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Athens Journal of Humanities & Arts

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The current issue is the second of the ninth volume of the *Athens Journal of Humanities & Arts (AJHA)*, published by the [Arts, Humanities and Education Division](#) of ATINER.

Gregory T. Papanikos
President
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Athens Institute for Education and Research

A World Association of Academics and Researchers

13th Annual International Conference on Visual and Performing Arts **6-9 June 2022, Athens, Greece**

The [Arts & Culture Unit](#) of ATINER is organizing its **13th Annual International Conference on Visual and Performing Arts, 6-9 June 2022, Athens, Greece** sponsored by the [Athens Journal of Humanities & Arts](#). The aim of the conference is to bring together academics and researchers of visual and performing arts, and other related disciplines. You may participate as stream leader, presenter of one paper, chair of a session or observer. Please submit a proposal using the form available (<https://www.atiner.gr/2022/FORM-ART.doc>).

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- **Dr. Stephen Andrew Arbury**, Head, [Arts & Culture Unit](#), ATINER and Professor of Art History, Radford University, USA.
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Important Dates

- Abstract Submission: **14 February 2022**
- Acceptance of Abstract: 4 Weeks after Submission
- Submission of Paper: **9 May 2022**

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The Social Program Emphasizes the Educational Aspect of the Academic Meetings of Atiner.

- Greek Night Entertainment (This is the official dinner of the conference)
- Athens Sightseeing: Old and New-An Educational Urban Walk
- Social Dinner
- Mycenae Visit
- Exploration of the Aegean Islands
- Delphi Visit
- Ancient Corinth and Cape Sounion

Conference Fees

Conference fees vary from 400€ to 2000€
Details can be found at: <https://www.atiner.gr/2021fees>



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The [Humanities & Education Division](https://www.atiner.gr/2022/FORM-REL.doc) of ATINER is organizing its **7th Annual International Symposium on Religion & Theology, 23-26 May 2022, Athens, Greece**. The aim of the conference is to bring together academics and researchers of Religion, Theology and other related disciplines. You may participate as stream leader, presenter of one paper, chair of a session or observer. Please submit a proposal using the form available (<https://www.atiner.gr/2022/FORM-REL.doc>).

Important Dates

- Abstract Submission: **31 January 2022**
- Acceptance of Abstract: 4 Weeks after Submission
- Submission of Paper: **25 April 2022**

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Social and Educational Program

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More information can be found here: <https://www.atiner.gr/social-program>

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The Five Ancient Criteria of Democracy: The Apotheosis of Equality

By Gregory T. Papanikos*

Democracy in ancient Athens was different from what is implemented today even in the most advanced democracies. To evaluate this difference, this paper presents five criteria of democracy and then applies them to ancient Athens and modern advanced democracies. In comparison and according to five criteria, modern democracies are inferior to what the eligible citizens of Ancient Athens enjoyed. The ancient Greek literature on the subject has identified five criteria of democracy which neither today nor in ancient times were fully satisfied. The democracy today satisfies some but not all five criteria. This was also true for the ancient (Athenian) democracy. They differ in which criteria they satisfied. Of course, each criterion is fulfilled to a certain extent and this may differentiate modern from ancient democracy. These issues are discussed in this paper.

Introduction

Democracy is a political system which was applied for the first time in ancient Athens in the 5th century BCE. People would gather together in a location, which was usually called *agora*, to do something in common. In the centuries preceding the 5th century BCE, these gatherings most probably served the purpose of the ruler (king), where announcements would be made about some important events. At the same time, judging from people's reactions, he could get an idea of what they thought. I have examined elsewhere ten such meetings which are mentioned in Papanikos (2021).¹ All these were far from being considered meetings of a city-state which was ruled by democracy.

This brings us to the issue discussed in this paper. What is democracy? This is discussed in the next section. What are the criteria to evaluate whether a political system is democratic or not? Reading the ancient literature, I have discerned five criteria of democracy which are discussed in five consecutive sections. These are *isegoria*, *isonomy*, *isocracy*, *isoteleia* and *isopoliteia*. The final section of the paper gives a synopsis of what was covered in the paper.

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1. G. T. Papanikos, "Collective Decision-Making in Homer's *Odyssey*," *Athens Journal of Mediterranean Studies* 7, no. 1 (2021): 59-84.

Democracy Defined

In 431 BCE, Thucydides,² citing Pericles' *Funeral Oration* on the occasion of honoring the first dead of the Peloponnesian War, defined the political system of ancient Athens as follows:

"... and the name is called **democracy** because not the few but the many rule"

"... καὶ ὄνομα μὲν διὰ τὸ μὴ ἐς ὀλίγους ἀλλ' ἐς πλείονας οἰκεῖν **δημοκρατία** κέκληται"

Before this definition is analyzed, it should be mentioned that this was not the first time the word democracy was used in a document, but this was the definition everybody cites when a reference is made to the beginning of democracy.

Herodotus, writing in 440 BCE, was most probably the first to use the term both as a noun and as a verb. The first mentioning of the word democracy is in Book 3 (Thaleia) of his 9-books history (later called by the names of the nine muses). The word *φυλάς* is translated here with the word clan and not with the word race:

"...from this marriage Cleisthenes was born who established the clans and **democracy** in Athens" (Bold emphasis added)

"...τούτων δὲ συνουκησάντων γίνεται Κλεισθένης τε ὁ τὰς φυλάς καὶ τὴν **δημοκρατίην** Ἀθηναίοισι καταστήσας" (Bold emphasis added)

And in Book 6 (Erato), Herodotus states:

"...here I should mention a greatest thing happened not to be believed by Greeks that Otanes expressed the opinion to the seven that Persia ought to be **democratized**. Mardonius abolish the Tyrants of Ionia and established **democracy** in the cities" (bold emphasis added).

"...ἐνθαῦτα μέγιστον θῶμα ἐρέω τοῖσι μὴ ἀποδεκομένοισι Ἑλλήνων Περσέων τοῖσι ἑπτὰ Ὀτάνεα γνώμην ἀποδέξασθαι ὥς χρεὸν εἴη **δημοκρατέεσθαι** Πέρσας· τοὺς γὰρ τυράννους τῶν Ἰώνων καταπαύσας πάντας ὁ Μαρδόνιος **δημοκρατίας** κατίστα ἐς τὰς πόλεις" (bold emphasis added).

2. Thucydides was writing history which he thought would be useful for all future generations because people tend to make the same mistakes over and over again. He made the strong assumption that people learn from their mistakes, especially the people of a democratic *politeia*. They do not. On the issue of history see Papanikos, *Δέκα Μαθήματα Δημοκρατίας* (Athens: ATINER, 2021); Papanikos, *The Use of History as a Tool of Policy-Making*. (Mimeo, 2006); Papanikos, *The Use of European History: Lessons for the 21st Century History* (Mimeo, 2005). These historical issues have been also discussed in Papanikos and N. C. J. Pappas, *European History: Lessons for the 21st Century. Essays from the 3rd International Conference on European History* (Athens: ATINER, 2006).

Two words in Pericles' definition have led to too many misunderstandings: *πλείονας* (many) and *οἰκεῖν* (govern, rule, manage, administer, direct). Democracy exists when all participate to direct (*οἰκεῖν*) the *politeia*. The word *οἰκεῖν* means that all directly (not through representatives) manage their *politeia*, e.g., its economy, its military, its erection of monuments of arts and worship, and its organization of religious, athletic, and educational festivities. In other words, all people govern and there is no need for anybody to govern for the people.³ Without the all, the many does not define democracy.

As it stands in the excerpt of Pericles, the word "many" is unfortunate because it gives rise to two interpretations. The first relates to the ever-present political mechanism of majority voting in electing representatives and/or rulers⁴ by all eligible citizens or decision making by any political organ, e.g., the parliament. It is a system where elected "representatives" of the people decide and rule on their behalf for a relatively long period of time which would have been considered contradictory to democracy, not only in ancient Athens, but also in such oligarchic political systems such as that of ancient Sparta. In ancient Athens, such a political system of ruling (*οἰκεῖν*) through "representatives" (a government for the people) would have been considered a mockery of democracy. Similarly, there is no such thing as "indirect" democracy. By its own merit, the word democracy means "direct," and there is no such thing as indirectly direct.

Apart from the misuse of the term democracy when the adjective "representative" is used, the word democracy has been abused by monarchies which call themselves democracies! Even worse, brutal dictators who stay in power for all their lives call their political system democracy, sometimes even a "people's" democracy. Many atrocities have been made in the name of people's democratic rule. This would have been ridiculous and outrageous in ancient Athens. Of course, a monarchy or a dictatorship can be a very good political system and a monarch or a dictator may be an excellent ruler, but it should be

3. In his **Gettysburg Address** (the Funeral Oration of the dead of the American Civil War in 1863), Abraham Lincoln, similar to Pericles' *Funeral Oration*, stated the famous phrase: "Government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the Earth." Many use this phrase as a praise of democracy. It is not. In a democracy there is no such thing as "for the people". There was nothing "for the people" in ancient Athens. By definition, democracy was and is the people! Again, it should be mentioned that democracy is not necessarily the best of all available alternatives. It is absurd, though, to call something democracy when it is not.

4. In many cases not even this is satisfied. In the 2016 USA presidential elections, the majority of the votes were casted for the candidate who was not elected. In 1963 the same occurred in Greece. The political party which obtained the relative majority of votes had fewer seats in the Greek Parliament and could not form a government. Modern "democracy" at its best! In both cases, the electoral law was applied. The system was legal; its political system was not a democracy.

clearly mentioned: it is not a democracy! It can be called a benevolent monarchy (dictatorship).

The second interpretation is considered as the authentic definition of democracy. If one reads the *Funeral Oration* carefully, it will come to the conclusion that Pericles meant that in a democracy all and not many (πλείονας) must participate in the decision-making process and in governing and ruling (οἰκεῖν) their *politeia*. It was in the middle of the 5th century BCE that, at last, all citizens of Athens could be elected (chosen, drawn) to all offices (archonships) without any exception.

Democracy exists when all citizens participate to decide on every issue relating to the direction and government of their *politeia*. And of course, decisions on every issue are taken by all citizens by majority voting. The word “many” does not mean majority voting for representatives (elect “political animals”), but majority voting to decide on specific issues (choose “inanimate beings”) and govern (direct) the everyday affairs with the participation of all citizens.

As in many contemporary political systems, in ancient Athens, majority voting at the level of the *ecclesia of demos* could change neither the fundamental (constitutional-traditional) laws (“πατρώοι νόμοι”), nor could implement laws which were against a minority. Actually, the *ecclesia of demos* voted on resolutions (ψηφίσματα) and not so much on laws. If someone wanted to change a law, he had to first request the permission of the *ecclesia of demos* with at least 6,000 casted votes (about 1/3 to 1/4 of the total members of the *ecclesia of demos*) to obtain the right to propose a law change. For those who did not follow this rule, there were harsh punishments, including the death penalty. In ancient Athens, this “illegal” process of changing the laws was called γραφή παρανόμων.

The above also explains why there was no need to distinguish the executive power (government), the legislature power and the judiciary. All these functions were performed by the full participation of all eligible citizens. This is not true in monarchies and oligarchies, albeit under certain circumstances these could be much better political systems than a democracy.

Isegoria

In ancient Athens, when the general assembly of eligible citizens convened (called *ecclesia of demos*), the herald would open up the deliberations, announcing with stentorian voice, “who wants to speak?” or in the original, “τίς ἀγορεύειν βούλεται;” The key word here is ἀγορεύειν which is more restrictive than the word “to speak,” and means “speak in the agora”. After all, even the non-citizens living and working in Athens such as slaves and metics could freely speak, as is mentioned by Xenophon.⁵ Speaking in the agora was a political right. Speaking

5. Xenophon (Pseudo), *Athineon Politeia* (5th century BCE), i12.

elsewhere was a social privilege. Citizens had the political right to address the assembly of eligible citizens who then would decide by voting, after listening to all speakers on the issues listed in the meeting's agenda. Thus, *isegoria* exists not only if you can speak, but if others who decide listen.

Many confuse *isegoria* with the wide-ranging ideal of freedom of speech and freedom of expression.⁶ Such freedoms are definitely a characteristic of democracy, but where and when this right is exercised distinguishes a democracy from a non-democracy. In a democracy, *isegoria* means the right of every eligible citizen to speak freely and frankly only before a political body that matters, i.e., the *ecclesia of demos*, at a specified time and place, with a specific agenda and a well-determined audience (eligible citizens). The *ecclesia of demos* decides on all political issues and appoints rulers of the *politeia* with the participation of all citizens. In ancient Athens, democracy meant freedom to decide, or in the words of Pericles, "... we freely decide for our common things."⁷

Thus, *isegoria* requires three things. Firstly, it demands freedom to speak not just anywhere, but before the political organ (institution) that decides and rules. Secondly, all eligible citizens must participate in this body, otherwise it is not a democracy. Thirdly, all must have the right to vote freely during the specific deliberations of this political organ for all the issues that relate to the ruling, governing, directing, and managing of their *politeia*.

Today many confuse the meaning of *isegoria* with the lack of censorship. The freedom of press is a manifestation of this misunderstanding. Actually, the so-called freedom of press violates the criterion of *isegoria* because (a) the audience of the mass media (press) neither decides nor rules, at least directly (b) each citizen does not have the same right or probability to appear in the mass media and (c) the audience is not what should be in a democracy.

The ancient Athenian who spoke in the Pnyx (the place under the Parthenon where the *ecclesia of demos* was convening) was free to speak, but most importantly to be listened by all those, who, at the end, would vote on a specific issue, e.g., go to war. Speaking without the relevant (decision-making) audience to listen is not what was meant by *isegoria*. In contrast, today freedom of expression is meant by being able to speak at any place, at any time and through any medium. The question is who listens? This is far from what the ancient Athenians meant by *isegoria*. In ancient Athens, democracy and freedom to decide on political issues went hand in hand. Today freedom to speak does not extend to the freedom to decide on each and every single political issue or a "common thing" in Pericles'

6. In ancient and modern Greek, the word *παρρησία* is used to describe the right of free speech with courage and frankness. If people do not express their opinion with *παρρησία*, should they be allowed to have the right to speak? In a democracy they should not.

7. "... ἐλευθέρως δὲ τὰ τε πρὸς τὸ κοινὸν πολιτεύομεν". There is a lot of discussion of the concept of freedom, both its negative (private life) and positive (public life) aspect. This is important, but goes beyond the scope of the arguments made here.

words. Instead, the freedom is restricted to elect someone who, for many years, will decide on behalf of the citizens for each and every issue of concern to all. These elected representatives have the freedom to speak before a political body which decides, e.g., a parliament, a congress.

In a democracy, freedom to speak in public should not be allowed anywhere,⁸ but only in the *ecclesia of demos*. This is the political body eligible to make decisions with the participation of all citizens. Those who speak in the mass media are decided by an oligarchy. This definitely is not what is meant by *isegoria* in a democracy. Mass media's "audience" includes non-eligible citizens which is another violation of *isegoria*. The audience of the so-called "free" media and "free" press cannot be identified as the decisive and ruling political body for many reasons, most importantly the exclusion of children. For pedagogical purposes, children should not be allowed to participate in the deliberations of the "free" press. After all, Socrates had the freedom to speak in the Athenian *ecclesia of demos*, but did not have the right to "corrupt" the youth, i.e., the freedom to publicly speak to a young audience.

It can be argued that the so-called "free" press today corrupts not only the youth, but all citizens. The "free" press speaks without *παρρησία*, as this was meant by Isocrates, i.e., with impunity, and not as it was meant in Euripides and Demosthenes, i.e., frankness and straightness. The most important manifestation of this corruption is fake news that started as a joke in New York in 1938, continued as a tragedy with Hitler's Minister of Public Enlightenment and Propaganda, Joseph Goebbels, and has come full circle today with news that are tragically comic, which use sophisticated techniques of "enlightening" the public. Unfortunately, many people, without gnosis and virtue, believe and use these "news" because the audience is similar to what pseudo-Xenophon was describing 2,500 years ago for the ancient Athens *ecclesia of demos*: ἐν δὲ τῷ δήμῳ ἀμαθία τε πλείστη καὶ ἀταξία καὶ πονηρία. Translating for today's audience of social media, radios, televisions and newspapers: *the audience of the mass media* (δῆμῳ) is *mostly ignorant* (ἀμαθία), *in mess* (ἀταξία) and *sly* (πονηρία). Many uncultivated and ignorant citizens do not have the virtue (*arete*) to choose between real and fake news. In addition, most of them feel comfortable with fake news because they square well with their own ignorance and most importantly with their own prejudices. In a democracy, citizens without gnosis must be excluded from deciding and ruling. Of course, citizens can choose to remain ignorant, but they should not be allowed to rule, to govern, to manage and to direct the *politeia*.

8. There is a good and simple reason for this. If public speaking in a restricted audience includes arguments against other people who are not there, then the whole process violates the criterion of *isegoria* because the people who are "accused" as holding an opposite view are not there to defend themselves and their views. Today this has taken a dramatic twist with the fake and manipulated news that circulate through the social media with a speed that the ancient God Hermes would envy.

However, fake news is not a new phenomenon. Its technology has been changing. In ancient Athens, the spread of fake news might have been slower, but the damage was as dire as it is today. The eighth character, out of thirty, of Theophrastus referred to the people who spread fake news. He called fake news *λογοποιία*⁹ and defined them as a synthesis of untrue (false) words and actions whom the spreader wishes to be believed.¹⁰ The interesting thing is that immediately Theophrastus provides an example of a spreader which is not gossiping, but fake news about a military operation.

A final comment on *isegoria* relates to freedom of thought. In ancient Athens, as in modern democracies, the eligibility of citizens to speak in the assembly was determined by age, gender and citizenship status. Only Athenian male citizens above a certain age were eligible to participate, speak and vote. The only training required was a military service. However, Plato was first to point out in the fourth century BCE, followed by John Stuart Mill in the 19th century and John Dewey in the 20th century, that *isegoria* (democracy) without education was not possible. Knowledge is what makes people free from any superstitions and ignorance. *Isegoria* requires freedom of thought and this can be obtained only through education.

Isegoria is so important that it is used to define democracy itself. If this criterion of democracy is satisfied, then there is no need for the “masses” to get wild (*ἄταξία*). The criterion of *isegoria* implies that there is no need to organize political demonstrations and political gatherings of any kind because every citizen has the right and the opportunity to speak before the largest and most important political congregation ever, i.e., *the ecclesia of demos*. No need to demonstrate or lobby. No need for civil disobedience. No need for filibusters in the representative political bodies. *Isegoria* makes these mechanisms to affect decisions and make rulings obsolete and they should be abolished.

Isegoria gives the right to all citizens to participate in a decisive political body, but also the opportunity to persuade the *ecclesia of demos* to take a particular course of action in order to rule the *politeia*. For example, going or not to war is an important decision, and in a democracy, this must be taken only by the *ecclesia of demos*. Similarly, the USA President’s executive order to ban immigration could be the result of a decision made by the eligible USA citizens. No pressure groups (lobby) are needed if the *ecclesia of demos* does its duty which is what is required from a democracy. All important issues can be debated and voted upon by all eligible citizens. According to *isegoria* all those who want to speak will speak. Today this can be achieved through the technology of the internet and social media, if they are organized to serve a contemporary virtual *ecclesia of demos*. In a

9. The meaning of the word *λογοποιία* is writing a speech and can have a bad and a good connotation. A bad connotation implies writing something which is not-true.

10. I translated this paragraph from Theophrastus, *Characters* (8th character) “Ἡ δὲ λογοποιία ἐστὶ σύνθεσις ψευδῶν λόγων καὶ πράξεων, ὧν [πιστεύεσθαι] βούλεται ὁ λογοποιῶν”.

way, everybody can “demonstrate” and “lobby” for his/her opinion on the issue from the comfort of his home without the need of a physical presence.

Isonomy

Isonomy means that all citizens must be equal before the law. The word *isonomy* is a compound word. The word *iso* means equal and is widely used in Greek as well as in the English language. The word *nomos* has two interpretations. The first has a straightforward interpretation and means the law. Thus, *isonomy* meant that everybody is equal before the law. The second interpretation of *nomos* is more complicated and it can mean share, distribute, and allocate. The question is, equal share of what? Some would argue that it means an equal distribution of (political) power. Thus, it is another word of (synonymous to) democracy. Notwithstanding these arguments, *isonomy* here is interpreted as equality before the law.

In ancient Athens, there was a clear distinction between private and public life. In his *Funeral Oration*, Pericles states that in Athens, “...all citizens are equal before the law for their private differences.”¹¹ Democracy must also guarantee that all citizens and non-citizens alike are equal before the law. In ancient Athens, non-citizens (*metoikoi*¹² and *douloi*¹³) were equal before the law for their private affairs with citizens and non-citizens. With few exceptions, such as ostracism, the *ecclesia* of *demos* could not adopt a law which applied to one man only (*ἐπ’ ἀνδρὶ*). And in any case, ostracism was only for the male Athenian citizens. Athenian citizens had other obligations as well such as serving as soldiers and fighting and dying for their homeland. Being a citizen had privileges, but obligations as well.

To a certain extent, most contemporary, advanced countries satisfy the criterion of *isonomy*, but by itself does not determine the existence of democracy. *Isonomy* can exist in oligarchic and monarchic political systems as well. Ancient Sparta had *isonomy*. The rule of law is a necessary, but not a sufficient, condition for a democracy. For example, a monarch or a tyrant can guarantee *isonomy* for all of its subjects. In ancient Athens, Peisistratus, as Aristotle mentions in his *Athenian Politeia* and Herodotus in his *History Books*, was a tyrant (dictator) very popular during his rule because he applied *isonomy*.¹⁴ In some cases, he even

11. “...μέτεστι δὲ κατὰ μὲν τοὺς νόμους πρὸς τὰ ἴδια διάφορα πᾶσι τὸ ἴσον”.

12. Similar to what landed immigrants are today in many advanced countries.

13. This is translated as slaves, but in Ancient Athens the word meant work as it still does today in modern Greek. Pseudo-Xenophon writing about the Athenian *Politeia* around 420s BCE “complaints” that citizens in the Athenian democracy could not mistreat them (*metoikoi* and *douloi*) because they dress the same way as the citizens and there is the danger to mistake some citizens as *metoikoi* or *douloi*.

14. Aristotle, *Athineon Politeia* (4th century BCE); Herodotus, *Histories (Istoriais)* (5th century BCE).

discriminated in favor of the poor and against the rich, which some people would consider, for some unexplained reasons, fair. Actually, in Sparta--an oligarchic system with two kings--the rule of law was stronger and was respected by all, especially by the archons.¹⁵ Some authoritarian regimes are better suited to apply the rule of law and of course *isonomy*, especially in protecting all citizens from criminal activities.

In contemporary advanced societies, the biggest threat to *isonomy* does not normally come from the political process itself, but from the judiciary. Since antiquity, corruption of judges existed in both democracies and non-democracies. It is well known that Hesiod's inspiration to write his monumental work in the mid-8th century BCE was a response to corrupted archons (kings), who, at the time, served as judges as well. Hesiod writes the following in his *Works and Days* referring to a property dispute with his brother:¹⁶

"... many you seize by bribing the judges who this way they want to judge"

"... ἀρπάζων ἐφόρεις μέγα κυδαίνων βασιλῆας δωροφάγους, οἱ τήνδε δίκην ἐθέλουσι δικάσσαι" (*Work and Days*, 38-39).

