

# GROUNDINGS

Volume 14, April 2023

Temporal Shifts:  
Renaissance & Retribution

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## CONTRIBUTORS

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### Authors

*Sophie Barcan*

*Eva Burns*

*Alberto Bodas Gallego*

*Anna Keenan*

*Mollie Kelleher*

*James Murdoch*

*Sharath Nambiar*

*Samarth Pinnamaraju*

*Ally Zlatar*

### Academic Advisors

*Dr Callum Sutherland*

*Dr Souvik Naha*

*Dr Tom Nichols*

*David Hall.*

*Dr Callum Sutherland*

*Dr Christopher*

*Classen.*

*Dr Karen Cuthbert*

*Dr. Steven Roper*

*Professor Louise Harris*

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# EDITOR'S NOTE

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It is my pleasure to present the 14th Volume of the Groundings Undergraduate Journal as a publication of the Libraries Committee of the Glasgow University Union. The theme for this edition, 'Temporal Shifts: Renaissance and Retribution' seeks to explore key moments in time that cause change and the legacy of these changes in various aspects of society. Considering the upheaval of society through disease, debate, and decadence, the Editorial Team felt it was important to reflect on the way society has evolved and regressed over the centuries.

From inquiries in physics (Alberto Bodas Gallego) to challenging the artistic status quo (Anna Keenan, James Murdoch), this edition is a coalescence of various disciplines. Questioning the legitimacy of western intervention into indigenous communities (Sharath Nambiar) is relevant in the discussion of the colonial implications of western narratives in Singapore (Samarth Pinnamaraju). Similarly, understanding the expression of gender based violence and sexual assault (Ally Zlatar) is in tandem with the examination body geographies (Mollie Kelleher). The themes explored in this edition are able to transcend the

boundaries of subject fields by examining the implications of research on society as a whole. The influence of football on socio political divides (Eva Burns) provides potential to use sport as a tool to heal society, and looking towards indigenous cultures and the use of psychedelics can have significant impacts on modern medicine and healthcare (Sophie Barcan).

Just as Volume 14 is a meeting ground for different areas of study, Groundings has historically been responsible for bringing together those heavily involved in the Glasgow University Union and those who may have never heard of the institution before. This year is no exception. This interaction continues to be important to showcase the very best the undergraduate students of the University of Glasgow have to offer in the arts, humanities, and sciences. I sincerely hope that the passion and hardwork put into this edition of the journal, is able to inspire the editions to come.

***Ananya Venkatesan***  
***Editor-in-Chief, 2022-23***

# Colours, not visions: On preserving authenticity in the New Psychedelic Movement

Sophie Barcan

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*The New Psychedelic Movement is not a “psychedelic Renaissance”. It is the re-emergence of a Renaissance that began in the 1930s, with Richard Evans Schultes’ ethnobotanical research, and culminated into a counterculture youth movement in the 1960s. While research around these substances is little more than a century old, the practices of using them, as performed by Indigenous peoples, date to prehistoric times [1]. These ancient practices stem from cultural contexts often disregarded by current research and contemporary practices. This brings to light a serious concern: that the focus of psychedelic inquiry is shifting toward commodification of the substances and the practices associated with them. In so doing, we are losing the authenticity of meaningful psychedelic use by transforming psychedelics and psychedelic practices into commodified pharmacological solutions to our current problems.*

*This essay, then, will attempt to address this issue. We will first contextualise the discussion by outlining a brief history of psychedelics. We will describe the current state of the psychedelic resurgence and compare it to the resurgence that occurred in the 1950s-60s. This will allow us to examine the loss of authenticity of psychedelic practices and show why this is an important contemporary issue. Finally, we will discuss possible solutions that may help preserve authenticity in the current movement.*

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## **A brief history of psychedelics**

Psychedelic substances have been used by cultures worldwide for thousands of years [2]. Early explorers and field researchers of the Americas, such as Sahagún, documented indigenous use of psychedelics in colonial encounters from the 1500s to 1800s. In the 1930s,

American ethnographers and botanists researched plants used by indigenous peoples of the continent [1]. Schultes, for example, led expeditions in the Amazon, and Weston La Barre studied the origins of the peyote religion among Native peoples in the Plains.

Meanwhile, Albert Hofmann discovered

LSD while studying the chemical structure of ergot, a group of fungi.

By the 1950s and early 1960s the interest in psychedelics had spread beyond purely scientific circles, and intellectuals were discussing the potential effects of psychedelics on consciousness. Aldous Huxley and Alan Watts both wrote extensively on their own experiences [3, 5]. At the same time, and throughout the 1960s, the CIA was investigating LSD as a “mind control” drug in a series of illegal experiments that formed the MKUltra program. Some psychedelics were picked up by the Beat writers, who had a strong influence on the student generation in the 1960s.

While teaching at Harvard in the early 1960s, Timothy Leary, Richard Alpert and Ralph Metzner conducted experiments in psychology using psychedelics, and these were quickly adopted by the student generation [8]. Ken Kesey and the Merry Pranksters also helped popularise psychedelic use, by bridging the gap between the Beat writers and the younger members of the counterculture movement.

After his dismissal from Harvard, Leary, with Kesey, became a figurehead for the movement and continued to write about psychedelics throughout the 1970s. Prohibition of most psychedelic substances prevented research until the 1990s, when a renewed interest in psychedelic science began in the Western world [8].

### **Comparison of current and 1960s approaches**

The current resurgence of interest in psychedelics seems to focus on their therapeutic potential. This is perhaps unsurprising, given the ongoing discourse around the importance of mental health. Much of the research revolves around the potential benefits that psychedelics may bring in understanding the brain and brain disorders.

Overall, information about psychedelics is easy to access in the age of instant communication. Perhaps because of this, popular interest has grown, and psychedelic integration (the process of applying insights from psychedelic experiences to day-to-day experience) is quickly becoming a buzz word, to the point that its importance might be lost. Commercialisation of psychedelic practises has started: vision quests, retreats and therapies are already being marketed to Westerners eager to experience altered states legitimately [9]. Furthermore, derivatives of some psychedelics are currently under review for medical uses. Ketamine, for example, is available in Canada in clinical settings. Ketamine-assisted therapy is a reality, with private clinics operating in major cities [10]. Various U.S. states have decriminalised, to some extent, psilocybin mushrooms. Finally, with instant communication come increased cultural exchanges, and indigenous populations are less isolated now than they have been

historically. While we will see that this may lead to a possible distortion of how a culture is represented, it is important to note that it has also become easier to learn from different cultures through increased intercultural exchanges.

In contrast, the popular literature of the 1960s movement highlights the importance of meaningful psychedelic experiences, through combined artistic points of view, ethnographic studies, psychological studies, philosophical inquiry or articles detailing suggestions for psychedelic sessions (without tedious legal disclaimers). Importantly, there is no “commercial hype”, or, indeed, a unified narrative like there is today in discussions about psychedelics. Instead, the multiplicity of views suggests that the focus of the movement was to find genuine meaning – at a time when the US was reckoning with racial tensions and fighting a losing war in Vietnam. The *Psychedelic Review* [11] is a fine example of a multidisciplinary publication that sought to advance meaningful discussion about psychedelics. While the multidisciplinary conferences of today (*Breaking Convention*, *Psychedelic Science*) arguably have similar goals, the impact that multifaceted discussion has on popular perception of psychedelics is less clear. It seems that the current

narrative champions a utilitarian view of psychedelics, eg. “In what ways can we use them?”, rather than the exploratory views dominant in the 1960s counterculture movement (“What can we learn from them?”). The utilitarian view foreshadows exploitative or profit-driven use of psychedelics, which we will later see undermines authenticity. The exploratory views dominant in the 1960s counterculture, in contrast, suggest a desire to create meaning out of what we have yet to learn about psychedelics and related practices. We will see that it is this attribution of meaning that makes a practice authentic.

### **Defining authenticity**

An “authentic” practice can be defined as an accurate instance of the practice. Authenticity, for a substance, comes from the meaning attributed to it and to the practices that surround its use. Indeed, attributing meaning to a practice gives a reason for it to be performed. A culture that combines both a practice done a certain way and the reason it is performed creates something unique to that culture. If something is unique to a culture, then it is authentic, it is “the real thing”.

Meaning forms the basis of different cultures’ spiritual beliefs as well as

1: It is problematic to claim that cultures, rather than representations, get “distorted”, when all cultures adapt over time as they interact with other cultures. Here we are simply stating that when there is change, some cultural elements may be lost. In the same sense, we are considering the loss of cultural elements as a negative consequence of adaptation; this is by no means the only view to take.



relating to people's general well-being. Losing authenticity, then, is a concern because it removes meaning, both an individual's applied meaning and meaning that cultures give to their practices. We will first show that wrongful cultural appropriation is unethical and leads to loss of authenticity. Then, we will discuss why commercialisation and commodification of psychedelic substances and practices result in loss of meaning.

### **Authenticity and wrongful cultural appropriation**

Cultural appropriation can be considered wrongful when harm to a culture or unacceptable offence to a person or group occurs. The authors of [7] consider three ways in which cultural appropriation of beliefs and practices is unethical: when there is a threat to a culture's identity by misrepresentation, when the appropriation constitutes cultural theft, and when there is unacceptable offence to a culture. Adding to these reasons, we will see that disregard for context when practicing psychedelic rituals also undermines the authenticity of the practice.

Representation of a culture occurs when outsiders publicly speak about a culture, or engage in a culture's practices, in the name of this culture. For example,

an academic considered an expert on a culture may represent it by publicly stating that this culture believes in X. Representation is not an issue as long as it is made clear that what is being represented by an outsider is different than the authentic cultural practice. This brings us to misrepresentation. When cultural practices are presented as authentic when they are not, there is misrepresentation. Brunk and Young describe this issue in [7]:

It is one thing to adopt a belief about the sacredness of the natural environment inspired by a particular Aboriginal world views, or to adopt a 'sweat lodge' practice as a spiritual ceremony. This in itself does not pose a threat of misrepresentation of the appropriated culture. However, when the belief or practice is publicly represented as 'Ogalala Sioux' or 'Haida', it may well pose this threat.

We can apply the same reasoning to psychedelic rituals. For example, a "New Age vision quest" is authentic only if it represents the New Age culture, a Kiowa vision quest must be done according to Kiowa customs, usually by and for members of that culture, and a vision quest inspired by a specific tribe is an ethical way of referring to a

2: It can be argued, however, that authenticity is a Western cultural concept that does not necessarily originate from cultures other than Western ones. R. Handler discusses this, and its implications, in [12].

3: Offences will, of course, be tolerated differently by different individuals or groups. By "unacceptable offense" we are referring to the "profound offence" described in [7].

Western ritual with some indigenous practices added to it. This last statement avoids representation of a culture while acknowledging the influence the culture has on the new practice.

Participation in an “ayahwasca vision quest” or an “ayahwasca ceremony”, however, is an ambiguous statement: while it does not explicitly represent a specific Indigenous tribe, it does evoke some distorted, generalised image of an indigenous ceremony, without attributing the practice to a specific culture. It may well refer to a group of urbanites going to a countryside cottage to conduct a non-religious ceremony with rituals meaningful only to them. In this last case, there is no threat of misrepresentation at all: indeed, the ritual clearly has nothing to do with any indigenous culture. Despite this, if it were to refer to an Indigenous-inspired practice, then it would be inauthentic. It must also be stressed that “vision quest” is a term referring to the rite-of-passage rituals of Native American Plains tribes, and that its meaning is often taken broadly as any spiritual rite-of-passage ritual [6]. This brings us to the next point: that generalisation of cultural views may pose a threat to cultural identity.

Misrepresentation of a culture constitutes a threat to cultural identity when an outsider’s view of a culture becomes generalised. The above example illustrates this point: the term “vision quest” is no longer associated exclusively with Native American cultural practices, much less with specific tribes. As such, terms that once referred to specific cultural practices take on broader meanings that

do not directly evoke specific cultures. If the cultural practices form a part of a culture’s identity, and they are then lost to generalisation, then there is a threat to the culture’s identity. Furthermore, when a culture is represented inaccurately, members of the culture may internalise the inaccurate, often dominant view of outsiders to their culture, leading to a dilution of their culture. The Church’s work to assimilate Indigenous peoples throughout Canada is a historical example of this. Note that these harms do not relate solely to psychedelic practices,

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*Misrepresentation of a culture constitutes a threat to cultural identity when an outsider’s view of a culture becomes generalised.*

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but are part of a larger discussion about cultural interactions.

Cultural theft is another unethical harm that Brunk and Young discuss in their chapter. The authors show that Indigenous claims of ownership and right to exclusive use on their practices fit with the Western concept of copyright. This is because a culture, by its specific way of expressing a religious/spiritual belief, brings an “added value” to the belief which the culture has a right of exclusive use to. Much like how an artistic

work can be inspired by another artist, and the new artist's work protected by copyright, a culture creates something new by expressing its beliefs in a certain way. This "certain way" is considered "copyrightable". Another ethical concern with losing authenticity is that it can cause unacceptable offense to members of a culture. Brunk and Young cite "religious expression torn from cultural context" as a form of unacceptable offense. Similarly, commercialisation of beliefs and practices, as well as misrepresentation, can cause unacceptable offense. (Commercialisation will be discussed later.) Much like misrepresentation, disregard for context contributes to loss of authenticity and may cause unacceptable offense. Indeed, the cultural context of a practice creates meaning for those performing it; this is certainly applicable to the psychedelic experience. Hence, disregard for the cultural context in which a substance is used, or from which a practice originates, takes away this meaning, thus undermining authenticity. Here we must distinguish between psychedelic substances, both naturally occurring and synthesized, and psychedelic practices. Whether harm occurs depends on where the wrongful appropriation happens (substance or practice), and whether there is a cultural context to consider.

Blanket appropriation of psychedelic rituals has already occurred, for example during the 1960s resurgence. Weston La Barre warned of the misappropriation of psychedelic rituals in 1975, in the

introduction to the second edition of his monograph, *The Peyote Cult* [4]. Comparing the Native American Church (an Indigenous religion which combines Christian elements, Native American beliefs and the ceremonial use of peyote, and the Neo-American Church, a group led by Timothy Leary which promoted "consciousness expansion" using practices similar to those of the NAC, he writes:

*Thus I defend the Native American Church among Amerindian aborigines; but I deplore the "Neo-American Church" among Caucasoid Americans who pretend to follow their "religion" through the use of mescaline as a "sacrament." Ethnographically the latter is a wholly synthetic, disingenuous and bogus cult, [...] indeed, to it could properly be applied the old missionary cliché against peyotism as the "use of drugs under religious guise."*

Here, disregard for the original cultural context creates an appropriated practice devoid of meaning.

We could argue that Huxley's use of synthesized mescaline in *The Doors of Perception* constitutes a novel psychedelic practice, as he does not attempt to reproduce one of the traditional peyote rituals that La Barre describes. We should, however, question his respect for the substance, since, as La Barre notes, he persists on referring to peyote by an incorrect name [see 4, p228]. The ethics of practices using substances that occur naturally, compared to synthetic, or

synthesized ones, is a topic beyond the scope of the present essay.

One might also argue that psychedelics have become part of Western “culture” in the last few years, and that the current scientific research creates a new culture altogether. If these last statements stand, then they must be heavily nuanced. First, Western psychedelia seems restricted to those educated, and wealthy enough, to have the time and inclination to explore it. For example, the 2022 Crime Survey for England and Wales [13] shows that people from households in higher income groups are more likely to use class A drugs, of which psychedelics are a part, than people from households in lower income groups. It is not a far leap to deduce that most people who use psychedelics are financially comfortable.

A “Western culture” is by no means limited to this subgroup. If “the West” is to be regarded as a very large, uniform social group, then Western psychedelia is not at all representative of Western cultural practices. In other words, Western psychedelia does not yet belong to all Westerners. Second, to call a 5- or 50-year-old movement a culture might be an incorrect use of the term, when we have so far considered indigenous peoples who have cultures that are thousands of years old. Hence, it may be best, for the moment, to refer to Western

psychedelia as a trend.

### **Commercialisation and commodification**

Authenticity of a psychedelic experience comes from the meaning it brings.

We will see in the following that commercialisation and commodification take away that meaning.

There have been instances of commercialisation of psychedelic substances before the current resurgence. For example, in 1959 in France, “Peyotyl R.D.” was being advertised as a cure-all medication. Owsley Stanley promoting the LSD he synthesized in the 1960s, using paper artwork or gaining exposure via the Merry Pranksters, resembles marketing. Schultes comments that “It is interesting here to note that when problems do arise from the employment of narcotics, they arise after the narcotics have passed from ceremonial to purely hedonic or recreational use.” (see 4, p225) The problems that Schultes describes are mainly societal issues that perhaps cannot be dealt with only in the discussion of psychedelics.

Currently in the Netherlands, some psychedelics are legally sold in shops that will hand out information leaflets about the substances they sell. These leaflets, although a first step to educating the public about psychedelics, lack the depth

4: Here “the West” refers broadly to Europe, North America and Australia. Even if, instead, we consider the Western world as the patchwork of cultures it more realistically is, then Western psychedelia still does not have the reach that a culture would have.

of information one would be expected to know to fully respect the non-Western cultures that use psychedelic substances. Without a cultural framework to place the practices in, experiences may lack meaning. In other words, few people will actively do their own research into the origins of the substances they use. It is this mindset that must be addressed in the current resurgence of the movement. Furthermore, the current “hype” for psychedelics masks the meaningful reasons to legalise them. We have previously stated that the emerging discussions around the importance of mental health have legitimised legalisation in the eyes of governing authorities. Of course, it is relatively easy, once legalisation occurs, to commercialise a substance. It is the seemingly unavoidable loss of meaning that comes with commercialisation and commodification that we wish to avoid.

The increased accessibility of medicine that comes with commodifying it, arguably, is good societal progress: it improves lives. Therapies using psychedelics, where legal, are currently offered at prices inaccessible to most [9]. Regarding meaningful use, one can hardly imagine psilocybin pills coming with the traditional drug warning sheet and a booklet describing the ritual use of teonanàcatl by the Aztec in Mexico. Nor

will a Western patient expect medicine to be administered ritually – it is these differences in cultural mindset that we must address in the current resurgence. Thus, legalisation will only reveal the existing challenges our society faces.

## Solutions

Despite the problems that losing authenticity brings, we can still discuss possible solutions to help preserve authenticity and meaning of psychedelic substances and practices. One obvious solution might be to limit commodification by not making psychedelics legal at all. There is a difference between legalisation and decriminalisation: where decriminalisation removes an authority’s power to impose penalties for eg. possession of a substance, legalisation allows a substance to be owned. A substance may be illegal but decriminalised. Decriminalisation, therefore, is more restrictive. In this view, it might be the solution for, at least, safer access and to limit the harms of commercialisation. For example, government-approved distribution sites could be set-up wherein access to psychedelic substances would be restricted. In this way, the impact of commercialisation on authenticity would be lessened.

Despite these points, the overarching

5: By making something widely available, commercialisation may create meaning for a group (collective meaning). The Western world, however, values individuality. Commercialisation replaces meaning created by individuals with collective meaning.

narrative of today's resurgence seems to be that we are headed towards legalisation. Most view decriminalisation as a first step to achieve this. Therefore, if we accept that we are headed toward legalisation, then we should try to prevent the issues discussed by informing policy and law. In other words, if we are aware of these issues, then we have a responsibility, if not to our own society, then to the cultures these issues may harm, to prevent them.

Tightening regulations for commercialising and marketing psychedelic substances may help, at least on a local scale, to limit the effects of commercialisation. One might imagine licensing boards like those regulating alcohol sales, or restrictions on advertising and packaging that apply to tobacco. This may well work to preserve authenticity on a small scale, but those wishing to commercialise psychedelic substances will simply move to places where it is easier to do so. Second, this does not address the problem of commercialising psychedelic practices. The previous point on the "ayahuasca vision quest" illustrates this: putting in place regulations would not prevent "psychedelic tourism". The touristic use of ayahuasca in Peru, for example, is described in [14].

One solution might be to promote a holistic approach, by establishing multidisciplinary research groups that focus less on the substances themselves, and more on the contexts they originated from. MAPS, for example, is an organisation that does this type of work.

Similarly, increasing popular interest on the origins of psychedelics (addressing the mindset described previously) would also contribute to this solution. Importantly, loss of authenticity does not relate only to psychedelics. It can be seen as the outcome of a lack of connection to an established culture. Promoting intercultural dialogue by encouraging cultural exchanges would help preserve authenticity by establishing connections with other cultures.

From an ethical perspective, we have seen the importance of accurate representation. An obvious solution for preserving authenticity, then, is to refer accurately to represented practices. For example, calling a new practice one that is inspired by an indigenous practice is accurate. Perhaps there is also a responsibility to refrain from representation. Respecting the right to exclusive use of certain cultural practices, such as leading a specific ritual, or to the dissemination of indigenous knowledge, reflects this duty to refrain from representation. It may also go further in cultivating respect for different cultures, as the "outsider" agrees to follow the culture's rules.

A more abstract solution to the problem of losing authenticity is a change of perspective. Commercialisation of psychedelics and the threat of cultural harms can be seen as a price to pay, a retribution, for improving medical treatments overall. This is the main solution championed by the current narrative [15, 16]. It is probably true that as medical

research into psychedelic substances evolves, some people will benefit from psychedelic treatment. This, perhaps, is enough to justify some loss of authenticity. Finally, a solution which might not only preserve authenticity, but generate it, would be to create a Western psychedelic culture. With a short history in the 1960s, and popular interest in psychedelics growing today, Western psychedelia is perhaps not completely devoid of authenticity. Compared to cultures which have changed more gradually, however, "the West" (Europe, North America and Australia) lacks a connection to its own culture. Hence, there is an inclination, in the Western world, to create meaning.

Meaning, and an understanding of the world, is expressed through ritual and cultural practices. As an amalgamation of different nations and subcultures, the West can, like any other society, create its own cultures that incorporate more meaning, and specifically, that include psychedelics. Since it is easier to know about the culture one is immersed in than a different one, this is a more promising solution than taking unfamiliar practices from other cultures and adapting them to Westerners' needs.

In creating a new culture, we can use what the West already has, as described above: fifty years of psychedelic use and ideals originating in the 1960s. In addition, Western culture also includes technological advances and medicine as a scientific discipline, as well as the ideal of individuality. Hence, by balancing the

therapeutic approaches of the current resurgence and individual meaning-making through ritual, we can create a Western culture that preserves, and promotes, authenticity.

## Conclusions

In conclusion, we have discussed the challenges of losing authenticity in the current psychedelic resurgence. We have outlined a history of psychedelics and compared the current resurgence of the movement to that which occurred in the 1960s. We have seen that loss of authenticity happens in two ways: through wrongful cultural appropriation, and through commercialisation and commodification. Finally, we have offered solutions to help preserve authenticity in today's resurgence of the psychedelic movement. Creating a Western psychedelic culture appears to be the most promising. Regarding the dichotomy between the Western utilitarian view of medicine and the traditional supernatural view, we may wish to consider how to balance these views to retain meaning in psychedelic use, while medically benefitting from their properties. We can also investigate the origins of the current psychedelic resurgence: what socio-economic events triggered a renewed interest in psychedelics in the last twenty years? Finally, with the aim of creating our own, new, psychedelic culture, we may ask, "to what extent does the 1960s resurgence of psychedelics and blanket appropriation of both substances and rituals constitute "added value"?"

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# Religious Retribution through Football in Scotland

Eva Burns

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*This paper sheds light upon the conflicting, religious undertones of the two largest football clubs in Scotland, Rangers Football Club and Celtic Football Club, that is fuelled by the fanbases' cultural dependencies within each association. These football clubs, known nationally across Scotland, have an established conflict of ideologies; beliefs that go far behind the goals of the football pitch. The main thrust of this paper, then, displays a compelling focus on the self-identity established through sport, and in this instance, football, while so too heightening the pertinence of the politics within this playing field.*

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The world of sport is a society that is rapidly growing, due to the increasing influence of social media, extensive competitions, populous fanbases and ultimately, its expansive politicisation. Sport is inextricably political, due to its ability to influence everyday lives, drive social change and provide a greater sense of identity to individuals. The politicisation of sport is most persuasive through football: its support from fans, evidenced by the sport accumulating 5 billion fans worldwide (FIFA, 2020), and its clubs, act as a global force in culture and diplomacy. This article will aim to prove that sport is political by exploring the case of Celtic FC and Rangers FC, football clubs in the West of Scotland. The relationship between Celtic FC and

Rangers FC is undoubtedly complex, fuelled by historical and political influence. Understanding this politicisation of football and the capacity of political input can be seen through the history, practice, and supporters' behaviour of Scotland's two largest football teams: the Celtic Football Club and the Rangers Football Club. Scottish football fans demonstrate the impact of identity politics in football, particularly those of Celtic FC and Rangers FC.

