EURAS JOURNAL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

Contents

DOI Numbers

Ibn Hani al-Andalusi (326/926 - 362/972): His Life and Poetry
Ibn Hani al-Andalusi
10.17932/EJOSS.2021.023/ejoss_ v01i1001

Modalities, Disciplinarity and Multiliteracies: the digital culture of higher education and the false promise of technological determinism
Jonathan J. FELIX
10.17932/EJOSS.2021.023/ejoss_ v01i1002

INSTC (International North South Transport Corridor) connecting Eurasia and India
Shoaib Khan
10.17932/EJOSS.2021.023/ejoss_ v01i1003

Healthcare in Oman Between Past and Present Achievements, Human Security and the COVID – 19 Pandemic
Elena Maestri
10.17932/EJOSS.2021.023/ejoss_ v01i1004

Between Coronavirus and COVID-19: Influence of Nigerian Newspapers' Headline Construction on Audience Information-Seeking Behaviour
Babatunde Raphael OJEBUYI, Mutiu Iyanda LASISI, Umar Olansile AJETUNMOBI
10.17932/EJOSS.2021.023/ejoss_ v01i1005

The Impact of Foreign Direct Investments on Balance of Payment Trends in Montenegro
Zdravko Tomic
10.17932/EJOSS.2021.023/ejoss_ v01i1006

Belonging and Genocide: Hitler's Community, 1918-1945 (Thomas Kühne)
Cemre Aydoğan
10.17932/EJOSS.2021.023/ejoss_ v01i1007

AIMS

EURAS Journal of Social Sciences (EJOSS) is a peer-reviewed international scientific open access periodical published in accordance with independent, unbiased, and double-blind peer-review principles. It publishes two issues per year. The publication language of the journal is English. The journal is an official publication of the Eurasian Universities Union (EURAS). EJOSS aims to contribute to the literature by publishing manuscripts of highest scientific level in such fields as social sciences, Sociology, Social Anthropology, Economics (Political Economy and Public Economics), Political Science, International Relations, Contemporary History.

SCOPE

EJOSS welcomes experimental outputs as well as interpretative proposals in all the fields of (broadly intended) social sciences. The journal conforms to the Principles of Transparency and Best Practice in Scholarly Publishing (doaj.org/bestpractice).

From The Editor

The "Eurasian Heartland" is quickly getting back the strategic, cultural and economic importance it held for millennia. EURAS was born as a far-sighted project aimed at establishing a permanent, friendly and fruitful cooperation among universities and institutions of the European and Asian sides of the Eurasian continent. And now, in the difficult and delicate phase entire World is experiencing, EURAS Executive Board has decided to issue three scientific journals. EURAS Journal of Social Sciences (EJOSS) is one of them.

EJOSS' mission is observing and reporting the developments occurring in the emerging societies and economies of the World, especially (but not exclusively) Eurasia. Our purpose is to provide serious, updated and interesting information out of stereotypes. EJOSS will be an open space where scientifically grounded and as much as possible politically, nationally and culturally unbiased contributes are welcomed.

We enjoy the support of highly-qualified scholars from Italy to Philippines, who are either included in the scientific and editorial boards and in the honor committee or are ready to help us as referees. We are thankful to all of them. We are also thankful to the technical staff and to all the people who is cooperating to this task. Let me mention at least Dr. İrem Arman.

EJOSS includes a section on EURAS life. You will see that despite pandemic, EURAS has not stopped its activities. We hope to give account of an increasing number of events and common achievements.

The first article of this first number is a special present by Prof. Dr. Mustafa Aydın, President of the Board of Trustees of the Istanbul Aydın University. He is the man who conceived EURAS. Thank you Mr. President!

Prof. Dr. Fabio L. Grassi

EURASIAN UNIVERSITIES UNION - POWERFUL COLLABORATION THROUGH A UNIQUELY WIDE NETWORK

BURAS launched in 2008, is a non-profit international association, covering universities and other higher education institutions within the Eurasian region to promote cooperation among 120+ universities from all across the West and Central Europe, Balkans, Caucasus, Middle East as well as the whole of Asia and working for the global advancement of educational standards in the Eurasian region.

Being the cradle of all known civilizations and having 2/3 of all the world population, the Eurasian region thus represents a center of excellence in terms of educational developments and cultural flows. By building an international educational platform for regional universities, BURAS serves its members as a gateway to reach the best educational services worldwide. As per the aim of internationalization via a dynamic and communicative network, BURAS has been strongly working on a wide range of fields in order to reach the highest achievements globally.

BURAS, as one of the fastest-growing higher education associations connects universities and all the higher education institutions belonging to different geopolitical and cultural backgrounds and seeks ways to enhance their dialogue and exchange of best practices.

Eurasian Universities Union's mission summarized as follows

- ✓ Building a platform for regional universities to reach international educational services.
- ✓ Encouraging student and academic staff mobility.
- ✓ Establishing cooperation and networking among members.
- ✓ Improving academic standards of education.
- ✓ Promoting policy development internationally.
- ✓ Representing the interests and concerns of member universities by supporting their prestige and visibility worldwide.
- ✓ Strengthening the leadership of Eurasian universities by sharing knowledge and exchanging best practices.
- ✓ Supporting innovation.