How then can citizens be protected from corrupted judges? In ancient Athens, during the democracy years, an exemplary way was found to account for corrupted judges. They made the cost of corruption unbearably high because of the large number of citizens who served as judges. In addition, judges were not known beforehand. They were drawn from a list of 6,000 eligible citizens in the morning of the court hearings. This procedure made the transaction and monetary cost of bribing the judges prohibitive. Moreover, and most importantly, an attempt by a litigant to bribe judges could not be kept secret, if someone attempted to bribe all 6,000 judges. This system assured as much *isonomy* as one can get from judges. And from the history of ancient Athens, during its glorious years of democracy, there is no serious report of a court decision which was the result of bribing the judges. There are many though who criticized decisions taken by judges implying wrongdoings, especially in comedies played in the Athenian theaters.

In ancient Athens, as in the present world, protection from lawyers was not possible. The rich could buy the services of skilled lawyers, called orators

15. Xenophon, in his *Lacedaemonian Politeia*, wrote, "But everyone knows that in Sparta all are convinced to obey the authorities and the laws" ["Ἀλλὰ γὰρ ὅτι μὲν ἐν Σπάρτῃ μάλιστα πείθονται ταῖς ἀρχαῖς τε καὶ τοῖς νόμοις, ἴσμεν ἅπαντες"]. The word *πείθονται* is translated as "convinced to obey" as opposed to "obey" only because this better express the meaning of what Xenophon explained in Chapter 8 of his book where this quote comes from.

16. Most classicists agree that Hesiod was contemporary to Homer and date both of them around the mid-8th century BCE. Homer's political world was that of a monarchy. Hesiod's *Works and Days* can be interpreted as a challenge to the power of monarchs. Hesiod's warns the monarchs to be fair because the mighty Gods have an eye on them.

(*ρήτορες*), to draft their court speeches because lawyers could not appear before the Athenian court. On the other hand, the rich were subject to an unusual type of unfair treatment. Athenian judges were particularly harsh in fining the rich because their stipend, as judges, depended on these fines.

In concluding this section, it should be emphasized that the difference between isonomy in ancient Athens and in contemporary political systems is a difference of degree and not of qualitative substance.

Isoteleia

Organized societies exist because they provide specific services to their citizens. This is the beginning of Aristotle's book on *Politics*.¹⁷ Societies must spend on what is called "public goods". *Isoteleia* requires that all citizens ought to contribute to public spending proportional to their income and wealth (property), but a *politeia* can find other revenue sources as well. This is well documented in Xenophon's excellent book on *Public Revenue Sources* (*Πόροι*).¹⁸ Two centuries earlier, Solon's reforms in the 6th century BCE were based on wealth (income).¹⁹ He grouped all citizens into four classes based on wealth (income) and not on heredity. Each class had specific economic obligations to the *politeia*. Similarly, their political rights as citizens were different. The American Revolution's "No Taxation without Representation" was in Solon's years, "Representation Analogous to Taxation".

A large portion of public spending in ancient Athens was allocated to defense, to public infrastructure and to cultural activities. In a democracy, *isoteleia* implies that public money is used efficiently, effectively and with transparency. This was guaranteed by the unique process which existed in ancient Athens to finance major public works. The rich of ancient Athens were obliged to finance the building and the maintenance of military equipment (naval ships, horses, weapons etc.) and bear the costs of various educational (cultural), sport and religious festivities called *liturgies*. This direct way of financing public spending improved the efficiency, the effectiveness, the competitiveness and the democracy (transparency) of public spending.²⁰

17. Aristotle, *Politics* (4th century BCE).

18. Xenophon, *Revenue Sources* (*Poroi*) (4th century BCE).

19. Taxes on wealth have been debated ever since the Solon's years. In political circumstances where tax evasion is ubiquitous, taxing wealth is the best tax policy. On this issue see Papanikos, "Taxing Wealth and Only Wealth in an Advanced Economy with an Oversized Informal Economy and Vast Tax Evasion: The Case of Greece," *Vierteljahrshefte zur Wirtschaftsforschung, DIW Berlin* 84, no. 3 (2015): 85-106, for a modern application of Solon's tax system.

20. In modern Greece, as in many other countries, this system is applied on a voluntary basis. Greek tycoons have financed the building of hospitals, universities,

This reduced the misuse of rich people's taxes because public spending on a particular item was directly managed by the one who paid for it. As a matter of tax fairness (*isoteleia*), the rich could claim that they were other Athenians, richer than themselves, who could pay more or bear the burden of financing a public project. In this case, it was possible to have an exchange of properties. Anyone who claimed that they were not as rich as someone else would be asked to exchange his property with him. This was an excellent way of evaluating and comparing wealth among Athenian citizens.

Isoteleia is another issue which modern political systems' performance can be considered acceptable even though there is no perfect tax system. In the relevant literature of democracy, *isoteleia* does not attract the attention of the other three criteria. This is unfortunate because, in a democracy, *isoteleia* plays another more important role. Given that all citizens must participate in the decision-making process and in ruling (managing, governing) their *politeia*, penury should not prevent them from doing so. Poor citizens must be compensated for the loss of their labor income when they serve their *politeia* as members of the *ecclesia of demos* and/or as one of the many archons and judges. In today's economic jargon, in a democracy, *isoteleia* must include a negative income tax, i.e., subsidies and wages to participate in the decision-making process and in serving as archons. In ancient Athens, during the years of its golden age of democracy, circa mid-5th century BCE, all citizens were compensated to participate in the *ecclesia of demos*.

In conclusion, democracy without *isoteleia* is not possible. However, there is a negative aspect to it as well. If *isoteleia* permits the participation of citizens with low opportunity cost (poor unemployed people), then the effect of the lack of pedagogy on democracy becomes evident and very perilous. The best way to describe it is using the words of Pseudo-Xenophon in his *Athenian Politeia* of 420s BCE:

...in the masses mostly exists ignorance and mess and slyness: penury leads to obscenities and to rudeness and to ignorance because some people lack money
 ... ἐν δὲ τῷ δήμῳ ἀμαθία τε πλείστη καὶ ἀταξία καὶ πονηρία: ἥ τε γὰρ πενία αὐτοὺς μᾶλλον ἄγει ἐπὶ τὰ αἰσχροῦ καὶ ἡ ἀπαιδευσία καὶ ἡ ἀμαθία <ῆ> δι' ἔνδειαν χρημάτων ἐνίοις τῶν ἀνθρώπων

This is a remarkable statement of the cause-and-effect relationship of lack of money (*ἐνδειαν χρημάτων*) on penury (*πενία*) and the effect of poverty on (a) obscenities (*αἰσχροῦ*); (b) ignorance (*ἀμαθία*); and (c) rudeness (*ἀπαιδευσία*). It is this penury (*πενία*) that leads some of the poor people of the Athenian *demos* to become victims of demagogues and populists. And, in ancient Athens, as in the contemporary world, there was not a short supply of demagogues. *Isoteleia* then must not only assure that poor people are able to participate in the *ecclesia of*

museums and art centers. They are done efficiently and mostly on time. Nobody can embezzle this funding because he will cheat himself.

demos, but guarantee that they are receiving the necessary pedagogy to fulfill their duty as citizens.

In ancient Athens, drama (tragedy and comedy), various religious and cultural festivities and the athletic games played this pedagogical role. Poor people were subsidized to attend the plays at the theaters and participate in the various festivities of ancient Athens. This was a learning process which promoted gnosis with virtue-ethos (*arete*). There were two other institutions which promoted pedagogy. The private schools of philosophers and the private symposiums organized by the Athenian intellectuals of the time could not be attended by poor and ignorant people.²¹ Unlike Sparta, ancient Athens never implemented a pedagogical system of free education.²² Plato's dialogue, entitled *Protagoras*, gives an excellent discussion on the education system of ancient Athens; both its means and its purpose.²³ If a strong free pedagogy was provided by the state, it would have made democracy immune to all criticisms that people without gnosis and ethos (*arete*) were allowed to decide (vote) in the *ecclesia of demos*, and rule as archons and judges. This aspect has been the most important criticism raised against democracy both in ancient Athens and in the modern world and is further discussed in Papanikos (2021).²⁴

Isoteleia was not perfect in ancient Athens. Unlike *isonomy*, there were many accusations against archons of embezzling and misusing public money and avoiding paying their due taxes. Even Pericles and his well-known friends, who built the Parthenon and other monuments on the Acropolis hill, were accused of mishandling and wasting public money. Unlike what Pericles mentions in his *Funeral Oration*, sycophants were not absent in a democracy. After all, the word sycophancy originates from ancient Athens. Democracy provided the opportunity to increase the number of sycophants because *isegoria* gave the freedom of speech which was misused by all those who lacked gnosis and ethos.

21. The problem was not poverty, but ignorance. Socrates was not rich.

22. In ancient Athens there was a public system of education for all its youth but it was only for military purposes for the males from 18 to 20 years old.

23. Plato, *Protagoras* (5th-4th century BCE).

24. Papanikos, *Δέκα Μαθήματα Δημοκρατίας*, 2021.

Isocracy

All organized societies must have archons who will manage the *politeia*. *Isocracy* implies that every eligible citizen must have the same probability to be selected as an archon. Most archons in ancient Athens were selected by a drawing system from a qualified pool of eligible citizens serving for a short period, usually a year. This process not only assured that all citizens had the same probability to be selected, but as many possible could be selected given the short duration and the large number of positions to be filled. In any case, all archons were assessed for their eligibility, arete (ethos) and service to their country by the *vouli* (parliament) and the court of Athens. Aristotle left us a vivid testimony of this assessment in his *Athenian Politeia*.

A number of conclusions can be reached from reading Aristotle's masterpiece on the history and characteristics of the *Athenian Politeia*. The entire assessment was based on three criteria: eligibility, ethos (arete) and civic obligations. Firstly, the archons were asked to verify if they were Athenian citizens. Only those whose parents both were Athenian citizens were qualified. Secondly, the candidates were asked whether they respected the Gods and whether they were treating well their parents. Thirdly, they were asked if they were paying their taxes and had served their military obligations. At the end of this process, anybody was called to say anything against the candidate if there was something to be said. Then, two separate political bodies voted: *vouli* and *court*, with two different processes.

The system of having many archons who served for short time periods had additional advantages. Firstly, during the same time period, citizens were serving as rulers (one of the nine archons) and as ruled citizens. As ruled citizens, they should respect the archons who ruled, and of course in return citizens would respect them as rulers. Secondly, since more and more people served as rulers, they acquired more gnosis to be used as citizens to be ruled. Thirdly, the random process restrained any arrogant and egoistic behavior by the rulers because their status was the result of luck. *Hubris* was something that in ancient Greece was considered as an action against Gods (immoral behavior) and sooner or later *nemesis* will come. In ancient Athens the *ecclesia of demos* was very strict on such behaviors and citizens who were considered dangerous to society were ostracized.

Thus, *isocracy* means that all have the same right and equal probability to serve in public office. Is this the best solution? Of course, it is not. However, Pericles in his *Funeral Oration* stated that in the Athenian democracy there was:

"... for public offices, everyone wherever prospers, not because where he belongs, but because of his ability, even if he is poor, if he has something good to offer to the city, he is not prevented from serving as an officer"

"... κατὰ δὲ τὴν ἀξίωσιν, ὡς ἕκαστος ἔν τῳ εὐδοκίμῳ, οὐκ ἀπὸ μέρους τὸ πλεον ἐς τὰ κοινὰ ἢ ἀπ' ἀρετῆς προτιμᾶται, οὐδ' αὖ κατὰ πενίαν, ἔχων γέ τι ἀγαθὸν δοῦναι τὴν πόλιν, ἀξιώματος ἀφανείᾳ κεκώλυται"

The above statement is really very difficult to interpret because archons were randomly selected. However, not all archons were selected with this process. In ancient Athens *isocracy* did not preclude those who were good at something (ὡς ἕκαστος ἔν τῳ εὐδοκιμεῖ) to serve the public as archons (κατὰ δὲ τὴν ἀξίωσιν). This was definitely the case for military leaders, and in the 4th century BCE the archons were responsible for public finances. Pericles himself served almost every year as an elected archon of the military (στρατηγός) by the *ecclesia of demos*. And this had nothing to do with someone's economic situation (οὐδ' αὖ κατὰ πενίαν). After all, Pericles was not poor, but not very rich either.

Isopoliteia

If one reads the ancient literature of history, philosophy (includes politics) and drama (comedy and tragedy), many excerpts will be found on how to treat the other *politeia*. If they are treated equal, then this system of international relations can be called *isopoliteia*.

There are two issues here which might be of interest from democracy's point of view. Firstly, does a democracy have a moral political right to spread democracy even by the use of force? It seems that in ancient Athens such an idea was not rejected. After all, democratic city-states were the allies of the *politeia* of ancient Athens. Another aspect of the use of force is whether a democratic city-state has the moral obligation to protect a democratic city-state when another state invades it? Secondly, does a democratic city-state justify on ethical political behaviour to attack a smaller and therefore weaker city-state? The ancient literature is ambiguous about this issue even though at its peak of democracy in the second half of the 5th century BCE Athens used its military power for its own advantage. The example of the detriment of the island of Melos is a characteristic implementation of what is today called political realism. The famous Melos dialogue cited in Thucydides' *Peloponnesian War* is an excellent example of the power of the mighty empires.²⁵ Since then the same story repeats itself and it has become what one might call the "iron law of international relations". The iron law is exactly the opposite from what one would normally expect from an ideal democratic state.

Equal treatment of other *politeias* by a democratic *politeia* neither existed in the alleged democracy of Ancient Athens nor it exists in the democracies of the modern world.

25. Thucydides, *Peloponnesian War* (5th century BCE).

Synopsis

Summarizing the above discussion, a democracy must satisfy all five criteria otherwise it is not a democracy. It can be something else, even better than a democracy. A better system is Plato's *utopian politeia*, if could ever become a reality. Plato's experience in establishing it in the Greek city-state of Syracuse was a dishonorable disappointment.

All five criteria can be measured using standard quantitative indices for each one of them. Then, an aggregation algorithm can be used to add them up to create one index (measure) of democracy. A composite index of all four can be constructed which will determine the so-called quality of democracy in each *politeia*. However, adding up the scores of the four sub-indices is complicated. Usually, the summing up is a weighted average of the sum of the scores of the four indices, i.e., a simple additive aggregation. This index then can be used to compare political systems that satisfy all the criteria of democracy. This will be a weak measure of the quality of democracy.

A strong axiom of democracy would require that the aggregation is multiplicative. It would imply that any zero performance in one of the five criteria nullifies the aggregate index of democracy. The construction of such measurable indices goes beyond the scope of this paper and most importantly beyond the author's personal talent. In Pericles' words: *ὥς ἕκαστος ἐν τῷ εὐδοκίμει*. At least where he thinks he can be fruitful. Does democracy have a future? Yes, but it requires educated citizens, or better citizens with pedagogy, as I argued in Papanikos (2022).²⁶

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The Horrors of War in the History of German Literature: From Heinrich Wittenwiler and Hans Jacob Christoffel von Grimmelshausen to Rainer Maria Remarque

*By Albrecht Classen**

As terrible as wars have always been, for the losers as well as for the winners, considering the massive killings, destruction, and general horror resulting from it all, poets throughout time have responded to this miserable situation by writing deeply moving novels, plays, poems, epic poems, and other works. The history of Germany, above all, has been filled with a long series of wars, but those have also been paralleled by major literary works describing those wars, criticizing them, and outlining the devastating consequences, here disregarding those narratives that deliberately idealized the military events. While wars take place on the ground and affect people, animals, objects, and nature at large, poets have always taken us to imaginary worlds where they could powerfully reflect on the causes and outcomes of the brutal operations. This paper takes into view some major German works from the early fifteenth through the early twentieth century in order to identify a fundamental discourse that makes war so valuable for history and culture, after all. Curiously, as we will recognize through a comparative analysis, some of the worst conditions in human history have produced some of the most aesthetically pleasing and most meaningful artistic or literary texts. So, as this paper will illustrate, the experience of war, justified or not, has been a cornerstone of medieval, early modern, and modern literature. However, it is far from me to suggest that we would need wars for great literature to emerge. On the contrary, great literature serves as the public conscience fighting against wars and the massive violence resulting from it.

War and Literature: A Paradoxical Correlation, Past and Present

While medieval poets tended to present rather glorious images of war because the knights could gain much glory in the fighting, already writers in the late Middle Ages realized a significant paradigm shift. In the early fifteenth century, for instance, the Constance public notary Heinrich Wittenwiler wrote a most curious allegorical verse narrative, *Der Ring*, in which we are confronted with the world of peasants who do not know how to operate rationally and so quickly turn to violence, which then explodes into a war in which the entire population of the village Lappenhäusen is decimated. Wittenwiler's text might have been too apocalyptic or too foresightful for its time, since it has survived in only one manuscript. Quantity of text transmission, however, is not necessarily a good benchmark to determine the quality of a literary work, as we know from numerous examples in medieval literature.

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The situation was already very different in the seventeenth century when Christopher von Grimmelshausen created his basically anti-war novel *Simplicissimus* (1668), reacting to the consequences of the Thirty Years' War (1618–1648). This novel became so popular that many translations and adaptations in other European languages appeared in print. Here we encounter brutal images of war and destruction affecting an entire world, all embedded in a biographical framework. Finally, this paper will address Erich Maria Remarque's *Im Westen nichts Neues* (1928/1929) in which the horrors of the First World War gain tremendous profile from the perspective of its protagonist, Paul Bäumer.

Although these three literary masterpieces differ in many ways from each other, at a closer analysis we discover how much the terror of war can also produce outstanding literary works of a similar kind throughout time. Even though Wittenwiler's narrative did not enjoy any significant popularity (one manuscript only), he addressed the very same issue as Remarque ca. 600 years later, and so belongs to the same tradition of, simply put, anti-war literature.

On the one hand, there is the horror of war, with its endless suffering and massive deaths, on the other, there are poets who have raised their voices throughout time and assumed the highly ennobling function of turning into their people's or nations' consciousness. On the other, and rather oddly, war, as terrible as it has always been, at least as perceived by the victims, has thus also served as a catalyst for some of the best or most effective literary products, that is, fictional texts, poems, art works, movies, and sculpture in which sharp and poignant criticism of war could be formulated.

The history of mankind has almost always been determined by war, if we think of the war between the Greeks and the Trojans, which Homer described so powerfully in his *Iliad*, then of the medieval crusades, which countless chroniclers and poets mirrored in their works, thereupon the Thirty Years' War, probably best documented by the famous German Baroque poet Christopher von Grimmelshausen, or the First World War, which Erich Maria Remarque documented in a most gruesome and despondent manner.

The Napoleonic wars found their probably most vivid spokesperson in Leo Tolstoy when he wrote his *War and Peace*, published in 1869. Stephen Crane's *The Red Badge of Courage* (1895) ominously mirrored the American Civil War (1861–1865); Ernest Hemingway's *A Farewell to Arms* dramatized, if not idealized, his experiences in World War I (1914–1918), which found a stunning parallel in Ernst Jünger's *In Stahlgewittern* (1920); and Tim O'Brien documented with his *The Things They Carried* (1990) the Vietnam War (1955–1975). The Second World War (1939–1945) was reflected, from an American perspective, in countless works, such as Evelyn Waugh's *Put Out More Flags* (1942), Henry Green's *Caught* (1943), James Hanley's *No Directions* (1943), Patrick Hamilton's *The Slaves of Solitude* (1947), and Elizabeth Bowen's *The Heat of the Day* (1949), which was richly matched by German contributions, such as Walter Kempowski's *Das Echolot – Abgesang '45* (2005). To this we could add a long list of works in many European

languages, and then widen the perspective and incorporate world literature from throughout time because no country, no culture, no religion, and no language group has ever lived without experiencing military conflicts.

Tragically, the world has witnessed countless more wars since 1945, but this has not daunted writers all over the world to respond in kind, criticizing, debating, idealizing, and questioning war itself. We are facing almost a kind of ying/yang in terms of war, as some of the worst experiences of people—in war—have produced some of the best forms of literary reflections and imaginations. This phenomenon has been a global one, whether we turn our attention to Japanese, Chinese, Australian, Nigerian, or Argentinian literature. The present paper aims at a critical analysis of the fictional discourse on war in the history of German literature from the late Middle Ages to the 1920s, not in order to offer a comprehensive overview, which would be impossible at any rate, but with the purpose of unearthing the fundamental function of literature itself to come to terms with human suffering and the ability to rally enough resolve to fight the consequences and impact of war on human life and to find a way out of the horrors of military operations.

Poets against War: The Literary Protest against Barbarity against Humankind

It would not be difficult to find much literature from throughout time in which wars were glorified as the struggle of the fittest against the weaker ones, as a triumphal effort to resist an evil or outside force, or as a medium for the male protagonist to prove his, sometimes also her, heroic accomplishments and achievements defending the own people or country. Ancient, medieval, and modern heroic literature illustrates this phenomenon impressively, and then, quite understandably in light of the specific genre criteria, only questions regarding guilt, innocence, honor, and power matter (Homer's *Iliad*, *Beowulf*, *Le Chanson de Roland*, *Nibelungenlied*, *El poema de mio Cid*, etc.)²⁷ Nevertheless, the critical voices against war have traditionally received a much higher level of recognition amongst scholars (and readers?), representing deep challenges against the military and economic powers and the social and religious establishments. The public readership, however, might have preferred texts that have promoted war, after all, if we consider the world of bestsellers glorifying war²⁸. War and all

27. David Konstan and Kurt A. Raafaub (Eds.), *Epic and History*. The Ancient World: Comparative Histories (Maldon, MA, and Oxford: Blackwell, 2010).

28. For many cases in modern literature, see Samuel Hyne, *On War and Writing* (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 2018); cf. also Alex Houen and Jan-Melissa Schramm (Eds.), *Sacrifice and Modern War Literature: From the Battle of Waterloo to the War on Terror* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018); Hélène Baty-Delalande and

related military operations have always challenged people deeply as to their ethical, moral, religious, political, and economic justifications, especially on the side of the losers, whereas the victors have, of course, tendentiously basked in the glory of their accomplishments — *vae victis*, as the Romans used to say, here not counting, tragically, the millions of dead soldiers.

Overall, most literary texts produced throughout time have focused primarily on just a short list of universal topics, such as love and death, God and the meaning of life, the quest for truth, and then, most ominously, on war.²⁹ Insofar as war with its massive killing of soldiers and also civilians has always had a deeply traumatic impact on the survivors, irrespective of the outcome for either side, it is quite understandable that the poetic voices have regularly focused on this issue.³⁰ This fact then allows us to embark on a critical discussion of three masterpieces in German literature where war assumes a central role and is viewed in most critical terms. Each work has already been discussed from many different perspectives, but they all can be identified as major contributions to one and the same discourse and thus deserve to be examined in connection with each other. With respect to military actions throughout time, previous literary-historical research has commonly focused on one century, on one major war, particularly World War I and II, whereas here I will bring together poetic comments from the late

Maxime Decout (Eds.), *Écrits de guerre: laboratoires esthétiques*. *Revue de Sciences Humaines*, 326 (Villeneuve d'Ascq: Septentrion, 2017); Jörg Rogge (Ed.), *Kriegserfahrungen erzählen: Geschichts- und literaturwissenschaftliche Perspektiven*. *Mainzer historische Kulturwissenschaften*, 37 (Bielefeld: transcript, 2017). For war literature in Nazi Germany, see Gerrit Lungershausen, *Weltkrieg mit Worten: Kriegsprosa im Dritten Reich 1933 bis 1940* (Wiesbaden: J. B. Metzler, 2017). But every war has triggered the production of its own literary responses, supporting or opposing the efforts by the individual war parties.