Celtic FC and Rangers FC are the two largest football clubs in Scotland. This fanbase, arguably dominating Scottish sport, has extensive influence over a considerable number of the Scottish public. With over 98,000 combined

season ticket holders between the two clubs and thousands of fans across the city of Glasgow and the rest of the world, their influence is sweeping (Celtic FC, 2023) (Rangers FC, 2023). This article will explore the politicisation of both Celtic FC and Rangers FC, by referring to the historical creation of both clubs, fan behaviour, institutional aspects, violence related to football and government interventions on the issue. These factors will provide support for the argument that sport is, in fact, political.

Football offers a space for people to re-examine their self-identification, highlighting the presence of identity politics in a distinctive way. An individual's self-identity can be defined as how they reflect on their unique socialization (Proshansky, 2016). Self-identity permits individuals to further understand what makes them unique and what qualities they possess, and value, most. Identity politics refers to 'politics in which groups of people having a particular racial, religious, ethnic, social, or cultural identity tend to promote their own specific interests or concerns of any larger political group' (Merriam-Webster, n.d.). The Celtic FC is an inherently political institution, due to its establishment. Celtic Football Club was founded in 1887, as a means to alleviate the poverty that the immigrant Irish population of Glasgow's East End were facing (Celtic FC, 2022). This club's formation was driven by Brother Walfrid, an Irish Catholic Marist, in St Mary's Church Hall in Glasgow (Celtic FC, 2022). At the time of the

Celtic FC founding, the vast majority of Catholics in Scotland derived from Ireland, and in turn, the terminology and definition of Catholic and Irish became interchangeable in the West of Scotland (Bradley, 2007: 83). Celtic FC possesses an ethno-religious make-up, with additional historical socio-political ties to groups of Scottish society – particularly the Irish immigrant population, the Catholic population, and consequently the less wealthy individuals across these groups, permitting Celtic fans to value being a member of the club support as a key part of their self-identity.

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*Self-identity permits individuals to further understand what makes them unique and what qualities they possess...*

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On the other hand, the Rangers FC was founded in 1873, purely as a sporting institution, with no overt political status. However, the Rangers FC were deemed as a Protestant football club, similar to all other clubs at the time in Scotland (Bradley, 2007: 85). From Rangers FC's establishment, the Celtic FC were understood as the 'other' in society. Undoubtedly, this is due to their immigrant background and differences in religious beliefs. In comparison, a strong Protestant nationalist-like identity was forged within Rangers (Bradley, 2007:86). In the context of establishing

the two clubs, it is thus clear Scotland was dominantly ruled by the Protestant church, whereas Catholics were the minority. In this instance, the hierarchical power of Rangers is clear, due to their alignment with the Protestant teachings at the time of creation.

It is important to note that the establishment of the Rangers FC did not take place against a political background, but rather, they were moulded into becoming associated with political foundations:

*Rangers at the turn of the century were a Protestant team, but only in the sense that all teams in Scotland were Protestant. As the one team which could be called upon to keep the Catholics in their place it attracted the more anti-Catholic elements in the Scottish population (Murray, 1988: 27).*

The divide and rivalry between the Celtic FC and the Rangers FC illustrate how football can be political in an extreme and overt way, through the understanding of fan behaviour and involvement, in addition to the institutional make-up of both clubs. One particular aspect of how the relationship between the two clubs is political can be seen through the faction of the Rangers FC support being Protestant and Unionist in hue - that is fuelled by anti-Catholic hate. The existence of the Celtic FC and the Rangers FC - in Scottish society - has extensively showcased the issue of religious retribution across the nation.

Football fans of Celtic and Rangers alike partake in extremely political behaviour towards one another as supporters, with frequent issues of sectarianism arising, which has become rife within Scottish society. Sectarianism can be understood as ethnic and religious hostility, discrimination, and prejudice (Bradley, 2014: 588). Moreover, sectarianism within Scottish football is deep-rooted through the political and social backdrop of the formation of both the Celtic FC and Rangers FC. In the instance of this rivalry between Celtic and Rangers, George Orwell's understanding of sport allows a further understanding - 'sport is bound up with hatred, jealousy, boastfulness, disregard of all rules and sadistic pleasure in witnessing violence' (Orwell, 1945: 2021).

The two clubs have opposing political bases and is seen most persuasively through the link between the Rangers FC and Orangeism in Scotland, against the pro-Ireland stance that Celtic Football Club possess. The Rangers FC fan culture is characterized by Orangeism sentiments, through the repertoire of fan songs and emblems used (Whigham et al., 2021). The songs included are: 'The Sash My Father Wore' and 'Derry's Walls'. These lyrics capture and celebrate the identity of being proud, British, Orangemen and commemorate the Victory of King William III, in the Williamite War in Ireland - a war in which a Catholic was overthrown as King of England, Ireland and Scotland (Bradley, 2004: 253). Undoubtedly, these songs explicitly incite sectarianism

and hatred towards Catholics in Scotland. Moreover, Rangers fans commonly utilise symbols relating to the monarchy, the union flag, and Northern Ireland loyalism – all of which incite anti-Ireland messages – which dispute the basic pillars of the Celtic FC as a religious safe haven. The fan culture has strong links to Orangeism in Scotland, along with the institution of the Rangers FC themselves. The Orange Institution have conducted its annual religious service at Ibrox Stadium – the home of Rangers FC – on numerous occasions, which can attract crowds of up to 15,000 people (Bradley, 2004: 254). It is important to note that anti-Catholicism is central to orange ideology practice in Scotland, therefore a portion of the fans within the Rangers FC, and its establishment, actively partake in and enable anti-Catholic behaviour (Bradley, 2004: 237). A direct example of anti-Catholicism within Rangers FC was in the 1960s when a former Rangers player publicly announced the club's Protestant-only policy. This policy has been held since the club's establishment, which permitted the Rangers FC to only allow players to partake for their team if they were of the Protestant religion. This in turn, also underscored the Rangers FC 'no Catholic policy', which shows the obscene direct discrimination that the Rangers FC endorsed for decades.

The Celtic FC fan culture is characterized by pro-Ireland sentiments, through the repertoire of songs and emblems used. For example, the songs 'Celtic Symphony' and 'Go on Home British Soldiers',



**Fan Culture:** Rangers FC

both express extreme pro-Ireland sentiments. With lyrics including 'We're not British, we're not Saxon, we're not English. We're Irish and proud we are to be' (Wolfe Tones, 2004), in tandem with pro-Irish Republican Army (IRA) statements throughout – these football songs spearhead the politicisation within the sport. This association with the IRA throughout their songs, emblems and political stance is a key component of the Celtic FC. The IRA were a republican paramilitary organization seeking an establishment to end British rule in Northern Ireland, become a republic, and form the reunification of Ireland (Cowell-Meyers, 2022). From the 1970's the IRA carried out bombings, ambushes and assassinations. As seen through the fan demonstrations and songs, many Celtic FC fans would argue that the IRA were not a terrorist organisation, but was instead a civil rights movement of freedom fighters, who acted to protect their beliefs. Ultimately, the IRA were a terrorist organization through their use of violence to create political change:  
*...the use of violence for political ends*

*within democratic societies should always be classified as terrorism and dealt with as such, because a democratic society provides for means to achieve the protection of all citizens' rights through nonviolent and legitimate means (O'Brien, 1983: 2).*

Within the framework that states perceive terrorism to be within a democracy, the Irish Republican Army were an unmistakable terrorist organization. This highlights the anti-British stance that Celtic fans have adopted and furthermore shows how political Scottish football can be.

The undisguised presence of sectarianism in Scottish football, and the wider Scottish society, has resulted in Government involvement through political party support and campaigns. The 'Offensive Behaviour at Football and Threatening Communications (Scotland) Act 2012' was introduced by the Scottish Parliament, as a means of tackling aggressive behaviour and threats by football fans (The Scottish Parliament, 2018). The Act encompasses offensive behaviour associated with sectarianism, including singing, chanting and social media posts or comments. MSPs in Scotland attempted to tackle the issue of sectarianism through this act, but ultimately failed. The final amendments to the Bill were proposed in 2018, which resulted in the complete repeal of the Act. In its final assessment, it was stated that it had not tackled bigotry and had been widely criticised by law groups and human rights groups. Football

fans have been treated as second-class citizens (The Scottish Parliament, 2018). The relationship between football fans and the Scottish Government is convoluted with emotions regarding the Act, even years after its repeal. The 'Offensive Behaviour at Football and Threatening Communications (Scotland) Act 2012' provides evidence to further claim that sport is, in fact, political. The Scottish Government had to intervene as a means to control and deter religiously fuelled hate between the Celtic FC and Rangers FC, as well as the wider football society in the country.

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In Glasgow, the sectarian violence and abuse extends beyond the boundaries of what is understood as 'football hooliganism'. In 1995, a young boy called Mark Scott was horrifically killed due to sectarianism. Mark Scott was wearing a Celtic top - under his zipped jacket - as he walked through a Protestant area of the city on his way home from a Celtic game, when a man picked him out randomly from a group of Celtic supporters and killed him by a knife attack which left Mark with a seven-inch wound in his neck (Scott, 2001). This

horrific incident led to the creation of 'Nil By Mouth', a campaign to combat sectarianism in Scotland. 'Nil By Mouth' has several aims: to inform the public about the problems of sectarianism; promote integration within Scottish society; to encourage respect to all cultures and to resist sectarianism, racism, and bigotry, in any form. Ultimately, this campaign was founded to raise awareness of the damage, violence and death that has resulted from sectarian behaviour in Scotland (Nil By Mouth, 2022). 'Nil By Mouth' has received increasing amounts of support from political parties, both the Celtic FC and Rangers FC, in addition to schools and colleges across Scotland.

In Scottish culture, particularly on the West Coast, being a football fan is a large aspect of an individual's self-identity. Some academics have argued that Scottish football allows supporters to express a sense of Scottishness, through a nationalist or unionist paradigm (Kelly, 2018). A key way that sport can be political is through the power to influence political opinion and participation. Thus, through being a supporter of either the Celtic FC or Rangers FC, it provides a strong sense of identity for thousands of individuals across Scotland and the rest of the world. Moreover, with both teams having contrasted political backdrops, it can ultimately influence their supporters' beliefs.

When referring to how sports can be political – the political affiliation of football clubs themselves provides a key

insight. Historically Celtic FC supporters have been associated with Irishness, Catholicism, and republicanism, as well as being left-wing of the political spectrum (Turner, Begg and McTague, 2022). The Celtic FC is also seen to have had strong ties to the Labour Party and left-wing politics, particularly visible through the previous Chairman of Celtic FC, John Reid. John Reid was a British Labour Party politician, having served multiple cabinet positions under Tony Blair, such as Home Secretary, Secretary of State for Defence, Secretary of State for Scotland and a Labour MP from 1987-2010. Following his roles in government, he took on the role of Chairman of Celtic Football Club in 2007.

John Reid was a Glasgow born, working class, Roman Catholic – his personal beliefs aligned with those of the club, and he provided an overtly political presence within Celtic FC. The Rangers FC and their supporters, on the other hand, have been associated with Protestantism, Orangeism, Conservatism, and unionism. The unionism that is overtly expressed by the Rangers FC and their fans is not focused solely on unionism in Britain, but also Northern Ireland (Turner, Begg and McTague, 2022). It is fair to state that Rangers FC have a clear right-wing agenda. Although Rangers' supporters cannot be wholly viewed to be Conservative Party supporters, it renders clear that there are strong connections between Protestantism, Scottishness, Britishness, Northern Irish politics, and the monarchy, in regard to the core ideologies of Rangers FC and the

Conservative Party (Bradley, 2004: 255).

The sport of football can be political through direct fan involvement through fan/crowd demonstrations – an aspect that is extremely apparent in the case of the Celtic FC and Rangers FC. Fan demonstrations for both teams are usually organised by their relevant ultras group. A football ultras group refers to a portion of the club's fanbase that usually consists of some of the most extreme and passionate supporters. Using Celtic FC, this is seen through the Green Brigade and its counterpart, the Rangers FC, the Union Bears.

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One way that fans of both Celtic and Rangers are seen to display their political opinions through football is through tifos and banners. Tifos are choreographed displays in which fans in a sports stadium raise a large banner together or simultaneously hold up signs that together form a large image. Both teams utilise tifos to project their political stance.

For example, in September 2022, Celtic played Rangers at Parkhead and unveiled a giant tifo that stated 'Today We Dare to Win', alongside an image of a teenager

in a gas mask, holding a petrol bomb from the Battle of Bogside in 1969. The Battle of Bogside occurred during the height of the troubles in Ireland, occurring from 1968-1998, due to longstanding enmities between Catholics and Protestants over British rule. The centuries of conflict ended in 1998 when the Good Friday Agreement was passed, which in turn provided a new power sharing agreement between the UK and Irish governments and the parties of Northern Ireland (UK Government, 1998). The chosen slogan on the tifo was in reference to the Irish civil rights campaigner and politician Bernadette Devlin who once said, 'Yesterday I dared to struggle, today I dare to win' (Devlin, 1970). This display is a fitting example when attempting to understand how football can be political.

These types of displays are not exclusive to Celtic's Green Brigade, with Ranger's Union Bears also partaking in political tifos, showcasing their unionist stance through such displays. One prime example is their tifo display in response to the passing of Queen Elizabeth II. The commemorative display, organised and presented at Ibrox, as shown below, included a union jack and a silhouette of Queen Elizabeth II. It highlights the regard in which a large number of the Rangers support hold the royal family and the monarchy. In this instance, the Rangers fans also sang 'God Save the Queen' after UEFA had banned them to do so. Once again, this subtly provides insight into the important of monarchy within the Rangers support.



**Types of fan displays:** Celtic Green Brigade (left), and Rangers Union Bears

The political stage of Scottish football is ardent and ever changing, particularly in the case of the Celtic FC and Rangers FC. Sport has the command to be extremely influential, through soft power, political culture, the concept of political identity, and the impact that sport has on the everyday life of individuals. Football clubs have the ability to influence extremely large numbers and have the unique opportunity to have the ability to influence a large percentage of young people, with many young people idolising football players and clubs. Both the Celtic FC and the Rangers FC have the ability to create their own political culture within its fan’s support, which can ultimately impact wider society – as seen through the over

presence of sectarianism in Glasgow and the West of Scotland. It is difficult to contest whether football can ever be ‘un-political’ with the ever-growing impact of social media, the politics of identity and the passionate support that fans have for their team. Although, FIFA states that football clubs ‘must not have any political, religious, or personal slogans, statements or images’ present at any time (FIFA, 2015), and governing bodies across all sports can implement laws regarding the politicisation of their sport, it is arguably impossible to remove politics all together. The case of the Celtic FC and Rangers FC provide a direct example of how politics can influence and be intertwined in sports today.

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# Modern Solar Navigation Techniques

Alberto Bodas Gallego

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*Navigation by sea has proven difficult due to the absence of distinct markers for guidance. One solution for longer journeys was to track the position of celestial bodies as a navigational method, which has become more reliable as mathematical models improved over time. This essay aims to explore the mathematical methods behind modern solar navigation techniques and illustrate how these models are highly useful to describe and predict real-life scenarios.*

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## Introduction

Navigation is defined as “the science of getting ships, aircraft or spacecraft from place to place.” It is especially concerned with determining the position and course of a vessel, to safely plan, track and control the craft’s journey.

Navigating by sea has always been especially complicated, due to the absence of distinctive landmarks to guide your course. Once sailors began undertaking longer journeys, losing sight of land, they required a system of navigation that would be viable in open sea. The solution was to measure the position of celestial bodies to determine the observer’s location using appropriate mathematical tools.[4]

Using the sun and stars for this purpose is an elegant and ingenious solution, and understanding the motion of celestial

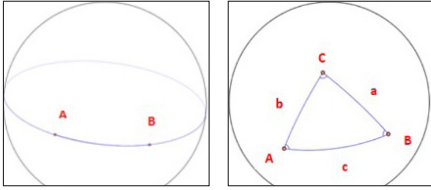
bodies has been the driving force in physical development through some of the most significant scientific expansions in history. Furthermore, celestial navigation constitutes important knowledge on a light vessel, as it is always reliable in case of electronic equipment failure.

Hence, this essay will explore some mathematical methods used to navigate the globe using the sun and develop some alternative solar methods which can be used for navigation.

## Navigation

Some modelling assumptions are made in this essay which must be explained. These are grouped according to their effect.

This paper assumes that the earth is a perfect sphere (as opposed to an ellipsoid [10]), and that the earth is stationary during a day (as opposed to rotating  $0.985^\circ$  around the sun).

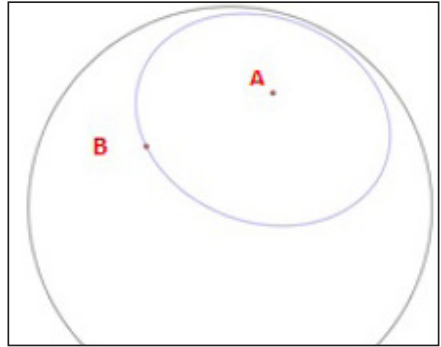


**Figure One (Left):** Great Circle (and segment) through A and B. **Figure Two (Right):** Spherical Triangle drawn by segments a, b and c.

Both these effects are negligible [10]. Furthermore, Polar Precession, which is the rotation of the Rotational Axis about the Orbital Axis once every 2,600 years [9], is ignored as it has negligible effects during our lifetimes.

Finally, this paper assumes the light rays incident on the earth from the sun are parallel. The average distance from the earth to the sun, defined as one AU, is 150,000,000km. In comparison, the radius of the earth is only 6,371 km on average [1]. This is a ratio of 1: 23 544, which means the radius of the earth can be ignored, justifying this assumption.

More significant assumptions include ignoring the earth's ellipsoidal orbit, which noticeably affects the angular speed of the earth around the sun, and therefore declination calculations, at some times of the year (see [8]). Atmospheric refraction (the bending of light as it enters the atmosphere) is also ignored. Refraction causes an average of 1.2° per day of additional sunlight [1] (which is roughly equivalent to a few additional minutes), with variable effect. Finally, magnetic north is assumed



**Figure Three:** Small circle of centre A, passing through B.

to lie exactly above the north pole, which is not necessarily the case [2]. This effect, called Magnetic Deviation, is location-dependent and there exist local corrections, but it is ignored in this essay.

## Terminology

### *Spherical Geometry*

A Great Circle is the circle drawn on the surface of a sphere by a plane intersecting that sphere, which passes through the sphere's centre, such as the equator.

A Segment is the shortest line connecting two points on a sphere's surface, which is always a finite section of a great circle. Any two points on a sphere can be connected by exactly one great circle segment unless they are antipodes. As all spheres are similar, segment lengths are simplified to the angles subtending them from the sphere's centre. Angular lengths are used for all spherical trigonometry formulae and can be

converted to real lengths using the radius of the sphere in question.

A Spherical Triangle is a triangle drawn on the surface of a sphere by three intersecting segments. The lengths of its sides and the angles between them can be resolved using spherical rules analogous to the planar sine and cosine rules.

A Small Circle is the circle drawn on the surface of a sphere by a plane intersecting the sphere without passing through the centre.

All parallels (except the Equator) are small circles, with the Rotational Axis passing through their centres.

An Antipode is the diametrical opposite of a given point on a sphere, which is a pair of points through which a straight line can be passed through which also goes through the origin.

### Navigation

Any location on a sphere's surface, in this case the Earth, can be described by two angles, measured from the sphere's centre, O, perpendicular to each other. These angles are analogous to the x and y coordinates on a Cartesian plane.

On Fig.4, the position of vessel V is defined by angle  $\lambda$ , called latitude, and angle,  $\varphi$  called longitude.

$$V = (\lambda, \varphi)$$

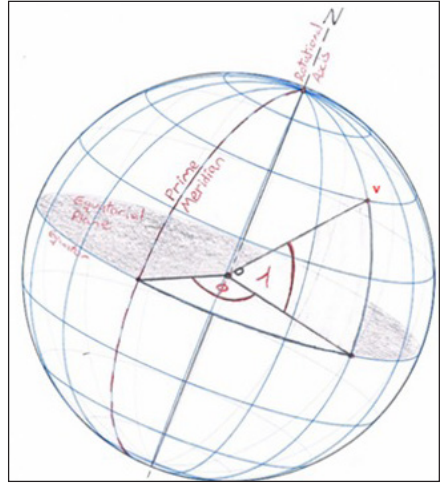


Figure Four : Small circle of centre A, passing through B.

**Latitude,  $\lambda$ :** The angle measuring the North-South displacement of a given point, defining the Equator as  $\lambda = 0^\circ$ . North is defined as the positive direction and South as the negative direction. Therefore, latitude oscillates from  $-90^\circ$  to  $+90^\circ$  at the poles. The small circles normal to the Rotational Axis (NS) which mark different latitudes on a map are called Parallels.

**Longitude,  $\varphi$ :** The angle measuring the East-West displacement of a given point, using the Prime Meridian (passing through Greenwich, England) as  $\lambda = 0^\circ$ . West of the Prime Meridian is defined as negative and East of the Prime Meridian as positive. Therefore, Longitude ranges from  $-180^\circ$  to  $+180^\circ$ . (Note that  $-180^\circ$  and  $+180^\circ$  longitude are equivalent, both marking points on the  $180^\circ$  meridian.) The semicircles running from

the North to South poles, which mark different longitudes on a map, are called Meridians.

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Note that whereas the Equator is a natural choice for  $0^\circ$  due to Earth's rotation, the choice of the Prime Meridian for  $0^\circ$  is completely arbitrary.

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This paper adopts mathematical convention, where positive and negative signs are used to differentiate north from south and east from west (opposed to the use of letters N, E, S and W ( $33^\circ\text{N}$ ,  $32^\circ\text{W}$ ) seen in ocean charts), and decimals are used when being accurate to more than one degree, opposed to minutes and seconds.

Note also that the symbols for latitude and longitude are switched around in charts [11]. To convert between decimals and seconds and minutes, use the definitions

$$1' = \left(\frac{1}{60}\right)^\circ \text{ and } 1'' = \left(\frac{1}{360}\right)^\circ$$

(chosen so there are 60 minutes in a degree and 60 seconds in a minute.) A nautical mile is defined as the distance on the earth's surface in a nautical minute, so  $1\text{NM}=1.852\text{km}$ . [17]

**Horizon Plane, h:** A plane tangential to the sphere's surface at point V. As light travels in straight lines, any celestial body

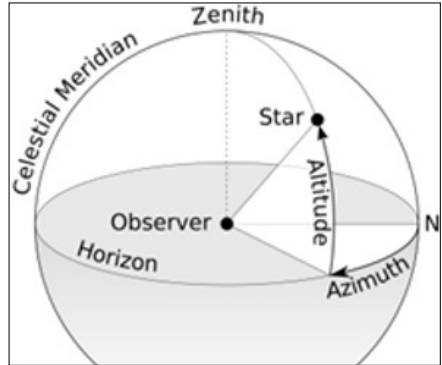


Figure Five : Altitude and Azimuth

above this plane is visible to an observer at V, and any point below it is not.

**Celestial Sphere:** an imaginary sphere with used to map the position of celestial bodies. Two systems of coordinates exist: *Equatorial coordinates:* earthly coordinates (latitude and longitude) are projected onto the celestial sphere, and the centre of the Celestial Sphere is O, the centre of the Earth. [14]

*Horizontal coordinates:* coordinates relative to the observer's horizon plane are used, with the observer in the centre of the sphere. [7]

Azimuth,  $\alpha$ : Measures the horizontal angular displacement of a body from the observer's north bearing.

Altitude,  $e$ : Measures the vertical angular displacement of a body.

Zenith: The point on the celestial sphere at  $90^\circ$  Altitude.

Note that (based on the Celestial Parallel Assumption) it is assumed V and O are on the same point, to allow the two coordinate systems to be compared.

