may hold its unique understanding of reality. For example, Filipinos tend to avoid direct confrontations than in Western societies because they are highly attuned or sensitive to the feelings of others, although Westerners may interpret this as being disingenuous or socially ingratiating (Pe-Pua and Marcelino, 2000). As we can see, some may view certain Filipino traits as negative when in reality, they are inherent characteristics of culture. Enriquez believes that

relying on Western categories is a reason for misinterpreting certain cultural attitudes (Pe-Pua and Marcelino, 2000).

Later on, Enriquez came to realise that simply translating these psychological instruments might prove to be a futile endeavour since it seems that these translations could not capture the true essence of Filipino psychology—the *Sikolohiyang Pilipino* (Aguilar, 2016). Because of this, Enriquez had thought of moving towards an *indigenisation from within*. This gave emphasis to deriving psychological concepts from Filipino culture itself and not just borrowing theories and concepts from external sources (Enriquez, 2011). When formulating new ideas, Sikolohiyang Pilipino has to place importance on the experiences of *real Filipinos* from the ground.

Working in for a community setting, there is a need to pose an important question regarding what kinds of social action human beings are capable of. This is where Sikolohiyang Pilipino can be useful, as one has to go back to the rules of behaviour. Looking into the sources of this behaviour enables an individual to have a deeper understanding of the worldviews and values that guide personal and collective aspirations. This understanding is instrumental in dissolving conflict and unifying the people towards concrete solutions. The kind of pedagogical philosophy advocated by Paulo Freire (1970/2005) underscores the development of critical consciousness by promoting collaboration and dialogue as integral aspects of the learning process. This is consistent with Sikolohiyang Pilipino's valuing of community and collective

identity as fostering a dialogic learning environment where community members openly share their experiences and cultural knowledge, granting them the capacity to assert control over their own education.

These values influence how individuals relate with their immediate circle, as well as with those they deem as outsiders. For Virgilio Enriquez, the local languages and dialects of the Philippines provide a wealth of resources that can help us grasp indigenous Filipino values. Its project focuses on delineating indigenous from colonial identity when Enriquez links “kapwa” (a shared inner self) with the struggle for justice and freedom. The emancipatory project of “Filipinisation” requires a recovery of Filipino personhood by affirming and sustaining the linguistic orientation of Sikolohiyang Pilipino. Pe-Pua and Protacio-Marcelino (2000) provided an introductory reference that familiarises readers with basic concepts as well as opens them to the vastness of source materials on Filipino psychology, also known as *Sikolohiyang Pilipino*. They defined it as “the psychology born out of the experience, thought and orientation of Filipinos, based on the full use of the Filipino culture and language” (Pe-Pua & Protacio-Marcelino, 2000, p. 49).

While being literally translated as “the other person” in English, the concept of *kapwa* has no exact translation in European languages, although writers like Paredes-Canilao & Babaran-Diaz (2011) roughly rendered it as “that person with whom I share all things”. For Enriquez, who is considered the father of *Sikolohiyang Pilipino*, understanding *kapwa* as a basic construct in the Filipino

worldview would help elucidate the important workings of their interpersonal relationships. In particular, it embraces both the categories of 'outsider' and 'one of us', as well as the levels in between (Enriquez, 1984, p. 24). By sharing an inner self with *kapwa*, the fellow individual is treated as deserving of equal dignity and worth. The act of empathising with others becomes performative, evidenced by actions that show kindness and generosity in times of need (*pakikiramay*), and the practice of the bayanihan or mutual assistance. They possess a sensitivity to people's feelings and emotions (*pakikiramdam*). "*Kapwa*" is the root word of "*pakikipagkapwa*" (holistic interaction with "*kapwa*"), which is the cultural basis of civil society in the Philippines (Pe-Pua & Protacio-Marcelino, 2000, p. 56).

Throughout the history of Philippine civil society, volunteerism implies an equal footing between the provider of assistance and the beneficiary, which is embodied in the terms "*damayan*" (assistance of peers in periods of crisis) and "*pagtutulungan*" (mutual self-help) (Asian Development Bank, 2013). Filipinos are very considerate of the quality of their person-to-person relationships. They believe that relationships that are satisfactory make them happy and secure. As *pakikipagkapwa* ultimately has an implication of building solidarity with people and a feeling of closeness, it becomes the guiding principle not just of unity but also of social justice (Licuanan, 1989). According to Epifanio San Juan, Jr (2006, p. 56), a foremost literary academic of the Philippines, this is a cultural representation of Kant's Categorical Imperative, a humanistic agenda of treating persons as ends in

themselves and unifying them in a manner that transcends boundaries of class, gender, etc.

In *Sikolohiyang Pilipino*, if one is regarded as "*ibang-tao*" ("other person"), the interaction can range from *pakikitungo* (transaction), to *pakikisalamuha* (interaction), to *pakikilahok* (joining/participating), to *pakikibagay* (in-conformity with/in accord with), and to *pakikisama* (being along with). If one is categorised as "*hindi-ibang-tao*" ("not-other person"), then you can expect *pakikipagpalagayang-loob* (being in-rapport with), or *pakikisangkot* (getting involved), or the highest level of *pakikiisa* (being one with). We can see here that in Sikolohiyang Pilipino, the relationship of an individual to another person goes through various levels of interaction—starting from the surface level of interaction until it comes to a point where the highest level of interaction is attained. Since Filipinos regard their fellow individual as not the "other person," it is understandable that they do everything to improve each other's lives, as we can see in the next part of the discussion.

***Sikolohiyang Pilipino* and civil society activism in the Philippines**

The history of the Philippines bore witness to several moments of crisis where unity was the only choice left for the people. In recent history, Filipinos forged revolutionary consciousness to act in unison against forces and powers that oppress them. Nonetheless, such unity was put into question after freedom was attained.

Tapales & Alfiler (1991) demonstrated two examples: the post-war Philippine Republic after the Japanese occupation and the reinstatement of democracy after the dramatised EDSA People Power Revolution in 1986 that toppled Ferdinand Marcos. Many people who took part in the restoration of freedom were demoralised when the elite came back to power. Some of these elements were themselves active in the struggle and wanted to have a share in power. However, academia saw the early years of the 1990s as a promising time to pursue research on Filipino values. Because of the social and moral decline caused by the Marcos dictatorship, which persisted until the restoration of democracy, social scientists hoped that these studies would lead "to a direct improvement in the moral and ethical situation of the country" (Reyes, 2015).