BURAS creates a wide and productive ground for mutual sharing in various academic, social and cultural areas. Each step taken for a certain end will also bring its own gateway to many other aspects and contribute to the enrichment of the activities of the members and the union. BURAS mainly target is at the following projects and services;

- ✓ Awards and scholarships.
- ✓ Certificate programs for BURAS Members.
- ✓ Database portal and Members guide.
- ✓ EURIE-Eurasia Higher Education Summit-Annual Conference of BURAS.
- ✓ Interactive platforms such as blog page and other common areas for intercommunication.
- ✓ Joint research and development activities.
- ✓ Joint projects under EU, UN and national agencies programs.
- ✓ Online events, webinars, workshops.
- ✓ Periodical and academic publications.
- ✓ Ranking systems.

- ✓ Short term programs, Summer schools, and internships.
- ✓ Student and academic exchange programs.
- ✓ Thematic conferences, seminars, and meetings.
- ✓ Volunteer programs.

EURAS has 3 academic journals;

- ✓ EURAS Journal of Social Sciences – EJOSS.
- ✓ Eurasian Journal of Health – EJOH.
- ✓ EURAS Journal of Engineering and Applied Sciences – EJEAS.

Eurasian Universities Union's vision is to promote sustainable peace and advanced technology worldwide through cultural developments and new educational systems. EURAS' vision for the future is to contribute to the society consisted of self-aware and highly qualified individuals benefiting from global education and mobility services. EURAS aims to open the borders of education to the public and to favor the exchange of knowledge and best practices among higher education institutions from the entire Eurasian region.

In order to accomplish these goals, we believe that connecting the universities from diverse identities can carry out the distinction in guaranteeing real equality and accessibility to excellence in educational standards.

Ibn Hani al-Andalusi (326/926 - 362/972): His Life and Poetry -Historical Literary Research-*

Mustafa AYDIN*

Summary

This study, which discusses the life and poetry of the Andalusian poet Ibn Hani al-Andalusi, is one of the studies in the field of literary history. The study consists of two main chapters. In the first chapter, information about Ibn Hani's life and the century he lived is given. In particular, the scientific and literary situations of his age are examined, and Ibn Hani's personality is described from different aspects. In the second chapter, the artistic features, and topics of the existing poems in Ibn Hani's divan are examined. Then, important annotations made to his divan are introduced. Some of the conclusions reached at the end of the research are explained, the main ones being; The literary position of Ibn Hani in the age he lived, the importance of the Fatimid caliph to Ibn Hani and the representation of a new trend in Ibn Hani's poems.

Key words: *Ibn Hani, Andalusia, Andalusian Literature, Fatimids, Fatimid State, Arabic Literature.*

Introduction

Poetry has a very important place of its own. During the time of the Prophet, it had a strong connection with people's lives, too. When there was a poet in a tribe, that tribe was proud of this and held ceremonies of joy. At the same time, poetry was a tool for defense of religion and help in the invitation of the prophet. After the Golden Age, poetry was also used for political purposes as well as in the Umayyad Period. Later, the themes of the poem expanded to include the social, cultural, political, religious, natural, and literary values that make up the structure of the society. It became an image of society and an expression of the reality of society. This made the study of poetry very important. Some of the reasons that reinforce this importance of poetry are as follows:

- In the study of poetry, a revival of the literary heritage that reflects a part of the universal cultural history is discussed.

- In the study of poetry, the discovery of the linguistic development stages is of essence, and poetry is considered the main material of these stages of development.

---

*Assoc. Prof., Istanbul Ayvansaray University, Istanbul, Turkey, (mustafaaydin@ayvansaray.edu.tr), https://orcid.org/0000-0001-7640-7470

Special Contribution by Assoc. Prof. Mustafa AYDIN, EURAS President and the Chairman of Istanbul Aydin University Board of Trustees

From this point of view, the divan of the Andalusian poet Ibn Hani, with regards to its literary and historical importance, has been examined in the context of the poet's life, the features of his poetry and the most important issues in his divan. This review was conducted using historical and analytical method. The study consists of an introduction and two chapters. The first one is later divided into two sections. The second part contains three sections. The research was concluded with some proposals and recommendations.

Part One

Features of the Period of Ibn Hani

Part One: His Period and Life

1. Political Situation in the Era of Ibn Hani

It is not possible for us to understand Ibn Hani's poems without understanding the era in which he lived and without being informed about the most important political, scientific, and cultural events that dominated his era. In particular, it is impossible to understand his poetry without understanding the effects of these events on it. Because of his closeness to the power of that period, especially to the Fatimid Caliph al-Mu'izz Lidini'llah, his poems were dominated by a political tendency. At the beginning of the IV century, after the establishment of the Umayyad State in Andalusia in 317 AH, three states that shared the Islamic world, emerged. These are the Abbasid State in Baghdad, the Umayyad State in Cordoba, and the Fatimid State in Africa.

In terms of the Abbasid Caliphate, there was fragmentation and weakening of the state. The state was suffering because of the multitude of uprisings, the deterioration of state affairs, the loss of the former power of the caliphate, and such matters led the state to collapse step by step. This was the result of the state's weakness in running the country and managing the country's affairs. This issue caused the laws not to be implemented, the order to be disturbed and the states to be pressured by the viziers, amirs, and commanders, who broke off from obedience to the caliph. For this reason, malicious or opposing forces began to take action and form masses to break away from the structure of the state, to establish small statelets away from the Baghdad administration, and they did so.[1] The Abbasid State became several states. These states were dominated by Arab and non-Arab commanders and amirs. The Qarmatians dominated Syria and parts of the Arabian Peninsula. Likewise, the Samanids; To the Khorasan regions, the Hamadanids; they dominated the part between the Tigris and Euphrates and Diyarbakir, and the Buyids dominated the Persian towns. Under the Abbasid rule, there was no place left but Baghdad and Egypt.[2] Thus, the eastern regions began to break away from the Abbasid caliphate. The remaining lands of the state gradually began to become independent from the center of the caliphate.[3]