### Calculating Longitude using Time

Whereas finding latitude through the altitude of stars or the sun was widely used since ancient times, calculating longitude accurately was not possible until the chronometer was invented. [4] The earth completes one full rotation around its axis in 23 hours and 56 minutes, such that it has the same orientation relative to the rest of the universe. This is called a Sidereal day, used when dealing with stellar motion. [19]

However, as the earth is rotating around the sun, it takes another 4 minutes for the sun to reach the same meridian it started the day at, compensating for the 0.985° travelled around the sun in this time. Accounting for both these effects, it takes 24 hours for the earth to rotate 360° around the sun in what is known as a Solar day, used when dealing with solar motion. [19]

$$\frac{360^\circ}{24h} = 15^\circ/h$$

The Meridians every 15° mark different time zones. This simple calculation also means that if the solar time of a reference point (GMT, Greenwich Mean Time, is used) is known through an accurate

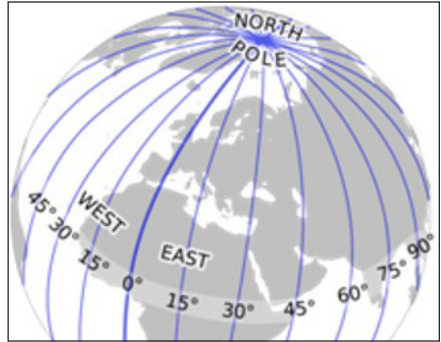


Figure Seven : World Meridians

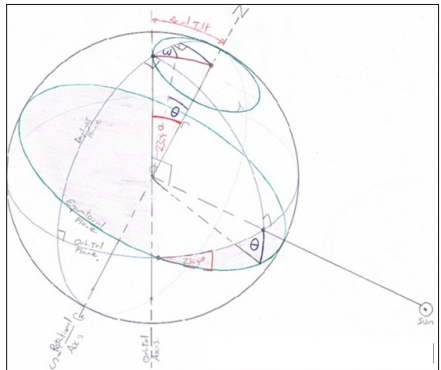


Figure Eight : Axial Tilt, the Daylight Plane and the Declination

chronometer, and Local Solar Time (LST) at the observer's longitude is calculated, the difference in time can be converted to degrees, obtaining a result for longitude.

$$\phi = 15 * (GMT - LST)$$

LST was typically measured at Solar Noon, because when

$$\alpha(\text{sun}) = 0^\circ \text{ or } 180^\circ, LST = 12.00$$

by convention, making it the most convenient time for measurement.

## Calculating Solar Declination ( $\Theta$ )

Being able to calculate Solar Declination is vital knowledge for all modern location calculations. Declination depends on Axial Tilt and the position of the Daylight Plane.

*Axial Tilt:* The angle between the Equatorial Plane and the Orbital Plane. (Also the angle between the Rotational Axis (NS) and the Orbital Axis)

*Equatorial Plane:* The plane projected from  $\lambda=0^\circ$ .

*Orbital Plane:* The plane the Earth orbits the Sun through.

As the earth orbits, the North and South poles' orientation remains fixed with respect to the rest of the universe but rotates with respect to the sun. Whether the North or South Pole is facing the sun is responsible for Earth's seasons. [13]

$$\text{Axial tilt} = 23.4^\circ$$

The Daylight Plane is the plane normal to the line  $\odot$ , which joins  $\bigcirc$ , the centre of the earth and  $\odot$ , the centre of the sun. It divides the earth into two hemispheres, one which is facing the sun and has daylight, and one facing away from the sun, which has night-time. This plane is independent of the earth's rotation, meaning that whilst points on earth rotate at  $15^\circ/\text{h}$  around NS,  $\odot\bigcirc$  and the Daylight Plane remain fixed relative to the sun. Solar Declination ( $\Theta$ ) is the angle between NS and the Daylight Plane,



**Planet Earth :** Great Circle marked by the Daylight Plane

which is also the latitude over which the sun reaches local Zenith at midday. NS can be thought of as rotating around the Orbital Axis, completing 1 revolution a year. This means that the distance from the rotational axis at N to the daylight plane can be described as:

$$R = r * \sin (23.4)$$

$$l = R * \sin (\omega)$$

$$l = r * \sin (23.4) * \sin (\omega)$$

---

Where  $l$ =the distance from N to the Daylight Plane,  $R$ =the distance from N to the Orbital Axis and  $\omega$ = the angle of displacement of the earth around the sun, measured from the last spring equinox The spring equinox used for measurements in this paper took place on the 21/03/2019 [20].

---



The spring equinox was a natural choice for  $\omega=0$ , because at that date, NS is aligned with the Daylight Plane, meaning  $\Theta=0$  when  $\omega=0$ .

$$\theta = \arcsin\left(\frac{l}{r}\right)$$

$$\theta = \arcsin(\sin(23.4) * \sin(\omega))$$

It should be noted that these constructions show  $\Theta$  ranges between  $-23.4^\circ$  and  $23.4^\circ$ .  $\omega$  can be converted to days by introducing the conversion factor

$$\omega = \frac{360}{365.25} \Omega:$$

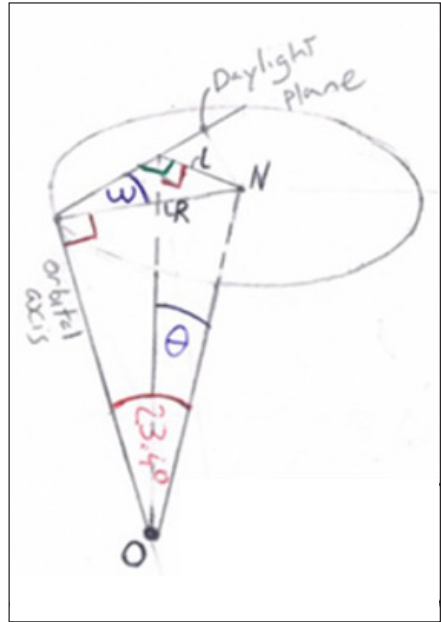


Figure Ten : Constructions for calculating  $\Theta$

$$\theta = \arcsin\left(\sin(23.4) * \sin\left(\frac{360}{365.25} \Omega\right)\right)$$

Where  $\Omega$ = days since the last spring equinox.

### Calculating Latitude using Solar Height at Noon

One of the most widespread methods of calculating latitude is measuring the sun's altitude at solar noon, when the sun is aligned with the observer's meridian and the centre of the earth [6]. The sun reaches its maximum altitude for the observer at this time.  $\odot \vee$  and  $\odot \ominus$  are assumed to be parallel.

$$a = 90 - e$$

$$\lambda = a + \theta$$

$$\lambda = 90 - e + \theta$$

However, for a  $\lambda$  in the Southern Hemisphere,  $\lambda \neq a + \theta$ . Instead:

$$\lambda = a - \theta$$

This ambiguity limits this method, as the observer may not know which Hemisphere they are in. Measuring the elevation of the sun, instead of from the closest azimuth, only from  $\alpha=180^\circ$  (South), can resolve this issue:

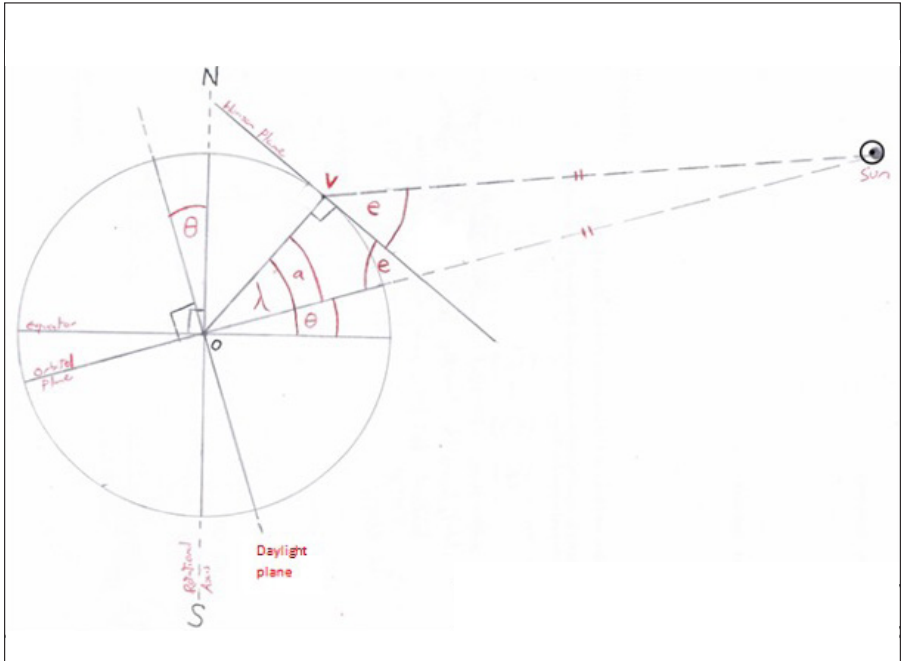


Figure Eleven : A cross section of the Earth at Solar Noon

$e_s = \text{solar elevation from south}$

Where:  $e_s = 180 - e_N$

Leading to:  $\lambda = 90 - e_s + \theta$

This variation of the formula can be used from any latitude without ambiguity.

### Calculating Latitude through the Daylight Angle

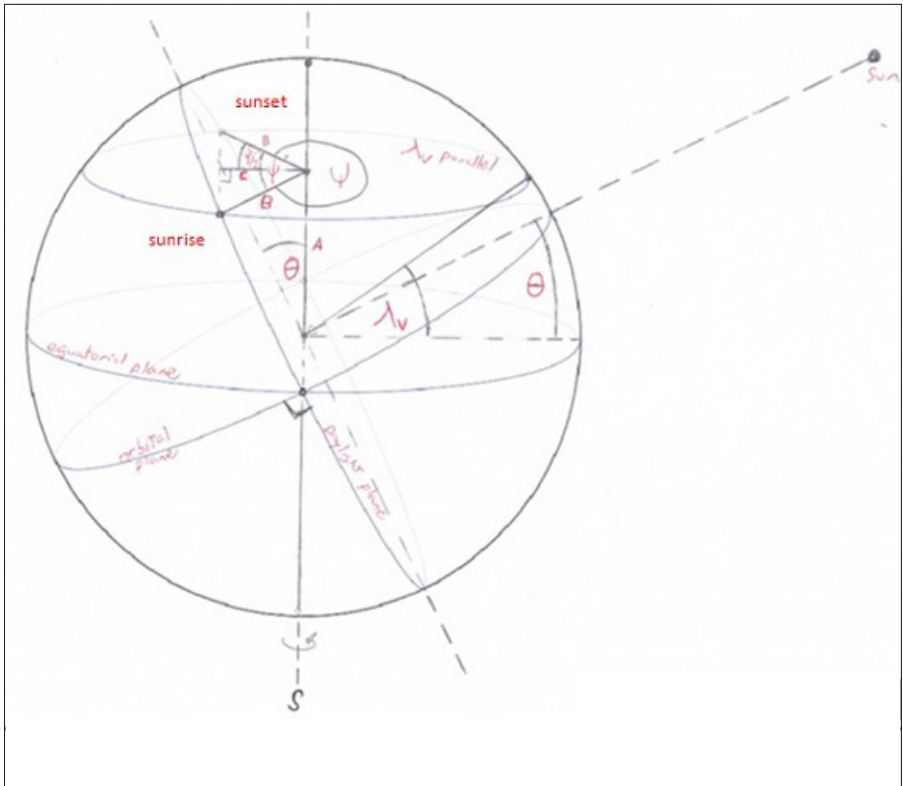
With modern knowledge about the solar system, navigators can find their location in more innovative ways. One such way is through measuring the Daylight Angle.

The two intersections between parallel  $\lambda V$  and the daylight plane mark the points of sunrise and sunset for  $V$ , which could be any point on this latitude. This means that angle  $\Psi$  is the angle of rotation around  $NS$  for which observers at  $\lambda V$  are in the dark, and its pair,  $\Psi$ , is the angle for which observers have daylight:

$$\Psi = 15 * (GMT_{sunset} - GMT_{sunrise})$$

$$\psi = 15 * (GMT_{sunrise} - GMT_{sunset})$$

These angles are dependent on  $\theta$  and  $\lambda$ , with effects that can be qualitatively summarised. When  $\theta$  is large, the difference between  $\Psi$  and  $\psi$  increases,



**Figure Twelve :** The Daylight Angle

and when  $\lambda$  is large, the difference between  $\Psi$  and  $\alpha$  increases. When either  $\lambda$  or  $\Theta$  (or both) tend to zero,  $\Psi$  and  $\alpha$  both tend to  $180^\circ$ . (Hence, points on the Equator have exactly  $180^\circ$  (12 hours) of sunlight every day of the year.) These observations explain some properties of the earth. When  $\Theta=0^\circ$ , every latitude has exactly  $180^\circ$  (12 hours) of sunlight, which happens two days a year, on the Equinoxes. There are also two solstices every year, one being the longest and the

other the shortest day of the year. They occur when  $\Theta$  is largest ( $\Theta=\pm 23.4^\circ$ ). As can be appreciated from Fig.12, there are very large positive and negative latitudes where the Daylight Plane does not intersect parallel  $\lambda$ . Points with latitude greater than these would have no sunrise or sunset, therefore having  $360^\circ$  of full daylight or night-time for at least a day a year. The Polar Circles, which can be found at  $66^\circ 33' 47.8''$  N and  $66^\circ 33' 47.8''$  S [12], are the closest parallels to the equator where this occurs.

Using these constructions, an expression for  $\psi$  can be constructed from these two angles. Firstly, lengths A, B and C are defined to construct triangles involving  $\Theta$  and  $\lambda$ .

$$A = r * \cos(90 - \lambda)$$

Which can be rewritten as:

$$A = r * \sin(\lambda)$$

(Recall A=the distance from O to the intersection of the rotational axis with  $\lambda$ )

$$B = r * \sin(90 - \lambda)$$

Similarly, B can be simplified to

$$B = r * \cos(\lambda)$$

(B=the radius of the small circle defined by the parallel at latitude  $\lambda$ )

$$C = A * \tan(\theta)$$

(C=the bisector of angle  $\psi$ , which joins the intersection between NS and  $\lambda$  with the intersection between the Orbital Axis and  $\lambda$ )

From the right-angled triangle formed with B, C and  $\Psi/2$ , we can conclude that:

$$\psi = 2 \arccos\left(\frac{C}{B}\right)$$

Substituting for our lengths and simplifying, we get

$$\psi = 2 \arccos\left(\frac{A * \tan(\theta)}{r * \cos(\lambda)}\right)$$

$$\psi = 2 \arccos\left(\frac{r * \sin(\lambda) * \tan(\theta)}{r * \cos(\lambda)}\right)$$

$$\psi = 2 \arccos(\tan(\theta) * \tan(\lambda))$$

We can rearrange for  $\lambda$ , to obtain

$$\lambda = \arctan\left(\frac{\cos\left(\frac{\psi}{2}\right)}{\tan(\theta)}\right)$$

As  $\Psi = 360^\circ - \psi$ , we can substitute for  $\psi$  to obtain the daytime equivalent

$$\lambda = \arctan\left(\frac{\cos\left(180 - \frac{\Psi}{2}\right)}{\tan(\theta)}\right)$$

$$\lambda = \arctan\left(-\frac{\cos\left(\frac{\Psi}{2}\right)}{\tan(\theta)}\right)$$

Rearranging for  $\Psi$

$$\Psi = 2 \arccos(-\tan(\lambda) * \tan(\theta))$$

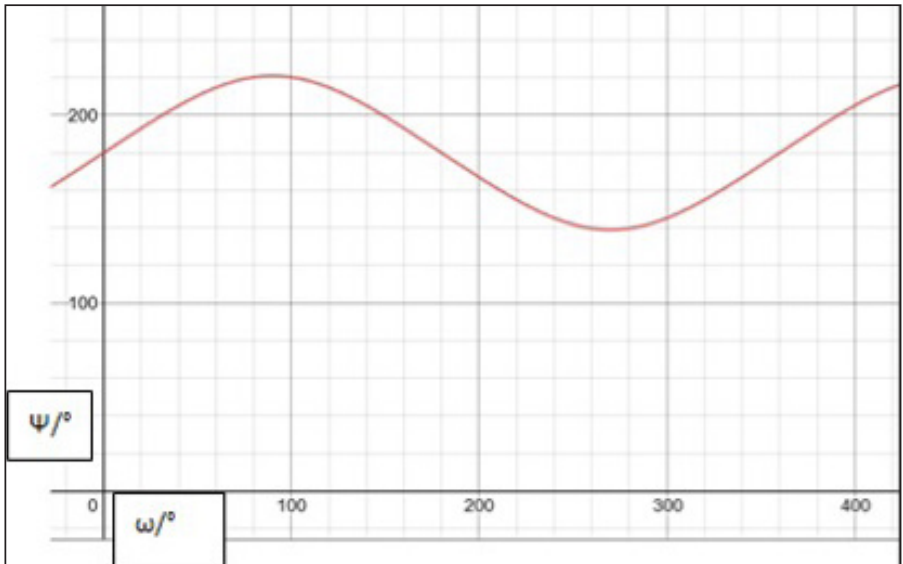


Figure Thirteen : The Yearly Angle against the Daylight Angle.  $\lambda=39^\circ$

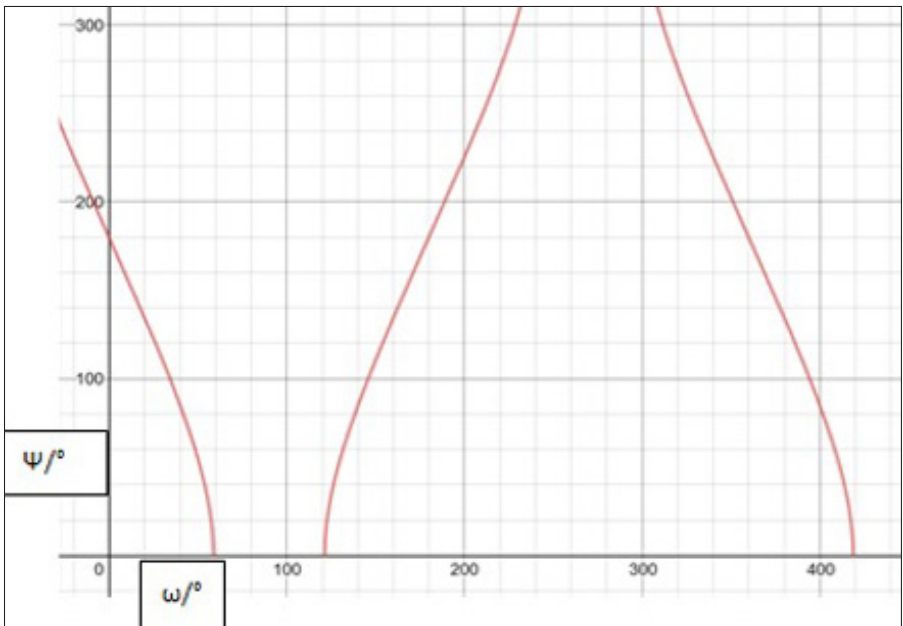


Figure Fourteen : The Yearly Angle against the Daylight Angle.  $\lambda=70^\circ$

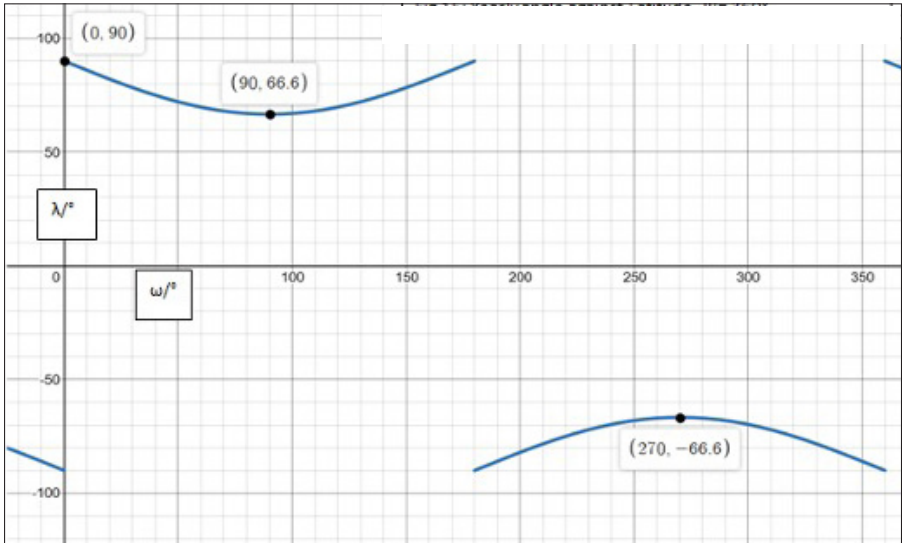


Figure Fifteen : The Yearly Angle against the Daylight Angle.  $\lambda=39^\circ$

As can be observed in Fig.14, when  $\lambda$  is above the Polar Circles, there is no sunrise or sunset at certain values for  $\omega$ , so the graph becomes undefined near the solstices. Opposed to Fig.13, as in Fig.14  $\lambda$  is negative, the Daylight Angle shrinks during the first quarter of the year.

For Fig.15, the lowest latitudes to obey the formula for  $\lambda=360^\circ$  should be equal to the latitudes of the Polar Circles. Our

equation for  $\lambda$  predicts a polar circle latitude of  $\pm 66.6$  to three significant figures, and the published latitudes are  $\pm 66^\circ 33' 47.8'' = \pm 66.563^\circ$ , so we can conclude the formula makes an accurate prediction.

To try out equation (4c) first-hand, the following measurements were taken and checked against their corresponding GPS coordinates:

Date: 09/11/19	Time of sunrise (GMT): 7:26 = 7.43	Time of sunset (GMT): 17:40 =17.67	Measurement coordinates: (39°18'N, 3°6'E) [15]
		$\lambda = 39.3^\circ$	
$\Omega = \text{days from 21/03/2019 to 09/11/2019.}$ $\Omega = 10 + 3 * 30 + 4 * 31 + 9$ $\Omega = 233$		$\Psi = 15 * (GMT_{sunset} - GMT_{sunrise})$ $\Psi = 15 * (17.67 - 7.4)$ $\Psi = 153.6^\circ$	
$\theta = \arcsin\left(\sin(23.4) * \sin\left(\frac{360}{365.25} * 233\right)\right)$ $\theta = -17.6^\circ$		$\lambda = \arctan\left(-\frac{\cos\left(\frac{153.75}{2}\right)}{\tan(-17.6)}\right)$ $\lambda = 35.7^\circ$	

Within its limitations due to assumptions made, such as constant orbital speed and refraction, and inaccuracies in measurements due to visibility, equation (4c) uses trigonometry to model the relationship between the angle of sunlight, the date and the observer's latitude to a good degree of accuracy, erring by  $-3.6^\circ$  (2%).

### Calculating Latitude Through the Sunrise or Sunset Bearing

Whilst the Daylight angle method for finding latitude works, it presents several limitations which reduce its usefulness whilst navigating. Firstly, it would take a time period averaging 12 hours to obtain the two measurements required to find your latitude, and until then any course chosen risks travelling in an erroneous direction. Furthermore, to avoid needing any corrections, the observer would have to remain in the same location throughout the measurement, which is unpractical for a travelling vessel, and at sea almost impossible to achieve due to drift, waves, and currents.

Therefore, a different approach was explored building on the Daylight Angle, which uses the bearing of sunrise or sunset to find latitude. As these measurements are instantaneous, it eliminates the difficulties presented by the Daylight Angle formula.

Firstly, compass bearings must be translated onto a spherical perspective. The North-South needle on a compass is

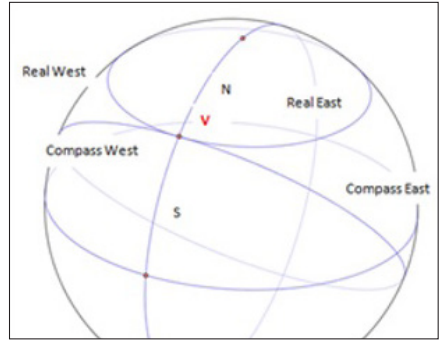


Figure Sixteen : Real vs. compass East and West

tangential to the longitude meridian the observer is on, and the East-West needle is tangential to the observer's parallel. However, to exploit spherical geometry later on, we shall use the bearing of the East-West needle to determine another great circle normal to the longitude great circle, as shown in Fig.16.

For any point V on a sphere, and a body located in its celestial hemisphere, there is a straight line which connects the celestial body to point V. When this celestial body is directly on V's horizon (at  $0^\circ$  altitude), this line is tangential to point V's position on a sphere. As solar rays are assumed to be parallel, this occurs when angle  $\angle V\odot = 90^\circ$ .

As can be seen from Fig.18,  $\angle V\odot$  (which is tangential to V) is oriented, from V's perspective, on the same bearing as the great circle segment which connects V to M, the point over which the Sun is  $90^\circ$  overhead. This allows us to think about the position of the Sun in terms of M, allowing us to introduce concepts from Spherical Trigonometry to find V's latitude.