The accession of Ferdinand Marcos to power was characterised by personality-based politics. After he declared martial law in 1972, he attempted to use political catchphrases which would legitimise his authoritarian government, like "*Sa ikauunlad ng bayan, disiplina ang kailangan*" [For the development of the people, discipline is needed]. However, Marcos failed because he imposed the new idea of authoritarianism on a people he described as lacking in discipline and initiative (Tapales & Alfiler, 1991, p. 107). Nonetheless, what kept the Filipinos going through the entire dictatorial rule was their faith in God and their hard work. Marcos failed to empathise with the plight of the common person through *pakikipagkapwa*. For instance, for the sake of "meeting the demands for social justice", he implemented a land reform

program which exempted his landowning allies and cronies (ibid, p. 106).

Seeing through government lip service, the Filipino people needed to make *pakikipagkapwa* visible through volunteerism and acts of service in their struggle for *katarungan*. While the technocrats of the Marcos regime failed to understand and apply the concept, many underground and aboveground groups were active to fill that gap. Non-government organisations (NGOs) took on the task of delivering the services needed by the people. They were aware that the kleptocracy and abuse of power in the government stripped the people of the right to live with dignity and that democracy was simply an empty rhetoric. They should take the lead in carrying out *pakikipagkapwa* if they are to promote social justice.

This defined the practices of community-based NGOs in the Philippines, many of which trace their origins from the popular movements of the 1970s. The Philippines is actually one of the largest and most active civil society movements in the world (Africa, 2012). According to Tuaño (2011), there are around 34,000 to 68,000 non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in the country. These NGOs commit themselves to improving the quality of life of the marginalized. Among the NGOs that spurred up are the medical- and health-related activist organisations. These organisations promoted health for the poor, as they viewed their health advocacy as part of the larger struggle to deal with the menacing socio-economic inequalities in the country. They focused on community-based health programmes (CBHPs) that emphasise

primary health care in rural areas. Later, the CBHP approach began to incorporate a gender component. Moreover, Sylvia Estrada-Claudio, a medical doctor, established a reproductive rights programme in Gabriela, a women's political movement. She would later help establish Likhaan in 1995 when she left Gabriela in 1995.

Reclaiming kapwa in community reproductive health work

The preceding section shows how the origin of Likhaan as an NGO are tied to the history of Philippine civil society. It illustrates the profound and enduring struggle of the Filipino people to improve the moral and ethical fabric of the nation through acts of service, thereby highlighting the importance of *pakikipagkapwa*. If one explores the links between the growth of Likhaan as an influential health advocacy group and the development of Sikolohiyang Pilipino, such connections can be traced.. In fact, Likhaan co-founder Sylvia Estrada-Claudio would later become one of the first PhD graduates of UP Diliman's Department of Psychology in 1996, whose concentration is in Sikolohiyang Pilipino (Pe-Pua & Protacio-Marcelino, 2000).

A paper authored by Estrada-Claudio published in the local journal *Review of Women's Studies* pointed out the need for a readiness to question the "oppressive role of colonialism, racism, sexism and elitism in the construction of the psychological reality of the Filipino" (Estrada-Claudio, 1991, p. 8) This implies a responsibility on the part of feminists to seek out philosophies of

science that would aid in the reconstruction of liberating psychology.

This kind of liberating psychology is harnessed by feminist practitioners on the ground in ways that enhance their impact in promoting positive change, and such involvement requires a profound understanding of the Filipino woman's psyche. Given that Likhaan is a grassroots movement aligned with the feminist agenda, it has to recognise that women have a distinctive role in the realm of social reproduction. Likhaan includes components that address numerous psychological issues, such as rape crisis centers and consciousness-raising groups that are focused on family violence. Following basic methods and techniques known in CBHP, the NGO also operates community-based clinics or health programmes as its core programme. Part of its services include pre-natal check-ups and maternal care, family planning and contraception, and abortion-related care. This is where the agenda of reproductive and sexual health for women in urban poor communities is rooted. In fact, the leaders come from the communities, which enables stronger social ties and better quality services. Likhaan's work uses the principle of participation when undertaking health services, education, and advocacy campaigns for women.

CBHPs operate on the philosophy that objective realities in the Philippines have a consequential effect on how the poor access health services. In particular, Likhaan's mission is to "help women and poor communities harness their resources and engage

government and other powerholders to transform unjust and inequitable situations” (Likhaan, 2018). It defined its long-term goal as being able to help women and their families and communities to fully enjoy their right to health, including their right to sexual and reproductive health. This is consistent with the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which articulates every person’s right to health as central to human rights and an understanding of a life in dignity.

Likhaan sees the reproductive health problems in urban poor communities as being intimately linked with the socio-economic makeup of the nation. While it sees the transformation of underlying social structures to ultimately solve these concerns, it works on the improvement of a democratic approach which is evident in that: (a) it manifests its partiality toward poor women; (b) it stresses the long term adversarial impact of the dole-out approach used in some family planning programs; and (c) it repudiates the doctor- and hospital-oriented notion of healthcare provision, which it sees as “condescending” and “anti-poor”. It promotes the confidence of the community to deal with their health needs through its encouragement of participatory methods of collective decision-making.

Partiality toward poor women.

It is worth mentioning another concept in Sikolohiyang Pilipino that can also be used in the analysis. Pe-Pua (1993, p. 84) believes that there is a great cultural divide among Filipinos who differ not

because of the geographical area or ethnolinguistic group they belong to but as a result of an outlook in life, whether highbrow elitist or populist. It is important to take into account values that are in line with the social reality, orientation, and struggles of the economically and socially marginalised when a reproductive health (or any development) programme is being proposed to them.

Likhaan's approach to primary healthcare services integrates basic healthcare, community organising, and education. Its community-based programs in the poorest of the poor communities in the cities of Manila, Pasay, Malabon, San Jose del Monte, and Quezon City are led by a network of community health workers whose role is outreach. These areas are described by our interviewees as places usually shunned by service providers and health workers from both the government and NGOs due to perceived risks to personal safety. When they first started their first community outreach during the 1990s, they noted the high level of maternal and infant mortality in these places. Pregnant women went to the *hilot*, a practitioner of traditional folk medicine, who did prenatal visits and delivered the infant during childbirth.

Likhaan started providing respectful and high-quality healthcare by listening to the stories and life struggles of women and girls in their homes, the streets and alleyways. While these women initially benefited from the provision of free maternal care and family planning services, they eventually developed a critical understanding of the social dynamics affecting current medical policies and practices in the country, as well as the power and

gender relations at play governing their health and sexual lives (Likhaan, 2018). Topics covered include the human body, sexuality, power, and gender roles, as well as practical training on contraception and related aspects of reproductive health. Another dimension of training deals with the need to create the capacity for organisation development so that trainees will be able to promote changes in the health system. At the same time, they imbibe certain negotiation and deliberation skills and learn how to work more effectively as a collective.