All these events coincided with the massive spread of Shiite the IV century had witnessed. The Abbasid caliphate began to lose much of its prestige and power. As a result of this, the Zaydis succeeded in establishing a state that seized power in Tabaristan in AH 250 and in Yemen in AH 280. The Qarmatians also seized power in southern Iraq, Bahrain, and al-Ahsa. Thirty years after the victory over the Fatimids, it became clear that the

---

[1] Reşîd, Nâzım, el-Edebu'l – 'Arabî fi'l – 'Asri'l- 'Abbâsî, Dâru'l-Kütüb Press and Publication Directorate, University of Mosul, 1410 / 1989, p. 190.

[2] İbnu'l-Esîr, Ebu'l Hasan, Ali b. Ebi'l Kerem, Muhammed b. Muhammed, el-Kâmil fi't-Târîh, Critical ed., 'Omer Abdulsalam Tedemmurî, Dâru'l Kitâbi'l- 'Arabiyye, (1st Edition), Beirut, 1417 / 1997, 8/455-456.

[3] İbnu'l-Esîr, el-Kâmil fî't-Târîh, 8/ 322, 324.

Abbasid caliphate had collapsed. When the Buyids succeeded in establishing dominance in Baghdad, the center of the Abbasid caliphate, sectarian uprisings, and religious turmoil arose among Sunni and Shiite adherents.[4]

On the other hand, the Christian Byzantine State in Constantinople (Istanbul) was watching the Abbasid caliphate and was looking for opportunities to benefit from the disintegration of the state. Meanwhile, Egypt was in its worst state of powerlessness, riots, turmoil, and expensiveness. Thus, the Fatimids in Africa took advantage of this bad situation in Egypt, which they coveted, and sent their propagandists there. Many people gathered around the propagandists. It is even said that Kafur al-Ihshidi attended their invitation. Thus, the caliphs of the Fatimids tried to conquer the regions of Egypt, but they were unsuccessful.[5] When the governor of Egypt, Kafur al-Ihshidi, died, the disagreements arose. The riots that occurred resulted in exorbitant prices. The Fatimid Caliph al-Mu'izz Lidini'llah took this opportunity and immediately took action to realize the goals of the Fatimids. He ordered an army to be prepared and appointed Jawhar al-Siqilli[6] as the head of the army and sent him to Egypt. He personally attended the farewell. He remained at his headquarters for days. He used to go to Jawhar every day and meet with him privately. One day he came to the headquarters again and Jawhar stood in his presence. The army was also assembled. Al-Mu'izz turned to the sheiks he had sent with Jawhar and said: "If this commander Jawhar had come out alone, he would have conquered Egypt and entered Egypt without a fight. He would stay in the ruins of Ibn Tolun. A city called Cairo, which dominated the world, would also be established."[7]

Ibn Hani is not far from these events. Here, he describes this army of al-Muizz, who went out to conquer Egypt, with the following couplet:

<div dir="rtl">

رَأَيْتُ بِعَيني فَوْقَ ما كُنْتُ أَسْمَعُ   وَقَدْ راعَني يَوْمٌ مِنَ الحَشرِ أَرْوَعُ[8]

</div>

"I saw with my own eyes beyond what I heard.   A day scarier than Hashr scared me"

When Jawhar al-Siqilli entered Alexandria, its people surrendered without a fight. When he turned towards the city of al-Fustat, the soldiers of al-Ihşidiyya fled the city. The people of the city, with the desire to make peace, sent a messenger named Abu Cafer Muslim Ubeydullah. This messenger was chosen from the Fatimids in the hope that he

---

[4] İbnu'l- Cevzî, Cemâluddîn, Ebu'l-Ferec, Abdurrahmân b. 'Ali, el-Muntazam fi Târîhi'l- Umemi ve'l-Mulûk, Critical ed. Muhammed Abdulkâdir 'Atâ, Mustafa Abdulkâdir 'Atâ, Dâru'l-Kutubi'l-İlmiyye, Beirut, 1412/ 1992, (1st Edition), 7/15, 19, 23, 33; El-Makrîzî, Ahmed b. 'Ali b. 'Abdulkâdir, el-Mevâ'iz ve'l-İ'tibâr bi- zikri'l-Hıtati ve'l- Âsâr, Daru'l-Kutubi'l-İlmiyye, Beirut, (I. Edition), AH 1418, 2/357, 358.

[5] In the early years of Caliph al-Mahdi's reign in AH 301, two attempts to conquer Egypt failed. As a matter of fact, attempts were made in the time of his son, al-Ka'im bi Emrillah, but he could not reach his goal. See, İbnu'l-Esîr, el-Kâmil fi't-Târîh, 8/84-89; el-Makrîzî, el-Mevâiz ve'l-İ'tibâr bi-zikri'l-Hıtati ve'l Esâr, 1/174; 'Imâdu'd-Dîn, İdrîs, Târîhu'l-Hulefâi'l-Fâtimiyyîn bi'l-Mağrib, Critical ed., Muhammed el-Ya'lâvî, Dâru'l-Garbi'l-İslamî, Beirut, p. 176.

[6] Ramazan Şeşen, Cevher el-Sıkıllî, (DIA), 7/456, 457.