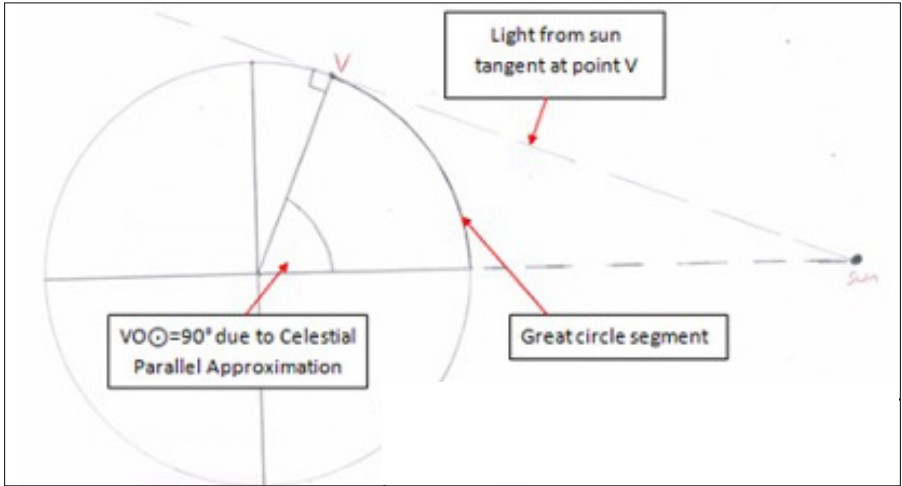


Figure Seventeen : Tangent to V translated into a great circle segment.

We can define a segment VM, which connects V to M. Another segment VN connects V (the observer at sunrise) to N. (When V is at sunset, 360-NVM gives the bearing of M, and therefore the sun). Furthermore, M can be connected to the North Pole using another segment of a great circle, NM. This gives us a spherical triangle, and angle NVM can be found from the existing information.

As can be seen from fig.18:

$$VN = 90 - \lambda$$

$$MN = 90 - \theta$$

From the Daylight angle formula, we know  $\Psi$  = the angle of daylight received by a point on  $\lambda V$ . Therefore, the point on  $\lambda V$  which is at midday when V is at sunrise is  $(\Psi/2)^\circ$  away from V. As it is midday for a whole meridian at any given time,  $\lambda$ 's

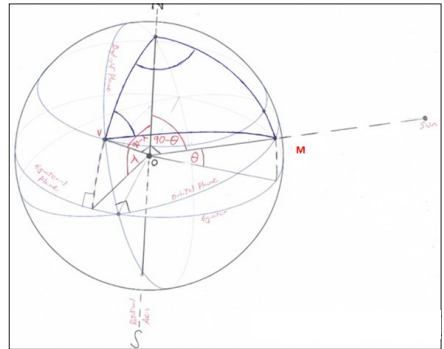


Figure Eighteen : Spherical Triangle NVM

midday point is on the same meridian as M. NS passes through N, so we can further conclude that:

$$VNM = \frac{\Psi}{2}$$

Moreover, as the Daylight Plane (which V lies on) is normal to  $\odot\odot$  (which M lies on) we can conclude that:

$$VM = 90^\circ.$$



## Proof

We apply the spherical cosine rule:  $\cos(c) = \cos(a) * \cos(b) + \sin(a) * \sin(b) * \cos(C)$  [21]

$$\cos(VM) = \cos(90 - \lambda) * \cos(90 - \theta) + \sin(90 - \lambda) * \sin(90 - \theta) * \cos\left(\frac{\Psi}{2}\right)$$

$$\cos(VM) = \sin(\lambda) * \sin(\theta) + \cos(\lambda) * \cos(\theta) * \cos\left(\frac{\Psi}{2}\right)$$

$$\cos(VM) = \sin(\lambda) * \sin(\theta) + \cos(\lambda) * \cos(\theta) * \cos\left(\frac{2\arccos(-\tan(\lambda) * \tan(\theta))}{2}\right)$$

$$\cos(VM) = \sin(\lambda) * \sin(\theta) + \cos(\lambda) * \cos(\theta) * -\tan(\lambda) * \tan(\theta)$$

$$\cos(VM) = \sin(\lambda) * \sin(\theta) - \cos(\lambda) * \cos(\theta) * \frac{\sin(\lambda)}{\cos(\lambda)} * \frac{\sin(\theta)}{\cos(\theta)}$$

$$\cos(VM) = 0, QED.$$

## Solving for NVM

First, we rearrange the cosine rule and substitute in the values for MN, VN, and VM quoted above

$$\cos(NVM) = \frac{\cos(MN) - \cos(VN) * \cos(VM)}{\sin(VN) * \sin(VM)}$$

$$\cos(NVM) = \frac{\cos(90 - \theta) - \cos(90 - \lambda) * \cos(90^\circ)}{\sin(90 - \lambda) * \sin(90^\circ)}$$

$$\cos(NVM) = \frac{\sin(\theta) - \sin(\lambda) * 0}{\cos(\lambda) * 1}$$

$$\cos(NVM) = \frac{\sin(\theta)}{\cos(\lambda)}$$

$$NVM(\text{sunrise}) = \arccos\left(\frac{\sin(\theta)}{\cos(\lambda)}\right)$$

$$360 - NVM = \text{sunset bearing}$$

$$NVM(\text{sunset}) = 360 - \arccos\left(\frac{\sin(\theta)}{\cos(\lambda)}\right)$$

Rearranging for  $\lambda$ :

$$\cos(NVM) = \frac{\sin(\theta)}{\cos(\lambda)}$$

$$\frac{\sin(\theta)}{\cos(NVM)} = \cos(\lambda)$$

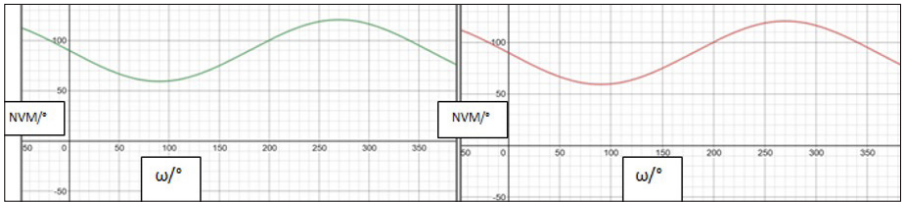
$$\pm\lambda = \arccos\left(\frac{\sin(\theta)}{\cos(NVM)}\right)$$

If we substitute the sunset bearing ( $360^\circ - NVM$ ) for  $NVM$ , the expression simplifies to obtain the same formula:

$$\pm\lambda = \arccos\left(\frac{\sin(\theta)}{\cos(360 - NVM)}\right) = \arccos\left(\frac{\sin(\theta)}{\cos(NVM)}\right)$$

Equation (5c), however, has an important limitation. As can be observed in Fig.19 and Fig.20, for points on two latitudes of equal magnitude, but opposite sign ( $\pm\lambda$ ) the sun will rise and set on the same

bearing (as  $\cos(\lambda) = \cos(-\lambda)$ .) Therefore, this method will limit  $\lambda$  to two locations: one in the Southern Hemisphere and another in the Northern Hemisphere.



**Figure Sixteen :** Real vs. compass East and West

Measuring the sun’s azimuth some time after sunrise or some time before sunset can help rule out one of the possible latitudes. If the sun travels north (sunrise) or comes from north (sunset), then  $\lambda < \Theta$ .

Conversely, if the sun travels south (sunrise) or comes from south (sunset), then  $\lambda > \Theta$ . Finally, if  $\lambda = \Theta$ , the sun will travel towards the observer’s zenith (straight up).

However, this solution does not apply when  $\lambda$  has lesser magnitude than  $\Theta$ , because when this is the case, the possible latitudes will either both be above  $\Theta$  (when  $\Theta < 0$ ) or both be below  $\Theta$  (when  $\Theta > 0$ ). Expressed mathematically, when  $|\lambda| < |\Theta|$ ,  $\pm\lambda > -\Theta$  or  $\pm\lambda < +\Theta$ .

In these cases, additional observations of the sun’s bearing do not rule out one of the possible latitudes.

However, the Hemisphere navigators are

usually well known to them, unless they are navigating close to the equator. In these cases, confirmation through the Solar Noon formula would be required to eliminate one of the possible latitudes, limiting the use of this formula.

**First-hand calculations:**

Understanding the observer’s perspective of sunrise and sunset allows two additional individual measurements to be used to find  $\lambda$ .

The results imply equation (5c) is more accurate than (4c), erring by  $-3.2^\circ$  (1.8%). It is speculated this is because atmospheric refraction may have had less impact on bearing measurements.

However, this method requires corroboration through additional measurements under specific circumstances, limiting its use when navigating close to the equator.

NVM (sunrise) = 114°	NVM (sunset) = 248°	$\theta = -17.6^\circ$
$\lambda = \arccos\left(\frac{\sin(\theta)}{\cos(NVM)}\right)$ $\lambda = \arccos\left(\frac{\sin(-17.6)}{\cos(114)}\right)$ $\lambda = 41.9^\circ$	$\lambda = \arccos\left(\frac{\sin(\theta)}{\cos(NVM)}\right)$ $\lambda = \arccos\left(\frac{\sin(-17.6)}{\cos(248)}\right)$ $\lambda = 36.1^\circ$	Measurement location coordinates: (39°18'N, 3°6'E) $\lambda = 39.3^\circ$

## Calculating Longitude using Sunrise and Sunset Observations

The times of sunrise and sunset can be used to calculate longitude too, through some manipulation of the formulae for latitude explored above. As 12.00 = Solar Noon, it follows that:

$$LST_{sunrise} = 12 - \frac{\Psi}{15} \qquad LST_{sunset} = 12.00 + \frac{\Psi}{15}$$

Introducing these into the equation  $\varphi = 15 * (\text{GMT} - \text{LST})$  gives:

$$\varphi = 15 * \left( GMT_{sunrise} - \left( 12 - \frac{\Psi}{30} \right) \right) \qquad \varphi = 15 * \left( GMT_{sunset} - \left( 12 + \frac{\Psi}{30} \right) \right)$$

Values for NVM can be used to find  $\lambda$  through the Sunrise/Sunset formula, and this can be used in turn to find  $\Psi$  through the Daylight Angle formula. Substituting  $\lambda =$

$$\arccos\left(\frac{\sin(\theta)}{\cos(NVM)}\right) \text{ into } \Psi = 2\arccos(-\tan(\theta) * \tan(\lambda)) \text{ gives}$$

$$\Psi = 2 \arccos\left(-\tan(\theta) * \tan\left(\arccos\left(\frac{\sin(\theta)}{\cos(NVM)}\right)\right)\right)$$

Substituting this into  $\varphi = 15 * \left( GMT_{sunrise} - \left( 12 - \frac{\Psi}{30} \right) \right)$

$$\varphi = 15 * \left( GMT_{sunrise} - \left( 12 - \frac{2\arccos(-\tan(\theta) * \tan\left(\arccos\left(\frac{\sin(\theta)}{\cos(NVM)}\right)\right))}{30} \right) \right)$$

$$\varphi = 15 * GMT_{sunrise} - 180 + \arccos\left(-\tan(\theta) * \tan\left(\arccos\left(\frac{\sin(\theta)}{\cos(NVM_{sunrise})}\right)\right)\right)$$

Repeating this process for sunset gives :

$$\varphi = 15 * GMT_{sunset} - 180 - \arccos\left(-\tan(\theta) * \tan\left(\arccos\left(\frac{\sin(\theta)}{\cos(NVM_{sunset})}\right)\right)\right)$$

These two formulae allow us to calculate longitude using NVM measurements at sunrise and sunset, along with the time in GMT.

NVM (sunrise) =114°	Time of sunrise (GMT) =7.43	$\theta = -17.6^\circ$	Measurement coordinates: $\varphi=3.1^\circ$ [15]
$\varphi = 15 * 7.43 - 180 + \arccos \left( -\tan(-17.6) * \tan \left( \arccos \left( \frac{\sin(-17.6)}{\cos(114)} \right) \right) \right)$ $\varphi = 4.9^\circ$			
NVM (sunset) =248°	Time of sunset (GMT) =17.67		
$\varphi = 15 * 17.67 - 180 - \arccos \left( -\tan(-17.6) * \tan \left( \arccos \left( \frac{\sin(-17.6)}{\cos(248)} \right) \right) \right)$ $\varphi = 8.0^\circ$			

These methods allow us to calculate longitude at three different times in a day, instead of just one, with an error of +1.4% for the worst measurement using (5). However, in absolute terms (+4.9°) this is a more significant error than those obtained for latitude.

## Conclusion

Over the years, mathematical models for the solar system have become increasingly accurate, allowing for different ways to calculate an observer's location. This paper has explored three different methods of calculating latitude, using solar height at noon, hours of daylight and the bearing of sunrise and sunset. Furthermore, it has applied these formulas to expand the number of moments an observer can determine their longitude at, to include sunrise and sunset besides solar noon. These methods allow navigators to find their location with minimum equipment (requiring only a compass, sextant, and chronometer set at GMT).

The errors presented for measured values are small enough as to be useful in an

emergency, despite not being accurate enough for regular journeys.

Another important limitation is that sunrise and sunset measurements present ambiguity near the equator, but this can be resolved using other methods to corroborate the coordinates obtained.

A possible area for further investigation could be correcting the formulae to account for atmospheric refraction and the earth's varying orbital speed, reducing measurement errors. Moreover, the relationship between the Azimuth and Altitude of the sun (which relies on the Daylight Angle and the Sunrise and Sunset bearings) could be investigated, yielding a formula that would allow an observer to determine latitude and longitude at any time of day, with any solar position.

This model would also correct the Equator ambiguities without relying on multiple measurements. Lastly, other areas of navigation, such as stellar triangulation, and the mathematics of courses and headings on a moving vessel and their conversions to a two-dimensional map, could also be explored. These topics have many applications in other areas, such as maximising natural light in homes and

maximising yield in solar farms. Overall, the methods explored illustrate how mathematical models are highly useful to describe and predict real-life scenarios. Methods such as these have been a part of human development, travel and exploration throughout the years, and their usefulness in different situations ensures their continued use and study in the future.

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# Judgment, self-scrutiny and punishment: How Hieronymus Bosch's pessimistic worldview enabled a radical shift in pictorial tradition

Anna Keenan

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*At its core, this essay examines how Hieronymus Bosch's (circa 1450-1516) pessimistic Christian worldview enabled him to break into a new artistic paradigm through his unrelenting and unprecedented focus on human sin and Divine Judgment. Working in Northern Europe during the time of the Renaissance, Bosch made paintings so radical and complex that nothing of the likes has been seen before nor since. With an oeuvre characterized by a deeply rooted fascination with sin and evil, in the three works that I examine, I trace Bosch's understanding of humanity's predisposition toward sin, the consequent punishment and, finally, the origins of such evil.*

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Often employing imagery as ghastly as it is delightful, the meaning of Hieronymus Bosch's work is permeated with ambiguity, yet his fixation on human sinfulness clarifies one thing: the world he sees brims with pessimism. By elucidating how Bosch perceived and expressed humanity's sinful nature, its origins and its consequent punishment, I seek to explore the ways in which Bosch's pessimism was an innovative force in his painting. To do so I will draw on three of his works – *The Seven Deadly Sins and Four Last Things* (Fig. 1) (from here on referred to as *the Tabletop*), the *Vienna Last Judgment* triptych (Fig. 2) and *The*

*Garden of Earthly Delights* triptych (Fig. 3). Many scholars have already pointed to Bosch's pessimism, most notably for my purposes, Larry Silver who posits that 'Bosch's originality stems first from his own consciousness of evil in the world and of human sinfulness – his artistry thus begins with pessimism.' This is very insightful as it suggests that Bosch's fixation of evil and sin provided him with the space to move into a new pictorial paradigm. This dark fixation, alongside his departure from the tradition of depicting positive biblical themes and his pivot away from iconography by virtue of obscuring the link between his images and religious

1: Larry Silver, "Jheronimus Bosch and the Issue of Origins," JHNA 1:1 (Summer 2009): 12.

text, enabled him to generate innovative ways of seeing and painting the world. In essence, Bosch's primary concern was the retribution humanity faces as a result of their inherent sinfulness, which carved him out as a radical image-maker.

The *Tabletop* is a useful entry point into medieval Christian dogma and, by extension, the theological underpinnings of Bosch's pessimistic worldview. Split into quadrants, each corner features a decorative circle depicting either Death, Judgement, Hell, or Heaven. In the centre is a large circle comprised of concentric rings. The two central rings are generally regarded as representative of the Eye of God; the pupil contains a half-length figure of Christ and the inscribed words *Cave, cave, dominus videt* (Beware, beware, God sees). Radiating golden striations mark the start and end of the iris (Fig. 4), before giving way to the outer wheel in which the Seven Deadly Sins are rendered in quotidian, contemporary scenes – a feature which mark it out as distinct from earlier medieval tradition. Each section is fascinating, but the eye is particularly drawn to the bottom zone which represents *ira* as it is the most upright (Fig. 5). Men fight raucously in a drunken brawl outside a brothel, a sin



Figure One: *The Seven Deadly Sins and the Four Last Things*

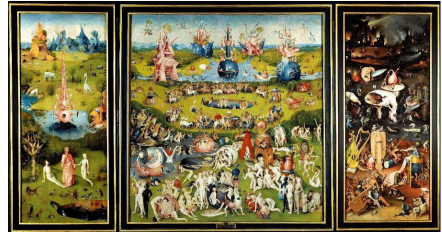


Figure Two: *The Garden of Earthly Delights*



Figure Three: *The Last Judgment*

2: Debra Strickland, Lecture 2: Bosch's Sins, 27.09.2022.

3: Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, II-II, q. 158, a. 1.

4: Walter S. Gibson, "Hieronymus Bosch and the Mirror of Man: The Authorship and Iconography of the "Tabletop of Seven Deadly Sins", OUD Holland, Vol. 87, No. 4 (1973): 213-214.

5: Gibson, "The Mirror of Man," 218.

6: Fra José de Sigüenza, "History of the Order of St Jerome," in *Bosch in Perspective* ed. James Snyder, 1973, (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1973), 35.



**Figure Four (Left):** *Eye of God, The Seven Deadly Sins and Four Last Things (detail)*. **Figure Five (Above):** *Ira (Wrath), The Seven Deadly Sins and Four Last Things (detail)*

which was traditionally criticised for its abandonment of reason. Sombre in tone, the panel reminds its viewer that sin is often wrapped up in the mundanity of life, in the here and now – a notion which is elevated by the composition’s similarity to a turning wheel: the temptation to sin is an inescapable cycle.

In relation to *The Tabletop* panel, Walter S. Gibson argues that by using the tradition of the Wheel of Vice and Virtue, reminiscent of works such as an early fifteenth-century fresco originally from a church in Inglestone, Bosch unites medieval ideas of God being both a witness of sinful mankind and a mirror reflecting the variety of his creation. This innovation, which he believes confirms

Bosch’s involvement in the design of the panel, even though it may have been painted by his workshop, enabled him to introduce an omniscient, scrutinising and inescapable God to monitor the sinfulness of humanity – a God that prompts the viewer to see and reflect on his own sinful soul. Reading the panel according to this twofold interpretation of what the individual is – sinful – and what they ought to be – pious – imbues it with didacticism that acts as a potent reminder of the viewer’s need to resist sin and live devoutly. Further, this introduction of self-examination opens up the possibility of a psychological reading of Bosch; commenting in 1605, Fra José de Sigüenza suggests that that

7: Peter Glum, “Divine Judgment in Bosch’s Garden of Earthly Delights,” in *The Art Bulletin* Vol. 58, No. 1 (March 1976): 45.

8: Ilsink, Matthijs; Koldewij A. M; Spronk, Ron et al, *Hieronymus Bosch: painter and draughtsman: catalogue raisonné*, (’s-Hertogenbosch: Bosch Research and Conservation Project, Brussels: Mercatorfonds, 2016): 290. 9 Hannah Kagan-Moore, “The Journey through the Judgment: Affective Viewing and the Monstrous in Bosch’s Vienna Last Judgment Triptych,” in *Critical and Historical Studies on the Prenatural*, Vol. 5, No.2 (2016): 134. 10 Larry Silver, “Crimes and Punishments.

Bosch’s Hells,” in *Bosch. The 5th Centenary Exhibition ed. Pilar Silva Maroto, 2016, (Madrid: Museo Nacional del Prado), 119. 11 Silver, “Issue of Origins,” 1.*

which distinguishes Bosch from other artists is his attempt to paint man 'as he is on the inside'. Although positive in the sense that Bosch promotes self-scrutiny, he expressed pessimism by virtue of what he assumes the viewer will find: that they are sinful by nature and destined for Hell if they turn away from God.

This reading heightens the pertinence of the four surrounding scenes. In the top left corner, we see a deathbed scene; the top right divine judgment; the bottom right, Heaven; and the bottom left, unsurprisingly due to his preoccupation with sin and the torturous punishments his later panels depict, Hell. Bosch shows the possible trajectory of the soul in the afterlife and enforces that there is a direct correlation between the life one lives and the soul's fate. Notably however, Heaven features infrequently in Bosch's painting and plays a subordinate role the few times it does. Although Heaven is seen in the bottom right corner of the *Tabletop*, which is the last thing the eye comes to when reading the panel from left to right, bottom to top, and therefore could suggest a certainty or finality in Heaven, I would say this is an insufficient visual reference to outweigh the sin and judgement that dominates the rest of the

panel. On the contrary, as Peter Glum has emphasised, Bosch attempts to represent the immanency of judgement using the deathbed and last judgment scenes as well as the resurrected Christ in the centre. It is not just the human proclivity to sin, but also God's watchful scrutiny of it and consequent chances of immanent judgment and eternal punishment that set the scene of Bosch's worldview, which is at best unforgiving and at worst terror-inducing.

This overwhelming presence of evil at the expense of the illuminating force of Heaven is similarly observable in the Vienna *Last Judgment* triptych. In the top third of the middle panel, Christ sits atop a throne surrounded by the Virgin Mary, John the Baptist and the twelve Apostles (Fig. 6). The rich blue orb delineates the celestial space from the world of creation engulfed entirely in the Hell of Judgement Day, and demons and monsters spread chaos and evil over the rest of the earth. The rest of the panel is given over to the evil that rises from humanity's sin, while the holy figures are remote and largely inaccessible by comparison, resulting in what Hannah Kagan-Moore describes as 'lopsided focus on the inevitability of Hell'.<sup>9</sup> This chimes with Larry Silver's

9: Ludwig von Baldass in Glum, "Divine Judgment," 49.

10: Silver, "Crimes and Punishments," 119.

11: Felipe de Guevara, "Commentaries on Painting," in *Bosch in Perspective* ed. James Snyder, (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1973), 28.

12: Toos de Peyer, "Grillen and Grylli: The Diableries of Jheronimus Bosch," in *Jheronimus Bosch, his Patrons and his Public* ed. Prof. Frances Kemp et al, 2003, ('s-Hertogenbosch: Jheronimus Bosch Art Centre), 215.

13: Debra Strickland, Lecture: Bosch's Hells (2), 18.10.2022



Figure Six: *God's Judgment, The Vienna Last Judgment (detail)*

reading, who suggests that Bosch favoured an emphasis on the presence of evil in the world over the accessibility of holy figures and image.<sup>10</sup> He also contends that this takes Bosch beyond an earlier established paradigm.<sup>11</sup> Unlike earlier religious works which generally focused on positive Biblical stories such as the Nativity and Adoration of the Magi, Bosch's images are ruled by evil and humanity's alienation from God. The consequence of the sins Bosch so meticulously paints become evident and arguably only mean anything of significance for the viewer, when seen in tandem with Bosch's imagined punishments. The right panel of *The Garden of Earthly Delights* is most famed for its depiction of punishment, teeming

with menacing monsters and torturous activities no less harsh than can be imagined. Stacked in front of a dark, fiery and army filled background, the tortures of Hell and its recipients are crammed into the pictorial space. Writhing anguished souls (medieval tradition used bodies to depict souls despite them being incorporeal to make their eternal torment more comprehensible), gather around a bizarre collection of objects including a giant skull, oversized instruments, huge ears with a protruding knife and the elusive Tree-Man (Fig. 7). Perhaps the epitome of punishment is the untraditional bird-like Satan (Fig. 8) who, wearing a chamber pot 'crown' and sat atop a wooden commode, eats and excretes human souls. The bizarre, undignified

9: Ludwig von Baldass in Glum, "Divine Judgment," 49.

10: Silver, "Crimes and Punishments," 119.

11: Felipe de Guevara, "Commentaries on Painting," in Bosch in Perspective ed. James Snyder, (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1973), 28.

12: Toos de Peyer, "Grillen and Grylli: The Diableries of Jheronimus Bosch," in Jheronimus Bosch, his Patrons and his Public ed. Prof. Frances Kemp et al, 2003, ('s-Hertogenbosch: Jheronimus Bosch Art Centre), 215.