29. For a useful overview, see Ursula Homann, *Der Krieg in der Literatur*. Retrieved from: <http://www.ursulahomann.de/DerKriegInDerLiteratur/kap001.html>; famous Erich Auerbach also offered most insightful reflections and a survey in his essay "Literatur und Krieg," Erich Auerbach, *Kultur als Politik: Aufsätze aus dem Exil zur Geschichte und Zukunft Europas (1938–1947)*, ed. Christian Rivoletti (Constance: Konstanz University Press, 2014), here quoted from the online version at: <https://faustkultur.de/2025-0-Auerbach-Literatur-und-Krieg.html>; see also Manuel Mackasare, "Krieg und Literatur," *akademische Blätter*. Retrieved from: <https://aka-blaetter.de/krieg-und-literatur/>. He focuses, however, only on Ernst Jünger, Walter Flex, and Erich Maria Remarque, all reflecting the First World War. See now the survey by Catherine Calloway, "War in Literature and Drama," *Oxford Bibliographies* Jan. 11 (2018). Retrieved from: <https://bit.ly/3wWfU3d>. [All Accessed March 30, 2021]

30. Christian Rohr, Ursula Bieber and Katharina Zeppezauer-Wachauer (Eds.) *Krisen, Kriege, Katastrophen: Zum Umgang mit Angst und Bedrohung im Mittelalter*. *Interdisziplinäre Beiträge zu Mittelalter und Früher Neuzeit*, 3 (Heidelberg: Universitätsverlag Winter, 2018). The contributors examine possible approaches to the topics of crises, wars, and catastrophes, using a variety of linguistic and literary data that do not necessarily concern us here.

Middle Ages, the Baroque, and the early twentieth century (Weimar Republic), probing each time how war or military actions are described and treated in literary terms in order to reach an ethical and moral assessment.

In the volume entitled *War and Literature*, ed. by Laura Ashe and Ian Patterson, “the contributors reflect on the uneasy yet symbiotic relations of war and writing, from medieval to modern literature. War writing emerges in multiple forms, celebratory and critical, awed and disgusted; the rhetoric of inexpressibility fights its own battle with the urgent necessity of representation, record and recognition. This is shown to be true even to the present day: whether mimetic or metaphorical, literature that concerns itself overtly or covertly with the real pressures of war continues to speak to issues of pressing significance, and to provide some clues to the intricate entwinement of war with contemporary life.³¹”

In fact, scholarship has intensively researched this huge topic, offering many different perspectives on equally many texts and art works from throughout time.³² But how have writers mirrored the dimension of fear, abhorrence, disgust, and hence how have they formulated concluding concepts about the danger of war in an apocalyptic context? My approach here is focused on those three major works in German literature where the consequences of massive killing in war is profiled in a rather alarming fashion. I do not want to pursue a close reading of each individual text because this would easily lead us astray, getting us entangled in countless details and would probably not yield truly new insights. After all, Wittenwiler’s verse romance, *Der Ring* (ca. 1400), Grimmelshausen’s *Simplicissimus* (1669), and Erich Maria Remarque’s *Im Westen nichts Neues* (1929) have already been examined, each by itself, by numerous literary scholars both in the German-speaking world and far beyond. We can easily confirm that they all represent literary accomplishments of the first rank, as the large number of critical studies confirms, for instance. Instead, the purpose here will be to examine more thoroughly the global perspectives toward the individual suffering in war and

31. Laura Ashe and Ian Patterson (Eds.), *War and Literature. Essays and Studies*, 67 (Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 2014); the quote comes from the online page by the publisher, <https://boydellandbrewer.com/9781843843818/war-and-literature/>. [Accessed 30 March 2021]

32. A[rnold]. D. Harvey, *A Muse of Fire: Literature, Art and War* (London and Rio Grande, OH: Hambledon Press, 1998); James Dawes, *The Language of War: Literature and Culture in the U.S. from the Civil War through World War II* (Cambridge, MA, and London: Harvard University Press, 2002). See also the contributions to: Horst Brunner (Ed.), *Der Krieg im Mittelalter und in der Frühen Neuzeit: Gründe, Begründungen, Bilder, Bräuche, Recht. Imagines medii aevi*, 3 (Wiesbaden: Reichert, 1999); Horst Brunner (Ed.), *Die Wahrnehmung und Darstellung von Kriegen im Mittelalter und in der Frühen Neuzeit. Imagines medii aevi*, 6 (Wiesbaden: Reichert Verlag, 2000); see now Albrecht Classen and Nadia Margolis (Eds.), *War and Peace: Critical Issues in European Societies and Literature 800–1800. Fundamentals of Medieval and Early Modern Culture*, 8 (Berlin and New York: Walter de Gruyter, 2011). The literature on this topic is legion.

what this experience has meant for society at large. What are the similarities and differences in the fictionalization of the drastic war situation throughout the centuries? We can be certain that here we face a universal discourse, but we still need to establish how each poet intimately approached his topic and tried to convey fundamental messages to the audience.

To put it differently, how did the individual writers respond to war, how did they translate those experiences into literary images, and how did they subsequently create new aesthetic expressions transforming the actual horror of the war into meaningful fictional messages that in turn were supposed to impact society? In particular, the central question will focus on the human suffering and the deep desire for peace expressed in each text because no war has ever sustained itself and become a *raison d'être* for all life, irrespective of any military triumph, as much as individual groups in society have always tried hard to pursue just that goal, such as the military-industrial complex against which President Dwight Eisenhower already warned the world about in his farewell speech on January 17, 1961 before he left office.³³

There is, however, one significant difference between Wittenwiler's *Ring* on the one hand and the two other works. Wittenwiler did not, as far as we can tell, respond directly to any major war, despite the many military operations that took place throughout the late Middle Ages. This allegorical narrative does not contain any allusions to the past world of crusades, to the emerging threat of the Ottoman powers, or to military conflicts among the European forces, such as the Hundred Years' War between England and France (ca. 1337–1453), which raged exactly at the time when this Constance public notary composed his work. Moreover, the war that he describes erupts within the rural population, whereas the representatives of the cities all over the country wisely decide to stay out of the internal conflict.

In fact, Wittenwiler's treatment of war targets primarily the stupidity and ignorance of the protagonists whose actions trigger war, though it still outlines in highly dramatic terms the consequences of war decimating an entire village population. Grimmelshausen and Remarque, by contrast, wrote their novels under the direct influence of major wars, the former reflecting upon the consequences of the Thirty Years' War, the latter responding to the First World

33. See, for instance, Paul Koistinen, *Military-Industrial Complex: A Historical Perspective* (New York: Praeger, 1980); Gregg B. Walker (Ed.), *The Military Industrial Complex: Eisenhower's Warning Three Decades Later*. American University Studies/Series 10/Political Science, 32 (New York, San Francisco, et al.: Peter Lang, 1992); Mark H. Rose and Roger Biles (Eds.), *The President and American Capitalism since 1945* (Gainesville, FL: University Press of Florida, 2017); <https://www.history.com/this-day-in-history/eisenhower-warns-of-military-industrial-complex>; <https://www.npr.org/2011/01/17/132942244/ikes-warning-of-military-expansion-50-years-later>; https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Military%E2%80%93industrial_complex [All Accessed 30 March 2021]

War. Nevertheless, as we will see, the outcome proves to be more or less the same in all three texts, and so the poets' messages warning about the devastating outcome of military operations emerge as strikingly parallel, all of them contributing to the same discourse that we would identify today as 'anti-war.'

Whereas the common tenor in the Middle Ages aimed at the glorification of war, whether we think of heroic epics or of crusading romances, in the late Middle Ages a profound paradigm shift affecting both the military technology and the actors on the battlefield transformed the experience of war in a radical fashion. Knighthood was increasingly outdated and could not uphold to the increasingly professionalized warfare, with the introduction of the crossbow and the longbow, and especially with the emergence of the mercenaries who subsequently gained access to the firearms that made all knighthood irrelevant. In the Hundred Years' War between England and France (1437–1553) the conditions on the ground changed radically, as best illustrated in the battle of Agincourt in 1415 when the French nobility was devastatingly crushed and decimated by a new type of army, based on mercenaries with new weapons.³⁴

Many other wars were waged all over Europe, and this at the time when the Constance notary public Wittenwiler sat down to compose his *Ring*. Europeans were deeply troubled by the approaching Turks, who had beaten the Christian armies at the battle of Nicopolis in 1396, leading to the conquest of Bulgaria by the Ottomans. From 1387 to 1389, the Swabian City League waged a war against the King of Bavaria, and virtually at the same time the Swiss cantons fought bitterly against the House of Habsburg in the so-called Sempach War from 1386 to 1388. Between 1398 and 1408, the Swiss canton of Appenzell was involved in a protracted war against the abbot of St. Gall. Between 1412 and 1415 the peasants in the region of the Harz mountain fought militarily against the local nobility in the so-called Flegler War, an early predecessor of the horrible Peasant War in 1525. In fact, violent conflicts were the daily norm also of late medieval society,³⁵ so it does not come as a surprise that Wittenwiler engaged with this topic as well, although he situates it in the world of peasants only.

Many literary texts aim for the glorification of war, as is commonly the case in medieval epics and romances, but at times, and so also in *Der Ring*, the fictional presentation of the horrors of war could also aim at condemning wars altogether and advocating the establishment of peace, which was, of course, primarily preached by the Church, here disregarding its vehement and consistent polemics in favor of crusades.³⁶ The philosophical and ethical issue was always the 'just

34. Clifford J. Rogers (Ed.), "Agincourt, Battle of," *The Oxford Encyclopedia of Medieval Warfare and Military Technology*, volume 1 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 7–10.

35. See the introduction by Clifford Rogers to *The Oxford Encyclopedia of Medieval Warfare*, xxiv–xxvi (see note 8).

36. For a global discussion of war and peace, see Irmgard Elsner Hunt, *Krieg und Frieden in der deutschen Literatur; vom Barock bis heute*. Europäische Hochschulschriften. Reihe 1: Deutsche Sprache und Literatur, 798 (Frankfurt a. M., Bern, and New York: Peter

war,’ and virtually every theologian struggled hard with this question since late antiquity. The poets were not far behind in that discourse.³⁷ Not by accident, the famous Humanist Erasmus of Rotterdam (1466–1536) formulated most famously, “dulce bellum inexpertis” (war is sweet for those who have not experienced it) as the title for his essay in his *Adagia* (1508; repr. 1515), and thus set the tone for all subsequent participants in this global debate about the wisdom of waging wars.³⁸

Heinrich Wittenwiler’s *Ring*

Wittenwiler confronts us not only with a war between the residents of two villages, but he also introduces an entire rural world determined by violence. Even though this allegorical verse romance is filled with didactic texts about the proper ways to lead a decent and meaningful life, none of those teachings fulfill their purposes, and everything fails ultimately because ordinary violence breaks out during the wedding festivities and quickly erupts into a bitter war pitting two parties against each other that really share most interests, are neighbors anyway, and have come together to celebrate the wedding of a young couple, Bertschi and Mätzli.³⁹ The two villages of Lappenhäusen and Nissingen are not really justified in any of their aggressive measures, especially because the original conflict concerned only one man, Eisenbeißer (Ironbiter) who accidentally injures his

Lang 1985); Daniele Vecchiato, *Krieg und Frieden in der Literatur; zu Zeugnissen aus Literatur und Publizistik der letzten drei Jahrhunderte* (Berlin: “Helle Panke” e.V. – Rosa-Luxemburg-Stiftung Berlin 2009); Gerd Althoff, *Frieden stiften: Vermittlung und Konfliktlösung vom Mittelalter bis heute* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 2015); Katherine Ludwig Jansen, *Peace and Penance in Late Medieval Italy* (Princeton, NJ, and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2018).

37. Frederick H. Russell, *The Just War in the Middle Ages* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1975); Stefan Hohmann, *Friedenskonzepte: Die Thematik des Friedens in der deutschsprachigen politischen Lyrik des Mittelalters*. Ordo, 3 (Cologne, Weimar, and Vienna: Böhlau 1992); Albrecht Hagenlocher, *Der guote vride: Idealer Friede in deutscher Literatur bis ins frühe 14. Jahrhundert*. Historische Wortforschung, 2 (Berlin and New York: Walter de Gruyter 1992); Ines-Jacqueline Werkner, *Gerechter Frieden: Das fortwährende Dilemma militärischer Gewalt*. Perspektiven. Essays aus der FEST, 1 (Bielefeld: transcript-Verlag, 2018); see now Larry May, *The Cambridge Handbook of the Just War*. Cambridge Handbooks in Philosophy (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018).

38. Wolfgang F. Stämmler et al. (Eds.), Erasmus of Rotterdam, *Über Krieg und Frieden* (On War and Peace.) Bibliothek historischer Denkwürdigkeiten (Essen: Alcorde Verlag, 2018), 177–240.

39. Eckart Conrad Lutz, *Spiritualis fornicatio: Heinrich Wittenwiler, seine Welt und sein ‘Ring’*. Konstanzer Geschichts- und Rechtsquellen, 32 (Sigmaringen: J. Thorbecke Verlag, 1990); Albrecht Classen, “Heinrich Wittenwiler,” *German Writers of the Renaissance and Reformation 1280–1580*, Dictionary of Literary Biographies, 179, ed. James Hardin and Max Reinhart (Detroit, Washington, DC, and London: Gale Research, 1997), 326–331.

dancing partner, Gretel, by scratching her palm too hard, making it bleed (6449–65.)⁴⁰ This occurs during the wedding festivities and is entirely unrelated to Bertschi's or Metzli's performance at that moment. Eisenbeißer certainly acts impetuously and treats the poor woman a little too rough, but he had no intention of hurting her, although her uncle immediately intervenes and severely blames his opponent for his bad behavior. The latter is not a man to accept such criticism lightly, retorts with foul words, threatening to rape both the other's mother and niece, from which quickly erupts an aggressive exchange of words between the two men, and this then turns first into a big brawl, whereupon all the guests have to flee, then subsequently into a veritable war.

Wittenwiler views and describes the peasants in most sarcastic terms and ridicules them in every possible way.⁴¹ Whatever situation they are in, they behave foolishly, crudely, and ultimately violently. The allegory sets in with a violent game of jousting against the knight Neidhart, who is by far superior to them all and injures badly every opponent. They do not understand the deception and why and how they are victimized, but all this sets the tone for the subsequent development that ultimately leads to the conflict at the wedding. While the peasants from Lappenhausen at first can use their home advantage and chase those from Nissingen away, the latter soon prepare themselves effectively for a real war, in which, tragically, they defeat their opponents and basically wipe out the entire village. Even Mätzli is killed, whereas only Bertschi survives, whom the enemies cannot reach because he has found refuge in the attic of a barn. They besiege him, but when he then pretends to have lost his mind, eating hay, they get scared and depart. But the outcome of the entire war proves to be so devastating for the foolish protagonist, and he is so shocked to see everyone dead, including his bride, that he travels to the Black Forest and settles there as a hermit without having ever understood what the cause for the catastrophe might have been. He is, like everyone else in Lappenhausen, an utter fool and not competent

40. Heinrich Wittenwiler, *Der Ring: Text – Übersetzung – Kommentar*, ed. Werner Röcke (Berlin and Boston: Walter de Gruyter, 2012). All translations into English are my own. As much as Wittenwiler's text has attracted considerable scholarly attention (see the bibliography on pp. 505-516, there are not many monographic studies on this allegory; but see Corinna Laude, "Daz in swindelt in den sinnen ...": *Die Poetik der Perspektive bei Heinrich Wittenwiler und Giovanni Boccaccio*. *Philologische Studien und Quellen*, 173 (Berlin: Erich Schmidt, 2002). See also Albrecht Classen, "Rape in the World of the Peasant Class in the Late Middle Ages: Heinrich Wittenwiler's *Ring*," id., *Sexual Violence and Rape in the Middle Ages: A Critical Discourse in Premodern German and European Literature*. *Fundamentals of Medieval and Early Modern Culture*, 7 (Berlin and Boston: Walter de Gruyter, 2011), 143-159.

41. Alan Baragona and Elizabeth L. Rambo (Eds.), *Words that Tear the Flesh: Essays on Sarcasm in Medieval and Early Modern Literature and Cultures*. *Fundamentals of Medieval and Early Modern Culture*, 21 (Berlin and Boston: Walter de Gruyter, 2018); unfortunately, the sarcasm in Wittenwiler's text is not addressed here.

enough to comprehend his own life and the external circumstances. Bertschi realizes that he had received many valuable lessons from his advisors and teachers, but he had never fully paid attention to the instructions and so failed completely in all of his endeavors: "Das ich so weysleich was gelert / Vnd mich so wenig dar an chert" (9680–81; Horrible to realize that I was so wisely schooled and cared so little about it). The results, however, are that everyone in his family, in his social community, and even his bride is dead. For him, all this only means that everything in this world is transitory, except for God's eternal love (9690).

According to Wittenwiler, the miserable protagonist gained the salvation of his soul after he had retired from the world (9696), but at the huge price of losing everyone in his village to the slaughter by the enemies. Sadly, Bertschi is not the kind of person to understand the causes and consequences of his actions, and the same applies to the other inhabitants of his village of Lappenhäusern. Those all die, Bertschi survives, but those peasant figures prove to be nothing but victims; they never gain intellectual agency and are helpless in the face of the military development.

Of course, Wittenwiler accuses the peasants of being completely foolish, crude, violent, rash, ignorant, and aggressive, not able to pursue any rational concepts and being victims of their illusions. But it is very clear that the peasants stand in for the average person normally lacking a certain degree of intelligence. The poet is careful to exclude urban burghers, whereas knights and other characters also appear getting involved in the devastating war and are hence also engulfed by it. Despite many theoretical lessons about marriage, proper behavior in public, and war, none of the teachings help to overcome violence. From early on, the peasants want to enjoy the reputation of knights but remain pathetic victims of the mean-spirited and deceptive treatment by the outsider, the knight Neidhart. However, the latter also betrays his own ideals and brutally plays with his opponents, many of whom die in their attempt to imitate knightly life.

Most fatally, the social interactions during the wedding festivities near the end of the allegory underscore most dramatically that the peasants, who are supposed to represent people at large, fail in every respect to operate rationally and reasonably, and who thus become victims of their own violence and foolishness. Not surprisingly, the representatives of the cities decide, after long and wise deliberations, to stay away from this military conflict since they do not want to side with either village, unless reasonable conditions would require their assistance, as especially the councilor from Constance—maybe the poet's indirect self-reference—elaborates in his highly praised speech (7772–846).

Following his recommendations that bystanders such as the cities should not intervene with military means and should try, instead, to advise and help constructively by dint of wise counsel (7824), they smartly decide to stay out of this rash conflict because they would otherwise become victims of the war which in fact engulfs, at the end, all men, women, children in the village of

Lappenhausen, and then even the farms and all goods (9661–66), apart from the miserable Bertschi.⁴²

However, as much as Wittenwiler's *Ring* appears to be a ghastly satire on the world of peasants,⁴³ we have also to realize that in its allegorical dimension this romance turns into a severe criticism of violence and military aggression resulting from ignorance and lack of self-control at large. The poet identifies most specifically that even a smallest incident such as the unintentional scratching of a hand leading to some bleeding can trigger war because foolish people easily get into conflicts with each other. While the audience was certainly invited to laugh about Bertschi and his fiancée Mätzli, along with their relatives and friends, the outcome of this massive narrative amounts to a tragedy mirroring the devastating consequences of war globally.

Although there are enough teachings provided throughout the text which all sound reasonable and reflect commonsense, no one in this work knows how to observe the principles of communication since everyone allows their own emotions and vices to rule their lives, apart from the representatives of the cities.⁴⁴ Thus, war erupts and devours everyone in the village of Lappenhausen, which made Wittenwiler's narrative to a most powerful allegorical warning which, however, obviously did not appeal to the contemporaries since the text has survived in one manuscript only.⁴⁵ Poets speaking up against the war, especially in the pre-modern world, obviously met with little love for their criticism, and this at a time when the ideals of knighthood and the ever-stronger efforts to develop new weapons clashed with each other. Moreover, late medieval Europe faced the global threat by the Ottomans, and internecine strife was almost routine everywhere. Naturally, a major satirical text such as *Der Ring* did not appeal to a rather militaristic society, especially because it was composed only at the dawn of the anti-war discourse.

42. Pamela Kalning, *Kriegslehren in deutschsprachigen Texten um 1400: Seffner, Rothe, Wittenwiler; mit einem Abdruck der Wiener Handschrift von Seffners "Ler von dem streitten"*. Studien und Texte zum Mittelalter und zur frühen Neuzeit, 9 (Münster, New York, et al.: Waxmann, 2006).

43. Ulrich Gaier, *Satire: Studien zu Neidhart, Wittenwiler, Brant und zur satirischen Schreibart* (Tübingen: Max Niemeyer, 1967).

44. This issue is examined at greater length already in Albrecht Classen, *Verzweiflung und Hoffnung. Die Suche nach der kommunikativen Gemeinschaft in der deutschen Literatur des Mittelalters*. Beihefte zur Mediaevistik, 1 (Frankfurt a. M., Berlin, et al.: Peter Lang, 2002), 401-435.

44. <http://www.handschriftencensus.de/werke/1897>. [Accessed 21 October 2018] See also Werner Röcke (Ed.) (see note 13), X.

45. See also Werner Röcke (Ed.) (see note 13), X.

Hans Jacob Christoffel von Grimmelshausen

The situation radically changed, however, already in the seventeenth century when Hans Jacob Christoffel von Grimmelshausen (1621/22–1676) published, in the wake of the Thirty Years' War with its devastating consequences for a wide swath of the German population, his *Abentheuerliche Simplicissimus Teutsch* in 1669.⁴⁶ Much is known about the author and his success as a writer, but for our purposes we only need to remember that he was kidnapped by Hessian soldiers in 1635 and from that time on personally witnessed many of the horrors of the war, sometimes serving in the Swedish army, sometimes in the imperial army until 1649. From that time until 1661 he worked as a castellan (castle administrator) for the counts of Schauenburg.

In 1662 he transitioned to a parallel post for the Straßburg physician Johannes Küfer the Younger and served in that administrative role until 1665. After a year as an inn-keeper, the Straßburg archbishop Franz Egon von Fürstenberg appointed him as a magistrate of the little town of Renchen in Baden in south-west Germany in 1667. In 1673, the French King Louis XIV embarked on a war against the Habsburg emperor Leopold I, which forced Grimmelshausen to enter the military service once again, this time under his lord, the archbishop, who sided with King Louis XIV. Nevertheless, in his rank as city magistrate he could dedicate much of his time to literary interests, and he thus emerged quickly as one of the most important German Baroque poets of his time. His *Simplicissimus* was certainly influenced by the Spanish *picareque* novel, and yet also included many autobiographical features.⁴⁷

It cannot be the purpose here to take the entire novel into view and to problematize its literary treatment of the Thirty Years' War once again. As in the case of Wittenwiler's *Ring*, I can only turn my attention to the critical reflections on the war and the comments on the brutal actions by the mercenaries in their deadly misuse of the peasant population as we discover it in the early section of the novel. Here we encounter the protagonist as a child, Simplicissimus (Lat.: The Most Simple Minded One), who observes many horrors but does not fully understand their meaning.

In the later development, conditions become much worse for him, or much better, depending on the circumstances, each time shedding startling light on the

46. Hans Jacob Christoffel von Grimmelshausen, *Werke*, ed. Dieter Breuer, volume I.1. Bibliothek der Frühen Neuzeit, 4.1 (Frankfurt a. M.: Deutscher Klassiker Verlag, 1989).