[7] el-Makrîzî, el-Mevâiz ve'l-İ'tibâr bi-zikri'l-Hıtati ve'l Âsâr, 2/234; İbnu'l- Esîr, el-Kâmil fi't-Târîh, 7/280.

[8] Divânu İbn Hânî, p. 193.

would be respected in the eyes of Jawhar. Jawhar greeted him and offered him a nice treat. Ibn Hani points to Muslim mentioned in his poem with the following couplets.

وما ابنُ عُبَيد اللَّهِ يَدْعُوكَ وَحْدَهُ ____ غَدَاةَ رَأَى أن لَيْسَ في القَوْسِ مَنْزَعُ

بل النَّاسُ، كُلُّ النَّاسِ يَدْعُوكَ، غَيْرَهُ ____ فَلأَ أَحَدٌ إِلَّا يَذِلُّ ويَخْضَعُ⁹

"Only Ibn Ubaydullah was not begging you alone. In that early morning when he saw that there was no room for fighting."

"On the contrary, all the people, all the people apart from him, were begging you. On that day, there was no one who did not submit, who did not obey."

Later, Jawhar entered Egypt in the middle of the month of Sha'ban in AH 358. He delivered a sermon in the old (al-'atîk) mosque on behalf of al-Mu'izz. He had called people for Alevism.[10] Ibn Hani also referred to this event in his eulogy, which began as follows:[11]

تَقُولُ بَنُو الْعَبَّاسِ هَلْ فُتِحَتْ مِصْرُ ____ فَقُلْ لِبَني الْعَبَّاسِ قَدْ قُضِيَ الْأَمْرُ¹¹

"Abbas sons say, has Egypt been conquered?

Tell the sons of Abbas that the job has been finished."

2. Scientific and Literary Situation in the Period of Ibn Hani

Abbasid State of Iraq: Despite the weakness, troubles and internal fragmentation of the Abbasid caliphate, the emirs of these newly formed statelets were interested in the Arabic language and gave importance to it. They attended scientific and literary meetings. For example, the Buwayhi ruler 'Adududdevle gave great importance to literature. He took some of the poets like al-Mutanabbi under his protection. He also trusted Ebu'l-Fadl Muhammed el-Hüseyin, who was a great scribe and known as Ibnu'l-Amid. He said the following about Se'âlibî Ibnu'l-Amîd: He was the best in the literary composition in his century. He is referred to as the Jahiz of the last age. Eloquence was given as an example; he was the person of distinction in fluency and good words. As a matter of fact, Müeyyidüddevle, the ruler of the Buwayhi State, made es-Sahib Abbad, who was a poet and clerk, his vizier.[12]

In addition, many Seljuk viziers such as Nizamülmülk Ebu Ali el-Hasan Ali became famous for their love of scholars and literati. Abu Shama-Maqdisi said about Nizam al-Mulk: He was an Islamic law scholar with deep knowledge, the closest people to him

---

⁹ Divânu İbn Hânî, p. 200.

¹⁰ İbnu'l- Esîr, el-Kâmil fi't-Târîh, 7/280.

¹¹ Divânu İbn Hânî, p. 123.

¹² Reşîd, Nâzım, el-Edeb fi'l-Asrı'l-Abbasi, p. 190, 191.

were the scholars he liked the most. He would debate with them in assemblies, dig deeper into issues and discuss some vague problems with them.

Poet Abu Ismail al-Huseyn bin Ali al-Tugrani became famous during the Seljuk Period. He was the vizier of the Seljuk Sultan Mas'ud Muhammad.[13]

Literature and science also advanced in the Hamdani Emirate, which ruled Mosul, Diyarbakir, Aleppo, Homs, Hama, Antakya, Manbij and Ma'arretü'n-Nu'man in the years AH 317-394. Seyfüddevle's palace in Aleppo was the place where Ebu't-Tayyib al-Mutanabbi, Abu Firas al-Hamadani, Ibn Nubate es-Sa'di, Ebu'l Ferec al-Isfehani and similar literary and poets gathered.[14]

Many poets and scribes emerged in the Ihshidi State, which ruled in Egypt and Damascus between the years of AH 323-358. The most prominent of them are: Ibn Tabataba, Ibrahim al-Cizi -who was the clerk of Kafur, Salih b. Names such as Mü'ennes and al-Hasan bin 'Ali al-Esadi'.[15]

When the Fatimids ruled Egypt and Damascus in the years 358-566 Hijri, the branches of science and literature gained great importance and importance in their period as well. Some of the rulers such as al-Mu'izz Lidini'llah excelled in composing poetry. As a matter of fact, the poets, who were close to these sultans, obtained high positions, valuable gifts, and bounties in the eyes of the emirs and kings.[16]

Moroccan Fatimid State: The Fatimid State Period in Morocco witnessed a kind of literary development. Literary prose in particular became widespread in this era. This type of prose was dominated by sermon and testament. The reason for the emergence of this type of literary expression was the qualities possessed by the Fatimids. Because they were the invitees of the Shiite sect, which is contrary to the belief of the majority of the population. This required the presence of preachers with high literary skill and expressive power. In this way, they were able to convey their invitations to their addressees with a solid style, a clear phrase, and a short word.[17]

Likewise, the first Caliph Ubeydullah al-Mahdi (AH 296 - 322) became famous for the abundance of official correspondence he made with his heir, Abu'l-Qasim, who was responsible for some conquests in Morocco. These correspondences became evident with the robustness of his style, the strength of his expression, his fondness for using literary arts, his diversification of parenthetical sentences containing expressions of respect and reverence for the Caliph, and his power to frequently quote from the Qur'an and hadiths.[18]

---

[13] Ibid., p. 191.