13: Debra Strickland, Lecture: Bosch's Hells (2), 18.10.2022

anal theme dominates this detail; we see the soul being devoured also defecating birds, the souls below defecating coins and the green creature's mirrored buttocks. To further heighten this disturbing motif, much of this imagery can be linked to worldly sins. As Ludwig Von Baldass pointed out, plenty of the symbolism in the panel is related to the Seven Deadly Sins, an idea that Larry Silver has elaborated by arguing that Bosch's punishments fit their sinful crime. Silver demonstrates that what we see in the foreground of this panel is former worldly pleasures converted in Hell into mental and physical torment. For example, Silver suggests that the soul defecating coins represents the sin of *avaritia*, the vomiting soul represents *gula* and the female soul compliantly looking into the buttocks mirror under the control of a demon represents *vanitas*. Further, the monsters that populate Hell, which secured Bosch's status as 'inventor of devils and chimeras', add to the extent of this torturous punishment. Bosch drew on traditional grotesques or grylli that usually populated the marginalia of illuminated manuscripts, such as the Luttrell Psalter, incorporating his inventions into the core fabric of his work. The hybrid creature on the right side of this folio of the Luttrell Psalter (Fig. 9) for example, has an anthropomorphised dog-like face, a reptilian scaled back,



**Figure Seven:** *Skeleton, Ears and the Treeman, The Garden of Earthly Delights right panel (detail)*

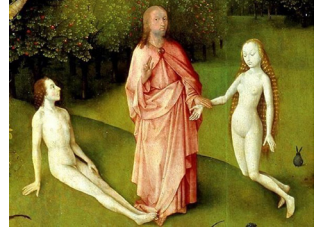


**Figure Eight:** *Satan, The Garden of Earthly Delights right panel (detail)*

14: Joseph Koerner, "Impossible Objects: Bosch Realism," *RES: Anthropology and Aesthetics*, No. 46, Polemical Objects (Autumn 2004), 95.

15: Rev 12:7-12

16: Silver, "Issue of Origins," 10. 20 Silver, "Issue of Origins," 12.



**Figure Nine (Left):** *Luttrell Psalter*. **Figure Ten (Center):** *Fall of the Rebel Angels*, *Vienna Last Judgment* (detail). **Figure Eleven (Right):** *God, Adam and Eve*, *The Garden of Earthly Delights* left panel (detail)

avian legs and feet and a vine-like tail. While Bosch’s monsters emulate earlier examples, he enhances them by individualising them and rendering them in an unprecedented level of realism. Further, unlike traditional archetypal monsters, they are identifiable according to what they do rather than what they look like. In this regard, in addition to knowing the sin that was committed, they also assist with their counterpart’s torture and blur the boundary between the sinner and the sinner’s torturer. In attempting to find a resolution to the dichotomy between Bosch’s monsters being impossible products of fantasy and truly convincing constructions, Joseph Koerner argues that their eccentric forms functioned so as to allow Bosch to depict Hell as he perceived it. This reinforces that they were tools with which Bosch could express two facets of his pessimistic outlook: both that the world is rife with sin and that their punishments are merciless. Therefore, punishment is personalised, almost intimate and operates in tandem

with life on earth – a reminder that God sees every individual’s sin in their lifetime, which would have been particularly unsettling for pious contemporary viewers.

I would now like to move away from Bosch’s depictions of punishment and instead examine his treatment of the origins of the evil that leads to such punishment. Arguing that he was motivated by the problem of evil, Larry Silver locates the origin of evil for Bosch was in the event of The Fall of the Rebel Angels. According to the Book of Revelation, having betrayed God, Lucifer and his angels are banished from Heaven following a war with Michael. Silver references the *Vienna Last Judgment* triptych as a key example of this – dark beasts, the embodiment of evil, cascade to earth at the top of the left panel (Fig. 10). A swarm of insect and toad-like creatures, many individually armed with swords, they engage in a battle of light versus dark below a hazy yet serene globe-holding God, as many

17: Hans Belting, *Hieronymus Bosch*, *Garden of Earthly Delights* (Munich: Prestel, 2002), 7.  
 18: *Ibid.*, 47-57.

convert into the monstrous rebel angels. Given that the Fall of the Rebel Angels precedes the events of Genesis and the Transgression, it is evident that Bosch regarded humanity as wholly alienated from the origins of their sin. Silver also contends that Bosch recognises this event as marking the beginning of history, which will end with the Last Judgment.<sup>20</sup> The worlds that Bosch paints operate within a pre-determined mechanism dictated by evil forces, which creates little room for human redemption. Here then, Hell begins in Paradise, is experienced on the Earth and ends in Hell; the promise of retribution is constant. Through joining the horizons across the panels of the Vienna Last Judgment and shifting from a lush landscape and blue skies in the left panel to a barren, fiery wasteland in the right panel, Bosch reinforces the darkness of the human condition and the inevitability of punishment.

In displacing the root of evil and locating it in the Fall of the Rebel Angels, theologically speaking, Eve is unshackled from the sole burden of the Original Sin of eating the apple from the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil. Thus, Bosch afforded himself the ability to present ambiguous versions of Biblical stories in other works, as seen in *The Garden of Earthly Delights*, in which the Transgression need not be depicted in order to represent evil in the world. This triptych is recognised for having not been wholly reliant on religious texts for the first time and therefore departed from conventional iconography. Consequently,

his images became inherently ambiguous, with a plurality of interpretations becoming possible. In the centre of the left panel, a Christ-like figure presents a demure-looking Eve, the embodiment of medieval beauty considering her golden flowing hair and pale, high breasts, to a resting Adam (Fig. 11), which signals the standard Creation story. However, unlike in the *Last Judgment*, in which the episodes of Genesis (the Creation, the Transgression and the Expulsion) unfold upwards, the Transgression and Expulsion are absent, as if they have not yet happened, thus destabilising the exact meaning of this panel and the rest of the

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*...it is evident that Bosch regarded humanity as wholly alienated from the origins of their sin*

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triptych. Yet, although the Fall of the Rebel Angels itself is not depicted, we see its consequences in death, desire and evil, which lurk in this panel: a cat has killed its prey (Fig. 12), toads are seen beside the pond at the bottom of the panel (Fig. 13) and an owl perches in the pink fountain (Fig. 14) (the latter two being particularly indicative of wickedness as they traditionally symbolised evil.) Thus, the central panel can be read in multiple ways in response to these ambiguities. For instance, one of these readings is that of Hans Belting, who suggests that, given the absence of the Transgression, the



central panel represents a counterfactual story of Genesis. For Belting, the triptych shows an imagined version of what the world would have looked like had Adam and Eve not disobeyed God, populated with their descendants who, in their frolicking and joyous copulation, embody innocent obedience rather than sin. He evidences this by referencing the figures in the foreground of the lower left of the central panel (Fig. 15), who gesture back toward Paradise as if acknowledging their ancestors. He claims that this is a world without death and while he postulates that motifs such as fruit could represent forbidden sexual desire, they instead represent natural fecundity. This reading distances the role of sin, perhaps even offering a glimpse of optimism in this image and, by extension, Bosch's view of the world. Yet, in my eyes, at its core this reading is in itself pessimistic: we witness a human race we cannot and will not know, a world that never existed. And, regardless of how one interprets the central panel, Bosch makes it clear through the right panel and the other works I have discussed, where the majority of humanity ends up regardless. I would suggest that no supposedly positive reading of his work can outweigh this or discount the force of his Hells. Ultimately, Bosch's gruesome Hell scenes eclipse other interpretations such that the only thing we are sure of in approaching his unsolvable puzzles is his pessimism.

In this essay, I have shown that Bosch expressed pessimism through his depictions of the world and humanity



Figure Twelve: *Cat with prey, The Garden of Earthly Delights (detail)*

dominated by sin, the result of which is a dark eschatological vision overflowing with an inevitable, torturous punishment. In examining the Prado Tabletop, I clarified Bosch's orthodox approach to humanity's sin and God's watch over it and drew on Gibson's ideas to ruminate on the self-scrutiny that Bosch innovatively advocated for. In his vision of Hell in the right panel of *The Garden*, his innovative monsters make it clear that man damns himself for his bad deeds by succumbing to irrational, worldly temptations. And, with the tortuous punishments fitting their worldly crimes, the extremity of this self-imposed punishment is unmissable for the viewer. Further, I have attempted to provide nuance by showing that this pessimistic worldview often bolstered his innovation. Out of his pessimism arose novel pictorial devices such as his monsters and, significantly, the ambiguity that characterise many of his images. Ultimately, many of Bosch's innovative pictorial motifs stemmed from his pessimism, which was itself a radical starting point for images of the time.



**Figure Thirteen:** *Frogs at pond, The Garden of Earthly Delights (detail)*

However, despite radically departing from tradition and inventing new modes of representation that was not reliant on text, he was evidently aware of and influenced by earlier image traditions. Moreover,

by locating the root of evil in the Fall of the Rebel Angels, a dark and pessimistic story, Bosch invented new modes of exploring Biblical stories.



**Figure Fourteen (Above):** *Owl, The Garden of Earthly Delights (detail)*. **Figure Fifteen (Right):** *Figures gesturing, The Garden of Earthly Delights (detail)*



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# How is trans geography scholarship reframing the concerns of body geographies as a field of enquiry?

Mollie Kelleher

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*This paper aims to explore how trans scholarship can be progressed in the field of body geographies by analysing and evaluating trans autoethnographies. I will consider work from Nordmarken to criticise the dualistic lens gender is sometimes considered under in body geographies, and how scholars argue Cartesian dualism played a pivotal role in upholding gender binarism. I will also discuss work from Doan, who details her experience with public bathrooms from a Foucauldian perspective, arguing sex-segregated bathrooms are a materialisation of disciplinary power. I will also discuss Johnston's work on the relation between 'privileged places' and the 'normative binaries' gender perspective and how this is present in the autoethnographies. I will then give criticism to these autoethnographies and find that personal narratives are valuable, but insufficient: there must be more scholars writing to progress the field, and scholars must theorise over these empirical experiences to develop them.*

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Gill Valentine expresses how 'the body is not just in space, it is a space' (2001, 23), illustrating why geography, a discipline that studies and conceptualises such complex notions of space and place, considers the body as an entity certainly worthy of further study and exploration. Body geographies are not simply concerned with 'inserting the body into geographical discourse' but rather 'making the body explicit in the production of geographical knowledge' (Longhurst, 2010, 103). The field of

enquiry involves examining different bodies in varying spaces but also examining bodies themselves. Some key geographers writing on the body include McDowell (2009) who explores working bodies, specifically examining the embodied experiences of working-class young men and their relationship to an expanded service sector (Wolkowitz, 2010), and Graham Rowles (2017) who writes extensively on older bodies and their changing identity in relation to space. Overall, this area of scholarship

investigates how different bodies are managed and how society operates through them.

Yet another group of body geographers, particularly feminist scholars, have explored how the gender binary is realised - and challenged - in and through bodies. Gender binarism refers to the 'common sense' that a body must be either male or female. As an example of challenging the gender binary, Judith Butler, a feminist philosopher and gender theorist, speaks to the 'disciplinary production of gender' (1990, 172), arguing that gender is often reified in binary terms and offers an alternative way of theorising gender through the concept of performativity. For Butler, transgressing the normative gender binary causes 'disorganisation and disaggregation of the field of bodies' (1990, 173).

However, bodies often perform and practice in certain ways to 'create the illusion of an interior and organising gender core' (ibid). There are many examples which can be drawn on to argue for the performativity of gender. The 'repeated stylisation of the body' (1990, 43) can take the form of gendered ways of speaking, interacting, walking and even sitting down: women are expected to cross their legs while men must sit with their legs apart. In terms of clothing, women are expected to

wear tighter fitting clothes to accentuate certain features of their body while men must opt for looser fitting clothes. These examples demonstrate 'gender as discursively produced' and fundamentally performative 'rather than inherent' (Francis, 2008, 220) – but these notions have become ingrained to such an extent that it has now become the instinctual acquired and custom way to behave. Thus, it is easy to see how this leads to distinct binary ways of thinking.

Addressing the binary imaginations of gender within this essay, it feels fitting to focus on trans people who are directly challenging these binary ways of thinking (Hyde et al., 2019). Therefore, returning to Butler's foundational thoughts, trans scholars have particularly criticised her theoretical ideas around gender due to lack of consideration of trans 'unruly' (Beauchamp, 2009, 359) bodies. However, Gerdes (2014) responds more positively, arguing that Butler's notion that gender 'take[s] place through bodies' (2014, 149) might be useful for transgender studies. By applying a transgender lens to Butler's work, Gerdes (2014, 149) argues that it holds the potential to 'open vital questions about the (re)formation of gender, subjectivity, bodies, and the body'. Gerdes' analysis of Butler's work highlights the possibility for developing an interdisciplinary connection between trans studies and

1: This essay recognises the importance of non-binary and gender-nonconforming geography, but will limit the scope of the discussion to specifically trans geography to ensure a detailed and thorough analysis.

body geographies, which has recently been actualised through the work of Todd (2021), March (2020), and Johnson (2016).

The recent overlap between trans scholarship and body geographies has considered how 'unruly transgender bodies' (Beauchamp, 2009, 359) experience space and place. This more contemporary consideration of trans bodies has become, as Todd (2021, 7) explains, 'a distinct body of work within geography which has explicitly explored the spatialities of trans lives' and within this essay, its emerging impacts on the subfield of 'body geographies' will be examined empirically and theoretically.

My overall argument will evidence how trans geography adds richness to body geographies by indicating what it has omitted in the past as well as highlighting new spaces and issues in need of examination. Both of these arguments will be framed and supported by analysing trans autoethnographies. Autoethnographers carry out 'cultural analysis through personal narrative' (Boylorn and Orbe, 2020, 1); this method 'dissolve[s] to some extent the boundary between authors and objects of representation, as authors become part of what they are studying, and research subjects are re-imagined as reflexive narrators of self' (Butz and Besio, 2009, 1660). This contemporary method allows the examination of less explored and sensitive topics, like that of trans geography (Jones et al., 2016). Not

only will such work support the idea of the enriching nature of trans scholarship but will also allow a discussion of a contemporary wider debate surrounding whether those who identify as transgender should be the only people considered to have a valid contribution to trans and trans-body geographies. Such deliberation will heavily shape my arguments. Firstly, Nordmarken's (2013) autoethnography will be analysed to criticise body geographies' sometimes dualistic lens when considering gender and sex. This will allow an examination of how trans scholarship is encouraging work on the body to move away from binary ways of thinking. Secondly, another way in which trans scholarship might refocus body geographies that reject the 'normative binaries' perspective of gender, is an emphasis on the importance of exploring 'privileged places' (Johnston, 2016, 674) for those who are cis-gendered, such as public bathrooms.

I will argue that trans scholarship achieves this by exploring how transgender people discipline themselves into certain ways of being and doing through acts of self-preservation. This claim will be developed by using Doan's (2010) lived account, and the necessity of recognising cis-gendered people's privilege in certain spaces will be reiterated through the lens of Michel Foucault's philosophy. To give balance to the contemporary debate regarding trans scholars, criticism will be shared concerning these two autoethnographies which will speak to

the wider controversy surrounding the importance of empirical and theoretical contributions to trans scholarship drawn from beyond the lived experiences of trans people.

Nordmarken's (2013) autoethnography of his experience as a transgender man adds not only important empirical material concerning what it is like to live as someone identifying as transgender on a daily basis but also adds a richness in general to the subfield of body geographies. He achieves this by commenting on an interaction between his 'unruly body' and another that is 'normatively gendered' (Nordmarken, 2013, 44) during a bus ride or in his words 'a geography and gendered transit' (ibid, 37) on his way to work one morning. He details his awareness of other bodies' response to his deviant body - 'the gender-normate to my left tightens her body movements' (ibid, 41) - and then he goes on to say how the passerby feels they must assign either 'Boy or girl? Man or woman?' (ibid, 40) to his body and when they cannot, it has this physical, uncomfortable reaction in their own body. Nordmarken concludes that his gender 'ambiguity' becomes a personal 'assault to their [the gender-normate's] understanding of themselves as omniscient' (ibid, 40).

Therefore, overall, the sharing of his lived experience exemplifies the binary conception of gender is still extremely pervasive and frequently encountered through everyday experiences.

Feminist scholars have argued that such binary ways of thinking emerged from Cartesian dualism, a philosophy which argues the mind and body are two distinct substances, which has allowed 'essentialist thinking about gender differences' (Konopka et al., 2019, 616) to prevail and dominate within society. Cartesian dualism played a pivotal role in producing and reproducing gender binarism due to this cartesian model of thinking that created splits such as 'mind/body, male/female and masculine/feminine' (Holland, 1995, 171).

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For example, Crewe's (2001) work on the 'besieged body' considers how bodies are managed and disciplined through 'fashion, fitness and food', but only cis-gendered bodies are included. The paper delves into the complex fashion decisions women and men have to make as well as breaking her analysis down into 'nails, hair [and] skin'. It is a comprehensive account of bodies and how society lives through them- but Crewe's (2001) analysis assumes the gender binary, critically omitting transgender bodies. Conversely, Nordmarken's (2013) account raises the issue of this arbitrary gender dualism, and

by doing so supports and perhaps tries to accelerate body geography's efforts to challenge the gender binary which is reproduced through work like Crewe's. Comparing Nordmarken and Crewe's work illustrates the difference that might be made if 'the voices of transgendered people themselves...[are] granted greater legitimacy than those of academic scholars' (Towle and Morgan, 2002, 491).

The value of trans scholarship using personal narratives from geographers of transgender identities becomes overt, rather than geographers making claims based on 'assumed lived experience' (Browne and Nash, 2010, 6) or exploring transgender lives through less intimate 'ethnographic portrayals' (Towle and Morgan, 2002, 469). Overall, Nordmarken's (2013) account adds richness to body geographies, encouraging a distance from binarised gender perspectives and underlines 'the power of people narrating their own stories of particular forms of prejudice' (Hopkins, 2020, 590).

These themes are also apparent in Doan's autoethnographic account concerning her encounters with 'the tyranny of gendered space' (2010). In the same way that Nordmarken's narrative raises important issues surrounding gender dualism, Doan's personal detailing of spaces that exclude certain kinds of bodies reframes and redirects the concerns of body geographies. As Doan speaks to the danger of using public bathrooms as

a transgender woman, she shares how 'each excursion for me into the most private of public gendered spaces risked discovery and a potential confrontation with others outraged by my perceived transgression' (2010, 643), opening up a perspective in body geographies that Johnston (2016) affirms has not yet been addressed. Johnston's (2016, 674) confirmation that 'geographers are yet to consider the normative and privileged places associated with being cisgendered' demonstrates the value of accounts like Doan's.

Body geographies frequently consider the connection and experiences between the environment and our 'sensuous' (Valentine, 2001, 33) bodies, thus adding this perspective from a transgender body is incredibly important because the relationship of a person to space differs significantly depending on their gender. To ground this argument, Doan (2010) details, as a transgender woman, how she chose to shower at midnight whilst sharing female bathrooms at a college conference, speaking to Michel Foucault's concepts of regulatory and disciplinary power. Foucault developed nuanced, pathfinding theories regarding the production of knowledge and associated power relations during the late 20th century. Specifically, he developed the idea that there are different technologies of disciplinary and regulatory power in his 1976 book titled 'Society Must Be Defended' where he refers to a form of control that 'train[s] individuals by working at the level of the body itself' and



subsequently 'achieve[s] overall states of equilibrium or regularity' (Foucault, 2003, 246). To explain this notion further, Foucault wrote extensively on disciplinary power in the context of prisons and how such spaces, with their panoptic design and constant threat of surveillance, control those in these environments (Sevilla-Buitrago, 2016). Bender-Baird (2016, 985) argues for another space that shares these disciplinary qualities, declaring that 'sex-segregated bathrooms are conceptualised technologies of disciplinary power'.

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*Body geographies frequently consider the connection and experiences between the environment and our 'sensuous' bodies...*

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Under this Foucauldian lens, and adopting Valentine's (2001, 34) position that 'disciplinary power is most effective when it is not eternal but is exercised by, and against, the self', one could determine that Doan's method of avoiding the female bathrooms and exercising judgement of when to enter this space demonstrates her disciplining of self as she strongly enforced this self-surveillance to avoid an uncomfortable situation in such a gendered space. In this instance, one sees the regularising and disciplinary power that society imposes on people's

display of their gender— linking back to Butler's fundamental theory of gender performativity. It is this idea that because society may not have observed Doan as performing and acting in a way that conforms with how other women act within this bathroom setting, she had to discipline herself to avoid openly displaying and diverging from instilled expectations and perhaps preventing subsequent scrutiny from others. Doan's (2010) narrative gives an insight into the sort of strategies that those identifying as trans have to employ to protect themselves from being identified as 'out of place'.

Todd (2022, 771) confirms this notion, asserting that 'trans people are exhausted by their everyday surroundings and encounters', eminently accentuating the privilege of being cis-gendered in such gendered spaces. The Foucauldian lens that Bender-Baird (2016) applies to her analysis of public bathrooms reinforces the extreme behaviours that are adopted as part of trans people's self-preservation as they navigate the significant prevalence of binary gender imaginaries. This makes Johnston's (2016, 674) earlier call for an exploration of these 'privileged places' even more imperative. Research in body geographies could be further developed, offering a different perspective for examining public places. Thus, one can see how an intimate exploration of exclusionary spaces, through the lens of trans experiences is important to progress as well as enrich body geographies. But how does this

important acknowledgement sit within broader debates about how trans geographies should be studied and represented?

As evidenced above, academic work by trans scholars is indispensable to trans scholarship. However, these accounts of lived experience do not always directly develop theoretical frameworks in trans or body geographies. For example, in Nordmarken's (2013) autoethnography, there is a distinct lack of overarching analytical points made that speak to the wider geographical concerns. Thus, it is difficult to envisage how such scholarship could progress the field or initiate new lines of enquiry and prompt future research.

Agerfalk (2014, 596) asserts the importance of how 'empirical findings need to be interpreted and related to theoretical concepts' highlighting the importance of theoretical contributions in order to add purpose to a paper and allow its application to a body of work. To ground this further, Drager (2019) also criticises that trans scholarship is not currently contributing on a theoretical level; he reasons that it is too 'nice' (ibid, 104). This risks trans theory becoming severely limited and ineffectual, as well as possibly facing stagnation. More specifically and to give a pertinent example, he details how 'it would be absolutely unfounded to imagine a trans studies scholar saying that perhaps, actually, trans children should not be

given hormones. As a field we do not allow for those kinds of disagreements' (ibid, p104. ). Chu (2019) elaborates on this idea, confirming how those types of disagreements are what allow theories to be born, outlining an explanation of why theoretical implications are missing in personal narratives concerning trans geography. Drager (2019, 104) also shares how 'among trans scholars... no-one wants to talk about how anticlimactic surgery really is or how dysphoria maybe never goes away' in fear of slowing momentum in this field (ibid).

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This reiterates the negative implications of this field being dominated by trans scholars as it will not only restrict new theories arising but also, as Drager substantiates, key parts of transgenderism will be missing.

These ideas weaken my above claim that trans scholarship's call for lived experienced accounts will add a definite richness to 'body geographies'; instead the weighing up of this contemporary debate has evidenced how trans geographies, reported on in this way, does not allow for disagreement and thus does not communicate new ideas. In

addition, the fact that certain discussions, for example, surrounding dysphoria, are prohibited, gives a general sense of stagnation to trans scholarship. Despite the fact that personal narratives certainly add an authenticity to scholarship, and it is easy to agree with Towle and Morgan's (2002) earlier assertion regarding the legitimacy of transgendered people's accounts, exemplified by Nordmarken's and Doan's insights, it is not enough. Too much emphasis on trans people's lived experience within this scholarly work slows progress and evolution for body geographies as this emerging field of inquiry. Doan's (2010) scholarship will similarly be evaluated.

In support of Drager and Chu's (2019) earlier outlined limitations of trans scholars' work, Doan's (2010) autoethnographic account can also be criticised for its lack of theoretical contribution. Her experiences raise important questions that are relevant in relation to Foucault and Butler's seminal theories but the accounts themselves do not add any new theoretical ideas. Comparing Doan's (2010) work with that of Browne's (2004) allows one to see the restricted contribution that solely empirical work gives to this type of geography. Browne (2004) has used a plethora of trans people's experiences when using public bathrooms, like Doan's (2001) account, to establish the new term 'genderism' and explore surrounding theoretical work. Browne (2004, 342) defines her new term as 'the discriminatory encounters individuals

experience when they are read as the opposite sex than the one they identify with or they are 'read' as out of place in sites that are single sexed'; this is very insightful. Not only does Browne's work include empirical evidence of trans people's daily lives but also it builds on such experiences to create an idea rooted in those authentic accounts. By providing this term to experiences that often go unnamed as well as unnoticed, it 'highlights that there is hatred and pain associated with maintaining gender norms' (Browne, 2004, 336) granting greater attention and examination to experiences that transgender bodies have to withstand.

Such a contribution will certainly contribute to growth within trans scholarship as well as 'body geographies' more broadly by creating new lines of enquiry and research. This is important because this field of inquiry must become well-developed and comprehensive in order to acquire an understanding of the full extent of human nature and behaviour that goes beyond the set assumption of the gender binary (Towle and Morgan, 2002). Towle and Morgan (2002, 491) even go so far as to say that examining trans bodies will 'shed light on normative gender relations' in a powerful and remarkable way. Therefore, overall, Browne's concept of 'genderism' has highlighted that personal narratives are insufficient, there needs to be other scholars writing on trans bodies in order to form theories and catalyse progress in this area of work.