This approach blends medical care with bottom-up political organising. Urban poor women are groomed to act as facilitators for social transformation through capacity-building activities. By analysing tensions in the healthcare system, like seeing the difference between private and public health sectors, they gain insight and a clearer understanding of what role they should have in their communities. In this way, individual women become their own advocates, and they develop greater self-awareness and autonomy as well as a common sense of solidarity. Such insight is supported by this quote from Lina, who used to benefit from Likhaan's free reproductive health services and now works as an administrative coordinator for the same organisation:

> "We were gradually made aware of our rights, that we have rights even if we come from places avoided [by the government]. We learned that it is the government's obligation to provide us with services, even if we are informal settlers. We are the women who used to benefit

> from the services [of an NGO], and we have evolved to become organisers ourselves. Likhaan gave us an opportunity to work with them. [In my case], I started as a volunteer, then became a health worker, then became a staff member when an opportunity came."

In terms of organisation, Likhaan encourages the CBHPs in their respective barangays (the smallest political unit in the Philippines) to elect their officials every year in order to achieve a functioning democracy. Likhaan also placed the different CBHP organizations under a huge federation called PILAK – Pinagsamang Lakas ng Kababaihan at Kabataan (Federation Representing the Strong Unity of Women and the Youth) (Encarnacion-Tadem, 2012). PILAK is proud to be the first poor urban organisation that is self-avowed socialist and feminist. In particular, its constitution and by-laws emphasise sexual rights.

Men are also made involved in reproductive health advocacy, as it is recognised that male partners are commonly the primary barriers to promoting ideas that support reproductive health and the prevention of violence against women in many poor households. Reproductive health facilitators are aware that the Filipino man's "macho" image still persists today, so they needed to devise ways to make family planning less of a woman's burden. They believe that it lies in both partners learning to coexist democratically within the household by developing the negotiation skills that allow both of them to internalise a shared identity through *kapwa*. They knew that this strategy was successful when

male partners started to appreciate Likhaan's facilitated workshops by telling them that sex turns out to be less of a marital issue when it becomes more negotiated and discussed by the couple. For our interviewees, this is an aspect of their facilitation work that they can personally identify with, inasmuch as they also had the same struggles with their own families and relationships back then.

Moving away from the dole-out approach.

In Filipino culture, it is valued that you are considered a fellow *kapwa*, and preferably not another human being, so that every transaction becomes more natural and honest. This is how the people who benefit from reproductive health programs of the government or NGOs expect to be treated. Target acceptors complain that the attitude of motivators or health educators is condescending, or they get easily bored.

Taking a look at how population programmes are implemented by the government, one can see the dominant power relations. On one side are the staff in charge of providing family planning information and technology. On the other hand, ordinary people who lack knowledge about it are always afraid of the "bad" consequences of using contraceptives.

By operating the mobile clinic "Tarajing", an electric vehicle that brings medical advice and counselling as well as family planning supplies directly to urban poor communities, Likhaan

understands that to minimise the anxiety of those who are used to having limited access to health services and facilities, practitioners should be able to create trust in the community by implementing a more personalised approach to health (Luna, 2012). Instead of simply linking poverty to population growth, their main concern was how women could be engaged through accurate technical information that is offered at a level appropriate to the context and knowledge of participants. It takes into account the life experience and self-esteem of learners and addresses affective aspects, including the feelings that emerge during the process.

Family members are said to be in the *hindi-ibang-tao* (not-other-person) category. But in reality, the different relationships within the family show that the quality of the relationship also varies. There is an *ibang tao* (other person) and there is *hindi-ibang-tao*. For couples, it is expected that all feelings are freely discussed, whether about children or about their sexual lives. But many women will say that couples are embarrassed to talk about sex. When it comes to this topic, a woman is comfortable talking to a fellow woman (Pe-Pua, 1993). The concept of *hiya*, roughly translated as shyness, is also a cultural attribute among Filipinos in general. They may have things to say but cannot say them in front of other people. If so, you need to go to them and talk to them more privately. The fact that the majority of Likhaan's community health workers are female means that they offer a safe and nurturing space to discuss violence against women (VAW) issues (e.g., rape, incest, domestic violence, sexual harassment), abortion-related concerns, and depression.

The recruitment and capacity development of volunteers (mostly coming from the pool of service recipients) to do different aspects of advocacy work allowed Likhaan to expand its activities from a mere provision of reproductive health services to championing policy proposals that are aimed at national or local government officials or institutions. Part of its core programme is gathering important documentation from the ground because this will strengthen the case to push for an enhancement of existing rules regarding reproductive health and women's rights.

Aside from research, volunteers also help in community organising and education. It is important to emphasise during training that not every concern in the community can be solved by NGOs alone. Owing to their socially progressive origins, Likhaan asserts that issues surrounding the lack of proper healthcare services or violence against women can be rooted in systemic problems around poverty or patriarchy. Nonetheless, discussing national or global issues will never make sense to slum dwellers if these are not linked to their everyday concerns at home or in the community. This is captured by this statement from Ellen:

> "There are those who eagerly promote national issues. Will they bother to ask first if the people they talk to have their own personal problems? The pain of the little finger is felt by the whole body. Sometimes local issues are left behind when [they come in here] to push for national issues. Let us not forget problems around housing and demolition,

> because if their settlements disappear where will the people go, right?”

Hence, the community organizers should start with issues that these women can feel and then relate them to national or global issues afterwards.

Repudiating hospital-oriented notion of healthcare.

As a philosophy, Sikolohiyang Pilipino emphasises that individuals have unique personal histories and live within a social, political, economic and cultural environment that influences them, but they also control in some ways. It validates the conceptualisation of psychological thought and practice in a uniquely Filipino context, “for example, livelihood psychology instead of industrial psychology, health psychology instead of clinical psychology” (Pe-Pua & Protacio-Marcelino, 2000, p. 53). This is evident in Likhaan’s advocacy work which links education to health. Lina said, “Likhaan also believes we cannot achieve reproductive health through having a sane body and mind alone, but we also need to address issues concerning basic needs. That includes housing, water, and electricity, which are some of the things that Likhaan also fought for.”

The organisation has helped poor urban women in the slums develop their community organising and researching skills so that they can make use of the necessary legal knowledge while acting in unison when confronting unjust attempts to evict them from

their settlements. While Likhaan does not explicitly proclaim their use of *kapwa* in this philosophy, it is clear that their respect for the humanity of urban poor women and their acceptance of the masses' inherent rights serve to unify the uneducated and economically deprived residents of urban areas, their community health workers, the doctors, in their belief in the values of self-reliance and people empowerment. Aside from its role in community empowerment, Likhaan was also instrumental in campaigning for the Reproductive Health bill (now a law), which we will discuss in the next portion of this paper.