47. See, for example, Dieter Breuer, *Grimmelshausen-Handbuch* (Munich: Fink, 1999); Volker Meid, *Grimmelshausen: Leben, Werk, Wirkung* (Stuttgart: Philipp Reclam jun., 2011); Heiner Boehncke and Hans Sarkowicz, *Grimmelshausen: Leben und Schreiben: vom Musketier zum Weltautor* (Berlin: AB – Die Andere Bibliothek, 2018); for a detailed and well-documented online biography, see https://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hans_Jakob_Christoffel_von_Grimmelshausen [Accessed 30 March 2021]

brutality and vagaries of the war (e.g., chs xxvii–xxviii, 213–20). However, the naiveté with which the young boy describes the horrible destiny of his family which is attacked and killed by a marauding troop of lansquenets, illustrates perhaps most impressively the actual suffering people had to go through. War is here described through the eyes of a child who does not quite understand, and yet conveys in truly chilling terms how the murderous soldiers rape, torture, and kill the people. Of course, we clearly recognize here the author himself who wrote this novel in his old age, drawing many registers in composing and structuring his text, deliberately projecting the violence in this early scene as something incomprehensible and outlandish, as children indeed would perceive it, not knowing anything about good and evil, being completely innocent and naive (20). Although rape, torture, burning, strangling, and other forms of killing take place, Simplicissimus does not understand the meaning of it all and actually laughs about some of the scenes taking place in front of his eyes.

At first, the young narrator outlines the quasi paradisiacal conditions of his family farm in the Spessart forest (today near Aschaffenburg, east of Frankfurt a. M.). Despite the seemingly playful tone of his voice, we are explicitly told that the soldiers committed horrible cruelties (27), which were representative of all the terrible things that happened in this long war devastating many parts of Germany. As much as the narrator describes himself when he was a child as completely naive and ignorant about the conditions of the world, he powerfully projects a horrifying scene when the soldiers arrive and attack the entire farm and the family.

After they had tied up their horses, they began to kill many of the farm animals and prepared them as food. Others rage through the house in search of money; even the toilet is examined closely (28). All the clothes and household items are piled together and taken away. Everything else is destroyed, with the lansquenets not demonstrating any mercy or any human instincts. The bed comforters are emptied out, and filled with bacon and other dried meat to be transported away. Others again willfully destroy the oven and break the windows, which the childish narrator comments, “als haetten sie ein ewigen Sommer zu verkuendigen” (28; as if they had to announce the arrival of eternal summer). Although there is plenty of fire wood in the yard, they break apart all furniture and burn them.

The farm maid is gang-raped so badly that she cannot even leave the barn anymore, probably dying from her heavy injuries and blood loss, while the farmhand is tortured through the use of waterboarding, although the lansquenets force sewer instead of water into his mouth, and this with the help of a funnel, which they call the ‘Swedish drink.’ This horrible treatment makes him break down quickly, so he takes them to the place where other people and their animals are hiding, that is, especially the protagonist’s parents and another woman. Now the soldiers use thumb screws to torture the helpless victims; one of the peasants they burn alive in the oven, while another is brutally strangled so badly that

blood spurts out of his mouth, nose, and ears. Sarcastically, the narrator emphasizes that each one of the soldiers had his own "*inventio*" (29) to cause pain and endless suffering.

Foolishly laughing with and about his own father, the young boy comments with astonishment how the soldiers tortured his own father, his Knan. Whereas all the others experienced horrendous pain or were killed, the Knan is tied up tightly, his naked feet are rubbed in wet salt, which then the old goat is licking off. Simplicissimus finds this scene so hilarious that he joins in the laughter: "das kam so artlich / daß ich Gesellschaft halber/oder weil ichs nicht besser verstunde/von Hertzen mit lachen musste" (29; this was so entertaining that I had to burst out laughing myself, either because my father's laughter was so infectious, or because I did not understand it better).

As to the women, old and young, Simplicissimus does not know what happened to them because the soldiers did not allow him to witness what happened. He can only report that he heard the women scream for pain, all of them obviously being raped, including his own mother and the maid Ursula. During all that horror, the young boy assiduously assists the lansquenets in the preparation of food, watering the horses, and the like, not grasping in the slightest who they are, what they do, and in what danger he finds himself in. But when he finally happens to enter the shed where the badly wounded maid is about to expire in her terrible suffering, she tells him with her weak voice to run away and so to save his life (30). This Simplicissimus manages to do in the evening, but he only encounters endless new problems, not knowing anything about the forest, being completely alone, and simply lost, after his entire family has been tortured and killed, and the farm burned down to the ground. The lonely child returns there the next morning, finding no one alive there (30), when he is suddenly confronted by five horsemen, obviously from northern Germany, as their dialect indicates. He is so scared that he cannot move or respond to the soldiers, one of whom gets so irritated because they cannot reach the boy due to a swamp separating them that he pulls his gun and shoots at him. Although he misses the child, Simplicissimus collapses out of fear and does not move until the arrival of the night, when he leaves the family ground and enters the forest, that is, when his new life begins, although he still represents a total simpleton and knows nothing about God and the world, as a hermit quickly realizes whom he encounters soon after (ch. VIII, 37-39).

Grimmelshausen certainly modeled this text on the basis of many other novels and romances dealing with a foolish child who first needs to grow up and learn the basics of this world, such as Wolfram von Eschenbach's *Parzival* (ca. 1205). When Wilhelm Dilthey coined the term "*Bildungsroman*" for this genre in 1870, he had in mind mostly novels from the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, but both *Simplicissimus* and *Parzival* were already predicated on this narrative

pattern and can be safely identified as important precursors to this genre.⁴⁸ The protagonist subsequently is exposed to many different war settings and experiences many ups and downs in his life, all determined by the vagaries of the war.

After the death of the hermit, for instance, who had taken care of him for a while, the hero tries to secure advice from the priest in a nearby village, but has to witness another terrible raid by mercenaries, who are about to kill everyone, including the priest, when a group of peasants come rushing up and chase them away, which the narrator again sarcastically calls “Kurtzweil” (53; entertainment), but now with the proviso that these events would have almost robbed him of any interest in exploring the outside world, which he regards as most dangerous. The novel would have come to a quick closure at that point if Simplicissimus would have been able to realize his initial decision, but neither violence nor the war at large spare him, and expel him from his sylvan solitude out into the world, where he has to endeavor somehow to survive.

Grimmelshausen does not spare us even the most cruel and horrifying experiences, of peasants torturing and killing mercenaries, and the latter doing the same to the former, depending on who is fortunate enough in their fighting. The entire world of the Thirty Years’ War comes to ‘life’ in this terrifying novel, and there is no doubt about the author’s strong effort to condemn the dehumanization and bestiality committed many times. Simplicissimus survives, surprisingly, and becomes the witness of the countless crimes and killing throughout the decades-long war, and thus the author conveys most drastic literary images of the cruelty of war on the audience, which might well have been the most daunting ever created in the literary history in Europe from the early Middle Ages until the late seventeenth century. The protagonist at the end abandons his home country and departs for the Orient, though he experiences a shipwreck near Madagascar in the Indian Ocean and survives on a mysterious island, never to be heard from again.

Little wonder that this major Baroque novel, which was well received and translated into various languages,⁴⁹ concludes with the protagonist’s words of

48. For a list of typical representatives of this genre, including both works cited here, see the useful list compiled at: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bildungsroman#Precursors> (last accessed on March 30, 2021), with an extensive bibliography, which pertains, however, exclusively to the modern literary history. Cf. Ortrud Gutjahr, *Einführung in den Bildungsroman*. Einführungen Germanistik (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 2007); see also Petru Golban, *A History of the Bildungsroman: From Ancient Beginnings to Romanticism* (Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2018); Elisabeth Böhm and Katrin Dennerlein (Eds.), *Der Bildungsroman im literarischen Feld: neue Perspektiven auf eine Gattung*. Studien und Texte zur Sozialgeschichte der Literatur, 144 (Berlin and Boston: Walter de Gruyter, 2018).

49. Italo Michele Battafarano, *Simpliciana Bellica: Grimmelshausens Kriegsdarstellung und ihre Rezeption 1667–2006*. Iris, 26 (Bern, Frankfurt a. M., et al.: Peter Lang, 2011).

good-bye to this world because it cannot be trusted and tends to deceive all people, who live only a short time and then have to face death (ch. XXIV, 544–551.)⁵⁰ Here Grimmelshausen again draws on a long literary tradition, intermingled with deep theological roots, but his novel proved to be a masterpiece of a unique kind because of the most somber descriptions of war and its aftermath. He introduces us both to actual war scenes, and also, perhaps most importantly, to the brutality and cruelty of the individual troops of lansquenets against the civil population.

Erich Maria Remarque's *Im Westen nichts Neues*

The next stage in this discourse on war was reached in the early twentieth century when Erich Maria Remarque (1898–1970) published his world-famous novel *Im Westen nichts Neues*, or *All Quiet on the Western Front*, in 1929. Although this work quickly turned into a bestseller, with 2.5 million copies sold in 22 languages in its first 18 months in print, and although it quickly aroused the ire of the Nazis who had it banned and burned next to many other books after they had risen to power in 1933, it has continued to be one of the most successful titles in the history of German literature, today available in more than 50 languages, having been sold in over 60 million copies.⁵¹

In many respects, this novel represents the prime example of anti-war literature, describing the life of the deeply traumatized protagonist, Paul Bäumer fighting on the western front in the First World War. We follow him through the military training and on his way to the front, where he experiences all the horror of modern warfare, although he manages for a long time to survive, until death also hits him, curiously at a rather calm day, when he becomes a victim of hostile artillery, and this just shortly before the end of the war – hence the sarcastic title of the novel. Even though Bäumer is allowed from time to time to go home on short visits of his family, the war has shaped him so deeply that the communication with the civilians proves to be virtually impossible. Remarque highlights the impact of the modern weapons technology, the use of toxic gas, the machine gun, and especially the horrors of the direct exchanges with the enemy, ultimately even the immediate killing of each other when hiding in trenches or in a bomb crater. At the end, all meaning of war has been lost, and the protagonist

50. Jana Maroszová, *Denn die Zeit ist nahe: Eschatologie in Grimmelshausens Simplicianischen Schriften: Zeit und Figuren der Offenbarung*. Beihefte zu Simpliciana, 8 (Bern: Peter Lang, 2013).

51. <https://www.die-besten-aller-zeiten.de/buecher/meistverkauften/>. [Accessed 30 March 2021]; the figure listed here, 20 million, can probably be upped to 40 million considering the countless pirated editions. Erich Maria Remarque, *Im Westen nichts Neues* (Berlin: Propyläen Verlag, 1929).

no longer understands what purpose there might be behind their mutual killing. Little wonder that the Nazis strongly rejected Remarque's novel which they regarded as defeatist and anti-patriotic, and also no surprise that it nevertheless resonated so strongly across the world until today because it exposes powerfully the absurdity and meaninglessness of all wars in which the soldiers become nothing but cannon fodder.

Remarque published many other novels, wrote screenplays, movie scripts, he lived in Switzerland, in the US, and then moved back to Switzerland, and he had many different relationships with various women, even with Marlene Dietrich. When he died in 1970,⁵² the author still believed that most people would be pacifists, but it also dawned upon him, as we know it today only too clearly, that the civilians who profit from the war under any circumstances really support and promote military conflicts because those create money for them.

Scholars have spent much attention on this novel, and it would be difficult to achieve a new reading of Remarque's message, except for integrating his novel into the long-term anti-war discourse, as it had set in with Wittenwiler's allegory already in the fifteenth century. The latter had still enjoyed the liberty of depicting a war affecting 'only' a village populated by foolish peasants, whereas the outside world smartly stayed out of the conflict. Grimmelshausen presented a world in which the war had devastating consequences especially for the civilian population, but the protagonist could survive, despite many dangers and severe conflicts. Remarque, by contrast, dealt with the worst war the world had ever seen up to that time, so he depicted the military situation in most gruesome terms, not leaving hope for the audience that any good could come out of that situation.⁵³

We could choose many scenes in this momentous novel, which naturally deeply angered, to emphasize this point once again, the Nazis because it aggressively undermined all traditional militaristic ideologies and any attempt at glorifying war as the ultimate catalyst for the strong man to prove himself to the world, as Ernst Jünger was to do in his rather callous, nationalistic, or later mostly deterministic novel *In Stahlgewittern* (1920, revised eleven times, and reissued in

52. Alfred Antkowiak, *Erich Maria Remarque: Leben und Werk*, 2nd revised edition. Schriftsteller der Gegenwart, 14 (Berlin: Volk und Wissen, 1977); *Erich Maria Remarque: Leben, Werk und weltweite Wirkung*, ed. Thomas F. Schneider. Erich-Maria-Remarque-Jahrbuch, 8 (Osnabrück: Rasch, 1998); see also the other volumes in the same series; cf. Thomas Schneider, *Unabhängigkeit, Toleranz, Humor: Independence, Tolerance, Humor: Erich Maria Remarque 1898–1970* (Osnabrück: Universitäts-Verlag Rasch, 2001).

53. Elisabeth Krimmer, *The Representation of War in German Literature: From 1800 to the Present* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010); Noah Berlatsky, *War in Erich Maria Remarque's All Quiet on the Western Front* (Farmington Hills, MI: Greenhaven Press, 2013); Murdoch, Brian (Ed.), *German Literature and the First World War: The Anti-War Tradition: Collected Essays*. Ashgate Studies in First World War History (Farnham, Surrey: Ashgate Publishing Limited; Burlington, VT: Ashgate Publishing Company, 2015).

1922, 1924, 1934, 1935, 1940, 1961, 1978, 1985, 2013, 2015, etc.)⁵⁴ For our purposes, one brief description of a sudden change in the development of the trench war must suffice to illustrate the (de)aestheticizing strategies by this author in his efforts to come to terms with war.

At a seeming lull in the constant barrage by artillery fire, the protagonist and his fellow soldiers jump out of their hiding because the enemy is suddenly making an attack. The narrator expresses his amazement that “in dieser zerwühlten Wüste noch Menschen sein können” (115; people still could exist in this torn-up desert). The narrator does not share his emotions and limits his report to a factual account of the mechanical sounds by the machine guns and rifles. Two of Paul’s comrades throw hand grenades as fast as possible, and yet the French soldiers are approaching them, and this despite “sichtbare Verluste” (115; visible losses). But people are here no longer people; they are objects which machine gun fire decimates in whole rows.

Then, however, Paul has a strange personal encounter with one of the enemies, a young man who falls into a barbed-wire barrier, when the machine gun shoots off his hands. Those remain hanging in the wire, “als wollte er beten” (116; as if he wanted to pray). In the next moment, Paul faces another soldier who fixates him with his eyes, which makes it impossible for him to throw a grenade and thus to kill the man. Nevertheless, in the next second, he notices that the opponent is lifting his hand, moves it suspiciously, obviously preparing to shoot, so Paul throws the grenade, after all, and kills him. Soon the entire company has to withdraw, and he realizes: “Aus uns sind gefährliche Tiere geworden. Wir kämpfen nicht, wir verteidigen uns vor der Vernichtung” (16; We have turned into dangerous animals. We do not fight, we defend ourselves against the destruction). While before the soldiers had been helplessly exposed to endless artillery fire, and this for three days, the attack by the French made it possible for them to release all their fury, frustration, anxiety, and rage, and then simply kill, “um uns zu retten und zu rächen” (117; in order to save ourselves and to get revenge).

The barbarity of this war can no longer be superseded, especially because the mechanization of the killing and the desperation in face of dead soldiers everywhere assumes unforeseen dimensions. There is no humanity left in them, they are only bent on fighting, killing, and trying to survive: “Käme dein Vater mit denen drüben, du würdest nicht zaudern, ihm die Granate gegen die Brust zu werfen” (117; If your father came with those on the other side, you would not hesitate to throw the grenade at his chest). And when the own forces succeed to throw back the enemies, there are no comments on the human aspect: “Der Angriff wird zerfetzt durch unsere Artillerie” (118; the attack is shredded into pieces by our artillery). The absurdity of war is thus profiled in shocking terms,

54. Schöning Matthias (Ed.), *Ernst Jünger-Handbuch: Leben – Werk – Wirkung* (Stuttgart and Weimar: Verlag J. B. Metzler, 2014).

and Remarque did not even have the strength to argue in any meaningful or effective ways for pacifism, for ending the war, for peace, for humanity. The age of the military machine had begun; there was no real hope left.

Conclusions

Curiously, as popular as Remarque's novel proved to be, pro-war literature such as by Jünger also achieved enormous successes parallel to his. In fact, and quite tragically, not one of these literary works that opposed war had any significant impact on the further development of war technology, military aggression, or warfare itself. Nevertheless, all three writers discussed here offered their audiences profound literary expressions of what the true consequences of war were like and ripped off the mask of the glorified war, presenting the true consequences and the horror behind the military ideology. We might never be able to identify specifically how much impact the literary discourse might actually have on the social, economic, and political conditions. In fact, as we probably would have to admit, the threat of war against all mankind has become ever worse since the late Middle Ages, and today we face the possible annihilation of mankind through a potential nuclear war.

Would we thus have to conclude that those three writers failed to achieve their goals? Is the literary expression truly completely helpless to speak up against the proliferation of weapons and military violence? Did not philosophers such as Erasmus of Rotterdam or Immanuel Kant argue cogently and influentially against waging wars, and yet then had to realize that the authorities did not even care about their ideas? We could also cite a long list of powerful theologians from Augustine to Karl Barth, for instance, who bolstered the discourse on just war and peace and yet had to realize that those in power did not listen to them.

Nevertheless, Wittenwiler, Grimmelshausen, and Remarque still achieved a monumental task, just as the other intellectuals mentioned above. They gave highly meaningful expression to the horrors of war and painted deeply impactful images of the mass murder, destruction, and global devastation of military violence. As much as their narratives contributed to the literary treatment of war, as much they also empowered their readers to reflect profoundly on the consequences of war. The anti-war movement, which might have started with Wittenwiler, so to speak, might not have been able to realize its goal, peace, which could easily be just an illusion considering human nature, but this movement is not going away and will continue to combat the warmongers and expose their true motives, to gain more money and power at the cost of infinite human suffering. In each text discussed above, the outcome of the war is pure devastation, horror, and global loss, not only of lives and goods, but of the human

spirit, human ethics, and human values, as Andreas Gryphius formulated so insightfully in his sonnet, "Tränen des Vaterlands" (1637; Tears of the Fatherland.)⁵⁵

In the case of Wittenwiler's *Ring*, the war destroys one village community; in the case of Grimmelshausen, the war severely endangers the civilian population; in the case of Remarque the war dehumanizes every war participant and threatens the entire European continent and culture. The war machine is taking over and rules totally, decimating the human spirit, as Paul Bäumer ruminates at the end: "Wenn wir jetzt zurückkehren, sind wir müde, zerfallen, ausgebrannt, wurzellos und ohne Hoffnung" (286; When we return home now, we are tired, have fallen apart, are burnt out, without roots and hope). Wittenwiler still projected a world where the intelligent representatives of the cities refuse to get involved in a war which they can only identify as foolish. Grimmelshausen already had to depict the fighting marauders and lansquenets as beast-like, inhuman, and Remarque recognized that technology suddenly ruled, also in the war, victimizing the human being entirely. The anti-war discourse continues until today, but wars all over the world do so as well.

The question remains for us to answer, as scholars and as individuals, why are there wars, who are we as human beings to allow such globally destructive forces to exert themselves, and what can the literary discourse contribute to combat against universal military aggression? As hopeless as it all might sound, we should not give up and should remember that the human struggle for a better society continues. Even if the literary voices are so ineffective in bringing about concrete changes in reality, they constitute a discourse of great significance which we all can and must listen to. Our critical engagement with these works constitutes one important strategy to instill anti-war sentiments in the younger generation, asking them to listen to so many different voices addressing the same concerns, and this already since the early fifteenth century.

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55. Albrecht Classen, "Boethius and No End in Sight: The Impact of *De consolazione philosophiae* on Early Modern German Literature from the Fifteenth through the Seventeenth Century: Andreas Gryphius and Johann Scheffler (Angelus Silesius)," *Daphnis* 46 (2018): 448–466.

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Gorgo: Sparta's Woman of Autonomy, Authority, and Agency

[Hdt. 3.148–3.149, 5.42, 5.46, 5.48–5.51, 5.70, 6.65–6.67, 6.137–6.140, and Hdt. 7.238–7.239]

By Oliver R. Baker*

Claims that Herodotus reveals himself as a proto-biographer, let alone as a proto-feminist, are not yet widely accepted. To advance these claims, I have selected one remarkable woman from one side of the Greco-Persian Wars whose activities are recounted in his Histories. Critically it is to a near contemporary, Heraclitus, to whom we attribute the maxim êthos anthropôi daimôn (ἦθος ἀνθρώπῳ δαίμων) — character is human destiny. It is the truth of this maxim—which implies effective human agency—that makes Herodotus' creation of historical narrative even possible. Herodotus is often read for his vignettes, which, without advancing the narrative, color in the character of the individuals he depicts in his Histories. No matter, if these fall short of the cradle to grave accounts given by Plutarch, by hop-scotching through the nine books, we can assemble a partially continuous narrative, and thus through their exploits, gauge their character, permitting us to attribute both credit and moral responsibility. Arguably this implied causation demonstrates that Herodotus' writings include much that amounts to proto-biography and in several instances—one of which is given here—proto-feminism.

One of So Very Few

Herodotus names very few Hellenic women in his *Histories*,¹ let alone assigning many of them significant roles during the Greco-Persian Wars, but his readers must readily note that in terms of political judgment he has nothing but praise for one royal Spartan woman—Gorgo (Γοργώ)—who is born somewhat later than Atossa of Persia but about the same time as Artemisia of Halicarnassus and Gorgo is therefore her contemporary.² Women are mentioned 375 times by Herodotus.³ But when including Hellenes, Barbaroi, Greek divinities, and other mythological figures, he actually names fewer than fifty women and very few of these are Hellenes. As is often the case, the biographical details that Herodotus

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1. All quotations from the *Histories* are from the Andrea Purvis translation presented in Robert Strassler, *The Landmark Herodotus* (New York, NY: Random House, 2007).

2. We do not know when Artemisia, the governor or queen of Halicarnassus, is born—but when first mentioned by Herodotus she is a widow and is serving as regent for her underage son Hdt.7.99.1–3. Nor does Herodotus mention when the late tyrant of Halicarnassus—her forever-unnamed husband—dies. Whether an able ruler or not, he has served his primary purpose—ensuring the succession. Her name is certainly theophoric.

3. Carolyn Dewald, "Women and Culture" *Women's Studies* 8, no. 1/2 (1981): 94, 125.

gives of many individuals fall far short of fully developed cradle to grave assessments. But that is not to say that these gleanings defy either expansion in context or interpretation; or that in many cases that these oblique references and anecdotes cannot be pieced together to form a reasonably continuous narrative. Much more was very likely widely known about Gorgo at this time, even outside of Sparta, but perhaps for this reason alone these details are edited out by the author and dismissed as commonplaces of minimal contemporary audience interest—we can speculate, but we will never know.⁴

An Only Child

Gorgo is the only known legitimate child of Cleomenes I, the Agiad king of Sparta; and she becomes the wife of Leonidas I—the Spartan dyarch killed in battle at Thermopylae—and the mother of Pleistarchus, dyarch of Sparta from 479 to 458. Since Gorgo's own son is still a minor upon his father's battlefield death in the late summer of 480, initially his only surviving uncle Cleombrotus and then his first-cousin Pausanias serve as his regents.⁵ Whether as dowager queen-consort Gorgo assumes a significant role in the Spartan court, Herodotus does not say. Although the Ephors will change annually she will know of them and they of her, and she will be entirely familiar with many members of the Gerousia including, of course, the kings or the appointed regent.⁶

4. See the "Sayings of Spartan Women" where Plutarch includes six sayings, which he attributes to Gorgo, Frank Cole Babbitt, *Moralia* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard UP, 1931): 451-469). These appear to be in character, and although he does not credit his sources for these, none of them come from Herodotus—this gives some credence to the notion that Herodotus makes his own selection from many now long-lost anecdotes about her.

