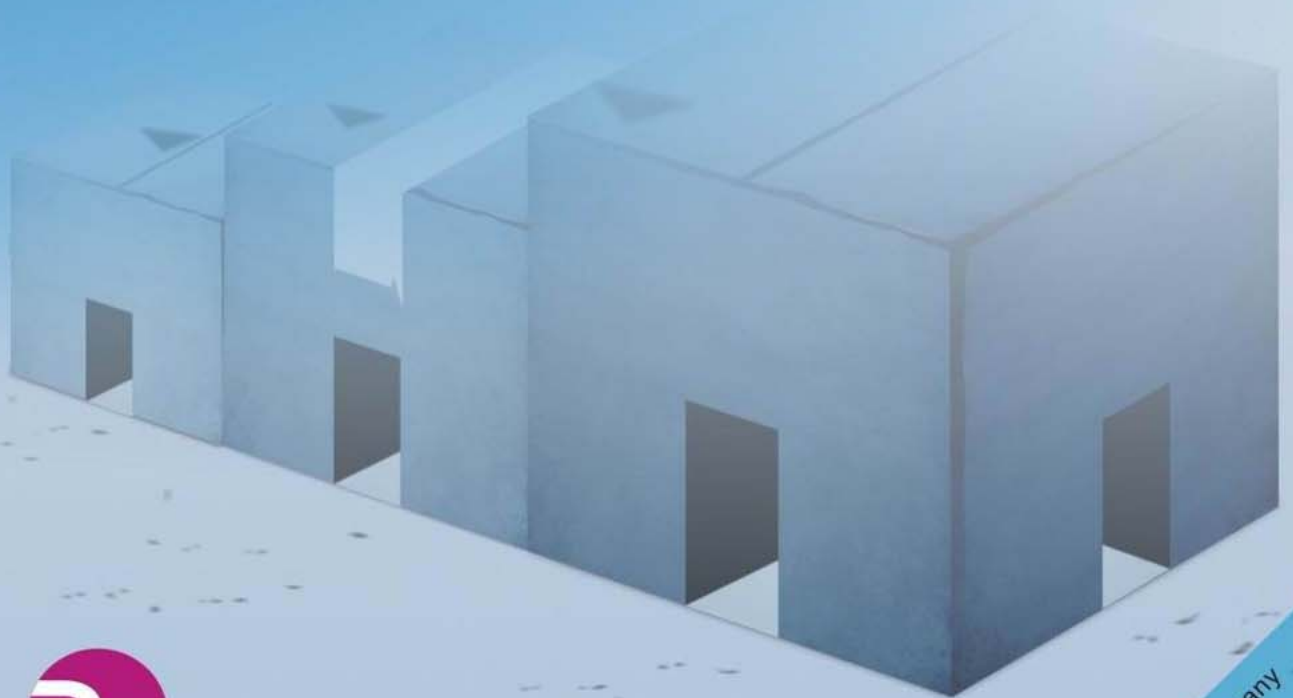


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The Historical and Current Characteristics of “Plague Writing”—Rereading Chi Zijian’s Novel *White Snow Crow* in the Post Epidemic Era

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Chi Zijian’s novel *White Snow Crow* is about the pestis in Northeast China from the autumn and winter of 1910 to the spring of 1911, focusing on the living conditions of people in Fujiadian, Harbin, under the shadow of the pestis, and thus connects the vicissitudes of Harbin in the development of modern Chinese history. Re-reading this novel in the context of the post-epidemic era not only allows us to immerse ourselves in the specific temporal and spatial fields described in the text with an immersive reading mindset, feel the heavy impact that the disaster has brought to the people of Northeast China, but also provide us with a different perspective to observe the current social reality. In particular, the social problems shown by the novel through the pestis and the description of ordinary people’s life experience under the plague still deserve further discussion.

Keywords: Chi Zijian, plague writing, *White Snow Crow*, post pandemic era

“Plague writing” is not uncommon in Chi Zijian’s novels, and this type of writing may be long or short, with different references in different texts. This type of writing, like the religious factors integrated into Chi Zijian’s works, has become an important component of the plot development of the novel. The description of pestis in *White Snow Crow* can be seen as the concentrated embodiment of this writing style. Although this novel describes the pestis in Northeast China more than a century ago, because the content of the novel is similar to the real impact of the COVID-19, a comparison between the new type of pestis that broke out in Northeast China more than a hundred years ago and the epidemic that still ravages the world will show that although the two are far away in time, from the huge impact of the epidemic on social reality and the measures taken by people in response to the epidemic, the two have extremely similar aspects: The same is a new virus, the same is a shortage of masks, the same is lockdown, the same is centralized quarantine, and so on. From a literary perspective, in the face of great disasters, human nature is interconnected. The description of the social reality problems exposed during the outbreak of the plague and the public’s mentality in *White Snow Crow* not only provides us with an aesthetic “mirror” to reflect on the current social reality problems, but is also possible to better understand the choices made by individuals as subjects in the face of disasters, as well as the sublimity and despicability revealed behind these choices, from this historical and current “comparison”. And this aesthetic reflection is precisely the unique way in which literature intervenes in reality.

The Historicity of “Plague Writing”

In this novel, the pestis itself is not the focus of the author’s attention, but the national problems and public mentality reflected by the outbreak of the pestis are the core of the novel. This is obviously a literary narrative method, and

compared to “historical narrative”, there must be a certain spiritual, psychological, and cultural “hidden structure” in this narrative. It is precisely because of this “hidden structure” that the author’s imagination, beliefs, beliefs, and demands make the novel text display the qualities of “surreal” and “super historical”. (Zhang, 2019, p. 63)

The track of Wang Chunshen’s carriage in Futou District and Fujiaden, on the one hand, described the historical features of several major urban areas of Harbin a hundred years ago and the personality characteristics of various characters when facing the pestis; on the other hand, the differences between different urban areas and the historical reasons for such differences were also presented through Wang Chunshen’s observation. Here, the author does not directly describe how Harbin was intervened by foreign forces a hundred years ago, but instead takes all of this as the “scenery” observed by specific characters in the novel, which removes the preaching atmosphere from this description and is embedded in the “plague writing” of the novel, allowing the novel to maintain a relatively objective narrative tone while incorporating rich historical connotations.

The novel extensively depicts the privileges of the Russians in Harbin, especially the construction of the Middle East Railway, which extends the influence of the Russians in Harbin. Even the grass by the Songhua River cannot be easily harvested because it is located in a subsidiary area of the Middle East Railway. The two elm trees in front of Ji Yonghe’s grain depot also caused him great distress because they were Russian property. Moreover, with the full connection of the Middle East Railway and the completion of the South Manchurian Railway, modern enterprises from Russia, Poland, the Czech Republic, and Japan gradually replaced local small workshops in Harbin, which made it difficult for Chinese merchants doing business in Fujiadian. These local merchants had to lower their prices again and again in order to survive, to the point where most local small workshops were on the brink of bankruptcy. The Chinese people who originally lived along the river still did their business. However, because this place has become a concession, they have changed from owners to settlers, the Middle East Railway Administration has established a land area office, and Chinese commercial and civilian land for building houses must apply to the land area office. After registration, land rental fees must be paid year by year in order to operate (Chi, 2010, p. 25). The various enterprises operated by the Japanese in Harbin have also brought a huge impact on the local business of Fujiadian. For example, the Japanese businessman Kato Shinfu opened a soy sauce factory in Fujiadian, which

virtually weakened the Xiangyi soy sauce that occupies half of Fujiadian soy sauce market. Gu Weici, the boss of Xiangyi, had to decline again and again to compete with the Japanese soy sauce market. In just one year, the old cost was almost lost. (Chi, 2010, p. 49)

In addition, the brewery, Baijiu factory, flour factory, cigarette factory, sugar factory, soap factory, etc., run by foreigners. It has caused a devastating blow to the local business in Harbin. Moreover, consuls from various countries stationed in Harbin took the opportunity to request intervention from the Daotai Prefecture, which was in charge of Fu Jiadian. In the eyes of Daotai Yu Sixing, “In addition to self-danger, foreigners have a deep purpose to intervene in Fu Jiadian’s epidemic prevention” (Chi, 2010, p. 50). This “deep purpose” undoubtedly took the opportunity to seize actual control of the Fu Jiadian area.

When the Russians and the Japanese used their privileges to block Fujiadian, which led to heavy casualties in the pestis, Fujiadian people's superstition and fighting independently also contributed to the spread of the pestis to a certain extent. If the blockade of Fujiadian by the Russians and Japanese in the port area and the new urban area has a clear color of external aggression, then the speculation and profiteering of Fujiadian local businessmen represented by Ji Yonghe during the spread of the pestis means the disintegration of Fujiadian's internal forces. In his opinion,

In ten and a half days and a month, there will be more deaths, and the railway will have to be shut down. “At that time, the grain cannot be transported in, but people have to eat, and the grain warehouses in Harbin have sold out, and there is no way to make up for it. The grain in my warehouse is gold and silver!” (Chi, 2010, p. 107)

However, the complexity of the novel lies in the fact that on the one hand, Ji Yonghe wants to make money in the face of the plague; on the other hand, he has a simple hostility to foreigners in Harbin, and he does everything to make money because:

“Money can be a man!” When I was a kid, where did I see so many foreigners? I followed my father in the Songhua River fishing, that is called a free, want to where a shack, want to go where to play! What's it like now? You want a shack, you have to apply on someone's acre! You know why? We are poor! If someone is rich, he becomes a father! As the old saying goes, money can make the devil go, when I earn enough money, let foreigners give me as a slave, I turn over as a master! God damn it, I have to build a grain store on the second floor for those with yellow hair and blue eyes to serve my guests and sell grain on the first floor, and a kitchen and bedroom on the second floor, where I sit in the chair of the chief teacher every day and let them serve me tea, wash my feet, warm wine, pick vegetables, pick my ears, make the quilt, pick my teeth and beat my legs! (Chi, 2010, p. 58)

This simple hostility naturally contains national contradictions, but national contradictions are not the premise of his hatred of foreigners, but his personal enjoyment is. Moreover, his important means of acquiring wealth—stockpiling grain and forcing Zhai Fanguai to sell his body—were at the expense of the interests of his compatriots and even his personal dignity, so although he had a hostile side towards foreigners, this hostility was not so much out of national righteousness as to satisfy his own selfish desires. In this sense, through the portrayal of characters like Ji Yonghe, the novel reveals the complexity of the relationship between individuals and others, and between individuals and nation-states under the special historical background of the plague raging and the unprecedented intensification of national crisis.

Social Criticism in the “Plague Writing”

In addition to describing the political crisis Harbin faced before and after the outbreak of the pestis and the spiritual oppression brought by this crisis to the Harbin people, the novel also extensively shows various social chaos under the plague, which greatly enriches the ideological connotation of the work. One detail in the novel is worth noting: Due to ignorance of the plague, when the furrier Bayin died of illness, the onlookers actually “split” his clothes, shoes, and hats and even the melon seeds in his pockets. The selfishness of the people revealed in this detail was an important reason for the rapid spread of the plague in Fujiatian. As if to retaliate against the Fujiadians for their ruthlessness, the plague quickly spread throughout Fujiadians in an unstoppable manner. Although the governors of the three eastern provinces specially sent two doctors with modern medical knowledge to assist Harbin's epidemic prevention work, in Fujiadian's view, those methods mentioned by the two doctors were a bit “far-fetched”. Not only are they not enthusiastic about disinfection, but

“hygiene habits are not good, they like to eat smelly fish and rotten shrimp, and there is no habit of washing hands before and after meals, coupled with the lack of sewage facilities in the streets, greasy pot water, and even urine cans of urine water, are poured on the street.” The moment these filth is thrown from the warm room, due to the warm heat, the wind will produce incandescent fog, dispersed in the air, and also a potential source of infection. (Chi, 2010, pp. 139-140)

If Ji Yonghe’s hoarding behavior still contains a simple concept of justice, then the behavior of firewood shops, burial clothes shops, coffin shops are also followed by price increases purely looting:

“In the business of firewood, there is a price increase, and the rest of the others also follow suit.” Not to be outdone, the shrouds put up their prices. The owner of the coffin shop, when he thought that everyone else was making money, he would be a fool not to make money himself. He also raised the price of the coffin. (Chi, 2010, p. 105)

Even Zhai, a eunuch who had been expelled from the palace, had begun hoarding as the plague spread. The 10 coffins he stored in the “Sanpu Kang Inn” were the same as the practice of Ji Yonghe, the owner of the grain warehouse, to buy large quantities of soybeans. Only Fu Baichuan, the man of Fu Jiatien, “joined with the people of the Chamber of Commerce to resist the tide of price increases, and followed suit, reducing the prices of goods in his own cooking pots, Shanhai grocery stores and satin shops by 20 percent” (Chi, 2010, p. 105).

In addition, the inaction of some officials of the Riverside Hall government is also an important factor leading to the continuous spread of pestis. In the case of pestis, how to identify whether a patient is infected with pestis is a huge challenge for medical workers, especially in the era of poor health care conditions; managers often take a “one-size-fits-all” approach to dealing with related issues. However, this indiscriminate approach is at the expense of the lives of ordinary people, to reflect their responsibilities as managers. In the face of the increasingly severe pestis, in addition to the virtual absence of the “Epidemic Prevention Health Bureau”, the governor Chen of the Fujiadian County Government was also ignorant; he “actually said that no matter how toxic the disease, like a child crying, you ignore him, it will pass by itself, there is no need to care about it” (Chi, 2010, p. 74). Wang Chunshen’s son Jibao and his wife Jin Lan died in the “epidemic disease hospital” set up by the epidemic Prevention and Health Bureau, and the author accused the “government” of inaction in epidemic prevention: ““Since few people go in and come out alive, then what is the use of spending money on this epidemic hospital?’ ... Fu Jiadian died every day, how come no one from the government died?” (Chi, 2010, pp. 134-135).

Generally speaking, although the pestis brought unprecedented disasters to the Fujiadian people, and even some people speculated and made money in the country, most people did not lose confidence in life. They not only spontaneously organized to deliver meals to the isolated patients, and provide free masks and herbs, but more importantly, they still maintained their simple and kind nature, even if they adhered to some traditional customs with feudal thoughts, but also out of devout prayer for the future life. Compared with the county officials and profiteers who plundered during the pestis, those who came from other places to take root in Fujiadian contributed their own strength. Among them, Fu Baichuan, the boss of Fu’s cooking pot from Shandong Province, and Zhou Ji’s family from Shanxi Province, all of them provide help to the people of Fujiadian within their own power, showing the mutual assistance and warmth among the people at the bottom. It is the adherence to this optimistic spirit and kind nature that prompts the people of Fujiadian to still greet the New Year in accordance with traditional customs and pray for good weather in the New Year. The novel describes Fujiadian people’s piety to the gods in detail, revealing a strong flavor of the New Year, and injecting a different kind of humanistic atmosphere into the whole novel. Although the Zhou family was nearly destroyed when Xixi sneaks into a crock-wagon separating suspected cases of plague in an attempt to bring some fodder to the Kitchen Lord’s white horse

and caught the virus, the author does not portray the brash child in a mocking or critical tone, but with deep sympathy, which is inseparable from traditional folk customs.