Campaigning for the reproductive health law

Abortion remains illegal in the Philippines, but it is a reality for women since the law has not discouraged them from ending unwanted pregnancies. Practices of contraception involve an active negotiation with faith and religion while striving to achieve some degree of autonomy (Natividad, 2019, p. 41). A woman's decision to undergo abortion speaks of a resistance to the authority of the Catholic Church that rests on the notion of mortal sin. Yet, without legal backing, women are unable to sustain their resistance and exercise their morality. Grassroots organisations have become increasingly aware of the need to bridge the gap between those who make critical decisions in government and those who benefit from the reproductive health services provided by private and non-profit groups. Likhaan initially fought for the repeal of the draconian law prohibiting abortion but later changed their tone in 1999 in favour of reproductive health legislation.

The organisation embarked on legislative advocacy but decided to halt it in order to focus on service delivery and tackling more pressing gender issues (e.g. domestic violence). Such a decision was made due to the growing number of bans on artificial methods of contraception, like the one imposed by the mayor of Manila in 2000 (Likhaan et al., 2007, p. 32). At that time, NGOs and pharmacies were harassed for dispensing them. However, reproductive health advocates saw momentum in 2010 when the newly elected president of the Philippines, Benigno Aquino III, expressed support for national legislation on reproductive health, believing "that the government should be able to provide it to Filipinos who ask for it" (Tubeza, 5 March 2010).

NGOs tried to bring the feelings and desires of the people to the attention of lawmakers. The campaign drew heavily on international conventions, such as the 1994 International Conference on Population and Development, which shifted its framing from population control to reproductive and sexual health rights. This attracted more players to the side of the campaign. They are aware that affirming the rights and welfare of poor women should inform the measure to be carried out throughout the campaign and lobbying process. The legislative arena is dominated by those who are adept in using hegemonic discourse, so the challenge for them is to amplify the voices of poor women in a manner that reaches the wider discourse. A sustained effort aimed at policy research and active public opinion-making targeted the general public. In fact, urban poor women from Likhaan-serviced

communities attended rallies to pressure legislators, who then invited them to speak during plenary sessions and committee hearings at Congress that deliberated on the then-Reproductive Health Bill.

While the Catholic Church has been an outspoken critic of the legislation, claiming that it will promote promiscuity (Strother, 2013), proponents and supporters emphasised that the bill is for responsible parenthood. They also stressed that this is not for population control but for women's control, as this is the very essence of reproductive rights. For example, they highlighted a woman's near-death experience of delivering a child in a public facility that lacked maternal health support. Some women recalled being refused to avail of ligation services from public health clinics unless they already had three or more children. This kind of messaging had proven to have more impact and had elicited sympathy from legislators when articulated by the women themselves.

There is no other piece of legislation in recent Philippine history that has been so exhaustively discussed and debated as the Reproductive Health Law. For groups like Likhaan, it is necessary to defend the poor not just against the conservative forces that aim to preserve the status quo but also against the tyranny of dominant, medicalising discourses in public health that belittle the goals of democratic governance. But it is also important to avoid celebrating just any cultural element as democratic. Realising a type of consciousness that is meaningful for the people

is not just a mere act of unearthing indigenous traits. By listening to how poor women feel and think and looking at ways to help them access basic reproductive services, as well as giving them a platform to speak and participate in the policy arena, community-based groups like Likhaan brought good results, but these are still supplemented by sound critiques that aim for structural change. For Estrada-Claudio, who is also an academic, "Healthcare is a social responsibility that cannot be solved by private efforts. When a private healthcare clinic is opened, it defeats the public sector, which is already skewed. As a result, you get greater inequity in healthcare services" (quoted in Sheker, 23 November 2011). Just like any other basic service, the healthcare system in the Philippines is profit-driven. As a matter of fact, many Filipinos are just one hospital away from poverty since being hospitalised in the Philippines is draining them financially because of the inefficient healthcare system in the country.

Conclusion

Likhaan is undertaking steps to bring about social change in a manner that harnesses the people's integral values. By being sensitive to the cultural aspects of the masses' experiences, it commits to effectively harnessing the values of the people for sustained unity and action underlined by popular empowerment. By respecting the narratives and orientations that the poor consider useful within their own communities, one can bridge the seeming divide between development practitioners who usually come from academic backgrounds and the masses who have

developed a distinct strategy for facing their everyday odds (cf. Chua, 2014, p. 103).

The story of Likhaan is reflective of the wealth of experience acquired by the Filipino civil society in working with the poor. It shows that productive dialogues with the masses can only take place if we make good use of valuable concepts comprehensible to them in a more free-flowing and natural manner. In promoting community-based efforts which strengthen people's confidence and determination to be self-reliant, the organisation works through the realisation of a people-oriented reproductive health policy. It combines policy analysis and research, activism, education, and service provision in addressing issues on the ground, which is consistent with what *Sikolohiyang Pilipino* stands for. As an emancipatory social science, it encourages a total approach and advocates for the decolonisation of the Filipino mind.

Paulo Freire (1970/2005) argued that people could act as oppressors or as liberators of their own situation and stressed that the aim of education is the creation of autonomous individuals who engage with the collective project of emancipation. It is important to look at people’s desire to connect with their fellow beings, their *kapwa*. According to Enriquez’s (1990) concept of shared-inner-selves embodied by *kapwa*, your fellow is you and me, I am you, and you are me. We are part of a large community, and our relationship is mutual, and we carry it out through fellowship. A bridge is being built by the Philippine civil society and

popular movements in this direction, i.e., bringing the feelings and desires of the people to the attention of policymakers. This is a form of *pakikipagkapwa* which may then lead to *pakikibaka* (struggle) for *kalayaan* (freedom) and *katarungan* (justice). The motivation to push for an equitable reproductive health policy that affirms the rights and welfare of poor women in the light of these values led to a demonstration of people's power in a move to *pagbabangong-dangal,* a renewal of dignity and self-worth (Enriquez 1990, p. 303).

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BOOK REVIEW

Bodhi, S. R. and Jojo, B. (Eds). *The Problematics of Tribal Integration: Voices from India's Alternative Centers*, ISBN 978-81-929930-3-4 Hyderabad: The Shared Mirror, 2019

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The current nation-state of India came into formation on the lands, forests, mountains, waterways, and islands of approximately 700 Indigenous communities spread across all 28 states and 8 union territories. These communities have historically been studied through an outsider's lens, rendering them objects of study within a framework rooted in colonial epistemology and led to their invisibility. However, there exists a growing assertion of Indigenous voices advocating for their own epistemology. The aim of this movement is to deconstruct the dominance of colonial epistemology and advocate for approaches rooted in perspectives that acknowledge the world's richness in diverse contexts rather than imposing a singular universal viewpoint. An example of such an attempt is The Tribal Intellectual Collective India (TICI), an academic community engaging with multiple intersecting realities and focusing definitively on Tribal epistemology, which differs from the mainstream. These inclusive approaches pave the way for embracing diversity and recognizing the significance of Indigenous

epistemologies. TICI was formed in 2012 and nurtures scholarship for decolonisation in multiple ways, including through annual workshops, seminars, and the publication of three journals: Journal of Tribal Intellectual Collective India, Indian Journal of Dalit and Tribal Studies and Action, and Indian Journal of Dalit and Tribal Social Work[1].