5. Never great at chronology and indeed why let that spoil a good story—a fault largely attributable to his own and his sources' lack of a supranational calendar and dating system—Herodotus exaggerates Gorgo's youth in this anecdote from 499, perhaps to make her appear exceedingly precocious and her father rather doting. She is already married to her uncle on her father's death in 490/489 and since her son comes out of regency in 479, we can surmise that she married Leonidas a year or so after this bribery incident, putting her year of birth around 516 as was Artemisia's. Nevertheless, Gorgo is the daughter, wife, and mother of a Spartan king. The Persian queen, Atossa, is some thirty-five years older.

6. Sparta has a five-member Board of Ephors elected annually by the Assembly which comprises all male Spartan citizens; and, the Gerousia, a thirty-member Council of Elders—the two kings plus twenty-eight men aged over sixty but elected for life by the Assembly. This Assembly, known as the Ekklesia, would always be required to vote on matters of peace or war. Paul Cartledge, *The Spartans* (London, Pan Macmillan, 2002): 45-46.

Heraclid Heritage

The significance of Gorgo's possibly theophoric name is arguably an interesting anachronism which cannot be overlooked, whatever its meaning. At the very least it constitutes a challenge to established, late sixth-century, divine Greek myth for the child on the part of her royal parents. According to Hesiod's *Theogony* the Gorgons are female monsters of frightening appearance where even a lock of Medusa's hair can defeat an entire army.⁷ However, over time, the beauty/ugliness—desire/fear ambivalence fades and by the fifth century the Gorgons are portrayed as beautiful young women.⁸ In addition, Gorgo's name might be an abbreviation of, or an allusion to, the name Gorgophone (Γοργοφώνη) which translates as 'gorgon-slayer' a reference to Perseus' greatest deed—his beheading of the only mortal Gorgon—Medusa.⁹ Gorgophone is the daughter of Perseus and Andromeda. One of the sons of Oibalos, Gorgophone's first husband, is Tyndareus, stepfather of Helen of Troy and Pollux, and father of Clytemnestra, and Castor, and another son is Icarius, father of Penelope, Odysseus' spouse. One of their great-great-grandsons is Heracles. There is also the possibility that parallel to the obvious mythical allusions, Cleomenes is literally having fun—no parent would name their child after a terrifying monster.¹⁰

Such an abundance of Homeric and mythical allusions cannot be happenstance. Cleomenes is blessed with only one child and he brings her up much as he might the son and heir he did not have, but with similar *great expectations*.¹¹ As the Agiad king's *patrouchoi* (πατροῦχοι) she is at once the most

7. Richard Caldwell, *Hesiod's Theogony* (Newburyport MA: Focus, 1987): 270-279. These myths are extended by later writers, including Apollodorus and Pausanias.

8. See the Gorgo/Medusa entry by J. N. Bremmer in the *Oxford Classical Dictionary*, Simon Hornblower et al. (Oxford: Oxford UP, 2012). Herodotus gets his chronology in 490 quite wrong when he writes, "... since Kleomenes did not rule for long but died without having sired a son. He left behind only a daughter; whose name was Gorgo" (Hdt. 5.48). Whether he dies or is assassinated before or after the battle of Marathon is not known.

9. This mystery is raised by at least one Spartan scholar; but not quite flummoxed he nevertheless hesitatingly shies from the notion that her name is the Spartan equivalent of the 1969 "A Boy Named Sue" challenge by J. R. (John) Cash/Shel Silverstein, *Cartledge Spartans* (2002): 104-105.

10. Today, parents naming their daughter Georgina risk the nickname George sticking. The English boy's name ultimately derives from the Ancient Greek Geōrgios (Γεώργιος) meaning tiller of the soil, or farmer, the affectionate nickname Digger is a possibility.

11. Spartan *patrouchoi* are more generously treated than *epikleroi* (ἐπικληροί), their counterparts elsewhere in mainland Greece. In Greek drama, Antigone, Oedipus' eldest daughter in Sophocles' tragedy the *Antigone*, becomes an *epikleros* when her two brothers Eteocles and Polynices are killed and the new Theban ruler, her uncle Creon, becomes responsible for her marriage as well as that of her younger sister Ismene.

powerful and easily the most desirable of contemporary Spartan heiresses.¹² Arguably the path to the throne offered by Gorgo and Helen of Sparta, to respectively Leonidas and Menelaus, are variants of male-preference primogeniture.¹³ Given their age differences, it is possible that Leonidas either puts aside an earlier spouse, or more likely simply remains unmarried until his niece, Gorgo, has reached her late teens.

The Son He Never Had

One of Herodotus' more delightful anecdotes and perhaps the one which constitutes her *one character-defining moment* concerns Cleomenes' early fifth-century meetings with the Ionian tyrant Aristagoras, at the last of which Gorgo is in attendance.¹⁴ Aristagoras, the tyrant of Miletus, seeks Spartan assistance in a proposed Ionian quest for independence, but Cleomenes is unconvinced and delays his decision.¹⁵ It is when they next meet that Cleomenes learns how far inland the Persian capital, Susa, lies.¹⁶ At this point Cleomenes says:¹⁷

12. Herodotus points out that by the Spartan interpretation of male-preference primogeniture rules, because Cleomenes has no male heir, if Dorieus, the eldest of Cleomenes' younger half-brothers, had not been killed in 510 during a forlorn attempt to found an independent Spartan colony in Sicily he would have succeeded to the throne on Cleomenes' death (Hdt. 5.48 and Hdt. 5.42–5.46.1). Interestingly, neither of Dorieus' younger brothers, Leonidas or Cleombrotus, joins him in these colonial misadventures.

13. Tyndareus is king of Sparta, but his consort, Leda, gives simultaneous birth to two sets of twins—Clytemnestra and Castor fathered by him and to Helen and Pollux fathered by Zeus. Myths vary, but in most Castor and Pollux predecease Helen, and after Menelaus marries Helen Tyndareus and Leda abdicate the Spartan throne in their favor. Therefore, one reason why Menelaus is so anxious to recover Helen is because her presence as his spouse legitimizes his rule in Sparta.

14. Hdt. 5.49–5.50. This meeting in Sparta takes place in 499, well before the foolish if not abortive Ionian raid on Sardis in 498. This raid, in which the Ionians are supported by contingents from Athens and Eretria, is one of the causes of the first Greco-Persian war.

15. Hdt. 5.49.9.

16. Hdt. 5.50.1–2 and Hdt. 5.49.5–7. At one stage Aristagoras produces a map engraved on a tablet; but whether it really shows to scale that Ephesus, a likely port for any invasion force, is around 300 nautical miles away from the Peloponnese, that Sardis, a provincial capital, is over 100 kilometers from Ephesus, and that Susa, the Persian capital, another 2,700 kilometers from Sardis, Herodotus does not say.

17. The Andrea Purvis translation of the *Histories*, reproduces all of Herodotus' tense shifts. So direct speech (see Hdt. 5.50.3 above) is always present tense, but his narrative (see Hdt. 5.51.1–3 above) is past narrative. Since my own text is present narrative, some tense confusion cannot be avoided.

“My guest friend of Miletus, you must depart from Sparta before sunset. Your request will never be accepted by the Lacedaemonians if you intend to lead them on a three-month journey away from the sea” (Hdt. 5.50.3).

Note that he says, “accepted by the Lacedaemonians” a clear indication that an affirmative vote from the Assembly is mandatory. Herodotus does not say where this meeting takes place, but he does say that despite the formal public banishment decree Aristagoras follows Cleomenes home.¹⁸ The inference is that their first meeting is in some public place, perhaps with several ephors or members of the Gerousia in attendance. He also uses the word home rather than palace; the inference is that the Spartan dyarchs do not indulge in the use of splendid personal accommodation during their reign.

He first asked Cleomenes to send away the child there, for his daughter whose name was Gorgo was standing beside the king. He happened to have only this one child, who at that time was about eight or nine years old. Cleomenes ordered Aristagoras to speak out and say what he wanted and not to hold back because of the presence of the child. [2] So Aristagoras began by promising him ten talents if he would fulfill his request. Cleomenes refused, and Aristagoras increased the sum step by step, until he has raised the offer to fifty talents. At this point the child blurted out, “Father, your guest-friend is going to corrupt you unless you leave and stay away from him.” [3] Cleomenes was pleased with his child’s advice, and he went into another room. Aristagoras departed and then left Sparta completely, losing the opportunity to explain the journey inland to the king any further (Hdt. 5.51.1–3).

If Cleomenes’ only child had been male, the boy might well have been sent off to the Agoge when aged seven and would rarely see either his mother or his father; as things turn out Cleomenes gets the best of both worlds and he is able to raise and perhaps indulge his only child at home throughout her childhood and adolescence.

Spartan Education and Ethics

Why Herodotus should include this anecdote leads to more questions than answers. We know very little about the inner workings of the Spartan court, but evidently diplomatic visitors can seek private audiences with one of the kings or perhaps with one or more of the ephors. A royal child’s silent attendance might

18. Hdt. 5.51.1.

be a compulsory part of their upbringing.¹⁹ Neither illiterate nor innumerate, these young Spartan women acquire not only the same grounding, if not much better, in the three R's as their male siblings; but in addition, the wonderful potentially off-road freedom from close surveillance afforded by the fourth R—riding.²⁰ The one-hour horse-ride horizon is vast compared to that accessible on foot. And it matters little whether this riding was astride or aside—it would be another millennium before the saddle is invented.

In contrast, if ever allowed outside the home, Athenian women are driven by others, trusted male slaves, in covered wagons. And famously, even a Phaeacian princess has to inveigle her doting father for permission to drive the wagon loaded with laundry and her maid-servants; although her confidence and skill with mule team suggests that she was no novice and this was not the first time he had acquiesced in granting such freedom.²¹ Although the lifestyle of the Spartan people is already synonymous with simplicity and communal austerity, we are obliged to ask whether individuals, particularly those in positions of influence, were invariably immune to bribery?²² Evidently Aristagoras believes that the Agiad Spartan king can be bribed; but whether Aristagoras, the tyrant of Miletus, fully understands the intricacies of Sparta's almost unique dyarchy—two kings, neither being an absolute ruler, who must work in conjunction with the Board of Ephors, the Council of Elders, and ultimately the Assembly—Herodotus does not say.

But Aristagoras is hardly the first ruler to harbor misconceptions about how most effectively to influence Spartan leadership, and furthermore ultimately to be disappointed. Herodotus tosses in the salacious tale that some ten years earlier Cleomenes is known to have been extraordinarily friendly with the wife of the Athenian aristocrat Isagoras.²³ However, much Cleomenes may well have enjoyed her bedroom favors and she his; given the complex decision-making process in

19. For general comments on the education of young female children in Sparta, see Sarah Pomeroy, *Spartan Women* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 2002): 3-32.

20. We hardly need Fay Weldon—a feminist author before the word was even coined—to point out that possession of these four "R's" ultimately leads to acquisition of the three "A's"—autonomy, authority, and agency—and the cost—accountability—trivial and not unreasonable, the first three "A's" engendering the fourth.

21. *Od.* 6.39–44, 6.61–65, and 6.80–94, see Robert Fagles, *Homer: The Odyssey* (New York, NY: Viking Penguin, 1990).

22. The word *spartan* enters the English language as a noun for austerity and indifference to luxury during the seventeenth century. Notwithstanding this famed austerity, Herodotus and Thucydides are littered with instances of Spartan leaders both offering and accepting bribes.

23. *Hdt.* 5.70.1. Of course, she is an Athenian aristocrat and therefore remains unnamed, but likely not at all unknown to the more influential contemporary Athenian politicians, some of whom may have been offered and even accepted similar carnal inducements by Isagoras.

Sparta, Isagoras' pandering his spouse likely results in only their mutual delight without achieving the desired significant influence on any diplomatic outcome.²⁴

Evidently, in this instance, Herodotus is letting an otherwise naïve female teenager make the obvious point that no matter where one is positioned in politics and diplomacy, almost everyone ultimately has a price.²⁵ This is not to say that once Cleomenes accepts Aristagoras' clumsy silver bullion bribe he can or would even consider ever following through. But more importantly to Gorgo is the notion that, by even listening, her father risks dragging the Agiad kingship and Sparta in general into disrepute. This is a broad jab to his contemporary readers that other Greek city-states—piously proffering the usual and expected denials—are also demonstrably susceptible to political and judicial corruption.²⁶

Moreover, Herodotus is setting the stage so that after her Agiad dynasty-repairing marriage Gorgo can be regarded as the equal in stature of such legendary Homeric consorts as at least Andromache in the *Iliad*, or in much more flattering terms to Penelope in the *Odyssey*.²⁷ However, until Gorgo marries, the best *model* or *fit* in Homeric terms for a vivacious and intelligent young woman of royal birth, welcome and active in her parent's court, is the beautiful Phaeacian princess, Nausicaa.²⁸ She has that rare ability to immediately discern nobility, virtue, and character despite all outward appearances.²⁹ Conversely Gorgo instantly discerns that Aristagoras lacks all of these attributes and—like many self-serving politicians— that he has absolutely nothing to say worth listening to.

24. As Heywood surmises, it would be “an yll wynde, that blowth no man to good, men saie.” John Heywood, *A Dialogue Conteyning . . .* (London, 1546): *Part ii, Chap ix*.

25. Irrespective of how her sense of morality and perhaps ethics are instilled they are a part of her royal upbringing, Gorgo's suggestion that Cleomenes leaves the room shows she is gentler, kinder, and more diplomatic than her father. Earlier in his reign, when Maiandrios of Samos attempts to bribe him, the young king immediately informs the Ephors and recommends that Maiandrios be banished from the Peloponnese lest he succeed in corrupting other leaders (Hdt. 3.148.1–3.149.1).

26. Gorgo's father is outraged to learn that the Athenians have corrupted the oracle at Delphi to garner Spartan support (Hdt. 6.123.2), but less than two decades later Cleomenes will bribe the Pythia—Periallos— to aid in his deposing of Demaratos (Hdt. 6.66.1–3). Note that in this case—perhaps because the Pythia's behavior is disreputable—her name is given.

27. See books 6 to 8 of the *Odyssey*, set before Odysseus begins his storytelling after washing up on the shores of Scheria (probably Corfu). Nausicaa is the only daughter of King Alcinous and Queen Arete of the island kingdom of the Phaeacians. Fagles trans., the *Odyssey*.

28. As usual, Herodotus tells us nothing about Gorgo's physical appearance; but we can argue from his silence that it was quite unremarkable, not rivalling that of Helen of Sparta or he would have said as much—clear eyes not too close together: neither drop-dead gorgeous nor excessively long of limb or nose.

29. *Od.* 6. 148–158. Fagles trans., the *Odyssey*.

A Dutiful Princess

A year or so after this incident Gorgo marries her uncle Leonidas, her father's half-brother by a different mother. Endogamy—then as now a favored pastime of many royal houses and the landed aristocracy—is a commonly accepted practice by the Greeks, including Athenians and Spartans.³⁰ In Gorgo's case—despite what in modern terms we might regard as distressing consanguinity—her marriage tidies up a major loose end in the Agiad line of succession. When his spouse appears to be barren, Gorgo's grandfather, Anaxandridas, is reluctantly persuaded by his Council of Ephors to enter into a bigamous marriage—a union which promptly produces the required son Cleomenes, Gorgo's father. Most surprisingly and shortly thereafter Anaxandridas' first wife, unnamed, of course, quickly gives birth to three sons: Dorieus, Leonidas, and Cleombrotus thereby clouding the Agiad succession.³¹ Gorgo's father may have spent a lifetime deprived of the secure knowledge of his Agiad legitimacy—the ephors who forced the issue are long gone and many of those elected to the Gerousia will have passed away. One way or another, this marriage removes any cloud.

Herodotus tells one last anecdote concerning Gorgo in the year 485.³² And we should be mindful that these are flattering anecdotes that he cannot possibly tell about contemporary Athenian women.³³ During this period Athenian women

30. Leonidas (his name a loose reference to the lion-slaying Heracles) was born around the year 540 and would be expected to marry when in his late twenties. As Cartledge points out, unless he was widowed or set aside an earlier bride, he would be in his mid-forties when he marries the teen-aged Gorgo. Cartledge, *Spartans*, 242-243.

31. Although entirely of their own making the ephors' dilemma is simple—is the true heir apparent the absolute first-born, albeit by the second, possibly bigamous union—or is he the somewhat younger first-born male child by Anaxandridas' first and unquestionably legitimate spouse? They can stall for a few years to see which children survive infancy, but not forever.

32. Classicists will recall that within *Plutarch's Moralia* he devotes a chapter to "Sayings of Spartan Women"—*Lacaenarum Apophthegmata*—there is no such chapter for Athenian women, nor for any other group of women Babbitt, 451-469. However, Plutarch has a not entirely relevant chapter also among his *Moralia* entitled "Bravery of Women"—*Mulierum Virtutes*, Babbitt 471-581. Athenian men insisted on protecting their wives, sisters, and daughters from the public sphere, consequently like little Victorian children they were to be rarely seen and seldom heard. In fact, if an Athenian woman's name is given, more likely than not, she is an accomplished *hetaira* (ἑταίρα) or perhaps one of many well-known local *pornai* (πόρναι) rather than a noblewoman—Aspasia of Miletus—Pericles' concubine comes to mind.

33. This sounds much like an Archaic Athenian variant of "Kinder, Küche, Kirche" (aber keine Komödie). Without giving any clues toward a date, we can only assume that it was late in the sixth century, Herodotus describes how the Pelasgians, who were at one time justly expelled from Attica by the Athenians, some of whom settled on Lemnos in the northern Aegean and from there plotted their revenge. Some years after the expulsion

whether aristocratic or ordinary citizens are confined to the domestic sphere and generally cannot appear in public—unless it is to attend an all-female religious festival.³⁴ But whether Herodotus' audiences ever notice this remarkable inclusion in his *Histories* of an independent and gifted woman, who was neither an Amazon nor a courtesan, contemporary Greek commentators do not say.

When Demaratos son of Ariston was in exile among the Medes, I do not believe—and here reason is my ally—that he had goodwill toward the Lacedaemonians, though one may conjecture whether he acted out of benevolence or out of spiteful satisfaction. For when Xerxes resolved to lead an expedition against Hellas, Demaratos was in Susa, and upon learning Xerxes' plans, immediately wanted to communicate this information to the Lacedaemonians. [3] There was a risk that he would be caught, so there was no other way he could inform them except by the following scheme. Taking a double writing tablet, he scraped off the wax and inscribed the plan of the King onto the wood of the tablet. After doing this he melted some wax back over what he had written, so that the tablet would be apparently blank and thus cause no trouble from the guards as it was conveyed to its destination. [4] When it arrived at Lacedaemon, the Lacedaemonians could not understand what it meant until, according to what I have heard, Gorgo the daughter of Cleomenes and wife of Leonidas deduced the answer herself. She ordered them to scrape off the wax, and said that they would then discover a message written on the wood (Hdt. 7.239.2–4).

A Queen's Place among Courtiers

To claim Gorgo as the first female cryptanalyst overstates the case as she is not deciphering Demaratos' message, just revealing it.³⁵ But in closing book 7 of his *Histories* Herodotus goes out of his way to make the case that where a roomful of men—supposedly Sparta's brightest and best—are utterly flummoxed, she is

they raid the temple at Brauron during the annual Festival to Artemis abducting many young Athenian women to be distributed among themselves as concubines, or forced into more common use. As the religious ritual was performed entirely by teenaged women, very few men, other than the covered wagon drivers, would be in attendance making the raid particularly cowardly (Hdt. 6.137.3–6.140.2).

34. In a comparison between Spartan and Athenian women Paul Cartledge comments that young Spartan women "were married at eighteen—a substantially later age than their Athenian counterparts" *Spartans*, 24.

35. Until deposed by Cleomenes in 491, in what can only be described as the dirtiest of deeds, including corruption of the oracle at Delphi, Demaratos was the Eurypontid king of Sparta (Hdt. 6.65.1–6.67.1). Banished from the kingdom, he eventually ends up an advisor at Xerxes' court. He may well have wished every ill of Cleomenes while harboring no ill-will against the Spartan people.

not.³⁶ There is no evidence that Gorgo shares her father's enmity with Demaratos. Indeed, this incident suggests that she knew him sufficiently well to be confident that he would not risk his life with any secret communication without good reason. Again, why Herodotus should include this anecdote raises interesting questions far beyond the ethnic (Athenian) slur that all Spartan males were Neanderthal Heraclids bred for brawn and not brain. He is sorting through and selecting from any number of near contemporary but unwritten stories in current circulation from his sources in the Peloponnese and Attica.³⁷ Most stories *improve with the telling* and Herodotus is certainly free to creatively re-work his source material both to his liking and to that of his audiences.

Arguably we can make the case that Herodotus is also a proto-feminist, almost two and a half millennia before the word is ever coined. Near the end of her article Lynette Mitchell writes, "It remains to ask whether it is significant that many of these women come from cities which might, from an Athenocentric point of view, be considered to lie on the edges of the Greek world."³⁸ Athenians may piously take their cue from Homer, and Hector in particular, who believes that women should solely "tend to . . . the distaff and the loom."³⁹ The center is often taken as the pinnacle of achievement, but it can equally be the slough of despair. No matter, we can make the claim that Gorgo, just to name one remarkable woman, earns her own place in Greek history on her own merits and not just upon those of the Spartan ruler to whom she is married or on those of her father. There is an unresolved paradox here—five of the Olympians are goddesses, of whom three are virgins, and are depicted in divine myth in their own ways as just as powerful as the Olympian gods.⁴⁰ This leaves unexplained why the status of mortal women is generally so low.

36. See Lynette Mitchell "The Women of Ruling Families" *Classical Quarterly* 62, no. 1 (2012): 10. Arguably Gorgo is a very different heroine than Andromache, who is hardly praised by Hector for her listing of her personal losses during the course of the war and lamenting his role (*Il.* 6.480–520). But unlike Hector's spouse, Gorgo—who is more like Penelope—in a point raised in her article about the role of women in ruling families—is not telling her husband's courtiers how to conduct the war.

37. If, as might be inferred from a disparaging comment by Plutarch, Herodotus gave public performances of near-completed portions of his work, we could argue that the perceived bias or spin on any particular story is a palimpsest of the last audience to whom it was successfully presented, see Babbitt (*Plu., Mor.* 864D).

38. See Mitchell, "Ruling Families" 20.

39. *Il.* 6.585–586. To point out the obvious: Hector is killed in battle and his body mutilated, the infant Astyanax has his brains splattered over the walls of Troy, and Andromache is a live trophy to be taken away into involuntary concubinage by the victors.

40. There are twelve (or perhaps thirteen) Olympian gods. Hestia (certainly sober and a virgin) is often displaced in the listings by Dionysus (most determinedly neither).

Gloomy Prophecies

Long before leaving the Peloponnese for Attica and the Hot Gates of Thermopylae to meet the Persian invader, the Spartans consult Apollo's oracle at Delphi and for once the Pythia's prophecy is particularly gloomy but unequivocal. Her prophecy is a simple either—or—either their city [Sparta] would be sacked by the Persians or that their king would die.⁴¹ Herodotus does not recount Gorgo's reaction, but Plutarch does. She must know about the oracle and Plutarch suggests that she discusses *what ifs* with Leonidas.⁴² Nor does Herodotus discuss what the Spartan authorities thought of this either, but offers the suggestion that Leonidas immediately perceives the Achilles-like parallel—*kleos* or everlasting renown—partially explaining why he assumes overall command but eventually sends much of his force away to fight another day.