To conclude, it is clear that trans geographies can make a significant contribution to 'body geographies'. Work by trans people authentically sharing their lived experiences gives a profound insight into how society lives through a non-binary body. Doan (2001) and Nordmarken's (2013) personal narratives pressed body geographies to move away from previous work underpinned with gender dualisms and unearth new areas such as cis-gendered bodies' privilege in certain spaces, exemplified by Doan (2001) and Bender-Baird's (2016) discussion of public bathrooms. Speaking more to the wider debate at play here, autoethnographies and work by trans people are vital for trans scholarship and 'body geographies' in an empirical sense. Circling back to Towle and Morgan's (2002, 491) comment that 'the voices of transgendered people themselves should be granted greater legitimacy than those of academic scholars' should

be affirmed as these perspectives offer body geographies a fresh perspective. However, in order to develop trans scholarship and body geographies in general, the focus of trans geographies should be rebalanced so as to make more significant theoretical interventions. One could assuredly say that trans geographies must build on and theorise these empirical experiences, developing and multiplying the theoretical trajectories made possible by work such as Browne's (2004) on 'genderism'. Nevertheless, the way that Doan and Nordmarken's personal narratives have contested body geographies concerns and attempted to reframe its perspective should not be downplayed. Instead, the opportunity for great progress and growth within these fields of inquiry that could be achieved if such empirical work was combined with theoretical contributions from other scholars should be the take-home message.

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# “You paid 200,000 francs for this shit?” The Art of Friendship

James Murdoch

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*This article considers the application of Lacanian psycho-semiotics to Yasmina Reza’s, Art, as a means of understanding the influence that aesthetic judgements wield as markers of social class: the defining actor in the balance of the play’s interpersonal relationships. In viewing the focus of their dispute, a recently acquired artwork, as a metaphor for the unconscious (as defined under the Lacanian psychological model), it becomes apparent the play’s structure strongly reflects that of Lacan’s analysis of Edgar Allan Poe’s The Purloined Letter. This understanding grounds a potentially lofty discussion of ‘high’ art as one that carries real-world, non-literary ramifications, contextualising the differing socio-economic power held by each of the characters and exposing the internal pressures that that imbalance exerts.*

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Reza’s globally celebrated Art (1994) critiques the notion of what is, and is not, discerning taste, and the social clout it allows its arbiters to wield. In considering the moralisation of aesthetic values through the explosive relationship of two friends, Marc and Serge, and the pacifying neutrality of their mutual friend, Yvan it considers “opinion” in all its forms: entrenched and reformed, weaponised and conciliatory. The play is centred around a dispute, prompted by Serge’s acquisition of, what is deemed to be, a completely monochromatic white painting. The perception of what purchasing this minimalist painting represents in Serge, affronts Marc’s notion of what friendship, and specifically, their friendship, is – a distaste which he voices

through the guise of opposing cultural sensibilities. This article will consider the trio’s relationships through the lens of Lacan’s post-structuralist psychoanalysis, exploring the recognition of the *i* (or self) and how it is opposed by the other – as portrayed in the veiled discussions that ensue over the Antrios – and the repetitive cycles of dependence, rejection, and reconciliatory renewal it brings about. Through a Lacanian lens, the manner in which an inanimate object can act as such a psychological driver of the characters’ behaviour will be considered.

Lacan’s definition of consciousness, as per his mirror-phase theory, is split into the imaginary and symbolic orders:

the imaginary (to be understood as the adverbial of "image") is the recognition of self-image, the moment that enunciates our intrinsic understanding of self upon first seeing our reflection; the symbolic is the secondary imposition of linguistic and cultural influences upon the imaginary through our perception of others' actions. The initially idealised recognition of the self as an image is, however, interrupted by the identification of the secondary other's image:

*C'est ce moment qui décisivement fait basculer tout le savoir humain dans la médiatisation par le désir de l'autre, constitue ses objets dans une équivalence abstraite par la concurrence d'autrui, en fait du je cet appareil pour lequel toute poussée des instincts sera un danger...*

It is in the understanding of the split between the imaginary, whether that be self-image - literal, metaphorical - or another's (henceforth to be referred to as the image), the active external influence of the symbolic, and the recognition of how that ties us to our reality, that reveals our unconscious thoughts and desires, and thus our behavioural motivations. In his eyes, this could, << accompagner le patient jusqu'à limite extatique du <<Tu

es cela>>, ou se révèle à lui le chiffre de sa destinée mortelle >>. In theory, it potentially offers to exalt the human condition from an ever-searching fallibility towards a self-realised certainty and directionality.

Lacan's method of unpicking a subject's psychology rests on Freud's notion of repetition compulsion; the behavioural tendency to unconsciously re-enact past experiences, either as situational reoccurrences or as an underlying experiential lens that guides other conduct. This repetition occurs involuntarily as the unconscious is unaffected by the ultimate human motivator - desire for pleasure, or the avoidance of displeasure: the pleasure/unpleasure principle. The Lacanian model diverges from that of the Freudian, in not considering the ego (to be understood in a Lacanian sense as the image) as the combination of our base desires (the id) and competing moral inhibitors (the superego), and our thoughts (the unconscious), to be a confluent entity. Lacan models this structure semiotically: our i acts as the signifier; the ego forms the signified. Consequently, Lacan purports that the unmoderated thought processes of our i (unconscious) come

1: Jacques Lacan, 'Le Stade Du Miroir Comme Formateur de La Fonction Du Je,' in *Écrits* (Paris, France: Editions du Seuil, 1966), 94.

2: Ibid, 98. \*It is this moment that decisively tips the whole of human knowledge into mediatization through the desire of the other, constitutes its objects in an abstract equivalence by the co-operation of others, and turns the I into that apparatus for which every instinctual thrust constitutes a danger.

3: Ibid, 99.

4: Ibid, 100. \*may accompany the patient to the ecstatic limit of 'Thou art that,' in which is revealed to him the cipher of his moral destiny.'



to the fore when the conscious being (ego) is at rest, the causality (or repetition compulsion) linking one unconscious thought to another, forming the chain of signification. This chain of signification reveals our unadulterated being.

Lacan famously exemplifies this chain of signification in analysing the psychologically reflective characters and scenarios found throughout Poe's *The Purloined Letter*. The short story charts the manner in which (previously elusive) stolen correspondence is unearthed thanks to the detective's consideration of the thief's psyche. In this instance, the thief had referentially mirrored the owner's own method of concealment: leaving it in plain sight. Just as Lacan considered Poe to have 'used a written letter as a metaphor of the signifier,' which 'determines the acts and destiny of the subjects', Reza employs the Antrios painting as the signifier in *Art*, an inanimate object from which the behaviour of the on-stage characters stems. The Antrios, as an imaginary

metaphor for the characters' individual psyches, acts as the unconscious - the signifier - and the behaviour (as a product of the ego) that this metaphor inspires is representative of the symbolic order - the signified. Jaccomard agrees with this reading in considering the Antrios, << un écran vide sur lequel projeter nos désirs, écran qui signale la vacuité du désir, tout en étant un objet palpable qui fait écran >>. Therefore, the judgements they make in their descriptions of the Antrios are tantamount to their judgements of each other's images, and what they learn from these judgements in relation to their self-image is tantamount to a chain of signification. The differences exposed in this chain of signification serve to heighten the friction within the plot, prompting vehement outbursts from the characters. The realisations they have about their own, and other's identities, are painful, and are therefore punitively weaponised against one another in order to prompt reassurances of their own self-images and reassessments of the other's opinions of them – the projection of the

5: Bice Benvenuto, Roger Kennedy, "The Purloined Letter" (1956), in *The Works of Jacques Lacan: An Introduction* (London, England: Free Association Books, 1986), 91-92.

6: Bruce Fink, 'Reading "The Instance of the Letter in the Unconscious," in *Lacan to the Letter: Reading Écrits Closely* (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 2004), 102.

7: Ibid.

8: Benvenuto and Kennedy, 'The Purloined', 92-93.

9: Ibid, 102.

10: Ibid, 99.

11 : Helene Jaccomard, "Art," in *Les Fruits de La Passion: Le Théâtre de Yasmina Reza* (Bern, Switzerland: Peter Lang AG, 2013), 122.

\*An empty screen on to which we can project our desires, a screen that signifies the emptiness of desires, all whilst being a palpable object that acts as a screen.'

12: Benvenuto and Kennedy, 'The Purloined', 95.

other's image. Just as in *The Purloined Letter*, '[...] the ascendancy which [a character] derives from the situation is not so much a function of the use of the letter but of the role it constitutes for him.' They equally utilise relational fault lines within the group to this end. Due to the imbalanced numbering of the cast in *Art*, dominant or submissive behavioural stances are conferred by the ever-changing majority's opinion on the painting. Thus, the shifting power structures allow each of the characters in turn to display their dissatisfaction with the friendship, as moderated by the Antrios. Whomever holds the greater sway within the politics of the group at the time of each revelation uses it as a triumphant prop to their own original (pre-argument) image; whomever does not, has theirs retributively diminished, by consequence. It is through this dramaturgical chain of signification that they come to garner a true understanding of themselves and one another, and of their own and of each other's identities and values.

As per the model set by Lacan in his analysis of Poe's plot structure, *Art* can be viewed as having a composition of several behaviourally separate 'basic scenes' - although in this case, three not two. These scenarios can also be categorised in this way as the action of the plot is based on the degrees of "blindness" which the characters have towards one another - that "blindness" being borne from another character's deceptive behaviour; and the degree to which the deceived character is "blinded"

being relative to how psychologically attune they are in observing the deceiver's actions. The first behavioural pattern (which encompasses the majority of the play's action) we can refer to as the dishonest escalation; the second, the truthful revelation (the point of greatest relational clarity); and the third, the dishonest mediation (a lapse back towards blindness in order to save the friendship).

The dishonest escalation centres around Serge and Marc disputing the Antrios' cultural and financial worth, and in doing so, attributes moral or immoral qualities to its aesthetic - yet another element of the painting the pair cannot agree on. Serge is perhaps the only character whose ekphrastic (visually descriptive) assessments we can trust. Yvan does not have the cultural understanding to descriptively do the work justice, whilst Marc "colours" its true appearance in his hatred of it as a visual marker for Serge's cultural progression. They are both blind to it, and therefore, each other. This descriptive flux of visual reality (of the imaginary metaphor) is reflective of their volatile states as their i's, their unconsciouss, and their self-images come under attack. For instance, Marc's perception of himself is changed when he realises the true meaning of Serge considering him the perfect pair to his partner, Paula, << [...] << condescendant >> , << ferme au monde >> ... << fossilisé >>...>>. It is the friction between his i and self-image, and the change that the other's image renders to his self-image

that hurts him. Only in understanding the parallel nature of what Antrios represents to the bachelor, Serge, and what his partner, Paula, represents to him, can Marc finally see the true literal and false figurative visual nature of the work as a projection of both Serge and his own unconscious in the argument. However, this revelation is told through the lens of his own field of comprehension, and therefore explains his superimposition of a non-existent figurality on the subject of the work (this being the only way for him to understand it as a traditionalist).

The dishonest escalation, while principally founded on a disagreement surrounding the positive or negative aesthetic value of the work (and its subtext), is further inflamed by the placating dishonesty of Yvan. Yvan does not let the guard of his ego down in order to express the true feelings he has that stem from his unconscious. Serge is convinced by Yvan's mirrored responses, << Ces couleurs me touchent >>, and that he therefore must resonate with the painting. Serge is consequently blind to the situation, and consequently, to Serge's psyche. This blindness, caused by a misunderstanding of Yvan's true character and motivations, enables Serge to continue his argument with Marc. Serge believes he holds the

cards in this argument (not only in light of his own self-accredited greater cultural expertise, but in having an ardent supporter in tow) and as such, believes that his shared view of the Antrios' aesthetic value must be correct.

Marc is fully aware of Yvan's true lacklustre opinion – in how he, from a mere description of the work values it as being worth, << zéro centimes >>, and in the compounding response of << Non >> to << Tu es ému par le tableau de Serge? >> when he has viewed it. In asking, << Tu reçois en cadeau de mariage ce tableau. Tu es content? Tu es content...? >> Marc demonstrates a telling understanding that Yvan would, in fact, not be happy, despite his non-responsive silence to the question, and later his dishonesty in saying that he had come to appreciate the painting. This reality is confirmed to us, the audience, in the dramatic irony of Yvan's soliloquy, that, << Je ne suis pas content mais d'une manière générale, je ne suis pas un garçon qui peut dire, je ne suis content >>. Marc can understand, by way of Yvan's non-committal symbolic response to the imaginary metaphor, his greater psychology at large: Yvan is unsure of his own self-image (as exemplified by his reliance on his psychiatrist, Finkelzohn) and is thus unable to give a consistent opinion. It is this inconsistency that initially

13: Benvenuto and Kennedy, 'The Purloined', 94.

14: Ibid, 97.

15: Yasmina Reza, *Art* (Paris, France: Gallimard, 2009), 98. \*'Condescending,' 'narrow-minded,' 'fossilised.'

16: Ibid, 72 \*'I find these colours touching.'

riles Marc and results in the casting aside of his conciliatory false affirmation of the work to Serge, that exacerbates every other argumentative social interaction the trio have. Marc moralises this non-response to the artwork, considering it to be worse to have no opinion than an opposing one, as eventually, does Serge. This, by extension, submits Yvan's psyche to moral scrutiny, due to the painting's role in the play as the signifier; a metaphor for the character's individual psychologies, as told through their visual analyses of it. Under this rubric, having a decisive outlook asserts the presence and parameters of one's being. As noted by Jacomard, Marc (misogynistically) feels that this non-opinion towards the artwork is, by extension, representative of Yvan having lost his vitality, his eccentricity, to the women in his life. Just as he has lost Serge to the << Gotha des grands amateurs d'art >> that would appreciate the Antrios, he has lost Yvan to a self-centred hysteria brought on by his submissive relationships to women. He is not really an <<hybride>> because of his indecisiveness towards the Antrios, but for what that indecisiveness

represents: a passiveness in his personal and professional lives, and by extension, an underlying effeminacy. Marc, in opposing the values that underlie Serge's acquisition (and positive opinion) of the Antrios, must therefore also question Yvan's moral state in wanting to continue his friendship with Serge (given what these values represent), presuming that, << si Yvan tolère que Serge ait pu acheter une merde blanche vingt briques, c'est qu'il fout de Serge >>. It is both his lack of gumption and his willingness to straddle a moral quandary that marks Yvan as lost to him. Marc, at this stage, has full sight of Yvan, yet a false sight of Serge in believing that his views and interests are maliciously contrived (which they are not). He feels justified in his attack on Yvan in light of his own contrary decisive stance, and consequent dominant social position. This behaviour could arguably be seen as relationally weak as it results in the distancing of himself socially, whereas Yvan performs a balancing act in order to maintain a level of social cachet. In the cultural environment of the play, however, he is rich in the primary social currency: integrity to one's own outlook.

17: Reza, Art, 26. \*'Bugger all.'

18: Ibid, 44. \*'You felt a resonance?...'

19: Ibid.\*'You get this painting as a wedding present. Does it make you happy?... Does it make you happy?...'

20: Ibid. \*'I'm not the sort of person who can say I'm happy, just like that.'

21: Ibid, 81.

22: Jacomard, 'Art', 133.

23: Reza, Art, 28 \*'one of the great connoisseurs.'

24: Ibid, 76 \*'amoeba.'

25: Reza, Art, 20. \*'If Yvan tolerates the fact that Serge has spent two hundred grand on some pieces of white shit, it's because he couldn't care less about Serge.'

At the height of the trio's division, Serge similarly reaches this evaluation of Yvan in saying, << Tu as remarqué que tu ne parles que de toi >>. Serge's judgement of this behavioural motivation demonstrates a new understanding of Yvan's psyche that has been exemplified to him through Yvan's contradictory discussions of the painting to both Marc and he - the painting acting once again as an imaginary metaphor. His friends provide him with the social role of being << le farfadet >> from which he garners pleasure and self-worth. They are <<les deux seules personnes dont la présence me procurait un embryon de satisfaction >>. Serge has come to understand Yvan wants to be << le grand réconciliateur du genre humain >> for his own gain, to make his dissatisfying life bearable in moderating the lives of others – the only dominant position he has in life. Thus, he has gained partial sight of the situation, and of his friend's psychological outlook and motivational drivers.

The truthful revelation is prompted by Serge's discovery of Yvan's true opinion, that they had been arguing over << une merde blanche >>, that he has agreed

with Marc all along. In this discovery, Serge achieves the same clarity that Marc has been in possession of since the first act. It is only in Yvan shedding his neutral stance, in adopting an opinion instead of a non-opinion, that the dishonest mediation can take place. Yvan's neutrality, having gained a sense of honesty, and shed its aggravating quality, materialises itself (in what could be considered a secondary imaginary metaphor for the unconscious) as the felt-tip pen Serge requests from him to propose a truce with Marc. Serge's acquisition of the painting had been tantamount to a rejection of Marc's tutelage. Marc had felt that he no longer held a cultural superiority over Serge and that the type of fondness he had for him would have to be re-evaluated in light of that shift: from storge to philia. The Antrios' blankness was representative of cultural theories that Marc had no comprehension of, nor appreciation for, as a traditionalist who favoured academic painting. Peacock considers this stance to be, 'mimeticism' - as evidenced by the, '[...] repeated ironic taunts with regard to deconstruction [which] give evidence of unreflective nominalism

26: Ibid, 110. \*'Are you aware that you've talked about nothing other than yourself?'

27: Ibid, 113. \*'the joker.'

28: Ibid, 112. \*'The only two people whose presence guaranteed some spark of satisfaction.'

29: Ibid, 38. \*'the great reconciler of the human race.'

30: Ibid, 114. \*'A white piece of shit.'

31: Noel Peacock, 'Unmaking Mimesis: Yasmina Reza's 'Art,' in Reverberations: Staging Relations in French since 1500, ed. by Michael Brophy Phyllis Gaffney Gallagher (Dublin, Ireland: University College Dublin Press, 2008), 150.

32: Peacock, 'Unmaking Mimesis,' 150.

rather than any grasp of aesthetic theory, which contradicts his self-image as an archetypal mimeticist.'

In essence, Marc subscribed to the notion that art can only copy nature or other artworks, as typified by the easily palatable painting, *A View of Carcassonne* that he hangs in his own home, in the Flemish style. This belief meant that he could not grasp the concepts behind the Antrios' minimalism.

The work, therefore, not only offended his artistic tastes, but the falsehood of his own self-image as a highly cultivated figure. Serge's ability to appreciate the work exposed the reality of this inferiority not only within himself, but within the balance of friendship: the self-image transformed by the secondary influence of the other. To strike a truce with Marc, Serge lets him draw on the painting, making it mimetic, figurative; he transforms the offensively elusive object into a work that will sit within Marc's frame of comprehension. However, in order to rekindle the friendship, he must blind Marc in concealing the fact that he was aware of the felt-tip being washable – that the damage to the Antrios will be repairable. Similarly, Yvan maintains his role as the group's moderator in hiding the same key detail from Marc, it being his pen. Thus, the snow which Marc considers the now

figurative blankness to represent, << [...] est devenue une métaphore de l'amitié entre les trois hommes. En apparence, innocente et rationnelle, au fond, impure et mensongère >>. The characters' dominant and submissive stances still exist, but are inverted: Marc is now the submissive party through his ignorance to the situation; the Antrios still stands in as a conduit for their psyches, and the behaviour which stems from it represents their altered egos.

Reza fully illustrates the potential for an artistic work to be a catalyst of seismic change, whether that be political or personal, through her comedic tragedy; the Antrios being transformed into a silent partner in the exchange, a near fourth character. It aptly evaluates not just the aesthetic debate of what is beauty, but the magnetism that lies beneath. In arguing over an expressionless form, the characters speak for it, imbuing a meaning and symbolism outwith the standard art criticism of minimalist works. It is a self-critical review. Given the art world's patron and market-led business model, issues of class, and consequently, exclusionary discernments of taste are inseparable from the production of art itself. The cycle of rejection, retribution, and rebirth throughout this play exposes the rot beneath this reality at a human level.

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# Responsibility to Protect or Licence to Plunder?

Sharath Nambiar

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*Responsibility to Protect (R2P) is a relatively new international norm that permits state intervention in cases of gross humanitarian violations. While R2P was designed to protect civilians from harm, this paper argues that it is an uneven trade-off for deconstructing state sovereignty. By assessing the moral and practical ramifications of R2P, one can find the prioritisation of vague liberal ethics over institutionalised legal frameworks comes at a grave cost to efficient responses to conflict. Subjective interpretations of morality increase the selectivity of the doctrine which is further corrupted by the political, financial, and militaristic concerns of the intervening countries. This paper also explores the internal legitimacy of states and finds that R2P obfuscates a state's moral duty. R2P provides the West the ability to self-legitimise and control the narrative while failing to address the root causes of conflict. Therefore, it is crucial to explore alternatives to R2P that could better address the challenges of humanitarian intervention.*

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Our modern conception of the state is predicated on our engagement with and the study of war. War, as we understand it to be, was predominantly defined by armed violence until recent years. This violence was regimented and justified under the banners of god, territory, and/or human greed. By justifying war, the modern state was able to legitimise its use of force and enforce epistemological and moral hierarchies upon its enemies (Tilly, 1985). With time these even gave way for justifying military interventions in third-party conflicts where those victimised shared an ethnicity, religion, or other immutable factor to those intervening (Heuser, 2022). Although post the Cold War there has been a trend to justify war

not on state needs or divine instruction, but rather on humanitarian grounds based on the inherent value of human dignity, the global political system has been moving towards a new universal set of moral principles grounded in individual human rights (Jemirade, 2020), (Jahn, 2021). This contested the realist conception of state sovereignty prevalent after World War II due to the increasing number of conflicts and atrocities being committed and the impact of the holocaust still prevalent in discussion surrounding law, morality, and just action.

During this wave, a new political norm has emerged known as the Responsibility to Protect (hereby known as R2P). Its intentions were simply

to provide the international community with legitimacy in superseding state sovereignty to protect human rights and prevent the four mass atrocity crimes: genocide, war crimes, crimes against humanity, and ethnic cleansing. R2P allowed for use of force, giving rise to humanitarian interventions to combat the rising number of such atrocities globally. The main issue R2P posed to the international world order was an introduction of morality into political decisions. This article shall engage with a few of the larger implications of this new justification including the obvious infringement of sovereignty, the lack of state consent, the question of norm vs law, and both the subjective nature of and effects of its implementation. This article shall limit its analysis to Jus Ad Bellum, and shall also focus its attention on the collective action pillar of R2P rather than its preventative legs.

### **Morality, Selectivity, and Legitimacy**

As introduced above, the first and main implication of a humanitarian justification of war is its prioritisation of individual rights over state stability and self-determination. It strives to use morality as a basis for deciding which wars are just and unjust which can allow for irregular applications and unfair treatment of those materially oppressed. Although before discussing the pitfalls of subjective morality, it would be beneficial to understand the key pillars of R2P to effectively engage with the norm. Acting as a response to the horrors

in the former Yugoslavia and Rwanda, R2P is not just a justification for military conflict, but its first pillar enshrines an international responsibility for every country to protect its own population from the four mass atrocity crimes. A failure to protect one's own citizens calls for the second pillar to ask the international community to assist and encourage meeting the above responsibility. Finally, if a state conclusively fails to meet its obligations, R2P allows for appropriate collective action to respond to the crisis

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*Acting as a response to the horrors in the former Yugoslavia and Rwanda, R2P is not just a justification for military conflict...*

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at hand (Bellamy, 2012). This action often manifests itself as a military intervention sanctioned by the international community.

Limiting the R2P norm to the four mass atrocity crimes allows for states with greater global influence (i.e. the Great Powers) to both define and act upon their own constructed moral codes. Key among the moral goals of the West is the goal of global democratisation and liberalisation (Chandler, 2004). The liberal peace thesis as originally conceptualised by Kant promotes an international moral world predicated on

the increasing democratic consciousness of the contemporary world (Kant, 1795). By applying this thesis, agents with the most common humanity must be tasked with leading this moral exercise. These agents happen to be functional liberal democracies, thus giving power and agency to the West to dictate which humanitarian crises amount to mass atrocities. By consolidating power in the hands of the few, this opens up avenues for selectivity in application of these important classifications. As witnessed by the largely non-existent levels of international cooperation and action in response to the Syrian crisis, and in stark contrast, the quick turnaround with the Libyan crisis, this can result in a lack of consistency in the application of the R2P doctrine. The decision to intervene in another state is multifaceted, thus, multiple factors must be considered when dissecting a country's readiness or reluctance when it comes to taking action. Thus, it must be noted that the quicker response in Libya was supported by a confluence of multiple political agendas, i.e., France's intention to be more proactive within the EU, Tony Blair's sudden interest in regional affairs, and the Obama administration beginning its global reach (Howorth, 2013). This lack of consistency can therefore lead to fragmented responses which squander the aims of the R2P which was meant to

stand as a guiding norm for international assistance. Furthermore, due to this apparent selectivity there arises a double standard, one where many acts of violence go unnoticed, such as those seen in Turkey, Chechnya, Sri Lanka, Myanmar and more (Chinkin and Kaldor, 2017; CFR, n.d.).