The editors of this book, Dr. Bodhi SR and Dr. Bipin Jojo, also serve as National Co-Conveners of the Tribal Intellectual Collective India (TICI). Both currently work as Professors at the Tata Institute of Social Sciences (TISS), Mumbai and have written extensively on decoloniality, decolonial social work, diversity-dialogue practice, Navayana Buddhism, tribal issues of governance, land, forest, tribal policies, education, and migration. Many but not all of the contributors to this collection are also scholars from tribal backgrounds and members of TICI.

I am Shankar Bhil (he, him), and I hold an undergraduate degree in B.A. in Sociology, a subject that helped me unravel the human experience through a critical lens and understand it better, especially in the context of my own community. I am currently working towards my M.A. in Development Studies at Azim Premji University, Bangalore. My home is situated in the forest of Satpura Hills, Khandesh, which is a region in the western state of Maharashtra and the traditional lands of the Bhil Indigenous community. Bhils are one of the largest tribal ethnic communities

[1] For more information, see https://ticilandproject.wordpress.com/tici-journals/

of western and central India, spread across Maharashtra, Gujarat, Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh. The name 'Bhil' is derived from the word 'billu', signifying 'bow.' We are renowned for exceptional archery skills and profound knowledge of our forests and other lands. Bhils are officially designated as the Scheduled Tribes (ST) in the 1947 Indian constitution. This classification system has its roots in British colonisation which perceived indigenous peoples as backward and criminal and ruthlessly exploited their labour and land. While Bhils continually resisted British colonialism, they remain one of the most socially and economically disadvantaged communities in independent India. Communities with ST status are entitled to positive discrimination under the Constitution in relation to free and/or subsidised education, admission quotas in higher education and public sector employment and political representation.

Last year, as part of the Indigenous Students Forum at Azim Premji University in Bangalore, we commemorated the 147th birth anniversary of Dharti Aaba Birsa Munda, a remarkable tribal freedom fighter who valiantly fought against British colonialism and diku[2]. To mark the occasion, a guest lecture was delivered by Dr. SR Bodhi on the theme of 'Adivasi Standpoint and Adivasi Epistemologies'. During this event, Dr. Bodhi also donated his books to the university library. Despite having a prior interest in comprehending our contemporary Adivasi (indigenous) situation, this lecture provided a specific direction for my future pursuits. Moreover, this book, authored by Adivasi scholars, instills in me a

[2] Outsiders are known as 'Dikus'

profound sense of belonging. It affirms that we are not stagnant in time and that we assert our indigenous knowledge from our unique perspectives.

The edited collection consists of 19 chapters which provide insights into historical and contemporary struggles by Indigenous communities for their rights to land and self-determination. The majority of chapters pertain to current issues faced by indigenous communities in northeastern regions of India. The introductory chapter by the editors orients the reader towards comprehending the processes and challenges associated with integrating tribal communities and their land within the administrative framework of India. The book aims to serve as an attempt to foster an 'emancipatory discourse' that opposes theoretical and methodological frameworks prescribing knowledge production as an objective or universal process. They argue that such a belief system constitutes ontological violence against Indigenous peoples, advocating for the disruption of Western and caste-based frameworks that portray tribes as 'timid' forest dwellers, 'savages,' 'primitives,' 'uncivilized,' or 'backward.' This disruption aims to challenge the portrayal of tribes as passive recipients of knowledge generated by dominant societies. Tribes residing in independent or semi-independent conditions are not permitted to maintain their autonomy. The concern raised by these scholars is that emphasis on integrating these tribes into the mainstream often results in their economic and social exploitation, leading to marginalization. Of greater significance is the risk of losing their culture, language, way of life, and identity.

The first section includes two chapters related to the theme of Problematizing the Discourse and Context. This section endeavors to problematize the discourses surrounding the integration of tribes from colonial times to post-independence India. The term integration here refers to the British colonial and postcolonial state premise that assimilation of tribals into mainstream economy and culture is the only solution to their purportedly backward conditions. The next section is themed The Frame of Reference and consists of four chapters which scrutinize the frame of integration across different state policies, constitutional provisions, and diverse developmental models aimed at the upliftment of Adivasis in India. The third section contains 11 chapters that speak to the theme of concrete conditions and dynamics. These chapters delve into the socio-cultural values, practices, and the diverse realities experienced by Adivasis across different regions of India. It also explores the evolving dynamics within tribal societies, emphasizing their endeavors in negotiating for autonomy, self-governance, and agency through various movements aimed at asserting their rights. The last section, titled 'Tribal/Adivasi Dialogues', comprises two transcripts of a speech and a dialogue delivered by two elders from the tribal/Adivasi communities, which possess significant historical value in understanding the struggle of the tribes for the land and their culture.

In Chapter 1, Virginius Xaxa traces the relationship of tribal communities with a national or Indian identity from colonial times through independent India to the present. Despite their diverse

lifestyles, they share a common experience of exclusion from other social groups and have been compelled to live on the periphery of national development. In his exploration of the sacrifices made by Indigenous peoples in embracing this myth, Xaxa emphasizes their assimilation into a singular, 'integrated' national identity causes them to lose their identity. He underscores how tribal communities, in this process, become alienated from their distinctive cultures- language and traditions, religious practices, land and environment etc.

In Chapter 2, Bodhi S.R. and Raile R. Zipao delve into the historical contestations around processes of integration between states and tribes in independent India, across North East India, the mainland, Himalayan regions, and island enclaves. The chapter draws extensively on the speeches of Jaipal Singh Munda, the sole tribal/Adivasi representative in the 1946-50 Constituent Assembly as well as constitutional provisions that reflect the tribals' struggle for autonomy and identity.

In Chapter 3, Monica Sakhrani makes historical links between the administration of tribes in British and independent India. The author highlights three paradoxes that emerge from the contradictions in India's policy relating to tribes and constitutional provisions for these scheduled tribe communities. The first paradox is created by the way in which the Indian Constitution recognizes individual and community citizenship rights, which separate Tribal individuals from their community. The second is created by the contradiction between Article 297, which vests all

national resources (land, forest, minerals, and resources in the ocean) and Article 372, which permits the continuance of colonial laws. The third paradox that confronts us is the tension between the state's overarching ideology of pan-Indian Hinduism and the aspirations of the tribal communities for recognition and self-determination.