Herodotus' audiences will not miss the point that Gorgo is widowed when her husband accepts, if not actively seeks, the most gloriously Homeric of all battlefield deaths—fighting to almost the last man when his three hundred Spartan hoplites and disputed but likely similar numbers of loyal Thebans and Thespians are grossly outnumbered by Xerxes' army of tens of thousands.⁴³ Her husband's battlefield death becomes even more Homeric when his remaining Spartan hoplites are killed when unsuccessfully trying to protect his corpse from Persian mutilation. Homer's battlefield heroes have a similar aspiration for what might be termed surrogate immortality stemming from eternal fame.⁴⁴ Herodotus' contemporary audiences—steeped in Homer—may even compare and contrast her behavior with Hector's spouse—who berates his role and bewails his responsibilities—except that Gorgo is no weeping Andromache⁴⁵—and with Odysseus' spouse—who accepts that such was her lot—indeed to win her Odysseus had devised and taken the Oath of Tyndareus himself and his duty was clear.⁴⁶ Whether Gorgo ever questions her husband's motives is a matter

41. Hdt. 7.220.2–4.

42. See Babbitt 455–456, possibly an apocryphal tale, Gorgo encourages Leonidas to show himself worthy and asks him what she should do, and he replies, “Marry a good man, and bear good children” (Plu. *Mor.* 240.6E).

43. Patroclus is killed in battle by Hector (*Il.* 16.951–971), but much of the action of book 17 of the *Iliad* covers the subsequent fight over his armor and his corpse. On Xerxes' orders King Leonidas' corpse is mutilated and his severed head is mounted on an infantryman's spear—an unusual and ignominious treatment by the Persians of a brave warrior and monarch (Hdt. 7.238.1–2).

44. See Michael Clarke, “Spartan *Atē* at Thermopylae” *Sparta: Beyond the Mirage* (London: Duckworth), 65.

45. *Il.* 22.550–570 and *Il.* 24.893–912, see Fagles' translation.

46. Herodotus' audiences, many of whom know their Homer backward, will be familiar with Odysseus' views on companionate marriage, in particular where he wishes that with her future husband Nausicaa will find “two minds, [and] two hearts that work as one” (*Od.* 6.201–202).

Herodotus leaves largely unexplored—it is fair to ask whether in a Kantian sense Leonidas does all the right things at Thermopylae for all the wrong reasons. For some valor is necessarily selfless; although bravery may not be fearless, nor is it careless or suicidal. Herodotus actually comments on the two Spartan survivors of Thermopylae.⁴⁷

There is no evidence that Gorgo ever re-marries, indeed doing so might confound her son's succession; but equally—widowed to a Spartan hero—she has no interest in a potentially second-rate, second spouse. Herodotus has penned the outline of an enduring love story.⁴⁸ But all this grief is in Gorgo's future—the two anecdotes from Herodotus above place her *defining moments* in the same context as the Phaeacian princess Nausicaa. Herodotus grants her the essential three A's— autonomy, authority, and agency, she becomes much more than just a royal incubator of the next Agiad dyarch; Fay Weldon would be proud.

Feminism before there was a Word for it

In the late Archaic and early Classical periods, we are so accustomed to learning of women in terms of the male figures with whom they are most closely associated, where often even their names remain unrecorded, that we forget that mythology is loaded with exceptions.⁴⁹ Paris, one of Queen Hecuba's nineteen children and an easily corruptible beauty pageant adjudicator to boot, would

47. Of the three hundred Spartans three were sent away from Thermopylae as messengers: Pantites, Eurytos, and Aristodemos. Pantites does not return to participate in the battle and hangs himself in disgrace, whereas Eurytos although blinded with an eye disease returns to fight and die in battle. Aristodemos, suffering from similar blindness, elects not return to Thermopylae and survives to live in ignominious disgrace. One year later he is killed during the battle of Plataea, but is denied any measure of *kleos* by his comrades because they believe that he wanted to die and deliberately makes a grandstand spectacle of his battlefield death. Hdt 7.229–7.231 and Hdt. 9.71.2–4.

48. Here we might recognize two aspects of Aphrodite's nature—"Aphrodite Urania, born of Uranus without a mother, represented intellectual, non-physical love. Aphrodite Pandemos, said to have been created by the union of Olympian Zeus and the sky goddess Dione, was the patroness of prostitutes and represented common or vulgar love" Pomeroy, *Goddesses, Whores*, 7. Accordingly, we might represent the dichotomy between the two sorts of love as that indicated by Nausicaa/Gorgo and Helen/Phryne.

49. It can hardly go unnoticed that Zeus' first spouse is the Oceanid, Metis, a daughter of the two Titans Oceanus and Tethys. She is the goddess of wisdom, prudence, and deep thought whom, when tricked momentarily into turning into a fly, Zeus will swallow. This swallowing is partly to foil the prophesy that the son Zeus has by her will be more powerful than he is and partly to ensure that Metis can continue to give him wise counsel from within—ruminating perhaps? The Greek word *metis* (μῆτις)—meaning cunning or crafty like a fox, or Odysseus—is not pejorative and often contrasted with *bie* (βία) brute force.

remain almost as completely unknown as the majority of Priam's other fifty sons, including his hapless younger brother Troilus, except for the status and fame of the woman he abducted. This identity paradox extends to the king of Locris, the Lesser Ajax son of Oileus, whose principal claim to Homeric fame is his mindless desecration of Athena's temple with the rape of Priam's daughter Cassandra, where the virgin priestess sought refuge during the sack of Troy—both so-called warriors appear to rely on the moral compass suspended below the belt rather than one above the shoulders for their moral guidance.

Herodotus goes out of his way to sketch-in some of the laudable accomplishments of a number of women—including Gorgo. Of course, they are someone's daughter, and admittedly it is their elite station in life that makes these deeds even possible. But once granted the autonomy, authority, and agency trident in hand—Herodotus shows that Gorgo waits on no man, neither her father nor her husband, let alone any of the ephors. Of course, Herodotus also describes the less laudable deeds of several other similarly trident-armed women—notably Nyssia and Amestris.⁵⁰ One of Lewis Carroll's Queen of Hearts favorite commands, "Off with her head!" comes to mind.⁵¹ But what Herodotus' contrast really shows is that the trident can be used for good or ill and that possession of great power is not enough—the holder has to know how and when to use it wisely—the difference between *mētis* (μητις) and *bie* (βία) becomes critical when resort to a Herculean display of strength is not an option.

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50. Nyssia is the spouse of the early seventh-century Lydian king Candaules, and Amestris is the principal wife of the fifth-century Persian king of kings, Xerxes.

51. See Lewis Carroll's 1865 *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*. Throughout the fantasy, the Queen's remedy to any problem is to demand, "Off with his/her head!" or "Off with their heads!"

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Beyond the Words in Print: Identity Construction in Messages of Condolence

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Death is part of human existence. When a person hears the news of someone's death, it is very common for that person to express their feelings about it. This feeling is in the form of condolences which express the speaker's sorrow, and condolences fall into the category of speech act. Semantically, condolences have a social meaning which refers to language use. Identities are created in relationships with others, and condolences are major platforms for the construction of identities, in that, existing relationships are, clearly, manifested in the messages that sympathizers expressed. Using a qualitative approach, the study analyzed twenty condolence messages which were purposely sampled from condolence messages posted in the portals of International Centre for Theoretical Physics (ICTP), when one of its members passed away. The analysis of the data revealed two main identity types enacted for the deceased: role identity and Social Identity. The major Role identity enacted, metaphorically, was Father while the least role was Achiever. Second, identity as an International Figure was dominant with the Social roles, but Good Personality was used less frequently. The present study adds to studies in identity construction, in general, and studies in condolence messages, in specific.

Introduction

Death is a natural part of human life, in that, little can be done about its existence.¹ It awaits every living thing on this earth. No matter what form it takes, death is always very painful. Death is almost always unscheduled² since, sometimes, we least expect the occurrence of death in our lives. When death occurs, its announcement to affected individuals becomes very difficult. When a person hears the news of someone's death, it is very common for that person to express their feelings about it.³ This feeling is in the form of condolence which expresses the speaker's sorrow. If the person who hears the death news does not show any reaction or does not express their feelings, in most cultures, such a person is considered unsympathetic. Death may be announced without prior

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1. T. R. Williams, "Linguistic politeness in expressing condolences: a case study," *Social Science & Humanities* 23, no. 1 (2015): 1-19.

2. R. E. Clark and E. E. LaBeff, "Death telling: managing the delivery of bad news," *Journal of Health and Social Behavior* 23, no. 4 (1982), 367.

3. Behman et al., 2013.

indication, leaving the speaker with no time to prepare.⁴ In delivering or talking about bad news,⁵ there is a tension between showing support and involvement by speaking about it at length, and showing respect for privacy by closing the topic quickly. Bereavement is a time when people may be particularly vulnerable; hence, failure to express condolences appropriately can damage personal relationships if the expression of sympathy is perceived as insensitive or inadequate.⁶

The expression of condolence falls into the category of speech act, the theory which has been developed mainly by Austin (1962) and Searle (1969; 1979). Speech acts are defined as actions performed via utterances in an actual situation of language use, bringing the functions the speaker intends to the hearer(s) to take or to interpret. Austin's (1962) classification is into three different meanings: locutionary (what is said), illocutionary meaning (the intended meaning), and perlocutionary meaning (the effect of one's words on the listener). In a classification of illocutionary act, there is an elaboration of the taxonomy into five categories:⁷ first, representatives or assertives (the description of states or events, e.g., reports, assertions, claims); second, directives (e.g., requests, orders, suggestions, commands, inviting, i.e. asking the listener to do something in the future); third, commissives (e.g., promises, threats, offers, swearing, i.e., committing oneself to do something in the future); fourth, expressives (e.g., apologies, expressing gratitude, congratulating, i.e., expressing one's psychological state of mind), and fifth, declaratives (e.g., declaring, appointing, i.e. bringing about a change). Of these, expressive speech acts reveal psychological states of mind and express personal attitudes and feelings. They deal with social and interpersonal relations. The list of expressives includes greetings, thanks, congratulations, condolences, and apologies, and politeness considerations are among the main factors that determine the realizations of these speech act.

Speech acts are speech functions that are realized by way of words,⁸ and that being able to say the right thing to the right person at the right time would be a great social accomplishment.⁹ Thus, many social factors such as age, gender, class, culture, and status play important role in achieving effective communication. Habermas (1981) sees the importance of Searle's approach in that he considers language as a means for coordinating action. In sum, the theory of speech acts rests on the premise that the minimal unit of human communication is not a

4. K. Elwood, "'I'm so sorry': a cross-cultural analysis of expressions of condolence," *The Cultural Review, Waseda Commercial Studies Association, (Bulletin of Universities and Institutes)* 24 (2004): 101-126.

5. Clark and LaBeff, 1982.

6. Elwood, 2004.

7. J. A. Searle "A classification of illocutionary acts," *Language in Society* 5, no. 1 (1976): 10-15.

8. G. Yule, *Pragmatics* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), 47.

9. Ibid.

sentence or other expression, but the performance of certain kinds of language acts, such as requests and promises.

This speech act of condolence is used to express the speaker's sorrow at the news of someone's death.¹⁰ Speech act of condolence is related to the expressive classification; it is used to express the interlocutor's sorrow at the news of the death of someone.¹¹ Condolences are formal expressions of sympathy offered to people after the death of a loved one, and condolence phrases are designed to convey sympathy for the bereaved person, but, as a general rule, the emotion behind the phrase is often more important than the wording itself.¹² Many people are aware that it is very difficult to give condolence phrases without sounding slightly clichéd. Condolence expressions consist of utterances such as "sorry for your loss", "deepest sympathy" and many others. These condolence expressions are neutral enough to be appreciated for anyone regardless of religious beliefs.

Semantically, condolences have a social meaning which refers to the language use, and this is to establish social relations and roles; condolences are not just expressions of sympathy, but they are, also, acts of encouragement.¹³ Condolence responses are classified according to semantic formula which is analogous to Olshtain and Cohen's (1983) who found five types of semantic formulas for apologies: a) Acknowledgement of the death: it includes certain interjections such as 'no' and 'oh'; b) Expression of sympathy such as "I am participating in your sorrow"; c) Offer of assistance like "is there anything I can do?"; d) Future-Oriented remarks such as "try not to get depressed", and e) Expression of concern like "you must care for yourself". These were the classical categories that most researchers based their investigation of offering condolences on; however, semantic formula such as "expression of empathy", "statement of lacking words", "religion expressions", "expression of surprise", "related questions", "statement of not knowing", and others have been developed lately.¹⁴

Because conversations surrounding death are not institutionally prescribed, death is almost always unscheduled, and the interactions of the various participants are only partially regulated, there might be the interplay of social and personal diminuendos.¹⁵ Just as individuals form, transform, and modify how they define themselves and others in the context of work-based situations and

10. B. Lotfollahi and A. Rasekh, "Speech act of condolence in Persian and English," *Studies in Literature and Language* 3 no. 3 (2011), 139-145.

11. J. R. Searle, *Speech acts: an essay in the philosophy of language* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1969).

12. E. M. Yahya, "A study of condolences in Iraqi Arabic with reference to English," *Adab Al- Rafidayn* 57 (2010): 47-70.

13. A. Mwihaki, "Meaning as use: a functional view of semantics and pragmatics," *Swahili Forum* 11 (2004): 127-139.

14. Elwood, 2004.

15. Clark and LaBeff, 1982.

activities,¹⁶ expressing condolences also provide a platform for the construction of identities in the sense that identities are created in relationships with others,¹⁷ and condolences are major platforms for signaling the kinds of relationship that the sympathizers had with the deceased. The present study, therefore, seeks to examine the kinds of identity that are enacted for the deceased in condolence messages by sympathizers. In the rest of the paper, I consider the conceptual framework (theoretical and empirical studies), methods, and analysis and discussion. Implications of the study will also be added.

Conceptual Framework

This section, first, considers the theoretical perspective that underpins the present study, the Social Identity Theory, and then, adds relevant previous studies on condolences.

Theoretical Perspective

The theory that informs the present study is the Social Identity Theory (SIT). SIT rests on the premise that individuals define their own identities with regard to social groups, and such identifications work to protect and bolster self-identity.¹⁸ The creation of group identities involves both the categorization of one's "in-group" with regard to an "out-group", and the tendency to view one's own group with a positive bias vis-à-vis the out-group. The result is an identification with a collective, depersonalized identity based on group

16. J. E. Dutton, L. M. Roberts and J. Bednar, "Pathways for positive identity construction at work: four types of positive identity and the building of social resources," *Academy of Management Review* 35, no. 2 (2010): 265-293; Ibarra, "Provisional selves: experimenting with image and identity in professional adaptation," *Administrative Science Quarterly* 44, no. 4 (1999): 764-791; Pratt, "The good, the bad, and the ambivalent: managing identification among Amway distributors," *Administrative Science Quarterly* 45, no. 3 (2000): 456-493; Pratt, Rockmann and Kaufmann, "Constructing professional identity: the role of work and identity learning cycles in the customization of identity among medical residents," *Academy of Management Journal* 49, no. 2 (2006): 235-262.

17. Gecas, "The self-concept," *Annual Review of Sociology* 8 (1982): 1-33; Gergen, *The saturated self: dilemmas of identity in contemporary life* (New York: Basic Books, 1991).

18. Tajfel, "Social categorization, social identity, and social comparison," In *Differentiation between Social Groups: Studies in the Social Psychology of Intergroup Relations*, edited by H. Tajfel. London: Academic Press, 1978, 61-76; Tajfel and Turner, "The social identity theory of intergroup behavior," in *Psychology of Intergroup Relations*, edited by S. Worchel and W. G. Austin (Chicago, IL: Nelson-Hall, 1987), 7-24.

membership and imbued with positive aspects.¹⁹ Positive in-group bias can be explained because the in-group comes to take on a self-relevant role, where persons define themselves through the group. In Social Identity Theory, the self is reflexive in that it looks back on itself as an object and categorizes, classifies, or names itself in particular ways that contrast itself with other social categories or classifications. This is the process of self-categorization. In Social Identity Theory, self-categorizations are cognitive groupings of oneself and an aggregate of stimuli as identical, in contrast to another group of stimuli. Persons who are similar to the self with respect to these stimuli are grouped with the self (the in-group); persons who differ from the self are classified as the out-group.²⁰

The self-categorizations depend upon a named and classified world. Among the class terms learnt within a culture are symbols that are used to designate "positions," the relatively stable, morphological components of social structure that are termed roles. Persons acting in the context of social structure name one another and themselves in the sense of recognizing one another as occupants of positions.²¹ This naming invokes expectations with regard to each other's and one's own behaviors.²²

The self-view that emerges from the reflexive activity of self-categorization in terms of membership in certain groups or particular roles comprises one's identities. Thus, while the question of how one classifies oneself is different depending upon the theory that is used (group or role), individuals view themselves in terms of shared social categories.²³

The theory also holds that an individual has as many different identities as self-categorizations and that, as a set, these different identities make up the self-concept. For Social Identity Theory, the multiple identities are the different social categories to which the self belongs. Given multiple identities, there are relationships among the different identities which will be activated in a situation. In Social Identity Theory, the different identities are organized into a hierarchy of inclusiveness, with three levels which are generically attended to: a superordinate level such as "human," an intermediate level such as an "American," and a subordinate level such as a "Southerner."²⁴ The levels are dynamic and

19. Turner, Hogg, Oakes, Reicher, and Wetherell, *Rediscovering the social group: a self-categorization theory* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1987).

20. Turner, "Social categorization and the self-concept: a social cognitive theory of group behavior," in *Advances in Group Processes: Theory and Research*, edited by E. J. Lawler (Greenwich, CT: JA, 1985).

21. S. Stryker, *Symbolic interactionism: a social structural version* (Menlo Park: Benjamins, 1980).

22. Ibid; McCall and Simmons, *Identities and interactions: an examination of human associations in everyday life* (New York: Free Press, 1978).

23. Ibid.

24. J. E. Stets and P. J. Burke, "Identity theory and social identity theory," *Social Psychology Quarterly* 63, no. 3 (2000), 231.

contextual, depending upon the salience of the different classifications.²⁵ Different identities become active as the situation changes and relevant self-categorization stimuli change.²⁶

It must be acknowledged, here, that the process of identity construction is inherently dialogic in nature²⁷ in the sense that our senses of ourselves are fashioned in relation to the identities of others—sometimes, in concert with them; sometimes, in opposition to them, but always in relation to them.²⁸ Being and doing are both central features of one's identity. Thus, in expressing condolences, there is being and doing.²⁹ The present study seeks to examine the kinds of identity that are enacted for the deceased both through what the deceased was (being) and what he did (doing), which are anticipated to be expressed through the condolence messages that were sent to the portal of ICTP, when one of its members passed away.

The Social Identity Theory has been employed in many studies. For instance, in a study, it was examined how moral standards and moral judgements play a role in the regulation of individual behaviour within groups and social systems. They investigated the importance of morality for group-based identities and intra-group behavioural regulation. Their study revealed convergent evidence of the centrality of moral judgements for people's conceptions of the groups they belong to, and demonstrated the importance of group-specific moral norms in identifying behaviours that contribute to their identity as group members.³⁰

In academics, how identities are enacted, has been investigated. A study investigated identity conflict or interference by focusing on a new identity combination, the woman and scientist identities. The study examined the influence of identity centrality, or importance, as a predictor of interference and moderator of the relation between interference and well-being and science performance. Supporting hypotheses, greater identity interference was related to lower levels of performance and well-being. Furthermore, woman centrality was unrelated to interference for those with a central scientist identity, but for those without a central scientist identity, they were positively related. Although central identities were related to positive outcomes in the absence of interference, the outcomes of all women suffered when interference was high, contrary to the

25. Turner, "The role and the person," *American Journal of Sociology* 84 (1987): 1-237.

26. Stets and Burke, 2000, 231.

27. Bakhtin, "Discourse in the novel," translated by C. Emerson and M. Holquist, in *The Dialogic Imagination*, edited by M. Holquist (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1981), 259-422.

28. G. A. Hull and J. Zacher, "Enacting identities: an ethnography of a job training program," *Identity* 7, no. 1 (2007): 71-102.

29. Stets and Burke, 2000.

30. N. Ellemers, S. Pagliaro and M. Barreto, "Morality and behavioural regulation in groups: a social identity approach," *European Review of Social Psychology* 24, no. 1 (2013): 160-193.

hypothesis.³¹ Replicating past work, another study demonstrated that introducing negative stereotypes about women's Math performance activated participants' female social identity and hurt their math performance (i.e., stereotype threat) by reducing working memory. Moving beyond past work, it was also demonstrated that concurrently presenting a positive self-relevant stereotype (e.g., college students are good at Maths) increased the relative accessibility of female college students' identity and inhibited their gender identity, eliminating attendant working memory deficits and contingent math performance decrements. In addition, subtle manipulations in questions presented in the demographic section of a math test eliminated stereotype threat effects that result from women reporting their gender before completing the test. The work identified the motivated processes through which people's social identities became active in situations in which self-relevant stereotypes about a stigmatized group membership and a nonstigmatized group membership were available. In addition, it demonstrated the downstream consequences of this pattern of activation on working memory and performance.³²

Also, there was an analysis of the kinds of identity that were enacted with some non-verbal cues. Using the identity theory, the researchers examined a data set of four (4) presentations by M. A. Teaching Communicative Skill students. The study identified several non-verbal cues which were further categorized into five main groups - physical appearance, gestures, face and eyes behaviours, vocal behaviours and space environment. The researchers observed that each of the presenters A, B, C, and D enacted distinct identities and in some cases common identities.³³

Furthermore, a study investigated the experience of reversal conceptual transfer among Iranian learners of English as a foreign language, specifically in the construction of double identities in studying a foreign language. He employed a qualitative approach, by using open-ended questionnaires for 65 undergraduates at the University of Isfahan and 45 interviews conducted in a private language school. A key finding of the study was that most of the participants had partially experienced reversal conceptual transfer. On the other hand, some of the participants did not seem to have constructed a new foreign language identity

31. I. H. Settles, "When multiple identities interfere: the role of identity centrality," *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin* 30, no. 4 (2004): 487-500.

32. R. J. Rydell, A. R. McConnell and S. L. Beilock, "Multiple social identities and stereotype threat: imbalance, accessibility, and working memory," *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 96, no. 5 (2009): 949-966.

33. K. W. Gyasi, Kongo, B. K. Agbenyo, W. Y. Lumor, P. Aopare and C. Koufie, "Identity and non-verbal communication: the case of UCC students on Master of Arts teaching communicative skills programme," *African Journal of Applied Research (AJAR)* 2, no. 2 (2015): 51-60.

in English, but others who did had a more positive attitude towards their English identity.³⁴

Introducing another variable, gender, there was an investigation of the relationship that existed among college student's social identity, online learning performance, life satisfaction and social identity. The study employed 490 questionnaires using Jonathan M. Cheek relational identity orientation scale for the AIQ. The results indicated that the demographic features of students had different influence on their social identity, and the effect of online learning performance and life satisfaction on social identity shows a significant difference. Specifically, the study found that life satisfaction of girls was higher than that of boys. Also, students of associate degree had a higher social identity than students of bachelor degree. Third, both the improvement of online learning and life satisfaction could promote the enhancement of social identity, and the effect of improving online learning is more significant.³⁵ Also, a study investigated whether the implementation of intercultural movie clips could contribute to improving the personal identity, and impacting positively on L2 identity of participants in the English as a foreign language (EFL) context of Iran. Thus, two intact classes were assigned to the control and experimental group, each containing thirty students. This quasi-experimental study was implemented on the pre-test post-test equivalent-group design. Drawing on quantitative and qualitative analysis, using two questionnaires and a semi-structured interview, the results indicated that positive changes took place in the personal and second language identity of the participants. More specifically, the participants moved from a closed community of practice in which self was seen from one horizon to an intercultural community of practice in which others were seen besides self. The changing community provided by movie clips had an impact on the participants' views and trends. Thus access to new social, cultural, and linguistic resources resulted in the adoption of new identities.³⁶

Still on academics but with a focus on graduate students, there was an exploration on the experience that three East Asian international Graduate Teaching Assistants (GTAs) encountered at a Midwestern teaching and research institution in the US, by examining the perceptions, difficulties and challenges, and future career choices that constructed the learning, social and teaching experiences of these three East Asian international GTAs. Data were collected through in-depth individual semi-structured interviews, informal chats, and

34. R. Gholaminejad, "Identity construction and reversal conceptual transfer among Iranian EFL learners," *HOW* 24, no. 2 (2017): 1-15.