[14] Ibid. (Taken abbreviated.)

[15] Ibid., p. 193.

[16] Ibid.

[17] el -'Umeyrî, Semîre Behlûl, Nûrâ, el-Hayâtu's-Sekâfiyye li'd-Devleti'l-Fâtımiyye bi-bilâdi'l-Mağribi'l- 'Arabî, Master Thesis, Supervisor: Yasin Buderia, es-Senetü'l-Câmi'iyye, 1435-1436 / 2014-2015 academic year, p. 45.

[18] Ibid., p. 56.

Literary prose developed in the field of administration and correspondence during the reign of Caliph al-Mu'izz Lidinillah (AH 341 - 362). Some of the most obvious factors in this development were correspondence between the caliph's commanders and his men, on the one hand, and between the caliph and his rebels, on the other, as the interest of the administration demanded.[19]

One of the known examples of literary prose of the Fatimid Period in Morocco is the sectarian political sermons in which the caliphs addressed the public on religious and similar occasions. These sermons are distinguished from the others by the strength of the style, the sweetness of the words, the powerful effect and the frequent quotations from the Holy Quran.[20] The Fatimid Period in Morocco also had a distinctive genre in terms of literary prose types. This was the type of prose called Tevkiat, which the Fatimid caliphs were very fond of. This type of prose was an attractive form of literary expression, summarized as the caliph writing down his own opinion under the books and letters presented to him. These Tevkîats are distinguished from other genres by bringing together the styles of kasr and ijaz in rhetoric.[21]

As for poetry, they also used it to propagate and defend their faith in the service of their sect, to praise and support the caliphs.[22]

Kurtaba Andalusian State: During the reign of Ibn Hani, Andalusia witnessed a great development in various fields of science, both Islamic law and Arabic. Because when the Arab conquerors entered Andalusia, they carried all the colors of their culture, science and thought systems with them. On the other hand, the Andalusian people were migrating to the East and transferring the knowledge of the easterners to their countries. They wanted some influential figures to accompany them and they wanted them to be influential in literary, scientific and artistic life, such as Ziryab and Ebu 'Ali al-Kâlî al-Bağdâdî, who were students of the al-Mavsili family. In Andalusia, some of the writers had been prominent. So much so that eventually, Andalusia became a favorite place for those who wanted honor and wealth from the owners of knowledge and wealth.[23]

Al-Makkari, the author of Nafhu't-Tib, says: with them, all sciences, except philosophy and astrology, also had their share and special importance – *in the eyes of Andalusian people.* Because these two sciences - philosophy and astrology - had a great place among the elite and they would not reveal them because of public fear. Providing that it was said that a person studies philosophy and has an interest in the stars, the people would name this person "zındık", which means heretic. They would hold these individuals every move against them, keep them under constant control. If they had made a mistake in something suspicious, people would have had them arrested or burned before their situation reached

---

[19] Ibid., p. 48.

[20] Ibid., p. 49-50.

[21] Ibid., p. 50.

[22] Ibid., p. 52.

[23] ed-Dâye, Muhammed Rıdvân, Fi'l-Edebi'l-Endelusi, Daru'l-Fikr, Damascus, 1412/ 2000, p. 43.

the sultan. Or, the sultan would kill them to win the hearts of the people and be close to them. In case their books were found, their king usually used to order that person's books to be burned.[24]

Between AH 300 and 350, Andalusia reached its peak during the time of Abdurrahman an-Nasser. The grand library built under the guidance of his heir Al-Hakim Al-Mustansir has earned a reputation. So much so that Ibn Khaldun said the following on this subject: In his time, Andalusia had more libraries than anyone else before or after him.[25]

In the history of Andalusian literature, Ibn Abdi Rabbihi, one of the most famous poets of the period and the author of al-Ikdu'l-Ferid, is considered one of the most important sources of Arabic literature (AH 246 -328), as well as some of the poets and editors, appeared in this century.[26] Our poet Ibn Hani, who was affiliated with the ruler of Ishbiliya and had a distinguished place next to him, also emerged and became famous in this period. However, he was forced to migrate from Andalusia, so he left there and went to North Africa.[27]

Part Two: Personality of Ibn Hani

1. Name, Ancestry, Tag and Sobriquet

His name is Muhammad bin Hani b. Muhammed b. Sa'dûn. His ancestry is al-Azdi al-Andalusi and his identity is Ebu'l-Kâsım. Ibnu'l- Ahdal said that Ibn Hani's tag was Abu Nuwas. He expressed this by mixing it with El-Hasan Ibn Hani el-Hakemî el-Irakî's marking tag. His filiation is based on Umayyad Commander el-Muhallab b. Ebi Sufra al-Azdi. Ibn Hani was nicknamed as the Al Mutanabbi of east. This is because he was arguably one of the most famous the Western Arab poets and in the eyes of the Maghrebs he was like Al Mutanabbi and was belong to the same era.[28]

Ibn Hallikân said: Among the Maghrebs, there is no one in his rank, neither before him nor after him; on the contrary, he was arguably their best poet. He was like the Commander of the East in the eyes of Maghrebs and the two belonged to the same era. [29]

---

[24] el-Makkarî, Şihâbuddîn, Ahmed bin Muhammed, Nafhu't-Tîb min Ğusni'l-Endelüsi'l-Ratîb, Critical ed., İhsân 'Abbâs, Dâr Sâdr, Beirut, (1st Edition), 1968 art., 1/221.