The Current Nature of “Plague Writing”

According to Chi Zijian, her motivation for writing *The White Snow Crow* came from the SARS epidemic in 2003:

The SARS epidemic in 2003, when the government took a lot of prevention and control measures. The Harbin media reported that this was almost exactly the same as the measures taken by Wu Liande, a medical officer sent by the Qing government to combat the pestis when it broke out a hundred years ago. (Chi & Shu, 2013, p. 99)

In fact, looking back at the measures people took to deal with the pestis in the post-epidemic era mentioned in this novel, it is surprising to find that whether it is the plague in Harbin more than a century ago, the “SARS” in 2003, or the ongoing COVID-19 epidemic today, people have very similar aspects in dealing with the pestis: It is the same new virus, it is the same shortage of masks, it is the same lockdown, it is the same centralized isolation, and so on. This shows that although the current level of science and technology is far from that of a century ago, some of the most basic measures are still the most effective ways to deal with the plague, which cannot but cause us to reflect deeply on the lessons of history. On the other hand, although the performance of ordinary people in different times and their psychological feelings in the plague there are huge differences, such a “big era” often reflects the common human nature. If Chi Zijian’s *White Snow Crow* provides us with a novel to understand how ordinary people faced the plague more than a century ago, then, in the current era of such developed Internet media, when we see the spirit of mutual assistance shown by ordinary people in the COVID-19 epidemic and join hands to fight the epidemic, when there are also disgraceful acts of lawbreakers taking advantage of the situation, it is easy to think of a similar phenomenon in *White Snow Crow*. In this process of reading “history” and “present”, the charm of literature itself is self-evident. Therefore, the writing of the plague in the Snow Raven is on the one hand a record of past history, but also a profound insight into the world’s people:

“I began to pay attention to this event, to pay attention to Wu Liande, but I was not only interested in him as a character.” I want to know how ordinary people felt when the plague came, how they felt. (Chi & Shu, 2013, p. 103)

In this sense,

literature, in telling history, is trying to realize its own possibilities, while history, in its proud conviction of the truth and necessity of self-representation, misses the innumerable details and folds of existence that once had a sense of life and temperature. (Zhang, 2019, p. 69)

Such “details and folds” are also what we should pay attention to when reflecting on the survival of ordinary people in this disaster since the outbreak of the novel coronavirus outbreak:

“Focusing on ordinary people who are really suffering in the plague may be the way to make literary reflection towards humanity or the state of human existence.” In this regard, Chi Zijian’s treatment of *White Snow Crow* is of great reference value, both as a panoramic depiction of the pestis from the perspective of contemporary plague views and administrators, and as a name for everyone involved in the plague, whether noble or humble. (Zhao & Jiang, 2021, p. 18)

It is quite interesting that when the epidemic in Fujiadian began to show signs of improvement, the “Catholic Church” located in Fujiadian City had become a “epidemic prevention dead corner” because of its particularity. In addition to the believers, there are also the people who fled here from Fujiadian, who believe that the

“Almighty Lord” will save them, so they refuse the help of the Epidemic Prevention Bureau. The death of the Russian actress Senikova made Wulende realize the seriousness of the problem: “Senikova was infected in the church in the port area, it seems that mass during the plague is dangerous” (Chi, 2010, p. 101). Realizing this, “Wu Liande ordered that all churches and temples in Harbin be inspected and all religious activities suspended” (Chi, 2010, p. 101). However, “since the first people arrived already infected with the plague, and the church did not take any preventive measures, the people mixed together, and the severity of the epidemic was astonishing” (Chi, 2010, p. 225). In addition to the dozens of bodies that had been quietly buried, more than 20 people who had recently died were placed in coffins in the courtyard, and they had become a cemetery in the city! Moreover, of those who were still alive, after examination, about 80 percent were infected with the plague, and they still sat together, singing and chanting, praying that God would spare them and free them from the plague” (Chi, 2010, p. 225). In the recent COVID-19 epidemic, mass infections caused by religious activities have also posed a major problem for countries in the process of epidemic prevention. Rereading this novel, while lamenting the author’s meticulous description of the plague in Northeast China a hundred years ago, it can also make people reflect on similar problems in the current society.

If SARS in 2003 is the 1.0 version of this “coronavirus”, then the novel coronavirus and its variants are undoubtedly its upgraded version. Over the past three years or so, hundreds of millions of people have been infected with COVID-19 worldwide, and more than one million people have died. This has forced us to reflect on the fact that in the 2020s, when technology and medical treatment are so advanced, human beings are still so vulnerable to the virus. In this context, looking back at the pestis in Northeast China more than a century ago, history seems to repeat itself, except that the political issue of invaders from Russia, Japan, and other countries seeking to seize Chinese territory in the northeast where the plague is spreading is transformed into a geopolitical conflict between different countries and regions on a global scale in response to the novel coronavirus epidemic. This interpretation is too far from the topic for the *Snow Crow*, but the historical events described in the novel and the exploration of the mentality of ordinary people in the face of disaster can provide an artistic model for us to reflect on the life experience of ordinary people under the epidemic situation in the post-epidemic era. This is also Chi Zijian’s aesthetic concept in the novel:

“What I want to show is the daily life of people when the plague strikes.” That is to say, I want to push through the white bones, to seek even the phosphorescent glimmer in the depths, and to outline the life that lies beneath the shadow of death. (Chi, 2010, p. 259)

Unfinished Comments: Death Consciousness in “Plague Writing”

In fact, “plague writing” is an important feature of Chi Zijian’s novel creation. In addition to the novel *White Snow Crow*, which specifically describes the plague, in *The Right Band of the Argun*, “my” uncle Nidu Shaman introduced the reindeer plague to his own clan when he performed a spiritual performance for other Ewenki clan, which caused a large number of reindeer deaths. The description of the “Shijing troops” in *Pseudo Manchukuo* using live people to conduct plague virus experiment in Pingfang District of Harbin constitutes one aspect of the novel’s nation-state narration; *Goodnight Rose* takes the Japanese plague experiment in Harbin as the historical perspective of the story; a special chapter in *Clear Beyond the Clouds* describes “the Plague on the Vang River”; the plague of horses mentioned in *The Peak of Mountains*; the description of the plague caused by the release of rats carrying the plague virus after the defeat of the Japanese bacteriological forces in *Yellow Chicken Baijiu*; the “highly pathogenic avian influenza virus” appearing in “Tile City” in *The Bravery of Migratory Birds*; let’s wait.

These “plague writing”, like the religious factors that Chi Zijian incorporated into her works, became the internal driving force to promote the development of the plot. On the one hand, we can find that Chi Zijian’s “plague writing” is related to the consciousness of national state, which is related to the specific historical attributes of the objects described. On the other hand, while writing about the plague, she also extensively expressed the various associated reactions of the people’s hearts caused by the plague, which makes her “plague writing” not only have a historical sense, but also contain some permanent literary charm. Moreover, these “plague writings” are all closely related to death, which conveys Chi Zijian’s deep thinking about life itself.

A considerable part of these works describe people’s life experience in the face of death, and the experience of death is exactly the real experience that she has repeatedly experienced in the process of writing. In the course of writing *Clear Beyond the Clouds*, her husband died in an accident; *The Bravery OF Migratory Birds* and *All the Nights in the World* can be seen as a deep memory of the late husband; grandma died in the middle of writing *White Snow Raven*. These personal experiences all have a hidden or explicit influence on Chi Zijian’s novel creation, which leads her to unconsciously incorporate deep thinking about death in the process of writing. For example, in the writing process of *Clear Beyond the Clouds*, Chi Zijian experienced the separation and death of her lover. After completing the creation, she suddenly realized that the novel was the deepest memory of her lover: “Now I think of it, this novel seems to be a ‘eulogy’ written for my lover, although the content has no direct connection with him” (Chi, 2014, p. 330). In Pearl, the epilogue to *White Snow Raven*, she also mentions that “halfway through, I still felt the difficulty. This difficulty is not literary, but the kind of pressure that the mind cannot bear after truly entering the plague situation. This has never been done before in my writing” (Chi, 2010, p. 260). The sudden death of her grandmother gave her a deeper understanding of death, so that “I returned to the long form, no longer afraid to enter the plague situation”. It seems that grief and illness are not bad things. Quietly, they give me strength” (Chi, 2010, p. 262). The portrayal of Xin Kailiang in *The Peak of the Mountains* also includes Chi Zijian’s personal experiences with her lover, which together with other relevant plots constitute the novel’s further meditation on death (Chi, 2020, pp. 325-326). In the epilogue to *The Bravery of Migratory Birds*,

“A Fading Sunset”, she also mentions that the oriental stork written in this novel was a large bird she encountered during a walk with her husband. After the death of my lover, I told my mother about this bird, and she said that she had lived here most of her life and had never seen it, and that I lost my lover after the bird appeared, so it was not an auspicious bird. But in my eyes, its direction, so brilliant, is not unlucky, who is not finally toward the sunset, the length of time. (Chi, 2018, p. 202)

And the experience had a potential impact on her conception of the novel:

The chapter I wrote that moved me most was the ending, in which two birds, living and dying in nature, do not escape the storm of fate, and the two people who bury them, in a moment of chaotic happiness, cannot find their way back. (Chi, 2018, pp. 202-203)

The experience of death is integrated into the conception process of the work, and then the meaning of “life” is reflected in the writing of death, thus reflecting the philosophical thinking of “living to death” contained in this kind of work:

“I like to write about the abundant vitality in the death.” Life is indeed difficult, everyone will experience sudden disasters, fear, death, the only thing that can overcome these is the desire for life. The vitality and warmth in the shadow of death are especially valuable. (Liu, 2010)

Therefore, some researchers believe that “she tries to break through and surpass death, which is difficult to carry human aesthetic ideals but is absolutely unavoidable, so that it becomes a part of her ideal real life” (Liu, 2011, p. 123). In this sense, experiencing death and writing death have become two intertwining important themes in Chi Zijian’s “plague writing”.

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Marlowe's *Tamburlaine the Great* and the Tragedy of Karbala

Bushra Juhi Jani

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This essay analyses Christopher Marlowe's play *Tamburlaine the Great* and its intricate interweaving of historical events and cultural nuances. Focusing on the character of Tamburlaine, the essay explores themes of power, revenge, and divine justice within the context of the broader Shiite-Sunni conflict and the tragic history of Imam Al-Hussein. By examining Marlowe's incorporation of historical accounts and creative narrative techniques, the essay highlights how the play provides insights into the complexities of human ambition, political manoeuvring, and the consequences of wielding authority. Ultimately, *Tamburlaine the Great* is shown to be a timeless exploration of the interplay between history, religion, and individual agency, inviting readers to reflect on the enduring relevance of its themes in both historical and contemporary contexts.

Keywords: *Tamburlaine the Great*, the tragedy of Karbala, revenge, Marlowe, Shiite-Sunni conflict

Introduction

The English playwright Christopher Marlowe presented the character of Tamburlaine—Timur lang or Temur the lame—as a Scythian shepherd who views himself as the scourge of God. Most scholars have conceded that Marlowe has depicted a character that “bore a great deal of resemblance to Timur himself” (Miller, 2006, p. 255).

In Marlowe's play, *Tamburlaine the Great*, Tamburlaine refers to himself as the “scourge of God” multiple times as a way to assert his power and portray himself as a divine instrument of punishment. This self-proclamation aligns with Tamburlaine's ambitious and megalomaniacal nature. By calling himself the “scourge of God”, Tamburlaine presents himself as a force chosen by God to bring about divine retribution and punish those who oppose him.

Tamburlaine's repeated use of this title reflects his desire for conquest and dominance over others. He sees himself as a supreme ruler and believes that his military victories are a result of his divine mandate. By presenting himself as an instrument of divine justice, Tamburlaine justifies his actions and asserts his authority over nations and peoples he subjugates.

According to Arabic historical books, the 14th-century conqueror of Turco-Mongol descent Timur was Shiite—a member of a branch of Islam who believes that Imam Ali ibn Abi Talib (the cousin and the husband of Prophet Mohammad's daughter Fatima) and his descendants are the true successors of the Prophet.

To be Shiite is also to be a follower of a top Shiite saint and the grandson of the prophet Muhammad, Imam Al-Hussein, the son of Imam Ali by Fatima. Imam Al-Hussein was killed in a battle that took place in the year 680 in Karbala, which is in modern day Iraq. Shiites everywhere wear black mourning clothes, weep and beat their chests on the anniversary of the battle. The mourning reaches its climax on the 10th day of the Islamic

month of Muharram, known as Ashura, on which the forces of Caliph Yazid killed the 72 individuals who fought, including Imam Al-Hussein, his family and supporters. Those who were left living were made prisoners and transported to Yazid's court in Damascus. The prisoners included women and children, but Lady Zaynab, Imam Hussein's sister, was among the most important of them all.

The killing of Imam Al-Hussein was part of an ongoing struggle between the two main Muslim sects—Sunni and Shiite—over the leadership of the Islamic community after the death of Prophet Muhammad.