35. Z. Mingfang and W. Qi, "Empirical research on relationship between college students' social identity and online learning performance: a case study of Guangdong province," *Higher Education Studies* 8, no. 2 (2018): 97-106.

36. A. Nematzadeh and M. H. Narafshan, "Construction and re-construction of identities: a study of learners' personal and L2 identity," *Cogent Psychology* 7(2020): 1-19.

the analysis of relevant documents. The findings of the study revealed identities such as academic identity, social identity and teacher identity of the participants.³⁷ Furthermore, Using the Social Identity Model of Identity Change (SIMIC), a study investigated the process of academic identity construction among doctoral students. Through thematic analysis of semi-structured interviews with 22 Ph.D. candidates, they observed that the identity construction process relied on a person's perception of a navigable pathway between their current self and their future self. Importantly, participants who were able to access multiple identity resources were more likely to perceive a navigable pathway to a future professional self (e.g., as an academic), unless they perceived these identities to be incompatible with those held by leading members of the profession (e.g., their supervisors). The study suggested that the identities that people are able to access as they progress in their careers may play an important role in their ongoing professional identity construction and career success.³⁸

On the professional front, the process of professional identity construction of two English as a foreign language student-teachers from a sociocultural theoretical lens was investigated. A qualitative case study was conducted through personal narratives, semi-structured interviews, and a focus group, and the data were analyzed using a grounded theory approach. The results show that the process of student-teachers' professional identity construction was unstable and dynamic, and was shaped by inter-related personal and external factors such as self-image, learning environment, and practicum experiences.³⁹ Also, an examination of the process of professional identity construction in undergraduate nursing students during their education was conducted. Using a qualitative research which was anchored in the Historical-Cultural framework, the study used Twenty-three undergraduate nursing students who were interviewed, with a semi-structured script. The study showed four main themes: first, the subjects were found in a movement to become a nurse: from previous experiences to entering the courses. Second, the nursing professor in the construction of the undergraduate's professional identity: a two-way mirror. Third, Pedagogical relationship: instrument for constructing the student's professional identity and, four, Historical-cultural conditions: space for the construction of the student's professional identity. Thus, it was concluded in the study that the construction of the students' professional identity is limited to the material conditions of existence, translating appropriation to the intrapsychic scope of elements that

37. J. Gao, Exploring the identity negotiation of East Asian graduate teaching assistants: a case study of academic identity, social identity and teacher identity (University of Kansas, 2019).

38. S. V. Bentley, K. Peters, S. A. Haslam and K. H. Greenaway. "Construction at work: multiple identities scaffold professional identity development in academia," *Frontiers in Psychology* 10, no. 628 (2019): 1-13.

39. D. Salinas and M. Ayala, "EFL student-teachers' identity construction: a case study in Chile," *HOW* 25, no. 1 (2018): 33-49.

occur, first, in the inter-psychological space of interactions. Nursing professors can become a paradoxical mirror, with one face to be imitated and the other, which materializes meanings of a model not to be followed. This construction is also influenced by the conditions of professional practice and university education.⁴⁰

Still focusing on professional identity but shifting attention from novice as seen in the earlier studies, the identity construction of Business English teacher from the perspective of ESP was examined by focusing on teacher identities in Chinese Business English teachers construct, and the construction of these identities. They observed the teaching activities in four courses offered by Guangdong University of Foreign Studies for their first-year postgraduate students of Business English major. Based on Needs Analysis and learning-centred approach of ESP theory, the study showed three identities that Business English teachers should construct: teaching practitioners and researchers, learners, and businesspeople. Again, it was established in the study that teacher identity is of great significance to the successful construction of multidimensional teacher identities for Business English teachers and to the realization of their professional development. Also, Business English teachers must first be teachers who impart knowledge and solve doubts of the students, and the main function of teachers is the practitioner of teaching.⁴¹

Identity construction and negotiation in language institute of four Indonesian teachers of English for Specific Purposes (ESP) was investigated, through an exploration of life-history interviews. The findings highlighted that the participants constructed ESP teacher identity through acquiring subject knowledge via professional development activities within the workplace community or surrounding educational institutions. A sense of intrinsic fulfilment also enveloped these participants, as their self-positionings, as ESP teachers in the language institute, contributed to their professional development. On the other hand, the participants showed subordination to the students' demands for learning ESP as ESP courses in the context of language institute served as an independent and customized program designed for specific students. However, that condition encouraged the participants to develop their professional practices by making some course adjustment based on the result of teacher-student dialogue, in order to meet the students' needs.⁴²

40. R. S. Lima, R. S., M. A. I. Silva, L. S. Andrade, F. S. N. Góes, M. A. Mello and M. F. C. Gonçalves, "Construction of professional identity in nursing students: qualitative research from the historical-cultural perspective," *Revista Latino-Americana de Enfermagem* 28, no. 3284 (2020).

41. G. Guihang and Z. Miao, "Identity construction of Chinese business English teachers from the perspective of ESP theory," *International Education Studies* 12, no. 7(2019): 20-27.

42. A. W. Mahendra, "Constructing identity: experiences of Indonesian ESP teachers in a language institute," *English Language Teaching Educational Journal* 3, no. 3 (2020): 229-240.

Again, the enactment of national identities have been investigated. First, there was an examination of how Dominican Americans whose members are Hispanic, American, and, largely, of African descent did negotiate distinctive issues of identity in the United States. The study showed that language was central to these negotiations, both as a symbol of identity and as a medium through which the construct and display of local social meanings were carried out. That is, Dominican Americans used linguistic forms from multiple varieties of two codes, Spanish and English, to situationally activate various facets of their multiple identities. This multi-variety linguistic and interactional construction of identities undermines implicit assumptions of uniformity and essentialism in U.S. linguistic and ethnic/racial categories, particularly in the construction of the category "African American".⁴³ Furthermore, a study succinctly reviewed the main developments in Spain's contemporary history in order to provide a background for the discussion of the various identities expressed by citizens in Catalonia. A segmentation analysis reviewed the various forms of Catalan self-identification, among which 'duality' was to be underlined. Single Identity (values 1 and 5), Dual Identity (values 2, 3 and 4), (Values 6 and 7 had been aggregated), Catalan Identity (values 1 and 2), Shared Identity (value 3) and Spanish Identity (values 4 and 5) were also found.⁴⁴

Identity constituting discourses have also been analysed. The aim of the paper was to show how fairly abstract reasoning about discourse and identity could be translated into a method of research, concentrating on narratives that were told about the other, namely Turkey's past (ideational function), about the Turco-European relations (relational function), and the self, that is, about Europe (identity-function). His impression from the first exploratory look at the discourse was that narratives were quite frequent when it came to the representation of the Turco-European relations.⁴⁵

Related to national identity is ethnicity identity. There was an exploration of the relationship between value systems and ethnic identity formation and how the difference in value systems influences the salience of identity and conflict. Through narratives from in-depth interviews, he analyzed group identity formation and their impact on conflict. The study revealed that the role of salient identity was used in the denigration of others, and through narratives, an enemy was created out of the "other" and violence towards them justified.⁴⁶

43. B. Bailey, "the language of multiple identities among Dominican Americans," *Journal of Linguistic Anthropology* 10, no. 2 (2001): 190-223.

44. L. Moreno, A. Arriba, and A. Serrano, "Multiple identities in decentralized Spain: the case of Catalonia," *Regional & Federal Studies* 8, no. 3 (1998): 65-88.

45. R. Hülse, "The discursive construction of identity and difference: Turkey as Europe's other?" Discussion paper presented at the *ECPR Joint Sessions of Workshops (Workshop: The Political Uses of Narrative)* (Mannheim, 1999), 26-31.

46. C. M. Aapengnuo, *Threat narratives, group identity and violence: a study of the Dagomba, Nanumba and Konkomba of Northern Ghana* (George Mason University, 2008).

Focusing on Media, the complex nature of online identity, as the understanding of participants in a more granular way was crucial for social machine observation and design was studied.⁴⁷ They studied the personas that were portrayed by participants in a social machine that produced creative media content, and discovered that inconsistent or misleading representations of individuals do not necessarily undermine the system in which they were participating.

Because relationships exist at places of work, identity enactment is also prevalent. There was an attempt to expand on the knowledge of how follower identities were socially enacted. The research was empirically founded in the qualitative traditions by interviewing members of a highly specialized and diversified team at a Danish company, Novo Nordisk. The study showed how follower identity was placed amidst a multitude of identities, identity work and enactments that influenced how those individual understood 'who am I as a follower?'⁴⁸

A study, too, explored "identity enactment" within the context of a job training program that pushed its adult students to adopt certain work-related identities. Drawing on analyses of long-term participant observations, longitudinal interviews, and written artifacts, their study revealed the tensions, adjustments, and reorientations that occurred when adults' conceptions of their current and future identities collided with different, even disparate, models of the professional people they were asked to become. Also, job training was perceived as a prime context for identity construction and spoke to the complicated relationship of identity formation to skills development.⁴⁹

All the studies above prove the usefulness of the identity theory in a study of any data: academic, workplace, media, nationality and ethnicity. Thus, the applicability of this theory in examining the kinds of identity that are enacted for the deceased in condolence messages is laudable. Also, these studies did not use the identity theory to examine messages of condolence, my motivation for the present study. On the other hand, studies have investigated condolence messages as well, which are presented in the next section below.

47. A. Guy and E. Klein, "Constructed identity and social machines: a case study in creative media production," in *International World Wide Web Conference Companion* (Seoul, Korea, 2014).

48. A. Rasmussen, *Fellowship as an identity enactment* (Copenhagen: Copenhagen Business School, 2012).

49. Hull and Zacher, 2007.

Studies on Condolences

This section reviews studies on condolence messages. A number of studies have investigated condolence messages as a speech act, in many directions. Examples are presented below:

First, embracing a cross-cultural approach, there was a comparison of the expression of condolences between Americans and Japanese participants. Discourse Completion Task (DCT) was used to elicit data and her participants were asked to “express” themselves during a condolence in two given situations.⁵⁰ The data were analyzed according to semantic formulas. The analysis confirmed five patterns, which included: 1. Acknowledgement of the death with interjections like “oh” or “oh my God”; 2. Expression of sympathy like “I’m so sorry”; 3. Offer of assistance like “is there anything I can do?”; 4. Future-oriented remarks which took the form of words of encouragement or practical advice, like “try not to get depressed”, and 5. Expression of concern which relates to showing care for the well-being of the speaker and/or their family and includes questions such as, “How are you doing?”. Adopting the same cross-cultural approach, another study investigated the condolences responses in English and Persian.⁵¹ The study found that Persian responses were more celestial and collectivist in nature while English condolence responses were more terrestrial and individualistic. Again, there was an exploration of the giving of condolences across English and Persian via short messages⁵². About 60 short messages were gathered. The analysis of the data indicated that there was a difference in the way people gave their condolences and it was argued that Persian messages were more direct and short, and signs of religious culture were found in them. However, the English messages were mostly indirect, sympathetic, and apologetic. Furthermore, though cross-cultural, a study focused on novices’ way of expressing condolences by exploring the speech act of giving condolences by EFL learners in Iran.⁵³ The study employed DCT as tasks, where 10 male and 35 female Iranians were recruited. The study revealed that some learners performed the speech act of condolence like their English counterparts, while some of these learners performed this speech act like they do in Persian.

In a slightly different direction, another study investigated the patterns in condolences, by examining how cultural norms and values imparted condolences

50. Elwood, 2004.

51. P. Reza and M. Mostafa, “Investigating condolences responses in English and Persian,” *International Journal of Research Studies in Language Learning* 2, no. 1 (2012): 39-47.

52. Behnama, Hamed, and Asli, “An investigation of giving condolences in English and Persian via short messages,” *Social and Behavioral Sciences* no. 70 (2013): 1679-1685.

53. L. Samavarchi and H. Allami, “Giving condolences by Persian EFL learners: a contrastive socio-pragmatic study,” *International Journal of English Linguistics* 2, no. 2 (2012): 71-78.

in the Iraqi community.⁵⁴ It was revealed in the study that there were five most common and basic patterns of responses and five minor categories: Acknowledgement of death, Expressions of sympathy, Offer of assistance, Future-oriented remarks, Expressions of concern, Sharing similar experience, Making statements of not knowing, Making statements of lacking words, Expressing surprise, and Making related questions and comments.

There was a further exploration of the condolence messages in a mono-cultural setting.⁵⁵ What was done, here, differently from the previous studies was that there was the introduction of the variables gender, age and social distance in the study. DCT tasks were used to extract data from 40 male and 40 female Iranian students. Their study revealed eight categories, of which examples were Direct condolence and Apologies. Also, they found that the condolence strategies used by Iranians were influenced by their religion. Following the same mono-cultural style, the strategies Iranian native speakers of Farsi used when responding to an obituary note was investigated⁵⁶. Data were collected and analyzed from the condolence notes on a deceased contemporary Iranian actor in 2008. Two hundred comments were analyzed to examine the strategies used in expressing condolences. The findings showed that these native speakers expressed condolences differently.

Using a different set of condolences, there was an examination of the speech act of condolences in Jordanian Arabic that were conveyed via a social network site, i.e. Facebook. The data focused on the condolences made in response to an obituary status update on a deceased contemporary Jordanian actor in 2011. Based on 678 posted comments, the researcher was able to identify seven major strategies in the commentary, which included: praying for God's mercy and forgiveness for the deceased, reciting Quranic verses, enumerating the virtues of the deceased, expressing shock and grief, offering condolences, realizing death is a natural part of life; and using proverbs and sayings. The results revealed that the strategies were attributed to the respondents' religious orientation (i.e. Islam). Moreover, the findings also indicated that the majority of condolences in Jordanian comments were affiliated to faith and religious beliefs.

Like the study on strategies and gender, a further study explored the condolence strategies used by Arab native speakers (L1) towards a Hebrew (L2) native speaker in Hebrew (L2).⁵⁷ The participants in that study were 85 Arab lecturers who responded to a college condolence announcement by e-mail which was addressed to a Hebrew native-speaker colleague who lost his daughter.

54. Yahya, 2010.

55. Lotfollahi and Rasekh, 2011.

56. M. Farnia, "'May God forgive His sins': Iranian strategies in response to an obituary note," *Komunikacija i kultura Online: Godina II, Broj 2* (2013): 315- 323.

57. T. M. Murad, "'May Allah not let you experience another sorrow': condolence strategies used by lecturers who are native speakers of Arabic L1 toward their colleague who is native speaker of Hebrew in Hebrew L2," *Theory and Practice in Language Studies* 3, no. 1 (2013): 17-22.

Frequencies and percentages were considered. A finding of the study was that the main condolence strategy used by the respondents was 'religion expressions'. Other strategies such as acknowledgement of death, expression of sympathy, offer of assistance, future-oriented remarks, expression of concern, appreciation of the dead, direct condolence and others were less frequently used. The findings also showed that the females initiated more condolence utterances in the same response than males though the study revealed that gender did not play an important role in the frequencies of the condolence strategies.

Moreover, a study examined the move structure and the communicative function in messages of condolences posted in the portals of International Centre for Theoretical Physics (ICTP).⁵⁸ Employing a non-cultural approach, they examined patterns in the condolences like earlier discussed studies in addition to the lexicogrammatical features which highlighted the social functions of condolence messages in the world, in general, since the letters of condolences used for this study were written by people all over the world. They found that out of the nine patterns that were used, six of the moves were obligatory and the rest were optional.

Besides, a study investigated the proper construction of condolence messages in mitigating misunderstandings and preventing good intentions from being misinterpreted, by examining how Malaysian SMS condolences were composed, i.e. what semantic functions they did fall under.⁵⁹ Analyzing 36 authentic condolences written in English via SMS by local friends to a local Chinese female recipient, Malaysian SMS condolences were found to mainly consist of eight semantic functions. Those which expressed concerns via directives and wishful thinking were least preferred whilst those which eulogised the deceased and expressed uncertainty were most preferred.

Last, a work presented a sociolinguistic examination of different methods for expressing condolences.⁶⁰ After a death in the family, she collected thirteen instances of condolences which she analyzed using the framework of Linguistic Politeness. She identified three strategies for expressing condolences that ranked from most independence-oriented to most solidarity-oriented: (1) acknowledgment of sympathy, (2) question of concern, and (3) inquiry for information. Also, she examined the risks and payoffs involved in the specific tactics classified under the three strategies, and the correlation between the choice of strategy and the relationship of the interlocutors.

It can be seen from the above studies that condolence messages have been extensively studied, with particular attention on the semantics, strategies, moves,

58. A. E. Kongo and K. W. Gyasi, "Expressing grief through messages of condolence: a genre analysis," *African Journal of Applied Research* 2, no. 2 (2015): 61-71.

59. C. H. Kuang, "Functions of Malaysian condolences written in text messages," *Pertanika Journal of Social Science & Humanities* 23, no. 1 (2015): 1-19.

60. Williams, 2015.

gender, and religion amid other various cultural contexts. However, the above numerous reviewed studies on condolence messages did not examine the construction of identities for the deceased in such messages. The study⁶¹ that used a similar data to the present study did not consider identity construction, but focused on the move structure and the communicative function in messages of condolences. Hence, the present study seeks to examine the kinds of identity enacted for the deceased in messages of condolences posted in the portal of ICTP, when one of its members passed away.

Methods

The present study employed a qualitative approach. A qualitative research is concerned about finding out how people make sense of their lives, experiences and the structures of the world.⁶² Qualitative research analysis embraces multiple methods and research practices for undertaking research of field or life situations that are reflective of everyday life groups, societies and organizations.⁶³ The qualitative approach chosen in the present study is content analysis (specifically, textual analysis). Content analysis is a technique for examining information, or content, in written or symbolic material (e.g., pictures, movies, song lyrics, etc.), allowing the researcher to observe the content (i.e., messages, meanings, etc.) in a source of communication (i.e., a book, article, movie, etc.).⁶⁴ Further, content analysis is nonreactive because the process of placing words, messages or symbols in a text to communicate to a reader or receiver occurs without influence from the researcher who analyses its content.⁶⁵ From this perspective, this research aimed to describe the construction of identity for the deceased in condolence messages posted in the portals of International Centre for Theoretical Physics (ICTP), when one of its members, Professor Gallieno Denardo, passed away. ICTP is a wide world organization for Physicists. This research site was selected mainly because of the national variations of members. Therefore, the present study intends to examine the ways by which some particular groups of people use the language of condolence to enact identities for the deceased.

The total data obtained from the site were one hundred and five (105) messages of condolences of which some were written in Arabic, English, French

61. Kongo and Gyasi, 2015.

62. J. W. Cresswell, *Research design: qualitative & quantitative approaches* (California: Sage, 1994).

63. K. Punch, *Introduction to social research: Quantitative and qualitative approaches* (London: Sage, 1998).

64. L. W. Neuman, *Basics of social research: quantitative and qualitative approaches* (Boston: Pearson Education, 2007).

65. Ibid.

and German. Using purposive sampling technique, I sampled ninety-five (95) messages of condolences written in English, which was informed by my ability to read and comprehend the English language. Again, twenty out of the ninety-five (95) condolence messages were selected for this research. The reason for selecting the twenty messages of condolence was on the basis that only one message of condolence would be chosen from a country, and the messages of condolences written by a group of persons, and those without addresses were not chosen. Also, a cursory examination of the ninety-five messages revealed similar themes; thus, the limitation to twenty out of the ninety-five.

The data (messages of condolences) were read thoroughly and coded. The coded items were later grouped into different identity categories. To ensure reliability of the coded and grouped items, I asked three other colleagues who are well vexed in the area of identity studies to re-examine the data. Consequently, the inter-rater reliability between my three colleagues regarding the labelling of the identities was 80%. Upon further discussions with my colleagues, we tried to resolve the differences and concluded that the inter-rater reliability was justifiable.

Analysis and Discussion

This section presents analysis and discussion of the data. The various identities that were enacted for the deceased will be discussed one after the other, and each of the identities will be illustrated with evidence from the data. The identities are discussed based on their frequency of occurrence in the data. In terms of the kinds of identity that are enacted for the deceased, the data revealed two broad identities for the deceased— Role identity and Social identity.

Role Identity

Role identity is enacted through the duties that are performed⁶⁶. In the condolence messages, the deceased is projected as a father, friend, colleague, leader, achiever, and an academic. First, a summary of the role identity which is presented in frequencies and percentages is found in Table 1.

66. Turner, 1987.

Table 1. *Types of Role Identity*

Types	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
Friend	25	25.8
Academic	22	22.7
Colleague	19	19.6
Father	14	14.4
Leader	11	11.4
Achiever	6	6.2
Total	97	100

In Table 1, identity as a Friend was the highest, 25(25.8%) with identity as Academic, 22 (22.7%), and Colleague, 19(19.6%), placing second and third respectively. The least was Achiever, with 6(6.2%). The highest use of identify as a Friend in the messages is suggestive of the kind of relationship that the deceased had with all he interacted with. Perhaps, as a man with many responsibilities, knowledge and exposure, he was expected to maintain very formal relationship with all his interactions; however, he developed a very good relationship with such individuals, earning him that identify as a Friend in the data. Again, the frequent use of identity as a Father in the data resonates the concept of “Salience” which is the different social structural positions held by an individual and the possible impact of each on the person’s performance,⁶⁷ and “Salience hierarchy” which addresses which identity a person will enact in a situation where more than one role may be appropriate.⁶⁸ With relevant examples, all the role identities identified in the data are discussed below:

Identity as a Friend

First, for many of the well-wishers, the deceased was a friend. Some illustrations are found here:

Extract 1: I am depressed to hear that one of my best friends died suddenly.

Extract 2: I am deeply distressed about the news of the passing away of our good friend Gallieno.

Extract 3: Professor Denardo was a good friend of Ghana Atomic Energy Commission (GAEC). Professor Denardo was a friend of Jordan.

Extract 4: I was shocked and saddened to learn about the sudden demise of my dear friend Gallieno.... He was more than a friend.

From extracts 1-4, the deceased is projected as a friend. He is projected not as any mere friend but a “best friend”, “good friend” and a “dear friend” in extracts

67. P. A. Thoits, “Identity structures and psychological well-being: gender and marital status comparisons,” *Social Psychology Quarterly* 55 (1992): 236-56.