[25] ed-Dâye, fi'l Edebi'l-Endelüsî, p. 43.

[26] Ibid., p. 300.

[27] Heykel, Ahmed, el-Edebu'l-Endelüsî mine'l-Fethi ilaâ Sukuti'l-Hilâfe, Dâru'l-Mârif, Cairo, 1st edition, 1985, p. 233.

[28] See, El-Ziriklî, Hayruddin bin Mahmud, el- A'lâm, Dâru'l- 'İlmi Lil-Melâyîn, (15th Edition), 2002, 7/130; Collected from Mu'cemu'l-Şu'arâi'l- 'Arab, Encyclopedia of Poetry (This book is electronically numbered within the framework of bibliography service), p. 247; İbn Ma'sûm, Sadruddîn el-Medenî, 'Ali bin Ahmed, Selâfetu'l-Asri fi Mehâsini'l-Şu'arâ bi-kulli Mısr, (This book is electronically numbered within the framework of bibliography service); İbnu'l- 'İmâdi'l-Akrî, 'Abdulhay b. Ahmed bin Muhammed, Şezerâtu'l-Zeheb fi Ahbâri men Zeheb, Critical ed. Mahmud el-Arnavut, Dâr İbn Kesîr, Damascus-Beirut, 1st edition, 1406 /1986, 4/330.

[29] es-Safedi, Selahuddin Halil b. Aybek, al-Vâfî bi'l-Vefeyât, Critical ed., Ahmed el-Arnavut and Türkî Mustafa, Dâr İhyâi'l-Turâsi'l- 'Arabî, Beirut, 1420 /2000, 1/260.

2. His Birth, Growth and Death

Poet Ibn Hani; was born in es- Sukûn, one of the villages of Ishbiliya, in Andalusia in 320 Hijri, grew up there and learned poetry and literature there. At the same time, he grew up in a noble family with knowledge and decency. His father, Hani, was from the villages of al-Mahdiyya in Africa, he was also a poet and literate. Then he immigrated to Andalusia. Our poet, whose son is mentioned, was born and raised in Ishbiliya. He worked there and had a great literary background. He wrote poetry and became famous in this field. He had memorized Arabic poems and news. He became attached to the Emir of Ishbiliya and gained prestige in his presence. He was very immersed in pleasure and entertainment; he would not break away from them. He was accused of adopting the way of the philosophers, which caused the people of Ishbiliya to be angry with him. Because of him, bad words started to be uttered about the king. He was also accused of being of the same denomination. Thereupon, the king ordered him to leave the country until the accusations against him were forgotten. Ibn Hani left Ishbiliya when he was twenty-seven.[30]

He left there and wandered around the region and reached Maghreb. There, he met Commander Jawhar and praised him. Then he went to Zab and joined Cafer Ibn al-Andalusia and his brother Yahya. He took refuge beside and came under their protection. They also hosted him nicely and gave him goodwill. Then the news of this reached Ebû Temîm al-Mu'izz. He called her over and greeted him nicely and generously offered him treats. When al-Mu'izz went on an expedition to Egypt, he asked al-Mu'izz's permission to go to his family and bring them and catch up with him, and he gave permission. He left for his country. When he reached Barka, he stayed with one of the notables of the region for a few days to rest, and Ibn Hani was hosted for days. One day, he came out drunk from his house where he was staying. In the morning, people found him strangled in one of the country's slums. The reason for this and the perpetrator of the incident were unknown. He died on Wednesday, in AH 362. He was over forty years old. When the news of his death reached al-Mu'izz, he was very upset and said: "This person was someone we hoped to brag about to the Eastern poets, fate did not grant us this." [31]

Ez-Ziriklî also states that Ibn Hani traveled to Africa and Algeria, then he initiated to Fatimid Caliph al-Mu'izz Lidinillah Mead b. İsmail and he lived with him for a short time in el-Mansuriya near Kayravan. After that, it is reported that al-Mu'izz went to Egypt when Commander Jawhar al-Siqilli had conquered Egypt, Ibn Hani sent him off and returned to Ishbiliya, took his family to al-Mu'izz and he was heading to Egypt to catch up with the city and that he was assassinated in Barka when he arrived there.[32]

Ibn Hallikân also said: When Mu'izz headed to Egypt, Ibn Hani saw him off. He returned to Morocco to take his family and catch up with him. He got ready and followed him. When he arrived in Barka, a person from the people of Barka hosted him. He had fun in the entertainment meetings for days with his host, so it is said that the people in these meetings tortured and killed him. It is

---

[30] See, İbn Hallikân, Ebu'l- 'Abbâs Şemsuddîn Ahmed b. Muhammed, Vefeyâtu'l-A 'yân, Dâr Sâdr, Beirut, 4/421; Kehhâle, Ömer Rızâ, Mu'cemu'l-Muellifîn, Mektebetu'l-Musennâ, Dâr İhyâi't-Turâsi'l- 'Arabî, Beirut n.d., 12/88.

[31] el-Hamevî, Şihâbuddîn Yâkût b. 'Abdullaâh, Mu'cemu'l-Udebâ', Critical ed. İhsân 'Abbâs, Dâru'l-Ğarbi'l-İslamî, Beirut, 1414 /1993, 6/2667.