Tamburlaine's Connection to Timur's Religious Identity

The religious affiliation of Timur remains a subject of speculation, with the potential that he could have adhered to either paganism or Islam as his belief (Vitkus, 2003, p. 45). Additionally, some historians consider the possibility that he not only embraced Islam but also may have identified with the Shiite branch of the faith. According to Ephraim Nissan (2008),

A different ideology is reflected in the spurious claim, on his tombstone, taking his descent back to "Ali" (Imam Ali), thus endowing him with a genealogy of Imamic import to the Shiites, even though such Shiite affiliation of his is disputed. (p. 532)

But it is certain that Timur was a Shiite at one time of his life; Nissan points out,

His leading theological adviser, the Hanafite *cadi* Abd alJabbar Khwarazmi, was reputed to be a Mutazilite or modernist while he himself, at one time at least, was regarded as a Shiite. Some scholars have queried this but it makes sense in that Shiite authoritarianism was frequently allied with Mutazilite modernism against Koranic fundamentalism and shara traditionalism. (2008, p. 532)

More Arabic historic sources are talking about Timur as Shiite. One of these books is by Ahmad ibn Arabshah, the Arab writer and traveller who lived under the reign of Timur, and the author of the biography book, *Aja'ib al-Maqdur fi Naw'aib Taimur* (*The Wonders of Destiny of the Ravages of Timur*), which was written in Damascus 1435 and was translated and printed first time in Latin in 1636, which is considered by many critics as a major source for Marlowe's description of Tamburlaine and the play, because of a knowledge of Arabic that he might have gained through his studies at Cambridge, a knowledge made possible by the presence of Jewish scholars who migrated there, as Howard Miller (2006) states in an essay about the play and the translation of Arabic sources (p. 255). Ibn Arabshah mentions that Timor was a Shiite and that when he occupied Aleppo, he went to its castle and summoned its scholars and judges and asked them about Imam Ali and his enemy Muawaya, Yazid's father, who assassinated Ali in order to be the Caliph after him. When the scholars and judges tried to be neutral and did not take any side, Timur became very angry,

He said that Ali was on the right path, while Muawiyah was unjust and Yazid was a corrupted one. He also mentioned that the people of Aleppo were followers of the people of Damascus, who were Yazidis and had killed Al-Hussein. (2008, p. 190)

In his book *Ta'riḫ al-'Alawiyin, or The History of Alawites* (1924), the Arabic historian Moḥammad Amin Ghaleb al-Ṭawil states that Timur was a Nusayri, a member of a Shiite offshoot now known as Alawites, and he sought revenge over the killing of Imam Hussein bin Ali (pp. 325-330).¹ Al-Ṭawil also states that Timur occupied

¹ Al-Ṭawil's book, published in 1924, is a product of the modern era, yet it takes inspiration from historical origins. Unfortunately, this work lacks a bibliography or references to its sources. However, Matti Moosa's exploration of al-Ṭawil's text reveals references to ancient materials dating back to the era of Timur.

Damascus to avenge the killing of Imam Hussein (p. 325). According to Matti Moosa's book, *Extremist Shiites: The Ghulat Sects* (1988),

Timur also attempted to win over the Shiites. As a gestor of his support for them, he occupied Damascus to avenge the killing of the Imam al-Husayn in 680 by the lieutenants of the Umayyad Caliph Yazid, on the promise that Damascus was the capital of the Umayyads. Timur is thought by some ... to have been a Shiite. ... the fact remains that he greatly favored and supported the Shiites, who gained the upper hand in the Islamic countries under his control. (p. 273)

Tamburlaine's Revenge and Shiite Influences

In *Tamburlaine the Great*, there is certainly no mention whatsoever of Imam Al-Hussein, but there are some evidences in this drama showing that Marlowe was aware of the history of the tragedy of Imam Al-Hussein and that he wanted to reflect on the revenge of Tamburlaine on the followers of those who killed Imam Hussein and his companions.

First of all, the idea of revenge is clearly revealed in the play. Like Hamlet who views that his mission is one of divine justice:

but heaven hath pleased it so
To punish me with this and this with me,
That I must be their scourge and minister.
(Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, year, Act 3, Scene 4, Lines 194-196. The Folger Shakespeare. n.d.)

Tamburlaine also thinks that he is God's agent to punish the sins of his enemy: "I that am term'd the scourge and wrath of God,/The only fear and terror of the world" (*Tamburlaine the Great*, 2008, Part I, Act III, Scene III).

Because of the disputed nature of Timur's Shiite identity, Marlowe found another way to show his first audiences the Shiite affiliation of Timur by changing his identity from Mongol to Persian.

In her essay "'A warre ... commodious': Dramatizing Islamic Schism in and after *Tamburlaine*", Jane Grogan sheds light on what she sees as "neglected aspects of the play: its engagement with a more complex and varied idea of Islam" and the "intra-Islamic conflict and schism" (2012, pp. 45-78).

Grogan points out that, Marlowe's audiences were probably acquainted with the relatively recent institution of Shiite Islam as the Persian state religion under the Safavid kings. This transforming of the Mongol Timur into a Scythian shepherd-turned-Persian emperor allows Marlowe's audiences to read *Tamburlaine* as a Shiite ruler, and to read his hostility to the people of Damascus as a kind of revenge.

Even in Marlowe's stage directions of Damascus scene in Part 1, Act V, Scene I (Enter Tamburlaine, all in black and very melancholy), we see Tamburlaine in mourning cloths because Damascus was the base of the Caliph Yazid who sent the army to fight Imam Hussein and the place where the sister, the women, and children of Imam Hussein were brought as hostages. Drawing upon historical accounts, it is noted by Ahmad ibn Arabshah that Timur, during periods of mourning, would don attire of somber black. Furthermore, he would extend this custom to his military forces, as evidenced by their wearing of black garments upon occasions such as the passing of his own grandson (2008, p. 287). However, as per Ibn Arabshah's account, the siege and capture of Damascus did not occur during the month of Maharam. Expanding on the earlier point, it's pertinent to acknowledge the significant Shiite maxim: "Every Day is Ashura, Every Land is Karbala".

In the case of Damascus, Tamerlane's conquest followed a series of military campaigns in the region. He led his forces, which consisted of a formidable army of cavalry and infantry, into the Levant and besieged the

city. Tamerlane's forces were known for their ruthless tactics and military prowess, and they overwhelmed the defending forces of Damascus.

After a prolonged siege, Tamerlane's army breached the city's defenses and gained control over Damascus. The city was subjected to the pillaging and destruction that often accompanied Tamerlane's conquests. The exact details of the siege and the subsequent events may vary in historical accounts, but it is generally agreed that Tamerlane's forces were able to conquer and subjugate Damascus through a combination of military might, strategic planning, and ruthless tactics.

As per historical records, Tamir's strategy in capturing Damascus exhibited cunning and tactical prowess. He employed a calculated approach by initiating peace negotiations, causing the city's leaders to lower their guard. Once their defenses were weakened, he executed a decisive attack. According to historical accounts from Ahmad ibn Arabshah and numerous other Arab historians, Tamerlane dispatched two men ahead, positioned atop the besieged walls of Damascus. They proclaimed loudly that the prince, Tamir, was seeking reconciliation. This ploy garnered the attention of the city's inhabitants.

Subsequently, the citizens selected the chief judge, a respected figure, to engage in dialogue with Tamerlane regarding this matter. This representative descended from the city walls and met with Tamir, only to be deceived by the prince's seemingly kind words. Tamir cunningly stated that he had spared the city of prophets, Damascus, as a charitable act in honour of Allah's Messenger (peace be upon him), safeguarding the lives of his own offspring. The chief judge, swayed by Tamir's rhetoric, commended the conqueror and attempted to dissuade the people from further resistance, advocating for submission.

This approach triggered a division among the citizens. One faction aligned with the chief judge's stance, while another vehemently opposed it, resolved to continue fighting. The situation persisted throughout the night, and by the morning, the viewpoint of the chief judge had prevailed. He firmly resolved to solidify a peace treaty with Tamerlane, and those who resisted this decision faced the threat of execution.

In the aftermath, Timur wreaked havoc on Damascus. Mosques, schools, theaters, residences, grand buildings, military structures, markets, and bathhouses were all laid to waste, reduced to nothing more than ruins and deserted edifices. The once-thriving city lost its vibrancy, replaced by desolate remnants and abandoned outlines. The streets were strewn with the corpses of the fallen, and only children, numbering in the thousands, remained among the living—some barely clinging to life, others having tragically perished.

In *Tamburlaine the Great*, the fall of Damascus is depicted with dramatic intensity and theatrical flair. After conquering Africa, Tamburlaine proclaims himself emperor of the entire continent and shifts his focus to Damascus. He faces the task of defeating his father-in-law to reach the city. His wife, Zenocrate, pleads with him to spare her father, leading Tamburlaine to make him a tributary king instead. In the midst of the conflict, the governor of Damascus sends virgins as an offering to Tamburlaine's army. However, he responds by having them brutally killed and their remains displayed on the city walls. In the end, Tamburlaine emerges victorious in the battle.

Symbolism of Flags and Connection to Shiism

During the siege and conquest of Damascus, the character, Tamburlaine employs flags of varying colours. Raising white, red, and then black flags "reveals an apocryphal story meticulously arranged to inspire a mixture of horror and wonderment at the conqueror and his 'costumbre' ('custom')" (Menna, 2022, p. 618). However, the use of coloured flags as symbolic communication is a powerful literary device that often transcends its

narrative context to evoke cultural, emotional, and historical connections. Tamburlaine strategically deploys flags to convey his intentions and emotions during the conquest of Damascus. Remarkably, this use of flags, while a product of Marlowe's creative narrative, draws intriguing parallels to real-world practices. Specifically, the symbolic association between Tamburlaine's flag usage and the Shiite traditions observed during the mourning month of Muharram, particularly in the commemoration of Ashura, offers an intriguing lens through which to explore the thematic depth and cultural resonances of Marlowe's play. This discussion delves into the dynamic interplay between Marlowe's fictional narrative and the real-world symbolism of coloured flags, shedding light on the possible connections between Tamburlaine's actions and Shiite practices, particularly those observed during Muharram.

In Act V, Scene I, the stage directions read: "Enter the GOVERNOR OF DAMASCUS with three or four CITIZENS, and four VIRGINS with branches of laurel in their hands".

When Tamburlaine sees them, he says,

TAMBURLAINE. What, are the turtles fray'd out of their nests?
 Alas, poor fools, must you be first shall feel
 The sworn destruction of Damascus?
 They knew my custom; could they not as well
 Have sent ye out when first my milk-white flags,
 Through which sweet Mercy threw her gentle beams,
 Reflexed them on their disdainful eyes,
 As now when fury and incensed hate
 Flings slaughtering terror from my coal-black tents,
 And tells for truth submission comes too late? (Act V, Scene I)

In this passage, Tamburlaine expresses his contempt and frustration towards the people of Damascus. He questions whether the timid and helpless inhabitants of the city, referred to as "turtles", have been frightened away from their homes. Tamburlaine mocks them, considering them foolish for being the first ones to experience the devastating wrath he has sworn upon Damascus. He criticizes their lack of foresight, suggesting that they should have recognized his reputation and sent the inhabitants away when his peaceful and merciful flags were raised. Now, as Tamburlaine's fierce and hateful army approaches with their black tents, filled with fury and slaughter, he declares that it is too late for the people of Damascus to surrender and submit, as the time for mercy has passed.

In Act IV, Scene II, Tamburlaine says,

So shall he have his life, and all the rest:
 But, if he stay until the bloody flag
 Be once advanc'd on my vermilion tent,
 He dies, and those that kept us out so long;
 And, when they see me march in black array,
 With mournful streamers hanging down their heads,
 Were in that city all the world contain'd,
 Not one should scape, but perish by our swords.

In this scene, Tamburlaine uses different coloured flags to convey specific messages. He uses a bloody flag, presumably red, to signify a state of war and imminent danger. When this flag is raised on his vermilion tent, it signals that those who have opposed him will face death. In contrast, when Tamburlaine marches with black flags

and mournful streamers, it indicates a somber and merciless intent. In this state, Tamburlaine suggests that no one within the city will be spared, and all will perish by his sword.

This use of flags as symbols represents Tamburlaine's intention to communicate his intentions and evoke specific emotions or responses in his adversaries. The colours and imagery associated with the flags serve as visual cues to convey the severity of his actions and the impending consequences.

In this speech Tamburlaine is expressing his intentions regarding the fate of his enemies. He states that if his adversary, who has been keeping him out for a prolonged period, surrenders before the bloody flag is raised on his tent, that enemy will be spared along with the rest. However, if the flag is raised before surrender, that enemy and those who obstructed him will be put to death. Furthermore, when Tamburlaine enters the city wearing black attire and with mournful banners hanging down, no one within the city will escape his wrath. All will perish by the swords of his forces.

Shiites bear flags of black and red. The black flags of the Shiites serve as a symbol of remembrance and sorrow, reflecting their devotion and grief. On the other hand, red flags in Shiite tradition hold a dual significance, representing both the unjust shedding of blood and a call for seeking justice for those who have been slain. It was a longstanding Arab custom as well to hoist a crimson flag at the tomb of someone who had suffered an unjust death, keeping it raised until vengeance was attained.

During the Ashura commemoration, Shiites partake in a ritual within the sacred city of Karbala, a gathering that historically took place in secret due to political opposition, and is now commonly attended by numerous Shiite followers. As part of the Muharram mourning rituals, the customary red flag that usually adorns the dome of the Shrine of Imam Hussein (AS) is replaced by a black flag.

In Tamburlaine's case, the use of black flags and mournful streamers may evoke a similar sense of mourning and somberness. While his motives and actions differ from the historical events of Karbala, the symbolic use of black flags can evoke a connection to the idea of loss, tragedy, and the seriousness of his intentions.

Marlowe's Treatment of Characters and Shiism

Marlowe included characters of the virgins in Act Five of his play, which were part of the historical accounts of Timur's campaign, suggesting that Marlowe was aware of these events. In this act of the play, the governor of Damascus, besieged by Tamburlaine's army, sent four virgins to plead for mercy, but Tamburlaine had them slaughtered and hoisted on the city walls.

Tamburlaine: What, have your horsemen shown the virgins Death?
TEHELLES. They have, my lord, and on Damascus' walls
Have hoisted up their slaughter'd carcasses.

To some critics, Marlowe must have taken some liberties with historical accuracy in this scene, which they name as "petitioning children" which took place in other city and that Marlowe's choice of Damascus is surely a technical, plot related necessity. According to Ahmad ibn Arabshah, the virgins were petitioning children sent by the governor of Ispahan when conquered and occupied by Timur to pity them and spare their remnants, but they ended up under hooves (2008, pp. 69-70).

ZENOCRATE. Wretched Zenocrate! That liv'st to see
Damascus' walls dy'd with Egyptians' blood,
Thy father's subjects and thy countrymen;
The streets strow'd with dissever'd joints of men,

And wounded bodies gasping yet for life;
 But most accurs'd, to see the sun-bright troop
 Of heavenly virgins and unspotted maids
 (Whose looks might make the angry god of arms
 To break his sword and mildly treat of love)
 On horsemen's lances to be hoisted up,
 And guiltlessly endure a cruel death;
 For every fell and stout Tartarian steed,
 That stamp'd on others with their thundering hoofs,
 When all their riders charg'd their quivering spears,
 Began to check the ground and rein themselves,
 Gazing upon the beauty of their looks.

In this passage from Marlowe's play, Zenocrate laments the tragic events unfolding in Damascus. She expresses her anguish at witnessing the walls of Damascus stained with the blood of Egyptians, her father's subjects and fellow countrymen. The streets are filled with dismembered bodies and wounded men on the verge of death. Zenocrate is particularly devastated by the sight of the innocent virgins and maidens, whose beauty could inspire even the war god to abandon aggression and embrace love, being impaled on the spears of horsemen and cruelly killed.