In Chapter 4, Bhagya Bhukya identifies how Nationalist and Marxist historians have distorted the history of Adivasi struggles and contributed to large-scale erasure of Adivasi anti-colonial resistance. He highlights how tribal freedom fighters such as Birsa Munda and Rani Gaidinliu have been relegated to the periphery and non-Indigenous figures like Alluri Sitaram Raju, who belonged to the Other Backward Castes (OBC) have been elevated into history as 'champions' of tribal communities.

In Chapter 5, Rimi Tadu thinks through the geopolitics of the NEFA (North East Frontier Areas), now known as Arunachal Pradesh, which has faced cultural interference since British rule. Tadu examines post-independence laws utilized to govern economic interactions between communities living in the hill and plain regions which have facilitated state expansion in the name of tribal assimilation and integration. The discussion is informed by interviews with communities living in the Tanii Valley of Arunachal Pradesh. Through memories of occupation and oppression in the region. Tadu sheds light on how the state reshaped documentation of historical accounts of the formation of the state of Arunachal Pradesh.

In Chapter 6, Venkatesh Vaditya focuses on the debate between the first Prime Minister, Jawaharlal Nehru and anthropologist, Verrier Elwin, regarding the development of Adivasi communities. While Nehru advocated for a 'national ideology' to unite all of Indian society, Elwin favored an isolationist approach and a separate development model for the highly vulnerable Adivasi population. Given the harm neo-liberalism has inflicted upon tribal communities, Vaditya calls for adopting Elwin's approach to secure Adivasi struggles for self-determination captured in the political slogan 'jal-jamin-jangal', which in the language of Hindi translates to rights to water, land and forest.

In Chapter 7, J.J. Roy Burman explores the significance of sacred groves as cultural symbols of tribal political assertion. Burman delves into how tribal communities worldwide have symbolically employed sacred groves to strengthen their social cohesion, guide their quests for autonomy, and affirm their right to self-determination. This chapter presents valuable insights into the cultural practices and worldviews of tribal societies and elucidates the challenges these societies encounter upon integration into mainstream society.

In Chapter 8, Shyamal Bikash Chakma aims to dismantle the prevailing discourse of environmental conservation in India, which overlooks the rights and concerns of tribal communities. The chapter draws on an extensive literature review of conservation discourse in India combined with empirical data from national

parks and sanctuaries. Chakma concludes that wildlife conservation initiatives on Indigenous communities in India have deprived communities of their natural resources and significantly contributed to tribal displacement.

In Chapter 9, Richard Kamei focuses on the political strategy of collective bargaining, which remains unfamiliar within tribal communities. Kamei investigates this concept in the context of the indigenous alcohol industry, which operates in Rongmei tribes inhabiting the northeastern state of Manipur. Liquor has been ingrained in the way of life among indigenous tribal communities, woven into festivals, marriage celebrations, and death ceremonies. However, when the sale of alcohol was prohibited in Manipur, women assumed the role of brewing liquor to sustain their families and also constituted a primary livelihood source. These women found themselves negotiating with their families, village authorities, and the state machinery (specifically, the excise department) to persist in their daily task of brewing alcohol. Kamei's examination focuses on the complexity of the collective negotiation process undertaken by women from this tribe to secure their own space within their community.

In Chapter 10, Joseph Riamei critically analyzes current approaches to tribal governance and political participation in the multicultural/multiethnic North Eastern states. Riamei identifies the challenges and violence experienced by Indigenous peoples under the dominant governance model that is centered on the political and administrative unit of state governments. Riamei

stresses the urgent need for a substantial restructuring of the governance framework centered on Indigenous knowledge, autonomy, and development.

In Chapter 11, Kerlihok L. Buam focuses on the Jaintia Hills autonomous District Council in the state of Meghalaya and its role in protecting tribal culture, land and identity. The author advocates for the preservation and safeguarding of Jaintia culture – a traditional responsibility of the Autonomous District Council. The culture and practices of indigenous tribes are deeply rooted in their connection to the land. However, marketisation and mismanagement by the District Council have weakened this bond and devastated the Narpuh forest region through unregulated limestone mining and cement production. Even though rules prohibit selling tribal land to non-tribal people, the Councils haven't protected communal lands or formalized traditional land systems. Instead, these rules have enabled wealthier tribal individuals who also head these district councils to own most of the land.

In Chapter 12, Jagmohan Boro discusses the political endeavors of the Rabha community in the northeastern state of Assam. The Rabhas, viewed as early inhabitants of the Brahmaputra valley, have been mobilizing politically since the early eighties to demand political autonomy. However, the State government has deflected these demands by manipulating the politics within this multi-ethnic community.

In Chapter 13, Batskhem Myrboh focuses on the issue of non-tribal migration in Meghalaya, which has witnessed a sustained influx of such outsiders. The author identifies the political and economic problems created for Indigenous tribal populations, namely the Khasis, Jaintias, and Garos, Myrboh, as a result of land occupation by non-tribal migrant settlers.

In Chapter 14, Vulli Dhanaraju historicizes British colonial hegemony in the southeastern region of what is now the state of Andhra Pradesh. The author studies the administration of tribal regions in Andhra Pradesh from 1776 to 1947. Which established an administrative apparatus and forest policies in order to preserve forest resources by halting practices like shifting cultivation. The aim was to exploit forest wealth for projects like railways, shipyards, roads, and buildings. These colonial land revenue policies had a detrimental effect on Indigenous tribal economy and society at the time leading to displacement and loss of livelihood. As such, the current administration of the tribal regions in Independent India appears to be no different from colonial times.

Chapter 15, by Pandurang Bhoye, focuses on Adivasis in the western state of Maharashtra, who face the brunt of a state-led economic development process which has increased inequity and alienated Adivasis from their own habitats. Bhoye provides an overview of current social and political movements and organizations across different geographic areas of the state. Key findings include that ideologies like Marxism and Hindutva often

drive movements led by non-Adivasi leaders and activists in Adivasi regions to extend their influence into Adivasi territories. In addition, movements led by Adivasi leaders concentrate on addressing Adivasi exploitation by non-Adivasis, advocating for Adivasi land rights, and addressing issues related to irrigation, forests, and the broader spectrum of Adivasi rights.

Chapter 16, by the late activist-scholar Abhay Xaxa, discusses Adivasis' rights when faced with mining by multinational corporations in regions designated as Fifth Scheduled Areas by the Indian Constitution. - The Fifth Schedule of the Indian constitution provides for the self-administration of tribal areas in ten states in India, including Andhra Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Gujarat, Himachal Pradesh, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Odisha, Rajasthan, and Telangana. Despite this Constitutional protection, local governments have colluded with multinational mining corporations to erode forest rights and avoid transparent and accountable policy-making for the development of these impoverished regions of India.