[32] See, al-Zirikli, al-A'lam, 7/130.

also stated that he left these meetings drunk, oozed away on the road, and was found dead in the morning and the reason for this was not known. This event took place on the day that transited the twenty-third night of Rajab to Wednesday morning in the year three hundred and sixty-two Hijri. He was then forty-two years old. When the news of the poet's death reached the Fatimid Caliph al-Mu'izz Lidini'llah on his way to Egypt, he expressed his sadness for his death and his likeness for his poem and said: "This person- that is Ibn Hani- was someone we hoped to be proud of against the Eastern poets, fate did not grant us this." [33]

Chapter Two

Poetic Features of the Divan of Ibn Hani

1. Artistic Features of Ibn Hani's Poetry:

The first thing that the researcher will see in the era of Ibn Hani is the emergence of a new poetry movement that revives the original features of the old Arabic poetry, which was abandoned by the owners of the modern movement led by Abu Nuwas. Arabic poetry had lost many of its simple and plain bedouin features. For this reason, this trend came to restore the old artistic features of Arabic poetry on the one hand, and to limit the rebellion of muhdes poets against Arabic poetry on the other hand. This new trend was traditionalist on the one hand and innovative on the other. Undoubtedly, it retained the poetic method of the eulogy in terms of language and music; but it was considered an innovator in the meaning and delineation of poetry.

In terms of method, the owners of this movement acted on the traditions of the old poets, such as starting their poems with lamenting at the ruins/traces or beginning the poem with a preparatory ghazal, and then moving on to the poet's main goal.

With regards to the language, as was the custom of the ancient poets, they tended to prefer the polyphony of the words and the grandeur of the expressions. From the point of view of poetic music, they also preferred long prosody with solemn names and strong rhymes with a strong timbre.

In terms of the spirit and moral aspects of Arabic poetry, the adherents of this trend were dominated by being far from the extremism and rebellion identified with Abu Nuwas, ridiculing traditions and things that people lean on. As a matter of fact, he was also far from excesses in obscene matters, openly expressing rebellion and boasting about ugliness.

In terms of their semantic and figurative aspects, they delved deeply into the issues of meaning and shape and explored new meanings that were wonderful, original and no one knew before. This trend has reached its peak in the hands of al- Mutanabbi. Because al-Mutanabbi is considered a symbol of this orientation[34].

One of the outstanding features of Ibn Hani's poetry was his power to dominate the words. For he was holding the reins of his tongue in his hands and moving it as he pleased. Therefore, his poems

---

[33] İbn Hallikân, Vefeyâtu'l-Ayân, 4/50; Yâkût el-Hamevî, Mu'cemu'l-Udebâ", 19/93; Mustafa Aydın quoted from these two books in his article named İbn Hâni el-Endelüsî. See, ibid., p. 3; M. Faruk Toprak, İbn Hâni, (DIA), 20/28.

[34] Heykel, Ahmed, el-Edebu'l-Endelüsî mine'l-Feth ila Sukûti'l-Hilâfe, p. 194, 196 (abbreviated); el-Behbîtî, Necîb Muhammed, Târîhu'ş-Şiri'l- 'Arabî hatta Âhiri'l-Karni'l-Sâlisi'l-Hicrî, Dâru'l-Kutubi'l-Mısriyye, Egypt 1950, p. 485 et al.

were known for the expression and expressiveness that he used in the service of the Fatimids in terms of spreading the beliefs of the Fatimid caliphs, urging them to adopt their beliefs, glorifying them, praising them and spreading their values. One of the examples of this is the praise of the Fatimid Caliph al-Mu'izz Lidini'llah. Ibn Hani praised him in more than one of his eulogies. The poem "al-Nuniyya", which is considered the brightest of the praises and the most outstanding of the poems, is also one of them. This is the first poem he read to him in the Qasida Kayrevan, and al-Mu'izz gave him a great reward for this qasida. In his first couplet (matla) he says:

هَلْ مِنْ أَعِقَّةِ عَالِجٍ يَبْرِينُ[35]   أَمْ مِنْهُمَا بَقَرُ الْحُدُوجِ الْعِينُ

وَلِمن لَيَالٍ مَا ذَمَمْنَا عَهْدَهَا   مُذْ كُنَّ إِلَّا أَنَّهُنَّ شُجُونُ[36]

" 'Is it one of the valleys of Alic and Yebrin? Or are the big-eyed cattle of the palanquins carrying the lover from there?

Which of us has nights that we have not condemned from the very beginning, what are they but sadness and grief from the very beginning!"

In fact, when he managed to conquer the Moroccan city, he also praised the commander of al-Mu'izz, Jawhar al-Siqilli, as follows:

ولَمَّا تَغَشَّتْ جَانِبَ الأَرْضِ فِتْنَةٌ   تَشُبُّ لَظَى الهَيْجَاءِ أَلْفَحَ أَلْفَحَا

وَأَدْرَكْتُ سُولاً في ابنِ واسولَ عَنْوَةً   وَزَحْزَحْتَ مِنْهُ يَذْبُلاً فَتَزَحْزَحَا[37]

"When sedition covers the face of the earth, the fire of war blazes as it burns.

I took what I requested from Ibn Wasul (from Muhammad bin al-Fath) by force. consequently, I dismantled the Yazbul Mountain, and it was dismantled."

At the same time, he invited people to Ismaili beliefs in his poems. These are the following words that always point out the necessity of finding an innocent imam.