According to Al-Ṭawil's *The History of Alawites* which was quoted in English by Matti Moosa in his book, *Extremist Shiites: The Ghulat Sects*, it says that

Timur's march against Syria led the Nusayris (Alawis) ... to avenge them against their enemies, We are informed by al-Tawil that before Timur stormed Damascus, an Alawi woman, Durr al-Sadaf, the daughter of Saad al-Ansar (one of the men of Mamluk Sultan al-Zahir), accompanied by forty Alawi virgins, tearfully asked Timur to avenge the family of the Prophet particularly the daughters, including al-Husayn's sister Zaynab, who was taken as a captive after his murder, to the Umayyad Caliph Yazid in Damascus. (1988, p. 274)

Timur promised Durr al-Sadaf that he would avenge the family of the prophet. She accompanied him to Damascus with 40 virgins, who sang songs against the Umayyads (1988, p. 129).

It seems that Marlowe made changes on historical events. He changed the number of virgins from 40 to four for the stage need and he made the virgins to be slaughtered first of all to focus on the brutality of Tamburlaine. This can be linked to another event of the bride that is mentioned in al-Tawil's account.

When Timur entered Damascus, he offered amnesty to its inhabitants and asked them to find him a woman from among the dignitaries of the city to be his wife. When a maiden was found, he ordered that she be marched naked through the city. When the people refused, Timur said to them, "Who, then, gave you the right to bring the daughter of the apostle of God [i.e. imam Al-Hussein] uncovered to your city?" Then he ordered them killed. (Moosa, 1988, p. 129)

Timur tried to remind the people of Damascus how Imam Hussein's sister was brought to Damascus as a hostage after the battle and he wanted to avenge that. Probably, Marlowe fused both events in one scene that ends tragically to show the excessive brutality of his protagonist.

The historical accounts serve as a catalyst for contemplating the potential creation of a female character. Examining Marlowe's portrayal of the character Zenocrates in his play reveals his inspiration from these historical sources, even though Zenocrates is a fictional entity. Al-Ṭawil's *The History of Alawites* and the narratives of figures like Durr al-Sadaf and the bride provide intriguing insights into the historical context that likely influenced Marlowe's narrative choices. These sources illuminate the events and emotions that could have

influenced Zenocrates' character. Marlowe adeptly adapts and blends elements from these historical accounts, culminating in a portrayal of Zenocrates and the ensuing tragic events that resonate with his overarching narrative themes. Through Zenocrates, Marlowe effectively highlights the brutal nature of Tamburlaine, further accentuating the character's role in the unfolding drama.

We can also understand Tamburlaine's hostility to the emperor of the Turks in both parts of the play as a kind of revenge for Imam Al-Hussein. The name of the emperor in the play is Bajazeth which was originally Bayazid in Turkish, equivalent to *Aba Yazid* or the father of Yazid in Arabic language. Shiites throughout history hate and curse Yazid which is the name of the caliph who killed Imam Hussein. Knowing these facts, Tamburlaine's humiliation and the caging of Bajazeth can make more sense.

Ahmad ibn Arabshah recounts the tale of how Timur captured Ottoman Sultan Bayazid, also known as Ibn Uthman, and highlights sectarian tensions by mentioning the antipathy towards Yazid as a driving force behind the animosity towards the sultan:

When Timur captured Ibn Uthman, ... he seized whatever had come into his possession from the group of Ibn Uthman—their sanctities, wealth, treasures, and servants ... He adhered to his age-old practices, extracting treasures, capturing souls, and enslaving women. He made Ibn Uthman stand before him each day, treating him with affection, extending kindness and courtesy towards him, alternately ridiculing and laughing at him. [One day, when] the crowds converged, and when the place was packed with people, Ibn Uthman was swiftly summoned. He arrived with trembling heart, shackled and shivering. His heart then settled, and his terror dissipated. He improved his posture, and the scowls on his face eased through his blandishments. [Timur] commanded the instruments of joy, and they spun around ... Ibn Uthman looked and saw the cupbearers—his concubines and their veiled companions. His world darkened in his eyes, and the bitterness of his agony intensified at that moment. His heart cracked and ignited, his pain multiplied, his liver disintegrated, his sighs increased, his losses multiplied, his wound bled, his affliction nourished, and over the wound of his affliction, the butchers of grief scattered salt. (2008, pp. 278-279)²

Ibn Arabshah continues to employ well-known Arabic proverbs to highlight the issue of sectarianism, as he mentions Timur's act of releasing certain dignitaries who have been held captive by Ibn Uthman,

“And this is not due to my love for Ali—may Allah honor his face—but it is due to my aversion to Muawiya,” I said. Muawiya didn't reject the love for Ali, but rather, he sought to secure the succession of his son Yazid.

Another perspective suggests that it's not due to his affection for him that he extends his kindness, but due to his hatred for certain individuals among us. (2008, p. 280)

In Marlowe's play, Tamburlaine is portrayed as an agent of divine justice, with his conquests and retaliatory actions seemingly aimed at rectifying the wrongs suffered by the Shiite people and their imams. However, this perspective also highlights Marlowe's flawed understanding of Islam and Shiism with the scenes of burning the Turkish Quran and cursing Mahomet, as well as Timur's own misconceptions regarding Shiism. From a historical perspective, Timur unfurled a banner displaying the Arabic expression, “*Ya la-Tharat al-Hussein*”, which can be rendered in English as “O ye avengers of Hussein”, in order to further his personal interests. Similarly, the Abbasids leveraged the memory of Karbala to a great extent to garner public backing against the Umayyads (Cornell, 2007, pp. 117, 118). However, once they achieved triumph, they subsequently turned against the followers of Imam Hussein.

Finally, Marlowe kept the issue of revenge over the killing of Imam Al-Hussein implicit in the play because he was writing a play meant to amuse the Elizabethan audience rather than to boost an idea about Imam Al-

² All translations are mine.

Hussein as the play “draws upon the anti-Islamic discourse that had developed over the centuries in Christian Europe” (Vitkus 2003, p. 52).

Christopher Marlowe's *Tamburlaine the Great* is a complex and multi-layered play that engages with a wide range of historical and cultural issues. According to Miller, “Marlowe chose from his sources many incidents that had a basis in actual history” (2006, p. 266). Marlowe's use of historical and cultural references to the tragedy of Karbala and the Shiite-Sunni conflict adds depth and complexity to the play, highlighting its relevance to contemporary issues of religious conflict and political power struggles. By portraying Tamburlaine as a figure of divine retribution, Marlowe's play remains a powerful and thought-provoking work that continues to resonate with audiences today.

Conclusion

In conclusion, Christopher Marlowe's *Tamburlaine the Great* intricately weaves historical events and cultural nuances to create a complex narrative that resonates with both its Elizabethan audience and modern readers. Marlowe's portrayal of Tamburlaine as a scourge of God draws parallels to Timur's conquests and strategies, as well as the broader religious and sectarian tensions of the time. By using the character of Tamburlaine, Marlowe delves into the themes of power, vengeance, and divine justice, alluding subtly to the tragic narrative of Imam Al-Hussein and the ongoing Shiite-Sunni discord.

Marlowe's incorporation of historical accounts, such as Timur's use of flags and his interactions with the people of Damascus, adds depth to the play's dramatic intensity and provides a window into the political and religious intricacies of the era. The manipulation of historical events and characters serves not only to entertain but also to shed light on deeper themes, such as the idea of revenge and the complex relationship between power and religion.

While Marlowe's understanding of Shiism and the events surrounding Imam Al-Hussein's tragedy may be imperfect, his play remains a captivating exploration of human ambition, conflict, and the consequences of wielding power. The themes of vengeance, political maneuvering, and the interplay between historical events and creative narrative make *Tamburlaine the Great* a timeless work that continues to offer insights into the complexities of human nature and the pursuit of dominance.

In this intricate tapestry of historical and cultural references, Marlowe's play ultimately invites audiences to contemplate the far-reaching consequences of power struggles and the intricate interplay between history, religion, and individual agency. Through Tamburlaine's journey, Marlowe prompts us to reflect on the ways in which past events shape the present, and how the pursuit of power can lead to both triumph and tragedy. As a result, *Tamburlaine the Great* remains a compelling piece of theatre that resonates with audiences across time, highlighting the enduring relevance of its themes and messages.

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Dr. Muhammad Iqbal and His Efforts to Re-unite Muslim World

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Dr. Iqbal “The poet of east” was greatly moved with down fall of Ottoman Empire and and disappointed by Muslims as a whole. He through his poetry tried to awaken the Muslims specially to youth. He reminded them their glorious period and now where they have fallen. He blamed them that it is all their fault of down fall because they forgot their religion, their traditions, ethics and character of leadership. In this article we will point out in Iqbal’s Poetry and try to motivate the youg generation.

Keywords: Dr. Iqbal and his poetry, Concept of khudi, Fall of Ottoman Empire

Introduction

Dr. Mohammad Iqbal, who is commonly known as Poet of the East. He is a national hero of Pakistan and his philosophy and poetry had no borders. He is a hero of the Islamic world, who played such a great and vital role in the birth of Pakistan. His contribution is not only limited to birth of a new state Pakistan but he worked for entire Muslim Ummah. His mind was deeply affected by down fall of Ottoman Empire and Muslim Ummah was divided into small countries and their identity was lost. His poetry is full of poems and verses to awake the Muslims and it reminds their time of glory.

He was the first person, who dreamed to advocate the formation of independent Muslim state for the subcontinent. In 1930, he was President of the Muslim League; he used this as political platform to launch the concept of a separate homeland for Muslims. The feeling of separate entity had its foundations not only in religion and culture but also in history because Muslims were inheritors of Western supremacy for more than 700 years. The Hindus aim was different; they constituted the majority community under the Indian National Congress party, and developed the concept of composite nationalism which was supposed to be broadly Indian government representing all religious communities, including Muslims, Hindus, Sikhs, and the rest. The masses of Muslim community did not accept the concept of composite Indian nationalism. Iqbal was the only major influencing personality in sharpening the feeling of Muslim separateness on the basis of religion, history, tradition, and culture. He believed in activism, which was the corner stone of Iqbal’s philosophical thinking. It had a direct relationship with the aspirations of the rising middle class of the Muslim Community.

As the years passed by the conflict between the Hindus and Muslims became more and more serious and bloodily acute. Thousands of Muslims were being killed on daily basis.

Iqbal in his address at Allahabad in December 1930 voiced the demand for a separate Muslim state on the bases of their different culture, values, and religion saying “I would like to see the Punjab, North-West Province, Sind and Baluchistan amalgamated into a single state which should be the final destiny of the Muslims.”

It was apparently that the purpose of creation of a separate Muslim state was two-fold. One was to end the Hindu-Muslim rising conflict and two was to enable Islam to play its role as a cultural force.

Iqbal was greatly impressed and inspired by Kamala Atatürk’s Modern Turkey. It was the only Muslim country which was trying to fulfill Islam’s commitment to history. Iqbal’s Poetry and Philosophy was focused on following key features:

- Awakening consciousness of youth and nation.
- Character building under the shadow of Islam.
- Selfness or “Khuddi” concept.
- Reminding and connecting youth with their glorious past.
- Reunification of Muslim World.

Awakening Consciousness of Youth and Nation

Iqbal’s main target was to awaken the youth and nation. His poetry revolves around giving powerful message to youth. He believed that if youth is awakened, they would bring revolution. So in his poetry he gives them examples of their past glorious history. All our forefathers and leaders were brave warriors, true Muslims, not involved in luxuries, honest, their life according to Quran and Prophet Teachings. That’s why they ruled the world. His poetry strikes at their consciousness. Imagine about you and your present state. You are oppressed, divided, and indulged in luxuries, not following Islamic teachings is the reasons of your down fall. I will be quoting equal’s poetry in Urdu language and then translate into English.

کبھی اے نوجوان مسلم تدبیر بھی کیا تو نے

وہ کیا گردوں تہاتو جس کا ہے تو ٹوٹا ہوا تارا

Here Iqbal addresses straight to youth that you have ever concentrated and realized what is your history and background. You were a broken star of a milky way. In short, you had a bright and shiny past which have forgotten.

گنوا دی ہم نے جو اسالف کی میراث پائی تھی

ثریا سے زمین پہ آسمان نے ہم کو دے مارا

Here Iqbal says that you have lost the heritage of your forefathers and now you are like a stone thrown from sky to ground. Again he wants youth to realize their status.

زمانے میں معزز تھے مسلمان ہو کر

اور تم خوار ہو ے تارک قرآن ہو کر

Now Iqbal points his fingers to the Muslims that your forefathers were good believers of God and true Muslims; that's why they respected in this world whereas you left Quran, being disgraced everywhere.

Character Building Under the Shadow of Islam

He step by step wanted first to awaken the youth, then motivate and make them true Muslim fighter by giving their glorious historical examples in poetry and making their character so strong that they can bring the revolution. So Iqbal was a revolutionary poet.

کی محمد سے وفا تو نے تو ہم تیرے
ہیں یہ جہاں چیز ہے کیا لوح و قلم تیرے ہیں

This verse is Iqbal famous conversation to God directly. Here Allah is telling Iqbal that if being a believer you honor and respect Prophet Muhammad (PUB) then you find me (Allah) on your side. Allah says everything of universe will be in your hands and under your control, so dividing Islam on the basis of Sectarianism and concerns of last prophet, which have destroyed our unity.

یوں تو سید بھی ہو مرزا بھی ہو افغان بھی ہو
تم سبھی کچھ ہو بتاؤ تو مسلمان بھی ہو

Here Iqbal is pointing out to Muslims that you have divided yourselves into different factions like Sayed, Mirza, and Afghans. But are you a true Muslim as well?

Iqbal wanted the youth to believe and trust in him. He wanted them to be brave, be Islamic soldiers with a faith of life after death and total surrender to God, be positive in life. He wanted to enforce in minds of youth that have self-respect and never compromise on it, have "Ishaq e Haqai" True love to God, be patriotic and loyal to God. He was always reminding youth of their glorious past to have inspiration out of it. He wanted youth to keep their aims high, look up with pride, honor, and dignity. He wanted everyone to be good and useful member to contribute in society.

Concept of Selfness or "Khuddi"

Iqbal paid lot of attention towards character building of youth. He thinks that if a person has a good character, he can conquer the world. He wants to see youth as proud, honest, looking up, standing own feet, dying before begging, dying on principals, true lover of Islam and teaching of prophet. He resembles youth like an Eagle or "Shaheen" who lives proudly at the top of mountains, fly high than all other birds. He resembles Muslim youngsters like mountains who are not shaken by small problems. Rivers, deserts, and mountains are no obstacles for them. He motivates the youngsters to an extent that if he jumps into the fire, then fire should get cold. He emphasis that your "Khuddi" and self-dependency should be so high that God should come down as ask you, "What do you want from me?"