Chapter 17, by Niraj Lakra, provides a critical examination of the year 2016 revision of the Chotanagpur Tenancy (CNT) Act, 1908, and the Santhal Pargana Tenancy (SPT) Act, 1949 by the BJP government of Jharkhand, which came to power in the year 2014. Lakra argues that the revision was advantageous to industrialists who deprived Adivasi peoples of land and their ways of life. He questions the ongoing neo-liberal model of development through

which the Indian state has acquired Adivasi land and undermined tribal self-governance and autonomy.

Chapter 18 consists of a 2008 speech by John F. Kharshiing, Spokesperson of the Federation of Khasi States to the First General Assembly of Indigenous and Tribal Peoples, was organized by the Indian Confederation of Indigenous and Tribal Peoples (ICITP) and the Tata Institute of Social Sciences (TISS), Mumbai to understand the 'Politics of Identity and Tribal Resistance' focusing on historical evolution and articulation of indigenous tribal voices in India. Kharshiing's address raises critical issues of political autonomy and self-determination of the Indigenous people of these regions, which have persisted since Meghalaya was formed as an independent state in 1972. This speech advocates for the building of a positive relationship between indigenous communities and the state based upon international human rights law and consensual politics to uphold harmony and stability in post-colonial India. It contends that the approval of India's constitution should rely on the consent and active participation of indigenous groups.

Chapter 19 features a dialogue between Saneka Munda and Bipin Jojo, Munda is one of the few living participants of the Khuntkati land rights movement, which fought for land rights for Indigenous people in the central Indian region of Chotanagpur. The Munda community believe that 'God has created this earth, and we have cultivated the soil through our own efforts' (pg. 297). This movement opposed the oppressive British tax system through non-violent civil disobedience. Lasting for 10 years between 1929—and

1939, the movement did not succeed in securing the Khuntkati rights, and the struggle continues to this date.

Despite my attempts here, it is not possible to cover the richness of this volume. As Adivasis, we've grown weary of being reduced to mere subjects of examination in someone else's truth narratives. This book is a critical part of that endeavor in offering readers the knowledge to disrupt Western frameworks and engages with Adivasi/tribal episteme and is a pioneering effort by academics of tribal backgrounds, uniquely centers on the critical issue of integrating tribes into the mainstream—a process that has perpetuated their exploitation from the colonial era to the present day. It will be of great value to those who study and teach about Indigenous cultures and movements in India as well as the wider community worldwide.

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BOOK REVIEW

Anatole Baldacchino, *The Malta Thalidomide Affair*, ISBN 978-9918-0-0464-5, 71 pages

Michael Debattista

The due acknowledgment must be made that modern-day medicine has positively impacted humanity in general. The average longevity, for instance, has increased in a number of countries, particularly those that are affluent. Modern-day medicine has also mitigated, or otherwise eradicated, a number of illnesses and other medical conditions.

However, modern day medicine has its dark side, which at least in part is caused by the greed of those running the pharmaceutical industry. Oftentimes, dangerous or otherwise unsafe or inappropriate medicine would adversely impact the health and well-being (or life itself) of those persons taking such medicine. In turn, this could also be emotionally devastating to their significant others, such as parents and siblings. The Thalidomide scandal is a particular case in point. This scandal is deemed by a number of scholars to be one of the worst medical disasters in human history. Originating in the 1950s by Grunnenthal Gmbh, Thalidomide, in its original guise, was deemed to be a wonder drug. Expectant mothers were particularly targeted by this pharmaceutical entity,

which promised that this drug could mitigate the effects of ‘morning sickness.’ This pharmaceutical company went so far as its advertisements proclaimed to the effect that should children accidentally ingest the drug, the only side effect would be that they would fall asleep. As events transpired, these claims not only proved to be unfounded but that the drug eventually left its horrible mark in human history for being one of the most dangerous drugs that was ever allowed in circulation. Decades later, variants of this drug are still in circulation, but this time round are being employed to good effect in treating conditions such as cancer and leprosy, however, care must still be exercised when administering this drug.

Grunnenthal GmbH had its lion’s share of the Thalidomide scandal. It failed to perform rigorous tests that would ensure the safety of the drug prior to its marketing. There were a number of complaints, including by some of its employees, that this drug could induce stillbirths or severe deformities in infants. The claims were dismissed by the management of this pharmaceutical company as being ‘acts of God.’ Matters were exacerbated by this pharmaceutical company sending no less than 66000 letters to German doctors that stated to the effect that Thalidomide was safe. It also went as far as to hire private investigators to track down any doctors who expressed reservations about this drug. The proverbial cherry on the cake was the decision to export the drug to a number of countries around the world, which was also complicated by the fact that there were the Distillers Biochemicals Company Ltd produced the drug under license.

The spreading of Thalidomide developed a life of its own. This holds so true in the Maltese context. In his book named 'The Malta Thalidomide Affair', Baldacchino (2023) explains that there were a number of interrelated factors that led to its introduction in Malta and its delays in having it removed from circulation. One primary factor is that the colonial power at that time, the British Empire, was more concerned with shifting power to the Maltese parliament. The Maltese government at that time missed a golden opportunity to have the drug removed in the early 1960s. The Minister of Health at that time ignored the pleas by Dom Mintoff (then Leader of the Opposition party) during a parliamentary sitting in September 1962 to have the drug removed and destroyed. There were also gaps in legislation related to the sale of potentially dangerous drugs. In stark contrast to what happened in England, Maltese medical professionals decided to keep the issue under the carpet rather than actively collecting the drug from customers.

To conclude, greed and associated malpractice by pharmaceutical companies would entail a number of consequences. It could give rise to mistrust and perhaps anxiety about the safety and effectiveness of medicine. It could also lead to the disrepute of the pharmaceutical industry in general without discriminating against those who engage in best practices or otherwise. However, those who could potentially end up suffering the most are those people who end up taking medicine that is unsafe or inappropriate due to malpractice by defaulting pharmaceutical entities, which could

lead to adverse impact on their health or even their lives (which in some cases could extend to unborn children).

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COMMENTARY

PROBLEMATISING RAPE CULTURE IN PAKISTAN

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In this article, I engage critically with the current endemic of rape in Pakistan. According to the Global Gender Gap Report published by the World Economic Forum (2022), Pakistan was ranked the second worst country overall, and fourth worst in health and survival category. While this report draws a concerning picture of women in Pakistan, it fails to provide a deep understanding of the level of violence faced by women in Pakistan. I shall be focusing on one of the worst incidences of violence against women, currently being referred to as the endemic of rape in Pakistan, symptomatic of the colonisation of the body by patriarchy.

A report by the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan (2021) indicates that 11 rape crimes are reported every day in Pakistan. These reported cases in themselves are horrifying. However, there are many more that go unreported due to cultural and legal reasons. The most prominent example of it being marital rape, which is not considered rape by law, and various other 'cultural' practices that are not reported due to limitations within the law structure and religious authority in Pakistan. As some of the

practices are not documented, I will only be using examples of formally reported cases in Pakistan.