This selectivity is predicated not just on a mere lack of international consensus, but also on existing power structures and their limitations (Deller, 2011). With the Security Council (SC) being the key arbiter in deciding what does and does not constitute an atrocity, this entangles personal state objectives that mar its main moral objective. The P5 nations (1) have a monopoly over power and thus act not morally, but rather based on legal limitations, political timelines, and practical ability. In the case of Syria, they received no formal assistance from the SC arguably due to its ties to Russia and China, and because it had a reasonably organised national military. Even with over 400,000 lives lost in the region, it did not receive the adequate intervention and assistance required to help alleviate its sociopolitical tensions (Howorth, 2013). This selectivity is also evidenced by the response to the Gaza strip, where even while multiple draft resolutions were written to incentivise action in the region, each one was vetoed by the

1: The P5 Nations are the USA, Russia, UK, China, and France. They hold permanent seats on the Security Council, which is one of the principal organs of the United Nations. It is tasked with ensuring international peace and security and is the only body with the authority to issue binding resolutions on member states.

and replacing the initial assumption of the origin of legitimacy of the state from citizen's consent with its ability to protect human rights, this flips the above argument in favour of the concept of intervention. This is the prominent view within the international community (Tesón, 2001). Although considering that the state's conception is logically prior to exercising its morality, its duty to its citizens is greater than its duty to protecting liberal values (regardless of it being domestic or international). This duty is therefore shirked when large portions of state resources and access to the international overton window is spent to service their secondary duty. This further substantiates the moral failings of the liberal peace theory and its glorification of democratic states as the peaceful ideal.

### **The (il)legality of R2P**

Putting aside questions of morality and legitimacy, there exists a discussion of legality regarding the implementation of R2P. R2P is a political norm that has garnered popular support within western countries and has been gaining traction as an enforceable doctrine. However, seeing as it is not tied to any international treaties, there exists no requirement of compliance and no repercussions for a lack thereof. It exists solely in the political and rhetorical spheres of global politics (Chesterman, 2011). Due to this lack of effective regulation, acts of war carried either unilaterally or collectively can use this norm as a shield against being held responsible for the consequences of

their interventions. NATO's unsanctioned intervention in Kosovo was seen simply as "illegal but legitimate" by the Independent International Commission on Kosovo (2000). Regardless of the intervention failing in its mission to prevent the ethnic cleansing of the region's minorities, by using its moral aims as the basis for its actions, NATO faced no consequences for its use of violence in the region (Chinkin and Kaldor, 2017). Allowing for a mere norm to achieve substantial diffusion and stand akin to international law, creates a precedent for norms to advance beyond their initial non-coercive intention. The 2005 World Summit Outcome Document outlined the R2P in significant detail and established the norm into an international legal and political custom (United Nations General Assembly, 2005).

With further legitimisation comes more misrepresentation. As with the conflict between Russia and Georgia over South Ossetia, it is clear that Russia abused the principle of R2P, but was able to fly under its banner and disproportionately aggravate the conflict under the guise of 'humanitarianism' (Badescu and Weiss, 2010). The US and UK's involvement in Iraq speaks to a similar flouting of international law to ex post facto pursue this emerging doctrine by using pre-emptive force that was disproportionate to the humanitarian abuse in the region (Badescu and Weiss, 2010). While these are not perfect applications of the humanitarian justification, these are instances of collateral damage that is

United States, to presumably protect its political and ideological ally, Israel (Eskiduman, 2022). Thus, the lack of R2P's implementation in Gaza is symptomatic of its selectivity problem. Through the arbitrary and irregular implementation of its three pillars, R2P has become a paragon for neo-colonialist power.

Another justification used by academics to substantiate the inherent losses of war is a cost benefit analysis — if the harm of intervening is less than the benefits, then it is a worthy pursuit (Jahn, 2021). This is both short-sighted and unrealistic. Supporters of western imperialism and R2P would be quick to view Libya as a success and a legitimate infringement of their sovereignty (Bellamy, 2014b). This does not account for the aftereffects of political turmoil, lack of adequate infrastructure, and the introduction of western corporations that sought after its natural resources. Chimni puts forward evidence showing how colonialist explorers used the same justification of humanitarian benefits to exploit and take control of entire civilisations. This trend extends to globalisation where the 'cost-benefit analysis' is predicated on the intervening country's benefit rather than that of the intervened. This further victimises the infringed country (Chimni, 2021).

An additional implication of humanitarian intervention is the lack of internal moral legitimacy in the intervening state (Buchanan, 2018). Accepting that every state exists to protect and serve the

interests of its citizens, its actions must extend solely to support their needs. Their legitimacy is then based on their citizen's consent to the state. By non-consensually intervening, the intervening party is not just infringing upon another's sovereignty but also its own legitimacy. Considering the source of their legitimacy, intervening countries have a higher moral duty to their citizens over those external. Thus, ethically, they must prove the intervention to have a higher benefit to their citizens to be legitimate in their interests which can only happen if they prioritise their own needs over those of the intervened. This leads to a clash of interests — internal

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legitimacy requires benefitting itself, while external legitimacy is dependent on an altruistic use of force. Seeing as this is hard to reconcile, there is a flouting of these internal state obligations to achieve natural justice beyond the scope of their jurisdiction. Most countries that engage in R2P actively employ the language of humanitarianism to obfuscate their possible selfish motives (Kardas, 2003). This implies a lack of adherence to absolute morality, but rather subjective interpretations of liberal morality. Instead, by buying into the liberal thesis

a result of a poorly regulated doctrine. Moralistic imperatives are supplanted by personal state interests, following the realpolitik nature of the post-World War II era. Due to a lack of institutionalisation of the doctrine, the norm has limited ability to ensure compliance due to its vague and politicised nature. By allowing subjective interpretations of “moral duty”, R2P provides laissez faire for states to act without accountability and corrective action (Illingworth, 2022). Non-western states are then left to not just deal with the aftermath of the interventions of global powers, but also their inability to engage actively with the doctrine due to their lack of international legitimacy. Ziegler (2014) uses this to contest the widespread diffusion of the norm; arguing instead that most of the global South and East are left unable to internalise the doctrine at all. Thus, this imperfect duty is left without providing effective and consistent redress for countries committing such atrocities. Thereby, R2P only contributes to the problem rather than solving it.

### **R2P: A neo-imperialist weapon**

Assuming that the doctrine was legitimate in its goal, there still exist issues with its implementation through subjective assessment of authority and the neoimperialistic tendencies of the West, beginning with who should be the ones protecting the global world order (Deller, 2011). The 2005 World Summit placed the onus on the SC to follow a set of six criteria to assess the need for humanitarian intervention: “just

cause, right intention, right authority, last resort, proportional means and reasonable prospects” (ICISS, 2001, 32). While the former three requirements are relatively objective, the latter three are highly subjective and are dependent on the SC to place their metrics on proportionality and reasonableness. Through its ad hoc system of legitimising interventions, there exists a wide margin of subjective applicability (Chandler, 2004). This not only further muddles the intentions of the R2P, but also allows for greater disagreement and stagnation in responding to mass atrocities. This thus opens the United Nations to being unnecessarily undermined by global powers aiming to act on their moral duties. Of these, the P5 nations have the increased ability to abuse their power and reinforce a false cosmopolitan framework of responsibility. Their sovereignty remains the only ones protected as they have a monopoly on both power and legitimacy. As such, the rest of the international community is increasingly vulnerable, which is likely to profoundly alter how non-Western states interact with international institutions (Chandler, 2004).

Considering the already tense relationships between Western and non-Western states in the status quo, further proliferation of using R2P is likely to lead to an increase in western neoimperialism. This is evident in how even now, western counterinsurgency and proxy wars are not labelled as mass atrocities whereas independent conflicts are quickly

labelled and discussed as 'failed states' (Mamdani, 2010, 57). With the western consolidation of power, these nations can construct global narratives that benefit themselves — gaining impunity while actively villainising others (Mamdani, 2010, 59). This creates an unequal global regime placing western conceptions of morality, legality, and reality as the stage upon which international diplomacy can engage. This is likely to normalise western governance over Africa, Asia, and Latin America.

Bellamy (2014a) argues that there exists no link between R2P and Western imperialism, stating the many instances where the West refused to help Africa out of concern for the region. Although there is evidence to prove the West's constraint regarding explicit intervention, there is an argument to be made about western globalisation and its effect on the prevalence of war. The west can effectively and remotely engage in aerial missiles and employ technologically advanced modes of warfare, forcing all engagement with the west to remain asymmetric (Eaton, 2002, 58). Thus, with not just having majority control over the P5, SC, and UN, but also controlling a large share of global markets as active consumers, the influence of the west is palpable across the globe. R2P cannot be viewed within a vacuum, but rather must be entertained within global contexts and power imbalances. Delegitimising state sovereignty opens many developing and post-colonial countries to excess scrutiny and dismantles decades of work

to maintain and protect their respective principles of self-determination. This further weakens weak states, leaving them vulnerable to pervasive influences, both internal and external — likely resulting in more conflict.

## **Conclusion**

While the intentions behind legitimising humanitarian war may be to cater to the oppressed and enshrine individual human rights, this essay finds it to be an uneven trade-off for deconstructing state sovereignty. By assessing the moral and practical ramifications of R2P, one can find the prioritisation of vague liberal ethics over institutionalised legal frameworks, comes at a grave cost to efficient responses to conflict. Subjective interpretations of morality increase the selectivity of the doctrine which is further corrupted by the individual political, financial, and militaristic concerns of the intervening countries. This essay has even delved into the internal legitimacy of states and have found R2P to be an obfuscation of a state's moral duty. Furthermore, if the only stopgaps for immoral actions include accountability and the threat of intervention, those countries that are invulnerable to accountability have increased agency; thereby furthering a global power imbalance. This questions the branding of "illegal but legitimate", because legitimacy must be grounded in law and policy, lest prejudiced morals take precedence in deciding whether to push the metaphorical big red button.

Confusion over what can and cannot fly under the banner of R2P gets discussed often only after the act of intervention has taken place. States are then able to use R2P to gain a free pass and walk away from the consequences of their actions.

Alternatives to R2P already exist, such as UN peacekeeping forces, economic sanctions, and other international norms such as the protection of civilians in armed conflict. If R2P was able to

equitably reduce state security as the focus for international politics for all states, it could be better implemented and supported by both the West and non-West. Predicating morality over self-determination gives power not to those who are the most moral, but rather to those who have the most power over the metrics of morality. Thus, R2P provides the West with the ability to self-legitimise and control the reins of power and access to the legal use of force.

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# Temporal Shifts in Singapore: Renaissance and Retribution of Western Cultures and Colonial Narratives

Samarth Pinnamaraju

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*Singapore's relationship with colonialism has long been fraught with resentment while simultaneously being unable to detach itself from its identity as a former British colony. Colonial officer Sir Stamford Raffles is regarded as a national icon, after whom the Raffles Hospital, Raffles Institution and business district Raffles Place are named after. Along the Singapore River is a white marble statue of Raffles, with the plaque reading "On this historic site, Sir Thomas Stamford Raffles first landed in Singapore on 28th January 1819, and with genius and perception changed the destiny of Singapore from an obscure fishing village to a great seaport and modern metropolis."*

*Yet, there have been efforts to counter Western influence in Singapore, to justify illiberal or anti-democratic policies or simply to cultivate a synthetic national identity amongst a majority immigrant population with no primordial connection to the land.*

*It is then necessary to investigate the origins of this strange relationship with the British: a desire to either defend the colonists or to declare Western values as wholly irreconcilable to ours, and therefore need to be rejected.*

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## Introduction

Singapore is well-known as a global trading hub, having undergone rapid economic growth after gaining independence from the British Empire only in 1963, and

becoming fully independent in 1965 (1). Much of this success is credited to the foundations laid by the Empire, allowing free trade to flourish in the region, although there has recently been a resurgence of the anti-colonial sentiment among Singaporean academics (Sa'at

1: Singapore was unilaterally removed from the Malaysian Federation in 1965 because of racial tensions and politico-economic disagreements.

2: It is important to note that Singapore was also colonised by Japan in the 1940s, but this essay will focus specifically on the legacy of British colonial rule from 1819 to 1963.

et al. 2021: 41) and young people, just as there has been a rising interest in postcolonial theory in academia as a whole (Elam, 2019). This is set against the backdrop of further Western global dominance compounded by the post-Cold War triumph of capitalism, resulting in cultural homogenisation around the world. Unsurprisingly, the Western colonial powers are unpopular among Southeast Asian nations, given that its decolonisation project in the area ended as recently as 1983 (United Nations, 1983: 3) and its continued imperialistic actions. The story is different for Singapore; while Singaporeans campaigned fiercely for freedom in the 1950s, in the present day, the general public is encouraged to forget about colonial exploitation and oppression: Singapore was 'founded', not colonised in 1819. Not only is British colonial history diluted or erased entirely, it is celebrated; in 2019 Singapore celebrated the bicentennial, 200 years after the British first arrived in Singapore, various statues of the colonial officers are erected around the country, and institutions are named after them. They are, in short, oddly exulted in Singapore.

However, academic Thum Ping Tjin argues that the colonial legacy was more negative than it was positive, that Singapore's authoritarian and socially illiberal policies can be directly traced to

British rule (Dzeidzic et al., 2020). Thus, this essay will examine these contrasting views to understand the significance of the symbolic retribution and renaissance of the Western presence in Singapore: how it has ebbed and flowed, influenced culture and politics, and the possible trajectory of the future.

### **The Ebb and Flow of Anti-Colonial Sentiment**

Singapore was initially very anti-colonial: Merdeka (3) was the era of a fierce struggle for independence from the British Empire in the 1950s, up till full internal self-government was granted in 1959. Over the years however, the colonial period and its significance has been forgotten by the general public. More recently, there seems to be a renaissance of anti-West sentiment, though it is not useful in postcolonial discourse as it is more reactionary than it is progressive.

Firstly, Singapore's anti-colonialism was pragmatic, and this would form the foundation of her politics since independence.

In the context of Southeast Asian anti-colonial movements, Singapore's was seen as unremarkable and pandering to the Western powers because of the relative lack of violence and favourable relationships with the colonial nations,

3: Roughly translated to freedom in Malay.

4: Indonesia saw and continues to see itself as Southeast Asia's Primus Inter Pares, or the First Among Equals because of its violent and difficult decolonisation struggle. (Roberts et al., 1970)

especially when compared to the Indonesian Revolution (4) and the Vietnam War. Though the incumbent political party, the currently centre-right People's Action Party (PAP) was presented as "fiercly anti-colonial", the party for "the downtrodden and marginalised under colonialism" (Sa'at et al., 2021: 58), the desire for sovereignty was paired with a sense of pragmatism that the PAP and later Singapore as a whole, would come to be known for. Party leader Lee Kuan Yew said about their attitude towards the British: We want to be friendly with the British ... In the fight against colonialism we must think up good methods, for colonialism is cunning and clever ... We must keep a cool head and think of methods of retaliation (Sa'at et al., 2021: 56) It is thus clear that the practical option was to maintain diplomatic relations with the British, given that Singapore is small in population and land-scarce, therefore heavily dependent on international trade. Other countries also served as cautionary tales when they rightly refused to succumb to the will of the colonisers and faced unjust retribution in the form of sanctions and exclusion from trade agreements (5).

Yet, this does not provide an adequate explanation for the exultation of the people who colonised Singapore,

evidenced by the number of hospitals, schools and landmarks named after Stamford Raffles, the man who 'founded' Singapore in 1819.

This is not to mention the erasure and dilution of the exploitation and oppression of locals in schools' history syllabi, such that the general public accepts the celebration of the bicentennial in 2019. In fact, the colonial legacy seemed to largely have been erased from the national consciousness. Interestingly: Singapore's post-colonial condition is marked officially not by our merger with Malaysia ... which was supposed to liberate us from the British empire ... but by our separation from Malaysia... our post-colonial condition has been constantly spooked ... by multiple threats of failed nationhood -- of which colonialism was notably not one (Sa'at et al., 2021: 15)

This ostensibly suggests that the colonial period matters very little to the general public, that while the government might celebrate the bicentennial as a symbolic gesture to avoid alienating the West, the British are not genuinely viewed in an overly-positive light, nor do they exert significant influence over local culture. Paradoxically however, Alfian Sa'at suggests that "Colonialism has just so permeated our structures of feeling [where] you cannot decolonize without

5: The US has imposed various sanctions on Cuba because of its anti-capitalist government, including vaccines during the Covid-19 pandemic. (Stangler, 2021) Haiti has also been sanctioned for its anticolonial resistance. (Elegua, 2022)



### Temporal Shifts: *Singapore*

also losing an essential part of yourself” (Sa’at et al., 2021: 32). A large part of this is language: if the lingua franca of Singapore is English, a significant proportion of the media consumed by Singaporeans is English-language, often Western, media. This perceived homogenisation of culture and lack of distinctive national identity has led to the dangerous perception that ‘Western’ and ‘Asian’ values are in conflict with each other, that they fall into a neat binary. As a result, ‘Asian values’ such as pragmatism, filial piety and Confucianism were promoted by the government in the 1980s and 1990s (Chan, 1997) as underpinning the larger national identity, an attempt that not only fell flat due to its vagueness and inauthenticity, but also led to a dangerous rise of anti-West sentiment that was mistaken for anti-imperialism. Demands for greater

political representation and human rights for the LGBTQ community are perceived as ‘Western imports’ (Ang, 2021): decolonisation in this sense ironically means to continue the homophobic policies inherited from the British.

Moreover, concerns over human rights occupy a unique space in Singapore’s approach to crime. Though its crime rate is low, its approach to dealing with crime is coercive, unlike other countries which enjoy safety from violent crime (World Population Review, 2023). Such a coercive approach is also justified by the false dichotomy between Western and Asian values. The death penalty still actively being used in Singapore for crimes as minor as drug dealing. This is because many liberal democratic ideals, such as the provision of universal human rights, are seen by the people as

Western features that were not applicable to Southeast Asia. 74% of the general public in Singapore agree that the capital punishment should be meted out for the most serious crimes, and 62% agree that it is appropriate even for drug trafficking (MHA, 2022).

This support also likely comes from young people, since Lee Kuan Yew's "brilliant responses" to 'arrogant' Western interviewers about human rights and the death penalty have recently become popular amongst young people on TikTok (TikTok 2022), evincing a renaissance of anti-West sentiment. Prima facie, the

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*While colonial administration did play some role in Singapore's later success, its part is largely overstated.*

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interviewers' concerns about human rights may seem hypocritical: how dare they question us on human rights when they have subjugated and brutalised us for years? This is compounded by the misconception that the death penalty is somehow a communitarian approach: that the one criminal must be executed to defend the safety and dignity of society as a whole. Aside from the fact that there are other, more humane means of preventing and reforming criminals, collectivist ideologies have always included the community support for

and promotion of individual rights (Bae, 2008). Confucius himself believed that the government is meant to model virtuous behaviour for its citizens, which is in fundamental opposition to state violence. (Bae, 2008) Overall, the defence of death penalty is rooted in ignorance and contradiction. After fifty years of independence, the time has come to question our own governments as to why social progress seems to lag behind economic progress.

In all, although the British colonial period is not fully acknowledged or addressed in public spaces, anti-colonial sentiment in Singapore manifests itself through an attempt to define national identity in opposition to what the West stands for: liberal democracy, individualism and leisure (Robson, 2017). However, due to Singapore's multicultural immigrant makeup, pragmatism is used to unify its people, and more dangerously, is used to justify the neglect of human rights.

### **Singapore-Upon-Thames**

The colonial legacy is also misunderstood by the international community, who sometimes depict Singapore as an ideal of a decolonised nation, an idea that carries colonialist and racist implications. The renaissance of such a mindset equally applies to Singaporeans who support the exploitation of neighbouring, often less industrialised, Asian states by Singapore. While the colonial context explains the desire for Singapore to conform to Western ideals of modernity, it is

interesting that the British Conservative Party wants to adopt its former colony's policies to achieve domestic growth. Notwithstanding the misconceptions of Singapore as a laissez-faire paradise instead of having a tightly-controlled politico-economic system, and the odd parallels between Brexit and Singapore's expulsion from Malaysia, the concept itself should be something of a symbolic triumph: a former colony serving as the model to be emulated by the colonisers. The conception of the idea seems far from a compliment however, as Conservative writer and politician Dan Hannan claims that the "magic ingredient" that "transformed those swampy mangrove trees into the gleaming skyscrapers" was unilateral free trade. This claim is not just ignorant but blatantly racist in its assertion that precolonial Singapore was an insignificant, underdeveloped jungle until the "erratic and romantic colonial officer... Sir Stamford Raffles" (YouTube, 2019) developed and civilised the primitive natives. Such is the standard colonial narrative that some Singaporeans still partly accept to this day (Chen 2019), crediting the British for our success instead of our own ancestors. While colonial administration did play some role in Singapore's later success, its part is largely overstated. Before 1819, Singapore was a bustling port city that played an instrumental role

as a maritime trade centre in the region. Indeed, excavations between 1984 and 2012 found that there were many manufacturing activities that took place in Singapore after 1300, and a wide assortment of often high quality goods were imported from China and India up till the early 17th century (Miksic, 2013). While the British colonists can be credited for reviving its influence as a maritime port, its 'development' always had the primary purpose of serving the empire rather than the local people (Jones, 1997), leaving Singapore impoverished after decolonisation. This elucidates the pervasiveness of the colonial myth even in today's 'decolonised' and 'enlightened' world, such that even when Singapore is recognised internationally, it is but to reinforce racist ideologies.

Another consequence of the misunderstanding of the colonial legacy is Singapore's neo-imperialism in Southeast Asia. The popular perception of British colonialism is that it was benevolent, or at least when compared to countries like India, was relatively peaceful. As Hai Bin Neo illustrates, "What's interesting about colonialism in Singapore is that on the surface it looks wonderful. But everyone knows that there is a trauma. And we don't address it. Or we forget about the trauma... we have been inflicting it on ourselves, on our brothers and sisters, our migrant workers" (Sa'at et al., 2021: 37)

6: Approximately £370.



There is a lack of discourse regarding imperialism, instead there is a general acceptance that simply because Singapore is not suffering as other former colonies are, the colonial legacy is irrelevant to modern politics. Thus, we do not connect the British colonists' use of Indian convict labour to build local infrastructure and the present-day use of underpaid migrant labour from impoverished Southeast or South Asian countries. Many justify it with the belief that "we are doing migrant workers a favour by 'rescuing' them from unemployment" or even lower pay in their home countries, thus "they should be grateful" (Sa'at et al., 2021: 38). This is in spite of most foreign domestic workers (FDWs) making less than \$600 (6) per month (Poh, 2021), a figure almost one-seventh the average citizen's salary (SingStat, 2017), with no governmental attempt to rectify this. One can draw a parallel between this and the colonial narrative of the White Man rescuing the savage native from their primitive ways through subjugation and enslavement. Moreover, Singapore's extraction of sand from other countries and the degradation of coastal ecosystems through the expansion of Singaporean companies is justified with the same logic as the colonists; that we are developing their 'rudimentary' economies instead of exploiting them for our own benefit. As with everything Singapore, we have adapted a British system to fit our local context, evincing a twofold renaissance of imperialistic narratives.

In conclusion, there is a renaissance of the traditional colonial narrative of the 'civilised' people bringing prosperity to the primitive native people, both from the British and Singaporeans. Neither group has a strong understanding of the colonial legacy: while the British who repeat this narrative fundamentally misunderstand the country's economic situation, the Singaporeans with this belief misunderstand colonial rhetoric and how it was used to dehumanise colonised peoples.

### **Singapore, a truly independent nation-state**

There has also been a renaissance of cultural values in response to the rapid urbanisation and sanitisation of areas of historical and cultural significance because they do not fit the image of Singapore as a clean 'Garden City'. This is part of a broader movement against capitalism and hyper-modernism around the world, where the resulting alienation is explored in media and academia. This section will explore two films: the extremely popular *Crazy Rich Asians* (2018), that reinforces the image of Singapore as a wealthy, exotic 'Garden City'; and *Tiong Bahru Social Club* (2020), that deconstructs the relationship between capitalism, wealth and happiness using Lao Tzu's teachings.