خودی کو کر بلند اتنا ، کہ ہر تقدیر سے پہلے

خدا بندے سے خود پوچھے بتا تیری رضا کیا ہے

Here Iqbal recommended keeping your selfness, pride, self-respect, and integrity so high that Allah should come down and ask your desire:

نہیں تیرا نشیمن قصر سلطانی کے گنبد پر
تو شاہین ہے بسیرا کر پہاڑوں کی چٹانوں پر

Here Iqbal constantly pointed out at Muslim youth, that your destiny is not luxuries of life. You are a person of high aims to fly high and conquer mountains. Make your destiny at peaks.

آج بھی ہو جو براہیم کا ایمان پیدا
آگ کر سکتی ہے انداز گلستان پیدا

Here Iqbal says that life has equal opportunities for everyone, even if today you become true Muslims from your heart, even you can produce flowers out of fire, if you have belief and faith in you and Allah.

Reminding Youth for Their Glorious Past and Motivating

His poetry is full of motivation and examples of our glorious past. He was deeply impressed by Muslims of the Ottoman Empire and their time. Our caliphates were another very good example. He wanted that if the Muslims become motivated and true Muslims as per Quran and Prophet teaching, they can become glorious again and conquer the world again.

اپنی دنیا آپ پیدا کر اگر زندوں میں ہے
سر آدم ہے ضمیر کن فکاں ہے زندگی

Here Iqbal says if you are alive and dignified then you should struggle to get your dreams true legally then leave it to Allah for his final decision. He also stresses to be bold and take risk/challenges of life.

خدا جانے اسے کیا کہ تے ہیں خدا فریبی کہ خود فریبی

عمل سے فارغ ہو امسلمان بنا کہ تقدیر کا بہانہ

Here Iqbal says that our life is nothing but continuous struggle and hard work. Tragedy is that Muslims are hesitant to accept the challenges of life, thinking if it is not in my destiny, why I should try for it, whereas Allah asks to do your best and leave the result to me.

یہ غازی یہ تیرے پر اسرار بندے

جنہیں تو نے بخشا ہے ذوق شجاعی

دونیم انکی ٹھوکر سے صحرا و دریا

سمٹ کر پہاڑ انکی ہیبت سے راعی

Here Iqbal is talking about our bravery of past Muslim warriors and praising their achievements. He says that these mysterious followers of Allah, whom Allah have given might of bravery and professionalism. They are so brave and conquerors that once they decide to attack, mountains and rivers start shivering with their fear. High mountains lie down under their feet and start begging. In short, he motivates, obstacle means nothing before them. This type of bravery and believers is he wanted to see in Muslims.

ہے شباب اپنے لہو کی آگ میں جانے کا نام

سخت کوشی سے تلخ ہے انگبین زندگی

He talks to youngsters that youth means hardships, dedication, devotion, and struggle. If you think easy or luxurious life style is good for youth, then they should know that these are more harmful for you.

Iqbal Efforts to Reunite Muslim World

It was Iqbal's great desire to reunite the Muslim world. He visualized that Ottoman Empire down fall was due to division in Muslims. Enemy penetrated into our rows and divided us. Even now, his thoughts are very true. Look at Muslim world of today. We are into luxuries and life style of Arabs in Middle East. They are divided and other nations are kicking us, making fool out of us. Muslims are being dehumanized and labeled as terrorists. Our countries are being invaded on one pretext or another i.e. having weapons of mass destruction. Our sentiments and reactions are being tested after throwing Mother of all bombs. Weapons are being sold showing neighboring Muslim countries as threat for Billions. On the other day, same weapons are being sold to other countries as happening in the cases of Saudi Arabia and Qatar. We are being ruled on sectarian basis like Shia, Sunni, and wahabism. Just look at Condition of Iraq, Libya, Syria, Yemen, and Afghanistan. The message given by Iqbal is also given in Quran that "remain united, even if you are small in numbers". Examples are that Muslims won the Battle of Uhad where Muslims were 313 against 1,100 and Battle of Badar. This was the awakening Iqbal wanted to give to Muslims. He was the poet of past, present and future.

ایک ہوں مسلم حرم کی پاسبانی کیلے

نیل کے ساحل سے لیکر تابا خاک کاشگر

Here Iqbal shows his utmost dreams that Muslims should be united as one nation from shore of river Nile to deserts of Kashghar.

صدق خلیل بھی ہے عشق ، صبر حسین بھی ہے عشق

معرکہ وجود میں بدر و حنین بھی ہے عشق

Iqbal narrates story of Prophet Ibrahim that he was true in his belief in Allah so he accepted the challenge of jumping into fire and that fire turned in cold. Then he narrates story of Prophet Hasan and Husain in Karbala. He also believed strongly in Allah and sacrificed his life for Islam. He talks about Battles of Badar and Hunnain where Muslims were 313 against 1,100. They defeated enemy with more strength and weapons at the basis of faith and belief.

Indonesia independence was inspired by Iqbal's poetry. It played a great role in their struggle for independence from colonialism. They studied Iqbal's philosophy and implemented into their country politics. The name of Iqbal was often mentioned in radio and press of Indonesian in the early 1945.

Iqbal's perceived that there are links between religion and politics. He was sad about situation of Muslims, fall of Ottoman Empire. Muslims Ummah was scattered into many states and the idea of nationalism was raged by west into Muslim countries. So Iqbal was a pioneer who raised his voice to reunite Muslims Khilafah. The symbol of the unity of the Muslim *Ummah*, Iqbal believed that it had become an impediment to the development of Islamic thought. To meet the challenges of the modern world, he advocated the use of *ijtihad* (fresh thinking and independent judgment). He believed the example that Turkey should be followed by Muslim countries in order to rebuild and strengthen their states on modern lines. In the same vein he hoped that with the disappearance of the institution of the Khilafat the unity of the Muslim world will have to be derived from the independent and sovereign status of individual Muslim states. Iqbal wrote "It seems to me that God is slowly bringing home to us the truth that Islam is neither Nationalism nor Imperialism."

Conclusion

To conclude, the real causes of Muslims down fall at present age are:

- Corrupt and bad leadership who are more worried about to save their Kingships and regimes.
- Way of life not according to teaching of Islam and Quran/Sunnah.
- No attention being paid on character building of youth.
- Division in faith like Shia, Sunni, Wahabi, Barelvi, Deobandi, etc.
- No self-dependency in weapons and protecting own states. Still many Muslim countries look towards superpowers to protect.
 - No efforts being paid to educate our youth on history and research of our history.
 - Most of leadership maintains their personal accounts out of country as discovered in Panama case. Pakistan is one of the victims.
 - Our youth is into luxuries, entertainment, and in habit of easy going life.
 - Lack of justice, poverty, unequal division of wealth, and resources is also contributing factors.
 - Unjustified wars imposed to control Muslim states resources on one pretext or another, not allowing Muslims states to prosper, destruction of Muslim states like serial killer, sometimes on the pretext of "war on Terrorism", sometimes Al Qaida, sometimes Daish or ISIS.
- I would strongly recommend including Iqbal philosophy in Muslim country's policy making and his poetry/character building and teaching in students' syllabus in each class up to graduation.

To conclude, Iqbal says:

شاہیں کبھی پرواز سے تھک کر نہیں گرتا

پر دم ہے اگر تو ، تو نہیں خطرہ افتاد

If you are motivated and have high aims, you can never fail, no matter how difficult challenges you face, like eagle who never gives up, and reaches his destination.

جب اس انگارہ خاکی میں ہوتا ہے یقین پیدا

تو کر لیتا ہے یہ بال و پر روح المین پیدا

When a human achieves his belief and faith, he achieves his destiny.

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On Laozi's View of Desire

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Laozi's concept of desire has rich ideological connotations, not only referring to reducing personal desires. Laozi's concept of desire is based on "desire" as human nature, acknowledging the legitimacy and necessity of desire and demand. The rational criticism of "having desire" formed by "no desire" is the value pursuit of Laozi's concept of desire. From both personal physical and mental aspects and social order, "no desire" plays an important guiding role. Nature is the essence of Laozi's concept of desire, and being in harmony with nature is the best state of desire. Laozi's concept of desire reveals a deep spirit of love, and the "ethics of love" highlights Laozi's strong sense of care for the "other" and ethical attitude towards responsibility. Laozi's contemplation of desire contains a strong humanistic spirit, with the aim of promoting the healthy and sustainable development of life and society.

Keywords: Laozi, desire view, having desires, having no desire, nature, kindness

Introduction

As a great thinker in the pre-Qin period of China, Laozi's concept of desire has profound ideological connotations, and academic research on it has gradually deepened. This article argues that Laozi's view of desire does not simply mean to diminish an individual's desire. His understanding of human nature and his pursuit of value for inaction in nature constitute an important component of Laozi's view of desire. From the perspective of ethical care, the emphasis on "desire without desire" and the elucidation of the spirit of love both indicate that Laozi's concept of desire has a broad spirit of great love and an ethical dimension that benefits the people. Understanding Laozi's view of desire only as the control and regulation of personal desires is not enough to encompass the meaning and dimension of Laozi's philosophy of "deep morality". Laozi's concept of desire is based on the human nature of "desire", with "no desire" as the criticism and value pursuit of "desire", and its best state is to conform to nature. In Laozi's discourse on desire, it reveals a deep spirit of love, and "ethics of love" highlights Laozi's strong sense of care for the world and ethical attitude towards responsibility.

Desire: The Human Nature Foundation of Laozi's Desire View

The human nature foundation of Laozi's concept of desire is "having desire", which acknowledges the legitimacy and necessity of human desires and needs in social life. Laozi's discourse on the "desire" of human nature is divided into two aspects: on the one hand, he has a clear understanding of the legitimacy of human desires and advocates "being content with food, beautiful in clothing, comfortable in living, and happy in customs." (Chapter 80 of Laozi). This satisfies people's daily needs and ensures their safe living from the perspectives of quality of life and social customs. On the other hand, Laozi strongly criticizes the excessive desire, believing that "the five colors make the eyes blind, the five tones make the ears deaf, the five flavors make the population happy, the

wild hunting makes the human heart crazy; rare goods make it difficult to do.” (Chapter 12 of Laozi). Laozi believes that appropriate desire satisfaction is necessary, but a life that blindly pursues desires can lead to distortion and dwarfing of human nature, alienating people into the existence of other things. Blindness, deafness, smoothness of the mouth, madness of the heart, and obstruction of behavior reveal the enormous harm of indulgence, directly pointing to the personal safety of human existence, and suggesting the harm of excessive “desire” from the perspective of physical and mental health. This indulgence not only causes harm to individual existence, but also poses a threat to social stability and the well-being of the people. So Laozi strongly advocates that “serving the stomach is not the purpose”, limiting the satisfaction of desires to the premise of physical and mental health, rather than pursuing external desires, thus losing the value of human existence. At the same time, the external influence of desire cannot be at the cost of damaging social development, but rather takes the healthy development of society as the direction of moderately satisfying human desires. Laozi regulates human “desire” from both personal and social perspectives, in order to express his concern for individual survival conditions.

Laozi’s description of “desire” can also be analyzed from the two sentences in the silk book “constant desire” and “those who have desire cannot reside”. The difference between these two sentences in Laozi’s silk manuscripts and those that have been passed down lies in the fact that “there is always desire” in the writing of the passed down manuscripts, and “there is always desire”; The term “those who have desires” has been passed down from generation to generation, and is written as “those who have the Tao”. From the unearthed literature that has been passed down earlier, it can be seen that the sentence based on “desire” and “no desire” is more reliable. “desire” and “no desire” are both states of people’s exploration of the Tao. “desire” recognizes the “beauty” of the Tao, while “no desire” recognizes the “beauty” of the Tao. From “beauty” to “beauty”, there is a constantly deepening process of recognition. From a side perspective, it is necessary to elevate “desire” to reflect on itself in order to reach the state of “no desire”. The phrase “those who have desires cannot reside” indicates that Laozi’s understanding of human desires, especially the desires of rulers, is profound and comprehensive. He does not solely emphasize the importance of “no desires”, but fully pays attention to “having desires” in regulating desires, based on human “having desires” and using regulating desires as a means to achieve a state of “no desires”. The pursuit of “desire” is based on “non desire”, while “non desire” is based on “desire”. Laozi has reached a certain level of dialectical thinking in his view of desire.

In short, Laozi’s concept of desire is based on the recognition of human desire, affirming the legitimacy and necessity of human desires. On this basis, he advocates controlling the boundaries of “desire”, distinguishing between legitimate needs and excessive desires, and taking the healthy development of individuals and society as the premise. Laozi emphasizes the guiding role of “sages” and emphasizes the rational desire view of sages that “desire is not desire”. By criticizing “desire”, he achieves the goal of “no desire” and makes desire conform to the benign requirements of human survival, development, and ethical morality. As the core concept of Laozi’s concept of desire, “no desire” also requires special attention.

No Desire: The Value Pursuit of Laozi’s Desire View

Through a reasonable critique of “desire”, Laozi advocates that “no desire” be the value pursuit of his ethical thought. “No desire” is not simply a rejection of all desires, nor is it a “complete desire”, but rather a comprehensive consideration of desires from the perspective of pursuing appropriate desire satisfaction in a context that is in line with individual and social development. The representative vocabulary of Laozi’s desire view, which uses “no desire”, fully demonstrates his rational thinking and vigilant attitude towards the “desire”

of human nature. It should be clarified that Laozi not only opposes indulgence, but also does not support the general meaning of “absolute desire”. It is inaccurate to say that Laozi rejects all desires in a general sense. As mentioned earlier, Laozi’s view of desire is a “diminished” view of desire. Individuals achieve the goal of physical and mental rest through the reduction of external desires, and society forms a healthy life order through the norms and guidance of saints. This is the fundamental concern of Laozi’s “no desire” thought.

Firstly, individuals maintain a harmonious and healthy body and mind through a “no desire” cultivation approach. Laozi emphasized that after meeting needs, one should not excessively pursue extravagance. In the balance between life and fame and fortune, the principle of life first cannot be shaken. In Chapter 44 of Laozi, it is said:

Which is closer to the name and body? Which is more to the body and goods? Which is the disease of gain or death? Therefore, if you love deeply, it will cost a lot, and if you hide too much, it will be thick and perish. If you are satisfied, you will not disgrace yourself, and if you stop, you can last for a long time. (Chapter 44 of Laozi)

Chen Guying (2009) explained: “Laozi awakens the world to cherish life, and should not sacrifice oneself for fame and wealth.” (p. 235). Compared to the external value of fame and wealth, the existence and continuation of life are the primary things worth paying attention to. But the world often puts the cart before the horse, abandoning the precious value of life and pursuing fame and fortune, which actually leads to the weakening of life. Therefore, responding to the temptation of external objects in a “no desire” manner can consciously resist bad habits and achieve a state of contentment of “no desire to gain”. “Non desire” means an individual’s conscious satisfaction with “desire”. Therefore, Laozi said, “There is no greater harm than dissatisfaction, and no greater blame than desire to obtain. Therefore, contentment is often sufficient.” (Chapter 46 of Laozi). Only those who are constantly in a state of contentment can understand the enormous role of “non desire” in cultivating one’s character. “No desire” also manifests as cherishing one’s own spirit, and Laozi advocates achieving the “deep rooted and long-lasting path” through “stinginess”.