When looking for answers as to why rape happens in great numbers, it becomes readily apparent that different forms of oppression intersect together to create unique experiences of marginalization. I will be looking at how legal, religious, class, and tribal factors intersect to perpetuate male dominance and violence as a concrete manifestation of such violence.

Starting from the justice system, Muneer (2017) reported that the justice system has many informal bodies in Pakistan, such as the Jirga system, also known as 'Panchyat', in different regions, which consists of tribal courts. These are governed by elders or influential people who uphold conservative cultural norms which promote violence against women through honour killings, rape as punishment and child marriages (Muneer, 2017). The case of Mukhtara Mai is an example of this. She was ordered to be raped by the 'Panchayat', a village council of elders entrusted with the task of bringing justice to the village (Lal, 2005). This is not an isolated story, but the best known to come from Pakistan.

According to US Department of State's 2020 Human Rights Report on Pakistan, if rape is not ordered, many times people part of such systems (culture). would force women to marry their rapists so as not to involve actual legal bodies. This is only an informal body and holds so much power.

Yet, there are other areas, such as law which is discriminating on many levels as well.

The Protection of Women (Criminal Laws Amendment) Act 2006, section 375 does not explicitly identify and distinguish between various types of rape, hence making it impossible for cases such as marital rape to be tried under the law.

According to Pakistan 2020 Human Rights Report, there are no accurate national, provincial, or local statistics on rape. This is due to underreporting and to the non-existence of any centralised law-enforcement data-collection system. This means that there are no real data on the actual number of rape and types of rape that happen throughout Pakistan on a daily basis. The reported cases cannot be considered as the actual, on-the-ground reality.

The masculine impunity reflected in law, statistics and cultural norms creates and reproduces the regime of underreporting that serves gender oppression. According to the same report, it was reported that the police, which is a law-upholding authority, would take bribes from perpetrators and threaten the survivors of rape to drop the charges if they decided to go ahead with reporting the rape. It was also reported that many times the police would make superficial reports.

Another report from the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan (2021) - 'State of Human Rights in 2020' - shares the same reports in the context of police and legal bodies. It means that not only law

or informal bodies but the people working inside those formal bodies would work to uphold the culture of rape by creating another layer of oppression for rape victims.

Culture and law intersect with religion in Pakistan. Here, I would like to make a distinction between the religion of Islam and the way it has been interpreted by power-holding men in Pakistan. The one I am referring to is not the actual religion but the interpretations that were given despite the reports and articles mostly not making the distinctions. Gill et al. (2022) reported that women belonging to minority religions (such as Ahmadi) in Pakistan face more violence and harassment than women belonging to the majority religion. The reason mentioned is that most women belonging to minority religions also belong to poor economic backgrounds and hence are not protected by legal authorities in the same way (Gil et al., 2022).

In the context of Pakistan, religion mostly intersects with social class, especially if one belongs to a different religion than Islam. Even within Islam, minority sects are treated worse, but further research needs to be conducted in the context of rape and minority sects in Pakistan.

Gil et al. (2022) also mentioned that the experiences of Hindus in Pakistan, especially those working in labour and exploitative working environments, add to the vulnerability of women, where they could be subjected to violence and rape. This could be potentially linked to cases reported by the Human Rights

Commission of Pakistan (2021), where a 15-year-old Hindu girl went missing and later appeared in a video married to a Muslim man, claiming to have been married as well as converted to Islam. It was not until a month later that the girl retracted the video, indicating that the man forced her to convert and wanted to go back home. It was not until the court ruled, under the 2013 Sindh Child Marriage Restraint Act, that it was illegal for her to marry because children cannot marry until the age of 18. It was also reported that many times men evade this law by travelling to other provinces.

The intersections do not end with religion but continue with social class, family system, and government protection systems. The Pakistan 2020 Human Rights Report also mentioned that in rural areas, reports of families that force their daughters (underage or legal age) into marriage to settle disputes or debts are frequent. As survivors of rape in rural areas do not have the same access to resources as others in urban areas, such cases remain underreported.

Since shelters do not give much legal aid or counselling to women, many of these women are awaiting trial for adultery when in fact, they are survivors of rape. These specific shelters are known as Dar-ul-Amans. They are shelter houses for abused women and children. Since these are, for the most part, funded by the state, which is hegemonically patriarchal, their services are hardly helpful in cases of rape. In most cases, the person who has been

raped is neither protected by family nor by religion, government, law, or anyone working within these institutions.

I know from my personal experience of living in Pakistan for almost my whole life that the most important aspect of a woman's life in our culture is her reputation. From the time one is born to the time there is some semblance of being a woman, our bodies are the only real worthy possessions we have in the eyes of our society. This is not a secret knowledge but the popular discourse in our various institutions and relationships.

This most important 'possession' – our (?) body - is not only important for women to protect but is considered the duty of every 'good' family and their members to protect as well, because if something were to happen to this 'possession', it would create shame for the whole family. Hence, a woman is told to discipline herself (Foucault, 1979) to protect this worthwhile possession of family - not to be out at night, not to befriend men, cover themselves so fully that no body part through clothes could be identified, stay home unless there is an emergency, and many other rules to restrict their presence.

Foucault (1979) asserts that in discipline, punishment is only one element of the system. Rape for women in Pakistan is that one element of punishment in disciplining them. The women in Pakistani society are considered potential criminals, and rapists (institutional or people) are the power holders that are giving punishment, so women can be more disciplined in the way they

would like them. Women occupying public spaces, voicing their opinions, and by being themselves in their daily lives are doing the crime of mere existence, which is challenging the patriarchy. If women were to hide themselves from spaces, hide their bodies, lock themselves alone with other women only, or in protection of other men in their family, they would then be truly secure, hence disciplined as well.

Foucault (1979) also argues that one of the major functions of punishment is to prevent future crime. I contend that the high incidence of rape and various ways of rape is the way of men and institutions in Pakistani society to do what Foucault in his book said "One must punish exactly enough to prevent repetition" (Foucault, 1979, p. 93). The rules that he mentioned in his seminal work, such as 'the rule of minimum quantity', 'the rule of sufficient ideality', 'the rule of lateral effect', 'the rule of perfect certainty', all apply to the Pakistani context. For example, the first rule, which talks about punishment being worse than crime, is the case of rape of women (the crime being not protecting their bodies). The second rule, which is about pain not being the actual pain, but the idea of pain, is also the case for rape. The third rule, where the penalty has an intense effect on those who have not committed the crime, also applies.

In conclusion, rape is normalised in Pakistan. The State, through its apparata of persuasion, which includes symbolic and physical violence, reproduces the colonisation of the woman's body. The net

result of such control is subjugation into a culture of silence of both the oppressors and the oppressed.

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