While *Crazy Rich Asians* presents Singapore with the rare opportunity to take the international stage, it lacks the authenticity, as it merely utilises the mere

aesthetic of Singapore's affluence to appeal to a predominantly Western audience, thus reinforcing the idea of Singapore as a rich 'Garden City'. The audience sees the country through its Chinese-American protagonist, Rachel's eyes. After landing in the country, all she sees is the opulent aesthetic of Singapore's wealthy, especially when she visits her friend Peik Lin's and fiancé Nick's enormous houses. There are no other distinctly Singaporean features that the majority of Singaporeans who live in modest public housing (SingStat, 2023) can relate to. While Kevin Kwan, the author of the novel, claimed that he intended his work to satirise the experience of rich Singaporeans (Zhao, 2019), the satire and substantial Singaporean qualities are entirely lost in the film. It is instead entirely about the sense of cultural confusion that Asian-Americans, and perhaps Asians living in the West more generally. Aside from the racism and xenophobia they face in Western countries, they are also rejected for being too 'Westernised' in Asia. The latter is represented by Nick's mother's attitude towards Rachel, condemning Americans like her for "think[ing] about their own happiness". When considering that the primary audience is Western, this is dangerously in portrays Singaporeans, or Asians more broadly as holding "culturally exotic" values (Zhao, 2019) and being judgmental. Overall, it merely

reinforces the dichotomy of 'Western' and 'Asian' values without honest representation of the country that it is set in and ostensibly represents.

In contrast, *Tiong Bahru Social Club* is made for Singaporeans: the characters are not judgmental, nor do their depictions exoticise Singapore. Instead, they use Singapore's wealth and technological progress to explore the search for happiness amidst capitalism and modernisation. In the film, the main character, Ah Bee, is sent to live in a neighbourhood designed to maximise resident happiness through sophisticated technology, drawing inspiration from *Black Mirror*. Interestingly, the film seems to be a microcosm of Singapore itself: adapting certain Western features to fit the local context. However, the resolution is entirely independent of Western influence. As Ah Bee contemplates the fundamental nature of happiness and its pursuit, his realisation is adapted from a Lao Tzu quote: "Clay is shaped to make a pot, and what's useful is its emptiness... What is is beneficial, while what is not also proves useful." (Yu, 2018: 1) He understands that 'feeling empty' or a lack of constant joy is contrary to the goals of the club, but ideal in its provision of stability and an acknowledgment of the full range of human emotion. While this is

7: The ungrammatical title is typical of Singlish, and is indicative of the type of language used in the film.

not an anti-colonial film, it demonstrates a renaissance of Chinese thought and philosophy. Instead of promoting a synthetic concoction of 'Asian values' in opposition to 'Western' values, the film is interested in examining the overstimulation of Singaporean life. Behind Singapore's economic and academic success, there is a dark underbelly of poor mental health because of the promotion of delayed gratification and the promise of a better future. While other films have depicted this side of Singapore with a clearer focus, *Tiong Bahru Social Club* imagines the 'utopia' of Singaporean capitalism and subverts it with Chinese philosophy that seems lost amidst a Singapore intent on further Westernisation.

Recently, there is also a desire to reclaim 'Singlish', an English vernacular that unites the various ethnic groups of Singapore, to once again assert national identity in concrete terms, although this desire of local media has often been paired with anti-Western themes that has led to criticism for lack of subtlety and thoughtful portrayals. In 2000, the government started the decades-long *Speak Good English* movement that aimed to eradicate this dialect altogether, though its official aim was to facilitate easier communication with foreigners. This movement was largely unsuccessful, as many perceived it to have the purpose of detaching Singapore from any working-class connotations (Rubdy, 2003: 4)

while 41% of Singaporeans surveyed disagreed with the movement altogether (Wong, 2008). As a result, Jack Neo's films have gained massive mainstream popularity in Singapore with how it embraced Singlish and other quintessentially Singaporean mannerisms that were considered 'low-class', encouraging Singaporeans to celebrate what makes us unique. An example of this is the popular film franchise, *I Not Stupid* (7), that focuses on students grappling with the notoriously rigorous Singapore school system, as well as adults dealing with racism in the workplace. Familiar archetypes are used here: the rebellious teen, the tiger mum and the snobbish Westerner. However, since the media industry is in its nascent stage, depiction of the characters and themes are superficial, causing many to denounce local media as simplistic and immature, thus turn to Western media.

This is not, however, wholly negative. This phase of media is necessary in order to foster a national identity, because it represents the process of Singapore finding itself. It is unfair to compare local media with Western media not simply because their entertainment industries have existed for far longer. Colonialism permeates the psychology of the colonised as well, stripping them of their established identities in an effort to subjugate them. While White people have the privilege of establishing their

8: Hokkein for "red-haired", but more broadly refers to White people.

identity independent of race, “the curse of anyone nonwhite is that you are so busy arguing what you’re not that you never arrive at what you are” (Song 2022: 5). In addition to this, most Singaporeans have no primordial connection to the land because the majority of Singaporeans are descendents of immigrants from other parts of Asia, making a broad-based, inclusive identity elusive (Chong, 2007). This explains the way mainstream films and shows focus on highlighting their Singaporean qualities such that they are unable to move into depicting the broader and more universal themes that Western media is known for. As Rankine elucidates, “There’s no private world that doesn’t include the dynamics of my political and social world” (Ulin, 2016), in the same way that Singapore exists within a broader context of immigration, colonialism and Western cultural hegemony and thus the need to establish a national identity in response is ever-present in our media. Hence, there is significant value in Neo’s albeit shallow portrayals of the snobbish ang mohs (8) that are cathartically given their comeuppance by the end of films like *I Not Stupid*. We need this symbolic retribution if we are to move into defining ourselves in concrete, complex terms. In conclusion, there has been a cultural renaissance of Singaporean values and mannerisms in local media in response to growing cultural homogenisation. Even though it is not always very successful in creating or reinforcing a concrete national identity, it is useful in beginning to assert independence from our colonial legacy.

## **The Future of Postcolonial Singapore**

In conclusion, Singapore has a complicated relationship with the West and colonialism. We have suffered its traumas without fully acknowledging and unpacking them, causing social progress in terms of human rights issues to lag behind economic progress. It has also caused neo-imperialist actions in the name of economic progress. Nevertheless, the very existence of this discourse is evidence of progress in this respect. Singapore is moving towards building a solidified and inclusive national identity independent of its relationship with the United Kingdom and its colonial past through television and films. This is a struggle simultaneously common to all decolonised nations yet specific to Singapore because of its unique relationship with the West. While history is not commonly studied and discussed because the education system acts as a “well-oiled lawyer and doctor producing machine” (Tan et al., 2018), the Ministry of Education (MOE) is taking steps to address this. It aims to promote the study of history through the introduction of humanities scholarships for pre-university students (MOE, 2021), as well as the study of specifically Southeast Asian history through the modification of syllabi (Teng, 2020). This is in tandem with the rising awareness of politics and governance among youth (Zhang, 2022). Hence, we are slowly starting to examine the past and its ties to the present in order to set a more optimistic trajectory for the future.

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# Violated Voices: Millennial Messages of Sexual Violence in the Music of Contemporary Female Artists

Ally Zlatar

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*This paper examines the ways in which contemporary female musicians use their art to explore the impact of sexual violence. Through the utilisation of qualitative research and thematic analysis, the study analyses the lyrics of songs written by seven artists: Lady Gaga, Natalie Grant, Tori Amos, Ashe, Rapsody, Jolin Tsai and Ana Tijoux. The analysis focuses on examining several key themes such as the use of metaphor, the psychological experiences of survivors, and the representation of marginalised voices in the lyrics. The findings of the study highlight the powerful role that music can play in giving voice to the experiences of survivors and challenging cultural narratives that contribute to rape culture.*

*Key words: sexual violence, music, contemporary artists, female musicians, marginalised voices.*

*Content sensitivity warning: themes of sexual assault, violence and trauma.*

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Sexual violence and the trauma arising from it are significant issues that affect individuals and communities around the world. In recent years, numerous contemporary female musicians have used their art to explore the theme of sexual violence and to give voice to the experiences of marginalised communities. This essay examines two key questions of how these artists use their music to address the impact of sexual violence,

differences in cultural experiences of it, for which I will use the term 'rape culture', and to explore the ways in which their art contributes to social change. The research questions guiding this study are: What themes and patterns emerge from the analysis of the lyrics of these songs? How do these artists use metaphor and other literary devices to convey the experiences of survivors and challenge cultural narratives related to rape culture?



This paper used lyric and thematic analysis to gain insight into the perspectives and experiences of songwriters and marginalised communities (Fonseca 16). Thematic analysis was used to identify recurring themes and patterns in the data, such as the use of metaphor and psychological experiences of survivors (Braun & Clarke 77; Yusuf & Amelia 38; Yamawaki 406). The representation of marginalised voices was also analysed, examining themes such as resilience and social change (Mendes et al. 12). The methodology provided an in-depth exploration of the themes and messages in the songs, aiding in the understanding of how artists used their art to challenge cultural narratives related to rape culture.

Rape culture refers to what the United Nations defines as 'the social environment that allows sexual violence to be normalized and justified, fuelled by the persistent gender inequalities and attitudes about gender and sexuality' (UN Women, 2019). An important feature of rape culture is the notion that sexual violence is driven by sex, rather than the progressive reconceptualisation that it is driven by rage and power (Brownmiller, 1976, 6). The consequences of this notion still being present include victim-blaming—rape is driven by sex, hence it is the survivors' fault for being sexual beings or dressing in an 'immodest' way—, and the tie between purity culture (abstinence until marriage) and rape culture (Klement, Sagarin, Skowronski 2070). Klement et al. provide correlational evidence that people who are survivors of sexual

violence are often viewed societally in rape culture as no longer 'sexually pure', which harms survivors, often leading them to feel damaged, unworthy and unwanted (Klement et al. 2080). Lyrical analysis will show how these phenomena and their impacts are present in the music of contemporary female artists.

### **Trauma and Its Remains**

Few can grasp the difficulty of living with the trauma from sexual violence for survivors (Najdowski 460). Trauma, a response to distressing experiences, can cause physical and emotional effects, including anxiety, depression, and post-traumatic stress disorder (National Institute of Mental Health, 2021). Sexual violence can lead to a range of emotional, physical, and psychological responses, including fear, shame, and self-blame, and difficulties with trust, intimacy, and self-worth (American Psychological Association 2021). The following section will examine the ways in which Lady Gaga and Natalie Grant use metaphor and symbol to express the pain and violation of sexual violence and the ways in which their music reflects the experiences of survivors (Barker 128).

Lady Gaga's song 'Til It Happens to You' addresses the prevalence of campus sexual assault and the impact it has on survivors (Barker 123). Gaga sings about the fear, shame, and isolation that often follow sexual violence in her lyrics: "You tell me it gets better, it gets better in time / You say I'll pull myself together, pull it

together, you'll be fine / Tell me how the hell would you know? / 'Til it happens to you, you don't know how it feels" (Gaga 2016). These lyrics look at the individual difficulties that come from the experience. Not only is it isolated, but the recovery journey is highly individualised because of the effects of the traumatic event. She further expands upon how very few people truly understand the effects of sexual assault until they experience it themselves.

As Gaga stated in an interview where she recounts her experience of a producer trying to illicit sexual behaviours: "I understand this #MeToo movement, I understand that some people feel really comfortable with this, and I do not," she continued. "I do not ever want to face that person again" (Gaga in BBC News). 'Till It Happens to You' conveys these difficult emotions and experiences and serves as a reminder of the importance of the immense pain and difficulty one can endure alongside the need to voice these harsh realities. Gaga effectively captures the sense of betrayal and disillusionment that many survivors experience (Barker 128), and the idea that society often fails to understand the full extent of the trauma caused by sexual assault— that it is often up to the survivor to 'pull themselves together' and carry on with their lives.

Debra Patterson et al. examine why rape survivors often decide not to seek help from formal social systems (127). They interviewed 29 female rape survivors who did not seek any post-assault support and

found that several reasons occurred for their choice. The researchers found that survivors held the belief that the systems would not help, either because they were not 'worthy' or did not fit the 'normal rape conventions' that perpetuate notions of young, white, vulnerable females who come from middle class backgrounds being targeted by strangers (Patterson 136). In accordance, many felt that systems couldn't help or protect them from their assailants as either the events already occurred or that the assistance would intensify their painful feelings (Patterson 127). Therefore, survivors may choose the individual route of 'pulling

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*Gaga effectively captures the sense of betrayal and disillusionment that many survivors experience .*

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themselves together' as they may be attempting to protect themselves from perceived psychological harm or feel the systems are inadequately able to support them. This message is particularly poignant given the way that survivors are often blamed and stigmatised for their own victimisation (Barker 128).

Natalie Grant further reinforces these notions through her song 'Clean'. It is a powerful exploration of the importance of consent and healthy relationships and suggests that sexual violence is a societal

problem that requires collective action to address. Grant describes this song as being about a friend of hers. She stated: "I will never forget the moment I wrote the song 'Clean,'" the singer writes on her Facebook page... I began to weep. It was a holy moment. Truly an experience I'll never forget. Honestly, I feel like God wrote the lyrics and I just held the pen" (Grant in Ong).

Grant edified in an interview that she wanted to aid her friend and reaffirm to her that: "You are clean. We all are. That's the beauty of His grace and redemption." Part of the pain and trauma she describes is the feeling of being 'dirty' and with her Christian roots, focuses on faith to help preserve (Ong). often embeds the belief that people who are survivors of sexual assault are used, violated and no longer pure (Klement et al.). The lyrics of 'Clean' dealt with themes of empowerment, self-worth, and the need for respect and support. One of the key themes of the song is the importance of consent, with lines such as: "I don't want to be dirty, I don't want to be used / I don't want to be a victim, I don't want to be abused" (Grant) conveying the idea that individuals have the right to say no and to be treated with respect. The song also highlights the importance of healthy relationships: "I want to be clean, I want to be whole / I want to be loved, I want to be known" (Grant) conveying the idea that individuals deserve to be treated with care and consideration. Importantly, the song also suggests that the way we understand and support sexual violence

survivors is a societal problem that requires collective action to effectively address. Grant's lyrics reinforce this claim when she stated: "I don't want to be a statistic, I don't want to be a number / I don't want to be a part of your plan" (Grant). The lyrics suggest that sexual violence is often seen as an individual problem rather than a societal one, and that this needs to change.

Sociologists argue that sexual violence stems from social and cultural factors that contribute to a culture of violence and domination. In 'The Macho Paradox', Jackson Katz identifies gender roles, the objectification of women, and media normalisation of violence as contributors (17). He emphasises the importance of men taking an active role in promoting healthy relationships and gender equality, challenging cultural narratives, and speaking out against violence towards women (Katz 25). Men have a responsibility to challenge other men's violent behaviour, stand up for women's safety, and critically assess their own beliefs and behaviours to create a culture where violence against women is not tolerated (Katz 58).

Both Lady Gaga and Natalie Grant edify the complexity and depth in which women have been inflicted by the perils of sexual assault. What is important to remember is that these works could be argued to be proponents for understanding the immediate impacts and current culture surrounding sexual violence.

## Sexual Assault and Its Long-Term Effects

Contemporary female musicians have used their art to explore the ways in which sexual trauma is embedded in women's lives. Through their music, these artists give voice to the experiences of survivors and challenge cultural narratives that contribute to rape culture. One example of a female musician who addresses this issue in her music is Tori Amos, whose song 'Me and a Gun' explores the theme of sexual violence and is based on Amos' own experiences of being raped at knifepoint at twenty-one. She expresses the deep fear and torment she endured and the song evokes a powerful emotional exploration of the impact of trauma on her. She iterates the immense impact on her in an interview: "I really do feel as though I was psychologically mutilated that night and that now I'm trying to put the pieces back together again. Through love, not hatred. And through my music. My strength has been to open again, to life, and my victory is the fact that, despite it all, I kept alive my vulnerability" (Amos in Handal). The lyrics, which are spoken rather than sung, convey the sense of fear and powerlessness that can accompany sexual violence: "He left me with a gun / Pointed at my head" (Amos) conveying the sense of terror and vulnerability that she experienced. When analysing incidences of traumatic experiences many have described themselves as 'possessions' (Pietkiewicz et al. 373). Igor J. Pietkiewicz et al. (373) studied

how women with a history of sexual abuse in churches had these trauma-related symptoms and feelings which led them to being discouraged to seeking social support because of their feelings of unworthiness (Pietkiewicz et al. 373). Another artist who addresses the issue of sexual trauma in her music is Ashe, whose song 'Moral of the Story' examines the theme of self-worth after trauma. The lyrics, which appear on her album 'Ashlyn', explore the idea that survivors of sexual violence often internalise feelings of shame and blame, with lines such as "I gave him what he wanted, he gave me a scar" (Ashe) conveying the sense of guilt and self-blame that many survivors experience. Ashe captures eloquently how survivors of toxic relationships feel not only inferiority but defenceless with her partner.

There is a growing body of research that supports the idea that contemporary female musicians are using their art to explore the issue of sexual trauma and its impact on women's lives, and to promote social change (Braun and Clarke 77). Scholars have examined the ways in which music can serve as a tool for giving voice to marginalised experiences and challenging dominant narratives (Beigi et al. 447). Beigi et al. argue that music can be a powerful means of communication and expression, particularly for marginalised groups who may not have access to other forms of power or influence (Ibid. 448). They further suggest that music can be a cultural anthology used to challenge dominant narratives

and promote social change, and that this is particularly true for movements that seek to challenge gender-based violence and oppression (Ibid. 449).

Similarly, researchers in the field of psychology have examined the ways in which music can be used to facilitate healing and empowerment for survivors of sexual violence. For example, Cindy Najdowski (2011, 463) argues that music can serve as a powerful means of expression and coping for survivors and can be used to facilitate healing and resilience. She suggests that music can be an important tool for survivors to make sense of their experiences and to find meaning in the aftermath of trauma (Ibid. 464). Schrader and Wendland reinforce this claim with their analysis of music therapy programming in Cambodia for survivors of child sexual exploitation and rape. They found that it not only helped them express and process their feelings but also be able to start to enjoy life beyond their trauma (390).

These studies provide evidence to support the idea that contemporary female musicians are using their art to explore the issue of sexual trauma and its impact on women's lives, and to promote social change. What is highly evident throughout this discourse is that music gives voice to the experiences of survivors and challenges the dominant discourse. Through these artists sharing stories of sexual violence, they are raising awareness about these important issues to society at large.

## **Societal change**

This section will focus on cultural issues that perpetuate the harmful impacts of sexual violence to survivors and society overall. The works of Rapsody, Jolin Tsai, and Ana Tijoux will be explored to examine their commentary on social issues and related back to sexual violence and rape culture. The lyrics present in these artists' works advocate for societal change and challenge dominant narratives in respect to the experiences of non-White and queer women and the particular struggles of these groups.

A contemporary female musician who is using her voice to share the experiences of marginalised communities is Rapsody. Marlanna Evans (known as Rapsody) is an American rapper and songwriter who has used her music to explore themes of race, gender, and social justice. In the song 'Power,' Rapsody addresses the issue of the suppression of black power in the United States, through lyrics such as "I know my blackness is powerful and they don't like that", promoting ideas of resilience and empowerment by giving voice to the experiences of women of colour. These struggles are often dismissed: she iterates that 'I want the power to be able rap bout, what I rap bout', which edifies the difficulty of her community to have voices heard but also freedom to express their experiences. This cultural phenomenon can be illustrated through the impact of sexual violence on black women and communities. Allegations of

sexual violence against black women are overlooked or silenced in mainstream discussions, and black women are underserved by the criminal justice system and other institutions (Campbell et al. 237). Furthermore, sexual violence disproportionately affects black women in the United States (National Alliance to End Sexual Violence, 2021, 307). These resources are meant to provide support and protection, leading black survivors to feel unprotected and unheard (Ibid.). The work of minority artists discussing injustice and cultural phenomena that remove their power is critical (Fonesca 30).

By impressing the importance of black power, 'Power' challenges the narratives of rape culture that blame survivors rather than recognise the sociological forces working against marginalised groups. Listeners are encouraged to think about the ways in which these experiences can be understood and addressed, starting a conversation on injustice to these communities, which can include the lack of safety and institutional support for black survivors, and stigma of reaching out (Burton & Guidry, 370, 381).

Jolin Tsai's song 'We're All Different, Yet the Same' promotes respect and equality for queer people, challenging cultural norms that dismiss, blame, or normalise sexual discrimination: 'Different, yet the same, suffering from all kinds of trouble /Different, yet the same, there's gathering and there's dispersing'. The song encourages reflection and collective action to promote fair and equitable societies that champion love and respect

to combat societal problems relating to sexual assault, queer love and trauma (Tsai; Braun & Clarke 79; Lonsway et al. 534; Gill & Harrison 529, 511). This notion is particularly important for Asian communities where queerness has been traditionally taboo due to cultural norms of shame (Gill & Harrison 529). Tsai's lyrics reinforce this notion as she stated that 'Who is better than another, and who is there to judge/ Need no forgiveness, leave down the love to touch the rest of the world'. In these communities, a lack of critical reflection and public support suppresses the voices of queer people

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*The work of minority artists discussing injustice and cultural phenomena that remove their power is critical*

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and inhibits their ability to share struggles and stories and access support. This is something crucial for queer individuals, as well as survivors of sexual violence. The lyrics of 'We're All Different, Yet the Same' have a parallel significance to dismantling the damaging narratives of rape culture.

Ana Tijoux is a Chilean rapper and singer who has used her music to explore themes of social justice and human rights. In the song 'Antipatriarca', which appears on her album 'Vengo', Tijoux addresses the issue of female liberation against the

forces of oppression and control. She sings: "You're not going to denigrate me, you're not going to force me/ You're not going to silence me, you're not going to shut me up" (English translation). In rape culture, women are socialised to feel powerless, to not occupy space or have true bodily autonomy; this is one of the root causes of violence against women (UN Women, 2019). Tijoux fights this: "I won't be the one who obeys because my body belongs to me/ I decide about my time, how I want and where I want to be" (English translation). 'Antipatriarca' has messages of female liberation, and the cultural issues Tijoux speaks out against in this respect also feature in rape culture and speak to survivors of sexual violence, who can feel they are powerless and no longer in control of their body, it belongs to their perpetrator(s) (National Alliance to End Sexual Violence, 2021, 310).

The musicians in this section all have non-White backgrounds, and often non-White artists differ in their approaches to writing about sexual violence in the specific cultural contexts and experiences that they draw upon. For example, Black female musicians may draw upon their experiences of racism and discrimination and may use their art to challenge dominant narratives that dismiss or blame Black survivors of sexual violence (Braun & Clarke 99). Asian female musicians, on the other hand, may draw upon their experiences of cultural expectations and traditions and may use their art to challenge dominant narratives that normalise or minimise

sexual violence within their communities (Najdowski 460). Comparatively white female musicians may also draw upon their own experiences and vocalise the pain and trauma more directly but tend to neglect cultural influences and focus on their individualised experiences through abstraction, symbolism, and direct one-on-one dialogue with audiences. To further explore this notion female musicians of different cultural backgrounds may differ in their approaches to writing about sexual violence in the specific messages and themes that they explore. For example, Caucasian female musicians may focus on issues of consent and healthy relationships, while others may explore the long-term impact of trauma and the importance of support for survivors (Kilpatrick et al.). Still others from marginalised communities are more focused on challenging dominant narratives that contribute to rape culture and promote messages of empowerment and social change (Najdowski 458). A commonality emerges in which all women are aspiring to challenge dominant narratives that dismiss or minimise the experiences of survivors through their different perspectives (Lonsway et al. 534).

## Conclusion

Throughout the discourse, this paper has examined the ways in which contemporary female musicians use their art to explore themes of sexual violence, trauma, and marginalised voices.

Using qualitative research and thematic analysis, the study analysed the lyrics of songs written by artists such as Lady Gaga and Natalie Grant. In accordance, the works of Tori Amos, Ashe, Rhapsody, Jolin Tsai and Ana Tijoux were investigated. The findings of the study highlight the powerful role that music can play in giving voice to the experiences of survivors and challenging cultural narratives that contribute to rape culture. The analysis identified several recurring themes, including the use of metaphor, the psychological experiences of survivors, and the need for representation of marginalised voices. These themes were explored in depth in order to understand

how the artists used their music to convey the experiences of survivors and promote social change. Overall, the findings of this study demonstrate the importance of authentic and diverse voices in cultural conversation about sexual violence and trauma. By using their art to give voice to the experiences both Caucasian and marginalised communities and to challenge cultural narratives related to post-sexual assault, rape culture, and the aftermath of trauma. These artists can raise awareness about these issues and contribute to social change. In this way, their music serves as an important tool for promoting respect, consent, and healthy relationships.

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