Secondly, society achieves a good order of life through the concept of “no desire” governance. Laozi was deeply saddened by the chaos of the Spring and Autumn period and the Warring States period. In the turbulent era of “the world has no way, and soldiers and horses were born in the suburbs”, how to make society move towards stability was the “problem of the times” that Laozi faced. For the immoral behavior of the rulers in reality, Laozi bitterly criticized it as “theft and exaggeration”. The governance of the immoral ruler presented a “non Dao” situation of “eliminating the dynasty, leaving the land barren, and the warehouse empty. He was skilled in literature, carried sharp swords, disliked food, and had surplus wealth” (Chapter 53 of Laozi). Faced with such social reality, Laozi strongly advocates that rulers should have “no desires”. Under the guidance of “Dao often does nothing”, as the ruler of the feudal lords, they must follow the operating rules of the Dao and achieve a stable situation of “no desire for tranquility, the world will determine itself” by returning to the “nameless simplicity”. The political form of “no desire” in governing society is manifested as “no action”. In Chapter 48 of Laozi, it is said:

As learning increases, the way decreases day by day. The loss also leads to the loss of inaction, and inaction leads to inaction. Taking the world without action is often based on inaction, and even if there is something, it is not enough to take it. (Chapter 48 of Laozi)

The “no desire” of rulers is a prerequisite for individuals to achieve reasonable desires in society and an important guarantee for good social order. So Laozi advocates “governing the country with integrity”, where rulers promote a good social life through inaction and disinterest.

Due to the fact that saints have no desire to imitate the Heavenly Way, the people also regard the Heavenly Way as their object of worship. The expression of “no desire” is a criticism of the phenomenon of “multiple desires” in society. Laozi adhered to the spirit of natural inaction and fiercely criticized the abuse of power by rulers, as well as the use of clever governance. In ancient times, good was the way, not based on the understanding of the people, but on ignorance. When the people were difficult to govern, they were wise. Therefore, governing the country with wisdom was the thief of the country; not governing the country with wisdom was the blessing of the country. In the practice of rulers’ hypocrisy and deception, the people were also difficult to manage, which would inevitably lead to the decline of society. Laozi called for “no desire” to govern the country, restore the simple essence of the people, and thus purify the social atmosphere. By not governing the country with cleverness and wisdom, we achieve a state of “no desire” of “seeing simplicity and embracing simplicity, with few selfish desires”, which is also the social ethical style that Laozi yearns for. Individuals form a “natural” good state in a simple and stable social order, thereby achieving physical and mental health and harmony.

Overall, “no desire” is the value pursuit of Laozi’s concept of desire. From the perspectives of personal physical and mental development and social order, “no desire” plays an important value guiding role. By imitating the natural inaction of the Heavenly Way to regulate the behavior of rulers, from the inaction of the Heavenly Way to the lack of desires of saints, Laozi wants to guide human society in a standardized way through the connection between heaven and humanity, highlight the ideal state of a “Dao” society, and criticize the harm of multiple desires in real society. Laozi’s transformation from affirming the human nature foundation of “desire” to regulating the “no desire” of desire demonstrates his sincere concern for personal and social security. Its exhortation and admonition to rulers, as well as its earnest expectations for the people, all prioritize the survival of individuals and the development of society. Of course, simply discussing “having desire” and “having no desire” cannot effectively solve the contradiction between social development and personal needs. Therefore, Laozi deeply rooted his view on desire in the elucidation of the core concept of “nature”. Nature is the best state for achieving desire, and it is also the essence of Laozi’s view on desire.

Nature: The Best State of Laozi’s Desire Concept

As discussed above, Laozi’s view of desire is based on nature as its essence, and “nature” is the core concept in “Laozi”. How to understand “nature” has become the key to understanding Laozi’s view of desire. There are different views in the academic community on Laozi’s concept of “nature”, for example, Liu Xiaogan (1995) believes that the concept of nature has three meanings: “it’s like this”, “as it is”, and “as it should be”. When discussing Taoism’s nature, Zheng Kai (2019) compared the ancient Greek Physis (nature, growth) and pointed out that Taoism’s nature includes several meanings of “automatically”, “by nature”, and “natural”. This article is inspired by Xie Yangju (2014) and tends to understand Laozi’s “nature” as a natural state and trend, that is, the best situation. “Nature” appears five times in the popular book *Laozi*:

Success is achieved, and the people call me nature. (Chapter 17)

Hope to speak naturally. (Chapter 23)

People follow the earth, the earth follows the heavens, the heavens follow the Tao, and the Tao follows nature. (Chapter 25)

The reverence of the Tao, the preciousness of virtue, and the constant nature of Mo’s destiny. (Chapter 51)

To supplement the nature of all things without daring to act. (Chapter 64)

The corresponding subjects of “nature” in these five appearances can be divided into two categories. Firstly, Dao and De are the subjects of nature, such as Chapter 25 and Chapter 51. The second is that the people and

rulers are the subjects of nature, such as Chapter 17, Chapter 23, and Chapter 64. Therefore, “nature” can be said to be the hub for implementing the metaphysical and metaphysical levels. Overall, nature refers to the optimal state of being in harmony with the Tao. Nature is not only the optimal state for the existence of all things among the people, but also the essence of the Tao and the principles of its operation. “Non desire” is a way of unfolding in the best state under the guidance of nature. Therefore, fundamentally speaking, nature has become the essence of Laozi’s concept of desire, defining the limits and tendencies of “non desire”. “Non desire” displays a dynamic equilibrium state, neither blindly suppressing the satisfaction of reasonable desires nor absolutely rejecting desires from the world. It is a sense of satisfaction that can be achieved through the legitimate needs that can be formed through appropriate regulation in people’s living conditions. This regulation is not a unilateral external control or command, but a self-driven conscious behavior that can be formed through self-recognition of the Tao. From both internal and external aspects, it has become the standard for measuring Laozi’s view of desire, and more importantly, it is reflected in the rational control of self over desire.

In summary, “nature” is the essential requirement of Laozi’s concept of desire. Both “having desire” and “having no desire” take nature as their optimal state. From the external requirements of social governance to the internal attributes of the existence of all things, whether rulers take various measures to achieve the governance of “having no desire” or individual beings regulate their own rational “desire space” based on their rational abilities, they all contain the pursuit of the best state of nature. Only in the optimal state of human law and nature can the needs of individuals and society be fully and comprehensively developed. “Desire free” is a transcendence of “desire free” and a manifestation of human rational ability. In addition, in the best state of conforming to nature, Laozi implemented the reasonable realization of people’s desires into the level of social governance, emphasizing the benevolent character of rulers through the rule of sages, cultivating the people with the concept of justice and goodness, and reflecting on oneself with a weak and humble attitude. The emphasis on “no desire” reveals a broad and profound spirit of compassion, and Laozi’s view of desire demonstrates a profound and broad ethical dimension. It should be said that the love of saints is selfless dedication like a mother, containing a strong sense of worldly care and responsibility.

Kindness: Laozi’s “Other” Concern for Desire

Kindness is an important symbol of Laozi’s ethical thinking and also the concern of Laozi’s desire view towards the “other”. From the perspective of rulers, “no desire” implies kindness. The first of Laozi’s “Three Treasures” is kindness, which is an important guarantee for national stability and social development. Kindness reflects a strong altruism, just like the love of parents for their children. Kindness does not require return or reciprocity, but is only a care for the other. Therefore, the governance of the people by saints should be as selfless as the love of mothers, and it is the responsibility of saints to achieve the best state of nature. This is not a substitute for the rational desire of the people to experience, but to create the conditions for people to achieve the greatest happiness, and to achieve the nature of all things for the people with their own “no desire”. At the same time, the sage’s actions are also in line with the nature of the Tao, reflecting the human law and nature, because the Tao is manifested as

all things are born without giving up, achievements are not known, clothing nourishes all things without giving up. Often without desire, it can be named as small; all things return to Yan without giving up, it can be named as great. (Chapter 34 of Laozi)

This kind of love that does not seek reward is a manifestation of compassion.

Due to his compassionate heart, Laozi put forward strict requirements for the sage himself. Firstly, sages should follow the principles of the Tao and not compete with the people, so that “no one in the world can compete with them”. The desire for competition arises from the difficulty of satisfying desires, while Laozi strongly advocates the state of “the highest goodness is like water”. The eighth chapter of Laozi states: “The highest good is like water. Water is good for all things but does not compete, and is disliked by others, so it is almost inferior to the Tao.” (Chapter 8 of Laozi). The highest good nourishes all things like water without competition, and is often in a place that is disliked by others, but voluntarily assumes it. Such behavior is close to the Tao and demonstrates the spirit of sacrificing oneself for others. It is precisely because saints maintain a humble and unyielding heart that the phenomenon of “the world is happy to push without being tired” is formed. Secondly, saints also need to treat the people with a just heart, and treating them equally is an essential character for saints. Without a special preference, the “inhumanity” of sages is selflessness towards any individual. Therefore, Laozi advocates “knowing the constant appearance, tolerance is the public, the public is the king, the king is the sky, the heaven is the way, and the way is long. Without body, one is not dangerous.” (Chapter 16 of Laozi). Wang Bi and Lou Yulie (2008) annotated “tolerance is the public” and said, “everything is inclusive, and even completely fair.” (p. 36). To treat the people and all things fairly is to let them follow the trend in their natural best state and not interfere with the existence of all things. We do not impose our own selfish desires on all things, so the best state of governance is “the highest, the lowest knowing”, which truly reflects the spirit of “governing without action”. Finally, saints need to have a spirit of great love, with the goal of solving people’s normal desires. “Saints have no constant heart, and take the hearts of the people as their heart.” (Chapter 49 of Laozi). This is the urgent needs of the people, the interests of the people, and there should be a “virtuous” cultivation of “good people, I am good; not good people, I am also good”. Saints do not take all things for themselves, but always care about the people, achieving the ideal situation of “considering people as the more they have; considering others as the more they have” (Chapter 81 of Laozi).

In addition, from the perspective of Laozi’s compassionate care for the “other”, simply summarizing Laozi’s thoughts as metaphysical or political philosophy techniques is not enough to fully demonstrate Laozi’s deep concern for the human world. Through the discussion of Laozi’s concept of desire, it can be seen that his view on desire can precisely demonstrate the origin of ethical morality, highlighting a value connotation of “deep morality” from the dual perspectives of Dao and things, sage, and people, in accordance with the essential requirements of nature. Xie Yangju (2014) pointed out in this regard: “Taoism refers to this universal morality as ‘Xuande’, which is what I call ‘deep morality’.” (p. 80). In Taoism, morality cannot do without the Tao... virtue belongs to the Tao, which is why Taoism’s morality is deep morality. Deep morality originates from the unity of Dao and virtue, because it can also be said to combine the dual meanings of norms and descriptions. Perhaps this is the moral theory that criticizes humanity and reaches the deepest root of the disease. The altruism and selflessness demonstrated by compassion also need to be understood at the level of morality. Love is not only an inevitable requirement for the rule of sages, but also a manifestation of the nature of the Tao and the nature of inaction. It is also a guiding principle of primary ethics and morality towards a humane society. Laozi’s ethics can be called “love ethics”, which is an ethics proposed by Laozi based on his special philosophy of nature. In the perspective of benevolent ethics, Laozi’s view on desire also exhibits the characteristic of nature preserving.

Overall, Laozi’s view of desire is not only aimed at the requirements of individual society, but more importantly, it emphasizes the “no desire” of sages. The standardization of rulers’ desires and the care for the development of individual society all demonstrate Laozi’s spirit of love for the “other”. The purpose of Laozi is

“peace and tranquility”, opposing the rulers’ indulgence, and achieving a spontaneous and favorable social environment with a great love heart of “always being good at saving people, so not abandoning them; always being good at saving things, so not abandoning things” (Chapter 27 of Laozi). Laozi’s concept of desire serves as a behavioral criterion for all social classes, fully unleashing one’s potential through rational self-discipline in a natural environment, and achieving an internal and external balance between needs and desires. The broad and compassionate spirit in Laozi’s thought, as well as the “worry” about human existence, is precisely the precious human experience and wisdom of “knowing the ancient beginning, which is called the Dao Ji” (Chapter 14 of Laozi).

Further Discussion

In summary, Laozi’s concept of desire is manifested by affirming the human nature foundation of “desire” and advocating the value pursuit of “no desire”, with nature as the best state of desire. Laozi’s concept of desire is not limited to individuals, but rather achieves the ideal state of a world where there is a way by limiting the rulers’ private desires. The spirit of love is the “no desire” concern for the world, and Laozi’s “ethics of love” can provide thinking and reference for the development of modern civilization.

Laozi’s contemplation of desire reveals his contemplation of the value of human existence, reflects his reflection and vigilance towards desire, and also highlights people’s recognition and contemplation of their own existence. The purpose of understanding desire is to pursue happiness in life and explore individual values. In answering the question of what constitutes a good life, Laozi starts with the concept of limiting and regulating desires, and explains the active role of the subject from the perspectives of Dao body and Dao function. He advocates for curbing human desires through rational self-discipline, thereby achieving internal and external harmony at the spiritual and material levels. In the interaction between the natural inaction of the Tao and the rational adaptation of human desires, the role of desire is both limited and explored. This rational attitude towards desire fully reflects Laozi’s deep contemplation of the relationship between heaven and humanity. In the relationship between heaven and humanity, humans have elevated from passive subordination to active participation. Although thrown into it, they can achieve the realm of recognizing heaven through their own practice. From the perspective of the subjective role demonstrated by rational reflection on desire, it is precisely this emphasis on people’s internal understanding of their own life that highlights the long-standing humanistic spirit in Chinese tradition. The regulation of desire is rooted in the continuous recognition of the Tao by humans themselves, rather than simply seeking the divine will. This fully demonstrates that Laozi values the humanistic spirit of humans themselves.