68. Stryker, 1968.

1, 2 and 4 respectively. The adjective really indicates that the deceased was a very good friend indeed. The friendship was extended to individuals, agencies, and members of a community and even, nations. In the extracts above, “my dear Friend”, “a good friend of Ghana Atomic Energy Commission (GAEC)”, “our dear friend”, and “a friend of Jordan”, are evidence of his friendship towards these agencies, communities, and nations. The use of the singular first person pronoun, “my” is indicative that the deceased was a friend to an individual, on that personal level, which resonates the individualistic nature of offering condolences by English condolences as found in a study.⁶⁹ Again, a friend of “Ghana Atomic Energy Commission (GAEC)” is suggestive that he was “nice” and “good” to that agency, possibly, in terms of the support offered to that agency— the visits and the share interest in ensuring that all was well with the agency as a good friend will do. The use of the third person plural possessive pronoun, “our” is also indicative that the late was a friend to many individuals within the larger circle of work, which was even extended to nations, “a friend of Jordan”. The beneficiaries of this friendship enjoyed the relationship so much that it was revealing in the data that “he was more than a friend”, as found in Extract 4. What exactly that meant, only the writers could explain, but it can be deduced that it was a very positive relationship. Again, the various references to him as “Professor Denardo” and “Gallieno” show that his friendship was extended to colleagues as well as subordinates, cutting across all levels in his life. With this identity, a certain level of positioning is observed here. Positioning is “an event of identification, in which a recognizable category of identity gets explicitly or implicitly applied to an individual in an event that takes place across seconds, minutes, or hours”.⁷⁰ The activities of the deceased made the writers described him as a friend.

Identity as an Academic

Besides, the deceased was projected as an academic in the messages of condolence. In academia, like a discourse community, it has its own common goals, mechanisms of intercommunication, information exchange and feedback, specific genres, specialized lexis and a threshold level of expertise.⁷¹ It is often expected that a member of a community will reflect the practices of such a community— titles, activities, associations etc., and these reflections of an academic were found in the condolences:

69. Reza and Mostafa, 2012.

70. S. Wortham, “From good student to outcast: the student emergence of a classroom identity,” *Ethos* 32, no. 2 (2004): 166.

71. J. M. Swales, *Genre analysis: English in academic writing and research settings* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990).

Extract 5: ... untimely death of Prof. Gallieno Denardo

Extract 6: He has been discussing with me some issues like subjects to be included in the programme, selection of participant's demonstrations and laboratory work...

Extract 7: ... it is a great pity... to lose such an active and valuable eminent professor

Extract 8: He was a motivated promoter of science in the developing world, helping young people to build their careers, and more advanced researchers to connect and to work together.

The numerous references to the deceased as a "Professor" and "eminent professor" project him as an academician since such address terms, in the form of the titles, are used in the academic community to indicate the ranks or the level of scholarship in this field. The use of titles such as "Professor" before the name, which are pre-modifiers, are used to revere the deceased,⁷² confirming the findings of other studies⁷³ that adjective (as an example of modifiers) was used to maintain a distant relationship with the reviewer. Again, in Extract 6 above, we get a glimpse of this academic identity in the structure "like subjects to be included in the programme" as well as the use of "a promotor of science" in Extract 8. These are all related to the discourse of academics.

This academic identity also foregrounds the professional identity of the deceased, as a scientist and physicist. Illustrations of this identity are given in the extracts below:

Extract 9: He was a great scientist and person.

Extract 10: He was an excellent and dedicated promoter of scientific cooperation.

Extract 11: We will remember him as an enthusiastic physicist.

In Extract 9, the deceased is presented as "a great Scientist" while Extract 11 projected him as an "enthusiastic physicist". It can be seen that the deceased was a well-established scientist and physicist; he is presented as a great person in that direction, and somebody who loved what he was doing, too, confirming the assertion that a teacher's professional identity is shaped, in part, from the appropriation of the gaze that the others return to that teacher.⁷⁴ Thus, through the condolences, the professional identity of the deceased is brought to bear.

72. Kongo and Gyasi, 2015.

73. J. B. A. Afful and I. N. Mwinlaaru, "The construction of multiple identities in the acknowledgement section of a Masters dissertation," *English for Specific Purposes World* 30, no. 9 (2010): 1-26.

74. M. Solari and M. E. Ortega, "Teachers' professional identity construction: a sociocultural approach to its definition and research," *Journal of Constructivist Psychology* (2020): 1-31.

Identity as a Colleague

Another identity that is constructed for the deceased in the data is colleague. The deceased is represented as a colleague by many of the sympathizers who offered their condolences:

Extract 12: We are still shocked by the news of Gallieno's death.

Extract 13: I was shocked and greatly saddened by the news that Gallieno had died....

Extract 14: Please accept my personal and SIOF's deepest condolences for the sudden death of our colleague ... Gallieno Denardo.

Extract 15: I lost a most loyal and kind colleague at ICTP and its Scientific Community.

In extracts 12 and 13 above, the deceased is referred to by the first name, "Gallieno" but the full name, Gallieno Denardo, in Extract 14. The use of these address terms are indicative of a horizontal relationship between the deceased and the writers, revealing the social distance and the solidarity between the deceased and the writers of the condolences⁷⁵. Again, in Extract 14 and 15, the deceased is specifically referred to as "a most loyal and kind colleague at ICTP and its Scientific Community". We also get some reference to him as "our colleague". In all these illustrations, the late is foreshadowed as a colleague. The act of recognition is at play here, which is any explicit or implicit action through which an individual seeks or receives recognition or by which an individual recognizes other people.⁷⁶ Through the activities of the deceased, he was recognised as a colleague by the writers of the condolence, confirming the relational nature of identity.⁷⁷

Identity as Father

Furthermore, the deceased is projected as a father in the data. Various, the writers of these condolence messages refer to the deceased as a father. Examples from the data are provided below:

Extract 16: We really lost a great father.

Extract 17: I became very close with him through his fatherly care and counselling in order to see to it that initiated projects were well monitored and executed.

Extract 18: As a Senior Associate I hear the word orphaned in my mind...

75. Afful and Awoonor-Aziaku, "Naming in master's thesis acknowledgements within two Ghanaian university departments," *Africology* 10, no. 9 (2017): 252-273; Afful and Mwinlaaru, 2010.

76. C. Coll and L. Falsafi, "Learner identity. An educational and analytical tool," *Revista de Educacion* 353 (2010): 211-233.

77. Solari and Ortega, 2020.

In Extract 16 above, the writer states that he has lost a great father. Perhaps, the deceased is not the biological father of the writer; however, due to the kind of relationship that he might have had with the deceased, the writer refers to the deceased as a father. Extract 17 gives evidence of the identity enacted for the deceased as a father, that is, “for his fatherly care and counselling in order to see to it that initiated projects are well monitored and executed”. It can be deduced from the extract that the deceased had a caring attitude of a father by counselling the young “ones” because of his experience, monitoring and seeing to it that such projects were executed “well” just as a father will do at home, ensuring that the little ones do not go astray, which compares with the findings of a study that found that fathers who consider nurturing role highly central to their sense of self engaged in significantly more interactional responsibility behaviours with their younger ones.⁷⁸ The roles that a person performs give him or her a certain identity.⁷⁹ The deceased cannot be father to all these sympathizers, but through the duties that he discharged, he was seen as a father, which can be described as a metaphorical use of the word ‘father’⁸⁰, affirming the idea that, semantically, condolences have a social meaning which refers to the language use, and this is to establish social relations and roles.⁸¹

Identity as a Leader

Apart from the fatherly, friendship and colleague roles that the deceased performed, he, also, occupied leadership positions. He assumed many leadership roles, crediting to him the identity of a leader. The extracts below illuminate this identity:

Extract 19: He worked very hard for the development of Science in the developing countries in his position as head of the Office of External Activities.

Extract 20: I will remember him as great leader who endorsed the visions of Abdus Salam ICTP.

Extract 21: As the chair of the TSOSA Committee.... We cherish his duty visits to Ghana.

In Extract 19 above, the deceased was the head of the Office of External Activities. As the head, he occupied a position that placed him above others, and he saw to the smooth running of activities under his care, leading others to

78. R. T. Rane and B. McBride, “Identity theory as a guide to understanding fathers’ involvement with their children,” *Journal of Family Issues* 21, no. 3 (2000): 347-366.

79. Stets and Burke, 2000.

80. Bowdle and Gentner, “The career of metaphor,” *Psychological Review* 112, no. 1 (2005): 193-216; C. A. Hamilton, “Mapping the mind and the body: on W. H. Auden’s personifications,” *Style* 36, no. 3 (2002): 408-427.

81. Mwihaki, 2004.

achieve targets. Extract 20 categorically states that the deceased is remembered “as a great leader” and that he sanctioned the visions of Abdus Salam ICTP, simply because he had the power to do so because of the role that he played as a leader in that ICTP community. Another evidence of his leadership roles is that he occupied the chair of the TSOSA Committee as captured in Extract 21. All these roles ascribe to him the identity, a leader. This leadership identity has been made possible because of the evaluation of the writers which is evident in the condolences, a description captured in the assertion that leaders can be considered effective if other people evaluate them as an effective leader; that is, “perceived leader effectiveness”.⁸² In other words, the deceased is treated with perceived leader effectiveness skills because of what the writers of the condolences have said about him; however, he can aptly be described as a leader with “in- role performance”⁸³ per his many engagement with the activities of the group.

Imbedded in the leadership role is a modelling role, encapsulating the idea that given multiple identities, there are relationships among the different identities which will be activated in a given situation.⁸⁴ The deceased is projected as a master to be learnt from:

Extract 22: I think we lost him but we did not lose him as a model in life.

Extract 23: He mentored me to supervise effectively to achieve positive results in our endeavors.

Extract 24: My association with Prof. Denardo afterwards through his instrumentation in my formation period in scientific research work in Italy....

Extract 25: I have really lost him as a mentor.

Extract 26: His office was always full of young people scientists seeking advice which he readily gave.

In Extract 22, it is implied that there is a loss physically, but there is no loss materially, in the sense that the deceased is worthy of being a model, which, to the community members, is not a loss in anyway. Again, his leadership position allowed him to mentor many individuals; that is, he “mentored” (Extract 23) that individual to achieve positive results. Good advice plus firm supervision made those individuals saw him as a mentor. It is illuminating that the deceased is a mentor since he was instrumental in the formative period of these young ones (Extract 24). The formation period is critical as it determines what one becomes of in future, and strict mentoring is needed here— this the deceased gave to this

82. J. Prochazka, M. Vaculik, P. Smutny and S. Jezek, “Leader traits, transformational leadership and leader effectiveness: a mediation study from the Czech Republic,” *Journal of East European Management Studies* 23, no. 3 (2018): 474-501.

83 Ibid.

84. Stets and Burke, 2000.

young scientists (Extract 26), which enumerates the virtues of the deceased, a finding also of a study.

Identity as an Achiever

Lastly, in the data, the deceased is perceived as an achiever because achievers earn credits for their hard works. The deceased received awards, helped create successful scientific communities, and trained young ones. Evidence of these in the data are presented below:

Extract 27: It was an honor to present him with SPIE's Educator Award.

Extract 28: He helped to create the entire global community of talented physicists.

Extract 29: This is the great man who succeeded through the ICTP Office of External activities within the Affiliated Centers to train young scientists to obtain M.Phil and Ph.D. in Physics in Africa.

Extract 30: He salvaged brain drain on the continent and promoted brain gain in Trieste through ICTP visits of such scientists.

In Extract 27 above, the deceased received awards like SPIE's Educator Award. In addition, he trained young scientists to obtain M. Phil and Ph. D in Physics in Africa (Extract 29), and he helped stop brain drain but increase brain gain (Extract 30). These instances project the deceased as an achiever. This projection is in line with what is done in obituaries, where obituary notices served as a socially oriented practice for the expressions of positive feelings and compliments about the deceased.⁸⁵ Again, this role can best be described as an act of recognition, which is "conditioned by the intricate interplay between the social context, the activity that people are involved in, and not the least, by the discursive and non-discursive actions through which the recognized person participates in the activity".⁸⁶ In other words, it is not the intention of those who perform an action that defines it as an act of recognition; rather, it is the effect that this action has on the other person, depending on that person's interpretation of it, its meaning within the context where it takes place, and the impact that the significant other has on the recognized person, that emanates this act of recognition.⁸⁷

This section has discussed the Role identity of the deceased in the data, where he is projected mainly as a friend, academic and colleague, alongside other

85. Farnia, 2013; R. Pishghadam and M. M. Morady, "Investigating condolence responses in English and Persian," *International Journal of Research Studies in Language Learning* (2012).

86. L. Falsafi, *Learner identity: a sociocultural approach to how people recognize and construct themselves as learners* (Universitat de Barcelona, 2010), 31.

87. Solari and Ortega, 2020.

identities like father, leader and achiever. These different roles prove that, indeed, identity is dynamic and contextual, depending on the salience of the different classifications⁸⁸, and that different identities become active as the situation changes and relevant self-categorization stimuli change.⁸⁹ Again, the different roles identified in the study prove the assertion that, clearly, language can systematically be varied to construct varying and different identities⁹⁰, and that language can be considered as a site for the construction of self-identification or group affiliation since language is a key element in identity formation and identity is a sense of self or proves a sense of belonging.⁹¹

Social Identity

This part of the analysis presents Social identity which considers how individuals define their own identities with regard to social groups and that such identifications work to protect and bolster self-identity.⁹² The analysis of the data revealed four main social identities enacted for the deceased: group membership, family, international figure and good personality. Table 2 below summarizes the distribution of these social identities:

Table 2. *Types of Social Identity*

Types	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
International Figure	27	42.9
Member of a Group	15	23.8
Member of a Family	13	20.6
Good Personality	8	12.7
Total	63	100

According to Table 2, four Social identities, in varying proportions, were found in the data. Identity as an International Figure was highest, 27(42.9%), followed by identity as a Member of a Group, 15(23.8%). The least occurring social identity was Good Personality, (12.7%). The frequent use of identity as an International Figure is not surprising as ICTP is an international group with membership from almost all over the world. Besides, the deceased seems to have interacted with members of the group from all over the world because of the various positions he occupied as revealed in the discussion under Role identity in the previous section of the analysis and discussion of this present study. These social identities alongside evidence from the data in support of these findings are discussed further.

88. Turner, 1987.

89. Stets and Burke, 2000, 231.

90. Afful and Mwinlaaru, 2010.

91. Nematzadeh and Narafshan, 2020.

92. Turner, 1987.

Identity as an International Figure

First, despite all the many identities that has been enacted for the deceased so far, the writers of the condolence messages also created another identity for the deceased as an international figure. Evidences of this identity are offered below:

Extract 31: He was one of the outstanding international fellows and he had many friends all over the world.

Extract 32: I can confirm that mother Africa specifically and the developing World in general has lost an ICONE: EL PROFESSORI.

Extract 33: He supported our initiative for collaboration in the Balkans and Southeast Europe very strongly.

Extract 31 above demonstrates that the deceased was an outstanding international fellow, and he had many contacts with many people all over the world. In Extract 32 above, he is seen as having relations with Africa and the developing world. He also had dealings with the Balkans and Southeast Europe (Extract 33). Apart from the places that have been named in the condolence messages, the addresses of the writers of these condolences confirm that the deceased was an international figure to have received tribute from all these individuals across the globe:

Extract 34: Miltcho Dnailov, Laser Laboratory, Italy.

Extract 35: Goren Djordjevic, Faculty of Science, Serbia.

Extract 36: Mohamed Ewis, Director of HEQAA, Faculty of Sciences, Egypt.

Extract 37: Amy K. Flatten, The American Physical Society, USA.

Extract 38: J. O. Adeniyi, Physics Department, Nigeria.

Extract 39: Francis K. Allotey, Society of African Physicists & Mathematicians, Ghana.

The underlined names of places in the extracts (34-39) above designate the various dwellings from where individuals sent their condolences. These many places underscore the fact that the deceased had connections, in one way or the other, directly or indirectly, with all the writers of these condolences, bringing forth his identity as an international figure. Here, too, we see evidence of depersonalized identity based on group membership which is imbued with positive aspects.⁹³ In other words, the deceased has been defined through the group.

Identity as a Member of a Group

Second, the true identity of the deceased as an academic, the joy with which he discharged his duties in addition to the desire to remain loyal to the

93. Turner, Hogg, Oakes, Reicher, and Wetherell, 1987.

community in which he found himself, made him joined other professional associations, earning him the identity of a member of a group. This is an example of social identity, where individuals define their own identities with regard to the social groups.⁹⁴ Examples of this identity as a member of a group in the data are as follows:

Extract 40: I wish to extend my deepest sympathy to all ICTP, all national scientists, researchers, academicians, and all the International Scientific Community.

Extract 41: He was a member of the first SESAME Training Committee.

Extract 42: He participated in many activities run by ICTP together with UNESCO SC.

The extension of sympathy to these various groups is an indication that these groups have been bereaved, in that, the loss of that member has left distress in their hearts; hence, the writer of the condolence (Extract 40) sympathizes with “ICTP, all national scientists, researchers, academicians, and all the international Scientific community”, indicating that the deceased had associations with them. Extract 41 openly mentions that the deceased was a member of the first SESAME Training Committee. In other words, he was a member of that Training committee that was formed by SESAME. In addition, he participated in many activities ran by ICTP together with UNESCO SC. An individual cannot participate “in many of the activities” (Extract 42) of a group if he or she is not a member of that group — a projection of that identity as a member of a group. Thus, the deceased is viewed as a person who acted in the context of social structure that names one another and themselves in the sense of recognizing one another as occupants of positions. This naming invokes expectations with regard to each other’s and one’s own behaviors.⁹⁵

Identity as a Member of a Family

Another group identity of the deceased is family. The data set is indicative that the deceased had immediate family, but he belonged to the extended family unit too:

Extract 43: On behalf of EBASI and myself, we extend our deeply felt condolences to the family of Professor Gallieno Denardo.

Extract 44: Please convey my condolences to the bereaved family and his wife.

Extract 45: Sincere condolences to Gallieno’s family.

Extract 46: Please convey our deepest sympathy to his family.

94. Tajfel, 1978.

95. McCall and Simmons, 1978; Stryker, 1980.

In extracts 43-46 above, the writers of the condolences express their sympathy towards the family of Professor Gallieno Denardo, which are conveyed to both the immediate family member, "his wife" (Extract 44), and the extended family, "Gallieno's family" (Extract 45). The sympathizers express these condolences to the family because every individual is born into a family; accordingly, though group members, friends and colleagues may be affected by the death of the professor, it is the family that will carry the weight most for the deceased was a husband and might be a brother or an uncle to some individuals as well. His death will automatically cause pain to these family members; consequently, the need to console these family members. This identity as a member of family also appeals to the inherently dialogic nature of the process⁹⁶ in that our senses of ourselves are fashioned in relation to the identities of others.⁹⁷ Thus, the deceased gets an identity as a member of family because of the family he belonged to.

Identity as a Man with Good Personality

Finally, the deceased is presented as a man with good personality. This identity is the sum total of who the deceased actually was. Many noun phrases and descriptive adjectives have been used in the data to denote the good personality of the deceased. Examples are given below:

Extract 47: Professor Denardo will be remembered among us as a man of wisdom, courage and help.

Extract 48: He was a very kind person and he supported our initiative for collaboration in the Balkans and Southeast Europe very strongly.

Extract 49: He had time for everybody.

Extract 50: He as tough and tender with his actions and committed to duties.

Extract 51: He was selfless, devoted, honest and pragmatic.

Extract 52: ... he was a human being with a big heart- which never failed when it comes to sharing it with others.

Many good qualities have been attributed to the deceased, projecting him as a very good person. He is severally designated as "a man of wisdom, courage and help" , "enthusiastic and skillful support", "selfless, devoted, honest and pragmatic", "tough and tender with his actions and committed to duties" and "human being with a big heart", just to select a few of the instances. The use of these linguistics elements like nouns, adjective and verbs variously project the deceased as a man with good personality. In acknowledging memories of the deceased, the sympathizers recall or enumerate the virtues or some distinctive, well-mannered attitudes of the deceased.⁹⁸ It is not surprising to have the

96. Bakhtin, 1981.

97. Hull and Zacher, 2007.

98. Kongo and Gyasi, 2015.

deceased projected like this in the sense that, usually, in some societies like Ghana, the dead are to be held in high esteem because it is believed that they can bring blessings or curses, a belief probably shared in many cultures over the world, considering the fact that these condolences were sent from across the globe and that in each of the condolence messages, the deceased is projected as somebody who possessed good attributes. When personality characteristic is considered in some culture to be a desirable leadership characteristic, then its influence on the leader's acceptance and leadership effectiveness would be stronger.⁹⁹

In sum, this section has considered the various roles that have been enacted for the deceased in the messages of condolence, both role identity and social identity. Here, the deceased can be described as having polyphonic identity, a finding similar to a study that investigated identity of teachers and found that teacher identity is polyphonic, as it is inhabited by multiple voices with different origins and levels of generality.¹⁰⁰ With Role identity, the deceased was projected mainly as a friend, academic and colleague. There were also mentions of his identity as father, leader and achiever. Membership in a group and family as well as an international figure and good personality were his social identities which were acknowledged in the messages of condolence. Thus, we see evidence that being and doing are both central features of one's identity¹⁰¹, in that, in expressing condolences, there is both being and doing; that is, what the deceased was (being) and what he did (doing), which were clearly expressed in the data analyzed.

Conclusion and Implications

The study investigated the kinds of identity that are enacted for the deceased in messages of condolences. Adopting a textual analysis of the qualitative approach, the study analyzed twenty condolence messages purposely sampled from condolence messages posted in the portals of International Centre for Theoretical Physics (ICTP), when one of its members passed away. The analysis of the data revealed two main identity types for the deceased: Role identity and Social Identity. The major Role identity enacted for the deceased, metaphorically, was Father, and the least role was Achiever. Second, identity as an International Figure was dominant in the Social roles, but Good Personality was used less frequently. The different identities such as father and mentor enacted in the

99. Prochazka et al., 2018.

100. M. Prados, M. Cubero, A. Santamaria and S. Arias, "The teaching self in the university: self-positions and voices in the narrative identity/ies construction of university teachers," *Infancia y Aprendizaje* 36, no. 3 (2013): 309-321.

101. Stets and Burke, 2000.

present study were derived from the different roles that the deceased played when alive, and his association with others created those numerous identities for him. It must be noted that identities do not spring out just out of the bloom, but through the different roles that individuals play in their everyday life situations, including our associations with other people, in particular, and different groups, in general. Thus, there is the need for responsibilities to be discharged well, for through these, we create our own identities. Truly, the levels of identity are dynamic and contextual, depending upon the salience of the different classifications.¹⁰² Different identities become active as the situation changes and relevant self-categorization stimuli change.¹⁰³

The study has implications for contributing to scholarship and theory. First, the study has contributed to the growing literature on condolence messages. Condolences have extensively been studied with attention on semantics, strategies, moves, gender, religion, and amid other various cultural contexts. The present study which examined the kinds of identity enacted for the deceased in messages of condolences posted in the portal of ICTP, when one of its members passed away, has added to these studies on condolence messages by revealing that the deceased was, variously, projected as a father, mentor, leader and many more, with the dominant ones father. Thus, the present study help establish that condolence messages do not only reveal their inherent strategies and patterns, values and cultures from both mono and cross cultural perspectives, but that condolence messages are good grounds for enacting identities, projecting the different social roles which individuals can play in different contexts. Second, theoretically, the present study adds to the usefulness of the Social Identity Theory (SIT) that underpins the present study — that individuals define their own identities with regard to social groups and that such identifications work to protect and bolster self-identity. Several studies have employed SIT and have successfully managed, analysed and interpreted their data in many genres like academics, media, work place, nationality, and ethnicity. These studies have proven the usefulness of the identity theory in a study of any data, whether academic, at the workplace, media or in determining how national and ethnic identities are constructed. The adoption of this theory in the present study adds to the usefulness of the theory in interpreting findings and highlighting the various identities enacted for the deceased in condolence messages.

It is recommended that further studies investigate identity construction of national figures such as late presidents to ascertain the different identities enacted for such deceases in the messages of condolence. Also, cross-cultural studies could also examine identity construction in messages of condolence in Ghana and with other cultures to ascertain whether the patterns and expressions used in these kinds of situations may vary in different contexts and different cultures.

102. Turner, 1987.

103. Stets and Burke, 2000, 231.

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