Laozi’s profound understanding of desire also lies in guiding and regulating desire from a transcendental perspective of the Tao, transforming people’s low-level needs into high-level needs, in order to achieve the noble realm of “walking with the Tao”. While criticizing desire, it also demonstrates Laozi’s questioning of the value of human beings as a unique existence. The intrinsic value of human beings lies in their rational constraints on their own desires, thus maintaining a clear and rational attitude towards external things. By understanding and exploring the natural essence of the Tao, one can lead one’s rational desires to be in a good state, striving to improve one’s own realm, and following the path of natural and free connection in understanding and practicing desires. Laozi’s concept of desire also reflects the special attention of Taoism to bioethics. Li Hongwen (2020) said: “The basic proposition or starting point of Taoist bioethics is that everything is based on respecting the interests and values of life.” (p. 224). It can be said that Laozi’s criticism of desire has always been based on the

maintenance and care for the existence of life. The ethical dimension of compassion not only has a profound “Dao-De” thinking, but also provides a meaningful “living world” for human “coexistence”.

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Discussing the Teaching of Impressionist Chinese Painting in the Context of Art and Cultural History*

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Ink freehand brushwork is the soul and the highest level of artistic spirit in art categories such as painting and sculpture. Sculpture art and Chinese ink painting art have their own commonalities. I attempted to investigate the stone carvings of Huo Qubing's tomb in the Western Han Dynasty, combined with Tang Dynasty tomb carvings, which greatly helped me in the creation of Chinese ink painting art. I drew inspiration and nutrients from it, and realized what is art. What is the spirit of art? You can find the answer from it.

Keywords: pen and ink, vivid expression and bold outline, teaching Chinese painting

Introduction

Ten years ago, an academic research conference titled *Pen and Ink, Freehand Brushwork, and Teaching of Chinese Painting* was held. The conference was organized by the Chinese Artists Association and hosted by Xi'an Academy of Fine Arts, and the *Third China Art Chang'an Forum* (hereinafter referred to as the *Chang'an Forum*) was held. The main venue of the *Chang'an Forum* is permanently located in the ancient capital of Xi'an, which is today the Xi'an Academy of Fine Arts. The main research direction of the *Chang'an Forum* is "Chinese art". The *Mount Huangshan Forum* held by *Erji Chang'an Forum* is to study the trend of "world art". Both forums are held every two years and are the highest level art discussion meetings of the China Artists Association. I had the privilege of conducting research from the perspective of freehand brushwork and communicating with various experts.

The Background of Ink and Freehand Brushwork

The selection of the location for the *China Art Forum* to be held in "Xi'an" has special cultural significance. Firstly, he was an ancient capital, with 13 emperors establishing their capitals here; secondly, Xi'an, formerly known as "Chang'an", is the center of politics, culture, and trade in the world; third, there are extremely rich cultural relics on the ground and underground, which are the best textbooks for us to learn, such as Banpo's original painted pottery fish pattern, human face fish pattern, Taotie pattern, and Kui pattern in the Shang and Zhou Dynasties, Qin colored Terra Cotta Warriors, stone carving art in front of Mao Mausoleum of Emperor Wu of the Western Han Dynasty, and Huo Qubing's tomb, such as stone fish, crouching tiger, horse stepping on the Hun and other large freehand stone carvings, Tang murals, Tang tri color, beauty (with the theme of "plump").

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The rich cultural relics such as the Eighteen Tombs of the Tang Dynasty are all freehand brushwork and will play an important role in the teaching of Chinese painting.

At the *Chang'an Forum*, more than 30 theorists and painters from all over the country gathered at the Xi'an Academy of Fine Arts to discuss Chinese art, focusing on the topic of "brush and ink, freehand brushwork, and teaching Chinese traditional painting". The interaction between the stage and the audience was ordinary, with sharp viewpoints and a direct focus on the theme. There were many reflections, and I believe there will be new gains in the current "hundred schools of thought contend". Although there are still scholars discussing the concept of "pen and ink" to this day, there are controversies and controversies to explain its charm, indicating that there is still a lot of room to explore. In summary, the fish pattern on the primitive painted pottery in Banpo, Xi'an, over 6,000 years ago, is one of the representatives of "freehand brushwork". Stone carvings from the Han Dynasty, tomb carvings from the Tang Dynasty, Tang and Yuan temples, tomb murals, and portrait bricks and stones are all freehand brushwork.

Teaching Theory of Brush and Ink and Freehand Chinese Painting

In the field of literati painting, freehand brushwork and ink culture have all developed to the extreme. Regardless of other works, such as the "Ink Grape Painting" by Xu Wei in the Ming Dynasty, the "Fish" and "Flowers" by Badashan people in the late Ming and early Qing dynasties, the "Group of Immortals Celebrating Birthday Painting" by Ren Bonian in the Qing Dynasty, and the "Horse" by Lang Shining, an Italian missionary and painter in the Qing Dynasty, are all representatives of grand freehand brushwork. Although Lang Shining used Western oil painting techniques to draw Chinese painting, which caused a strong collision between Chinese and Western cultures, resulting in Chinese culture being admired by foreign countries and recognized by the Chinese people. Later, a large number of young talents such as Xu Beihong and Lin Fengmian went to the West to learn Western painting, which led to the spread of Chinese painting around the world for a hundred years. At the same time, the essence of Chinese painting changed, and cultural identity also changed. But our cultural foundation cannot be changed, that is "pen and ink, freehand brushwork".

In the current teaching of Chinese painting, the students who are admitted are drawn through Western sketches, and the so-called sketch is the foundation of all forms, which needs to be discussed. I believe that in the teaching of Chinese painting, the first step is to learn and understand Chinese culture well. What is the blood of Chinese people? Firstly, it is necessary to understand and gradually learn and promote the art of Chinese painting.

When I was in college, I always believed that "brush and ink" and "freehand brushwork" were the same thing. Later, after consulting experts and scholars and attending discussions, I gradually realized the difference between the two through experience and experience. Chinese painting must have a brush and ink, which is the "spirit" of Chinese painting, while freehand brushwork is the "soul" of Chinese painting. Chinese painting must have a brush and ink; otherwise it is not Chinese painting. Emphasizing that the three words' Chinese paintings are not found in other Western countries or in any other country in the world, it is a cultural system with Chinese characteristics. Chinese painting has no pollution or grafting, and it is an element of pure Chinese culture, reflecting the highest level of art.

Ten years have passed since college, and I have always believed that Professor Yang Xiaoyang, the current Vice Chairman of the China Artists Association and President of the National Academy of Painting, is feasible. He believes that "freehand brushwork is a spirit, a concept", and that "freehand brushwork is not a form of

painting”. The highest standard of freehand brushwork is to be close to nature; otherwise it is photos; otherwise it is plagiarism from nature. From the perspective of art history, painting originates from nature and is higher than nature. Abstract is the continuation of painting, not the end of freehand brushwork. It is incorrect to juxtapose freehand brushwork and realism. I believe that freehand brushwork should be distinguished from “writing” and “meaning”, and there are differences between the two. The cultural meanings of the two are different. Writing includes the meaning of painting and depiction, while meaning is something that cannot be seen or touched. It is a synonym for a cultural concept of perception and perception. These are all obtained through extensive reading of ancient and modern art theories and cultural cultivation, and are not always present.

Reflections on the Teaching Methods of Pen and Ink and Freehand Chinese Painting

In terms of sketching, photography, and collecting styles, I believe it is a way and means of collecting materials, not the end of Chinese painting creation. Mr. Zhao Quanquan, then an associate researcher at the Chinese Academy of Art and editor of “Art Observation”, believed that “copying and sketching ancient classic works to solve the problem of form, and collecting materials in nature are the fundamental elements of Chinese painting creation, that is, pen and ink; in addition, he emphasized the practice of calligraphy”. I made my own opinion statement on the forum theme. Borrowing the practice of traditional Chinese painting from Tang Dynasty’s Zhang Yanyuan’s belief that “skilled painters are not good at calligraphy” and “cursive brushwork”, Qing Dynasty’s Shi Tao believed that “the pen and ink should follow the times” is the best interpretation.

In my speech, I emphasized the importance of copying and developing traditions (at that time, the projector was broken; unfortunately, it could not be played, and could only be described orally), such as the copying of Shanxi Yongle Palace murals and Dunhuang murals, seeking and inheriting tradition, and ultimately promoting national culture and art. Copying is only a part of Chinese teaching, not the ultimate goal, but it is very necessary. I created the most basic imitation of walls step by step and completed the copying in an orderly manner. During the copying process, I learned from the hearts of the ancients and understood their aura (rhyme). This course is ultimately presented with a creative nature in front of everyone. It is not a traditional paper copy, nor is it a copy of the original work on the wall. We must view the problem from the perspective of the Yuan people, walking out of their era and examining contemporary Chinese painting art from the perspective of contemporary people.

True freehand brushwork is a spirit, a concept. I believe that freehand brushwork is a Chinese painting technique that emphasizes the expression of things and the author’s taste. It is also unique to China and the Chinese nation, and is consistent with the explanation of “meaning” on Page 252 of the Chinese Dictionary. At the same time, I believe freehand brushwork is the reflection and care of oneself and the people. In the process of teaching with Chinese characteristics, it is necessary to adhere to one’s own cultural, artistic, and creative positions, as well as the unique cultural heritage of one’s own nation. The so-called “national is also global” should be discussed. The scope of the nation is too small, and we need to break through the scope of the nation. As for this topic, we will continue to explore and study it.

After three days of discussion, we have gained insights into many cultural factors, and some issues are worth discussing. We hope that our culture can reach a consensus on “brush and ink, freehand brushwork, and Chinese traditional painting teaching” in the current discussion. This issue is also a continuation of the first and second Chang’an forums. We believe that with our joint efforts, we will study a series of issues clearly, provide explanations for the questions raised, and solve the long-standing problems. Of course, this belongs to the philosophy and social sciences, which require discussions from multiple aspects, disciplines, and perspectives to

form consensus during the discussion. Later, after long-term discussions and multifaceted arguments, there was some research and progress on the topic of freehand brushwork. Of course, academic research is endless and requires continuous accumulation in life. Only by discovering and affirming beauty in life can there be common intellectual writing, in which intellectual thinking plays a role.

Conclusion

In summary, the topic of “Pen and Ink, Freehand Brushwork, and Chinese Painting Teaching” has been discussed. Through on-site investigations and practical life art creation, we have visited multiple collection and display units such as the Shaanxi History Museum, Xi’an Museum, Shaanxi Archaeological Museum, Sichuan Guanghan Sanxingdui Site Museum, Gansu Provincial Museum, Xinjiang Uyghur Museum, as well as collections of Xi’an Banpo Colored Pottery, Lintong Jiangzhai Colored Pottery. We conducted a special on-site investigation into the culture of Zhou, Qin, Han, and Tang Dynasties, as well as the art of tomb carving. With questions raised, we arrived at the scene with a sense of “being there” and admired the wisdom of the ancients. What is the meaning of “freehand brushwork” here? The “deer pattern, single fish pattern, double fish pattern, and human face fish pattern” of the Banpo painted pottery, as well as the “horse slaughtering Xiongnu, jumping horse, Fu Hu, wild boar, fish, frog, human and bear” in front of the tomb of Huo Qubing in the Western Han Dynasty, are all representative of the grand freehand brushwork. Even today, these colored paintings and Han Dynasty carving art are still very “modern”. Each piece of work is impressed by everything in front of me. I am thinking about the issue of “brush and ink, freehand brushwork, and teaching Chinese painting”. The work is right in front of me, and all my thinking is on the screen. How should I unfold it in teaching? How to instill educational ideas and artistic concepts? We still need to constantly explore and discuss.

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Reading Toni Morrison's *Home* From the Perspective of Medical Relationship Ethics*

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As the first black women Nobel laureate, Toni Morrison has drawn great attention with her fascinating and deep-thinking novels. Her 10th novel *Home* vividly shows the racial suffering and the post-war trauma of black veteran Frank, who has drawn critical attention from various perspectives. However, there is hardly any scholarly focus on another major character Cee, whose experience of medical and racial discrimination actually constitutes another important clue throughout the whole story. Therefore, this paper intends to analyze *Home* from the perspective of ethical relationship ethics, including doctor-patient relationship, doctor-society relationship, patient-society relationship, and patient-family relationship. The analysis indicates that *Home* not only reveals the history of medical racial discrimination and human experiment ethics problems under the rapid development of medical technology in the 1950s, but also inspire readers' thinking on the ethical problems and ethical dilemmas in the contemporary world.

Keywords: Toni Morrison, medical relationship ethics, *Home*

Introduction

Home is the 10th novel by Toni Morrison, the famous black female writer and the winner of the 1993 Nobel Literature Award. It tells a story of the returning of home of an African-American Korean War veteran, Frank Money, and his sister, Cee Money. The book was written in 2012, the year in which Obama was re-elected in the US presidential election, and also, for the first time, black turnout exceeded white turnout, demonstrating the polarization of a "black and white" election, which can be described as the culmination of black nationalism in American politics.

However, 1950s was a rather dark time for the black in the American history. It was years of "violent racism" when "they were killing black people right and left" (Morrison & Giovanni, 2020, p. 135). So one of Morrison's aim to write *Home* was to remind people of the black old days and warn them not to forget the history even if we have already reached a bright future, though it turned out later these years that the fight for racial equality still had a long way to go.

Also, 2012 was still in the golden age of the proliferation of 9/11 literature and post-9/11 literature, with many American writers writing about 9/11 to express their hopes for human peace or to reflect on and question the policies of the US. After 9/11, the US made it a collective trauma and collective memory for not only Americans, but also all human beings, leaving the world in the shadow of terrorism. Correspondingly, the racial discrimination suffered by black people in the 1950s was also a collective trauma and collective memory, but

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unlike 9/11, such a collective memory seems to have been buried and forgotten in the traces of history. Therefore, facing with the “collective forgetting”, Morrison with her writing of *Home* boldly challenged the traditional memory of American history, trying to “take the fluff and the veil and the flowers away from the 50s” and remind people of the “dark” memories behind the so-called “Golden Age”. As Morrison herself said, what was really going on was the Korean War, McCarthyism, LSD experiments, and Tuskegee Syphilis studies, and there was “a lot of medical apartheid, the license of preying on black women, the syphilis trials on Black men” (Furman & Martin, 2014, p. 141).

However, although Morrison underscored her emphasis on the medical apartheid in the 1950s, hardly did any researches focus on the medical experimentation that Cee suffered in the book. According to findings and studies about Toni Morrison's *Home*, they can be classified into various categories. First, some scholars put great emphasis on the theme of the work itself, including the trauma and redemption, seek and return of home, gender inequality, racial discrimination, and so on. They investigated the work from different perspectives like new-historicism, post-colonialism, narratology, feminism, and so on. Second, some researchers used interdisciplinary methods and theories from the view of identity theory, trauma theory and concept of safe space, feminism narratology. Third, some other researchers compared Morrison's *Home* with her previous works like *A Mercy*, *Sula*, and others to analyze the differences and similarities between Morrison's different works.

Among all these studies and researches, few of them focused on the phenomenon of medical experimentation in *Home*, and the research of medical ethics and human experimentation remained rather blank. But still, there are several inspiring studies. Shuwen Tan (2018) investigated medical phenomena as a metaphor for politics, as the expulsion, apartheid, and forcing blacks to wars showed the dominant hegemony of western medicine in white society and the marginalization of non-western medicine such as traditional African medicine, as well as the cultural aggression and racial discrimination behind this phenomenon. Gan and Robin (2020) discovered the hidden problems of power and justice in the 1950s by referring to concepts like doctor-patient relationship, illness narrative, medical ethics and empathy, and also introduced the African American folk medicine compared with the dehumanized western medical system. However, none of these two researchers regarded the work from the perspective of medical relationship ethics. Medical ethics is a discipline that applies the theories and methods of general ethics to study the moral issues of the relationship between human beings, human beings and society, and human beings and nature in the field of medicine, especially the handling of the relationship between patients, families, doctors, hospitals, and society, whose most fundamental value lies in humanistic care and humane sentiments. Therefore, in medical ethics, exploring the relationship between the various subjects is a major focus of research.

Based on medical relationship ethics, this article will explore the medical ethical phenomena of human experimentation in *Home* from the perspectives of doctor-patient relationship, doctor-society relationship, patient-society relationship, and patient-family relationship, and to analyse the reasons why Cee fell victim to the tragic fate of medical experimentation in *Home*.

Doctor-Patient Relationship

First, the essence of Dr. Beau's medical experiments on Cee was deceptive experimentation.

Deceptive experiments are unethical human experiments conducted on subjects using deceptive means in order to achieve the purpose of the experiment, in violation of the most basic principle of informed consent in medical ethics (Peng, 2004).

In *Home*, Cee went to the doctor's for a job as a maid, nurse, and helper, as Thelma, Sarah, and Mrs. Scott informed her. And in the first encounter, Dr. Beau said himself that her duties "were primarily cleaning instruments and equipment, tidying and keeping a schedule of patients' names, time of appointments and so on" (Morrison, 2012, p. 64), and never really mentioned the extra human experiments that he would do on her body and she "knew little about what had happened to her" even after she was saved by Frank out of the doctor's (Morrison, 2012, p. 121). Dr. Beau concealed his intention that to use Cee as a gynecological human subject to further his studies on wombs, not to mention the purpose, methods, expected benefits, potential dangers of the experiments she would be subjected to, which nowadays are regarded as the necessary information that participants have to know in joining the experiments. Dr. Beau violated the principle of informed consent and trampled on Cee's most basic dignity as a human being in an absolutely deceptive act.

Second, the relationship between Dr. Beau and Cee was an activity-passivity relationship. According to Szasz and Hollander (1956), activity-passivity relationship is a kind of client-facilitator relationship in which professionals are active, having full control over the decision making and clients are passive. They noted that this kind of model was most suitable in medical emergencies when clients had no consciousness and the doctors needed to intervene actively.

However, in *Home*, the "medical emergencies" were artificially created by Dr. Beau as he "stuck Cee with a needle to put her to sleep" and then did whatever he wanted on her body as if she was his belonging. And Cee, on the other hand, accepted what Dr. Beau did to her blindly and unconditionally and even felt happy and self-worthy about it as she firmly believed that these would do good to the medical industry. Such control and submission allowed Dr. Beau and Cee to develop an unhealthy and unethical one-sided activity-passivity client-facilitator relationship which later devastated the health of Cee and brought her physical and mental trauma alike, violating the principle of respect in medical ethics and ignoring Cee's independence and dignity.

Third, the doctor-patient relationship showed a tendency of consumerisation and materialization. In many cases, volunteers actively participate in medical experiments simply in order to be cured, to be paid, or to receive certain benefits. For instance, in the notorious Tuskegee Syphilis Studies, the US Department of Public Health offered free medical examinations, free treatment for "syphilis", and free funeral insurance to attract black men in Macon County Alabama to join its "treatment programme" (Alsan & Wanamaker, 2018). In this way, the health of the participants is materialized like they are some products that can be bought by money and once doctors pay for them, they can easily destroy the health of the subjects without any mental burden or guilt and take it for granted, while completely ignoring the subject's personal wishes. Such consumerisation and materialization of client-facilitator relationship deeply violates the principles of beneficence and justice in medical ethics.

In *Home*, Cee unknowingly sold her body to Dr. Beau in exchange for things, clothes, shelter, and other materials needed to survive, and Dr. Beau commodified and materialized Cee's body, exploiting and oppressing her inhumanely, ultimately causing serious damage to Cee's health—"Cee's loss of weight, her fatigue, and how long her periods were lasting", all the "blood and pain", her "feather-like" body that kept bleeding, near death, and that she would never have a baby (Morrison, 2012, p. 113)—these were all about the consumerisation and materialization of the body and health .

Fourth, Dr. Beau's human experiment on Cee showed technicalization of human experimentation. Technicalization means that doctors and professionals treat human experimentation only as a means of improving medical technique, thus completely ignoring the personal feelings of the subject. They weakened the whole

human body into an organ, or even cells and totally ignored the ideological and personal emotions, demonstrating a phenomenon and tendency to separate the patient from the disease. In 1840s, James Marion Sims, the father of gynecology, carried out a series of experiments on 11 black women slaves and repeated over and over again until the surgery finally succeeded (Sartin, 2004). According to the statistics, he performed 30 surgeries on one single slave in four years and all of them were without anesthetic. He technicalized the human experimentation callously and achieved fruitful results like the invention of "Sims position", "Sims speculum", and other more than 70 kinds of medical instruments in exploitation of the medical value of black women (Wall, 2006). Similarly, Dr. Beau used Cee's body to experiment all his medical visions and satisfy his need in and eagerness on the exploration and examination of womb, which violated the principle of respect in medical ethics, and raised concerns about medical techniques and medical ethics.

Doctor-Society Relationship

First, the socialization of medical services provided a path for Dr. Beau to earn a good reputation. As a discipline that deals with patients' diseases to promote their recovery, medical science has the characteristics of scientificity, practicality, serviceability, and sociality, and is a technical discipline that serves people and society. Human experimentation is a direct service to society and the general public, for its results, when successful and proven, will be applied to the clinic for promotion and popularization.

According to the book, Dr. Beau helped many poor people, especially women and girls, and "was extremely careful with his patients, finicky about observing their privacy". "When all of his dedicated help didn't help and a patient got much worse he sent her to a charity hospital in the city". When patients died in spite of his care, "he donated money for funeral expenses" (Morrison, 2012, p. 64). All these descriptions portrayed an image of kind and respectable doctor and thus he had a good reputation around the neighbourhood, as he was regarded as "nice person" (Morrison, 2012, p. 57), "very gentlemanly" (Morrison, 2012, p. 61), "young ... and friendlier than most" (Morrison, 2012, p. 62). And even Cee herself, though suffering human experiments from him, grew admiration for him. These showed that Dr. Beau used the new and useful medical findings to help other white women as a result of the socialization of medical services, which provided him with a great reputation.

Second, Dr. Beau has a rather high social status in the neighbourhood. Doctor is a profession revered by society, just as health is the most basic physical aspiration of concern to all human beings. In society, the health care system is greatly valued by the people, and the government provides greater protection for both medical development and medical personnel. This has created a high social status and a glorious professional image for doctors, which gives them a stronger and authorized voice in society, especially in the medical profession, and allows them to be easily sought after and praised by society, which in turn can have some influence on social trends and social discourse.

In the case of *Home*, Dr. Beau had a high social status in the neighbourhood and was highly respected by people around, which enabled him to control the unfavorable words towards him. In the communication between Cee and Sarah, Sarah mentioned that "some quit", "just one was fired", and she "never find out what the matter was" (Morrison, 2012, p. 62), which intimated that these working maids suffered the same as Cee did but were all easily handled like they had vanished into air, and caused no impact on Dr. Beau's reputation or his further exploitation on other black women. In this way, it is clearly that the society is the support and accomplice of Dr. Beau's unethical sin.

Patient-Society Relationship

First, black women could not control their own body, for they are both black and female. As black, they lacked of chances of education and basic material livings. And as female, they lacked of ability to think independently and make decision on their own.

If Cee could read and write, she would recognize the meaning of the books she found on Dr. Beau's bookshelf: *Out of the Night*, *The Passing of the Great Race*, and *Heredity, Race and Society*, all of which were books about "eugenics", demonstrating Dr. Beau's interest in genetics and eugenics, and his tendency in racial discrimination, and would understand what kind of dangerous situation she was in. However, till end she did not know what Dr. Beau was doing, and what was sarcastic was that Cee "promised herself she would find time to read about and understand 'eugenics'" and thought that "this was a good, safe place" (Morrison, 2012, p. 65).

If Cee could think and question, she would find out the strange evidences happened around her from the first time she went to the doctor's. Why Mrs. Scott said that "he is a scientist and conducts very important experiments" and "he's no Dr. Frankenstein" (Morrison, 2012, p. 60)? Why Dr. Beau cared about her sexual experience and history of pregnancy and born so much? Why he warned her to "be prepared for the reality of medicine: sometimes blood, sometimes pain" (Morrison, 2012, p. 64)? Why he helped so many poor people, especially women and girls? Why the previous maids all chose to leave the doctor's for no reason? These were all evidences that Dr. Beau was some kind of weird and crazy Dr. Frankenstein despite his good appearance and reputation.

So Cee was written as a typical black woman who lacked education and knowledge and could not think independently. In contrast, Mrs. Scott was a typical white woman in the 1950s, who received good education yet could not achieve self-value through work, as she "spent much of her time painting flowers in watercolour or watching television shows" and "never left the house" (Morrison, 2012, p. 65). By comparing the differences between them, we can see the hint of feminism, as Cee and Mrs. Scott could correspond to the main participants of the third wave and second wave of feminism. Yet in this background when the two women were put together, it highlighted Cee's vulnerability not only as a woman, but also as a black.

Second, the social background of 1950s was white supremacy and racism. From Lotus to Dr. Beau's, Cee tried hard to seek a safe home which can protect her from the dangerous and unfriendly environment. However, wherever she escaped, the large American social environment remained white supremacy, and she as a black woman was always at the lowest status could hardly change it. When in Lotus, Cee was regarded as the "gutter child" by Lenore, and was treated bad in Lenore's house as she "slept with parents on the floor", had "water instead of milk over the shredded wheat as breakfast", and "had stripes and welts on legs" (Morrison, 2012, pp. 44-45). These showed that she had never been accepted by her own family since young and the discrimination was rather fierce, which led to her making up her mind that never went back. When she came to the doctor's, Cee's room at Dr. Beau's house was "spotless, narrow, and without windows" (Morrison, 2012, p. 62), and downstairs, not far from the doctor's office, which was a metaphor of hospital and gaol, for it was small and sealed like a cell for prisoner, clean and cold like a ward for patient, and cold and underground like a morgue. And this environment description set a gloomy and ominous mood for Cee's coming sufferings. So wherever she went, she was always in the environment where black females are marginalized.

Another specific evidence was that in the 1950s, people of ethnic minorities could not buy house due to the policy of racial apartheid, as was written in *Home* that there were restrictions that "no part of said property hereby

conveyed shall ever be used or occupied by any Hebrew or by any person of the Ethiopian, Malay or Asiatic race excepting only employees in domestic service" (Morrison, 2012, p. 73). This policy based on the white's fear of minorities, and was deeply rooted in the racial discrimination and white supremacy.

Therefore, it is precisely the social background racial discrimination and white supremacy that led to black women's survival difficulties and ethical tragedies. The policies that banned the black from school and education and prevented them from house in city were also the natural causes of their personal inabilities and life tragedies.

Patient-Family Relationship

First, Cee's illness awoke the empathy between the families, and led to the restoration of their family. Generally, patients suffered from illness often endured stigma and would be regarded as unreliable or weak, which can be disruptive to the family's previously harmonious and intact ethical order. The burden of the disease on the family can leave the families with ethical dilemma: Should they pay a high price for the patient's treatment, or should they leave their modest savings to plan for their own future? Is it better to be by the patient's side every day, or to avoid the responsibility of caring for the patient as a relative? It is a matter of balance and choice between illness and future, responsibilities and duties, work and family (Tian, 2017). Therefore, the relationship between patient and family is one of the most important aspects of medical ethics.

However, in *Home*, things turned out to be different. The illness of Cee did not lead to the break of the family ethic; rather, Morrison showed how Frank regained his sense of responsibility and love for family and managed to restore the family ethical relationship in face of Cee's suffering of human experimentation. Confronted with a greater inter-racial mutilation, the siblings were shaped in a mould of black and they worked together to overcome the difficult time, in which way rebuilding the broken family ethical relationship.

Second, Cee's suffering from medical experimentation was also the chance and occasion for her and Frank to finally return to their original family, the black community of Lotus. After Frank brought Cee back to Lotus, local black women saved Cee with African American folk medicine to erase the bad effect of the dehumanized western medical system that happened on Cee. They accepted the siblings, especially Cee, who had been stigmatized by a white doctor, and mended them both physically and mentally. In this way, Morrison portrayed a group of black women who was diligent, peaceful, straightforward, and full of local wisdom compared with the callous, wry white doctor with two faces. Furthermore, she stressed the harmonious ethnic in black community and African American culture and pushed readers to reflect on the western system of medical ethics.

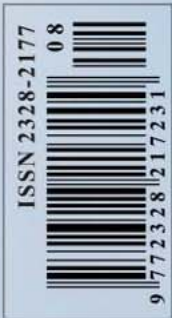
Conclusion

In conclusion, this article explores the medical ethical phenomena of human experimentation in *Home* from the perspectives of doctor-patient relationship, doctor-society relationship, patient-society relationship, and patient-family relationship. According to the research, Dr. Beau's medical experiments on Cee were deceptive experimentation with a characteristic of technicalization, and their relationship was an activity-passivity relationship which showed a tendency of consumerisation and materialization. The socialization of medical services provided a path for Dr. Beau to earn a good reputation and ensured him with a rather high social status in the neighbourhood. On the other hand, this society with severe racial discrimination and white supremacy proposed policies that prohibited the black from education and real estate in the city caused their personal inabilities and life tragedies and led to Cee's survival difficulties and ethical tragedies. However, Cee's illness awoke the empathy between the families, and led to the restoration of their family and her suffering from medical

experimentation was also the chance and occasion for her and Frank to finally return to their original family, the black community of Lotus.

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