لَوْلَاكَ لَمْ يَكُنْ التَّفَكُّرُ وَاعِظاً   وَالْعَقْلُ رُشْداً، وَالْقِيَاسُ دَلِيلا

لَوْلَمْ تَكُنْ سَكَنَ الْبِلَادِ تَضَعْضَعَتْ   ولَزُيِّلَتْ أَرْكانُهَا تَزِيِيلا

"Had it not been you, thought would not have given lessons, reason would not have guided, comparable would not have been evidence.

Had it not been you, the country's settlements would have been a mess, the country's columns would have been torn apart and shattered."

---

[35] Yebrîn: Reml Yebrîn (Yebrîn sandy) place name. al-Hajaru'l Yamama is also a vast sand in the area on the right at sunrise. It is also the name of a village near Aleppo.

[36] Divânu Îbn Hânî, p. 344.

[37] Divânu Îbn Hânî, p. 79, 80.

[38] Divânu Îbn Hânî, p. 280, 281.

Such are the features of his poetry. They are also easy to understand, far from being oblique and beyond vagueness. Only by listening and simple thinking the mind comprehends his poems. This is a feature that has left its mark on almost all of his poems. Jawhar al-Siqilli's eulogy written for him when Egypt was conquered by him also testifies to this. He begins the eulogy as follows:

فَقُلْ لِبَنِي الْعَبَّاسِ قَدْ قُضِيَ الْأَمْرُ³⁹ تَقُولُ بَنُو الْعَبَّاسِ هَلْ فُتِحَتْ مِصْرُ

"The sons of Abbas say, Has Egypt been conquered?   Tell the sons of Abbas that it is over."

His poetry is also marked by the beauty of its arrangement, the quality of its royalty, and the soundness of its compositions. So much so that the composition of the first verse is the same as the composition of the second verse. The following lyrics are examples of this feature in his poetry:

مُؤَيِّد الْعَزْمِ في الـجُلَّى إذا طَرَقت   —   مُنَدِّد السَّمْعِ في النَّادِي إذا نُودِي⁴⁰

"(He) reinforces perseverance when disaster knocks on the door. And when he is summoned to parliament, he tears out the ears."

In the same way, the following is one of the examples of this:

فَفِي نَاظِرِي عَنْ سِوَاكُمْ عَمَىً   وَفي أُذُني عَنْ سِواكُمْ صَمَمْ⁴¹

"My eye sees none but you, and my ear hears none but you."

Again, one of the features of his poetry is that his poetry is characterized by conformity to his nature and indicates his temperament. This is because it is far from being contrived, incomprehensible tricks and unusual analogies. As a matter of fact, his poetry also carries a religious remarks. He mostly mentions religious beliefs, concepts related to the universe, or Quranic truths. He does these by estranging the wrongness and the correctness of the idea that he wants to clarify and shed light on. For this reason, we see that he explains and compensates for the meanings of the verses of the Holy Qur'an in many of his poems, and the following words are among them:

كَانتْ جِنَاناً أرضُهُمْ مَغْرُوشَةً   فَأَصَابَهَا مِنْ جَيْشِهِ إِعْصَارُ⁴²

"Their plots were gardens furnished like thrones. A hurricane from his army hit them."

And also this saying:

أَنْتَ أَصْفيتهنَّ حُبَّ سُلَيْمَا   نَ قديماً للصَّافِنَاتِ الْعِتَاقِ⁴³

"Just as Solomon used to love breed horses, so you chose them."

---

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ Divânu Îbn Hânî, p. 389.

⁴¹ Divânu Îbn Hânî, p. 324.

⁴² Divânu Îbn Hânî, p. 144.

⁴³ Divânu Îbn Hânî, p. 226.

Again he says:

لَوْ كُنْتَ آوِنَةً نَبِيًّا مُرْسَلاً   نُشِرَتْ بِمَبْعَثِكَ الْقُرُونُ الْأُولى

أَوْ كُنْتَ نُوحًا مُنذِراً فِي قومِهِ   مَا زَادَهَمْ بِدُعَائِهِ تَضْلِيلاً[44]

"If you had been a messenger momentarily sent, the first centuries would have been resurrected by your sending.

If you had been Noah who warned them among the people, his call would not have been more than an increase in their knowledge."

2. The Poetry Themes in Ibn Hani's Divan

The themes that Ibn Hani dealt with in his poetry vary. The most prominent themes are eulogy and praise (el-Medh and Sena), and the most prominent of his qasidas in which this purpose appears are those that are known as "Muizzies". These qasidas that Ibn Hani wrote for al-Mu'izz Lidinillah have a significant place in literature, history, politics, and sociology. Furthermore, these qasidas are not only great literary treasures, but also a great honor for Ibn Hani and his art. These qasidas that he composed are only in praise of al-Mu'izz and his state, and in defense of the Fatimids right to the caliphate. These qasidas have significant place in Arabic literature.[45] In most of his poems, the poet describes the wars of al-Mu'izz with the Romans and his seizure of their lands;[46] Because the poet stayed with the caliph for about four years and wrote poems about him. He expressed his feelings toward him and his country.[47] These poems are considered among the most eloquent qasidas in terms of art, and amount to about half of Ibn Hani's literary legacy. One of the most important of these qasidas is the one in which Ibn Hani praises al-Mu'izz Lidinillah and begins with a ghazal describing his beloved who went out at night and left him alone. Ibn Hani begins his qasida as follows:

سَرَى وَجناحُ اللَّيلِ أَقتِمُ أفتخُ   ضَجِيعُ مِهَادٍ بِالْعَبِيرِ مُضَمَّخُ

فَحَيَّيْتُ مُزْوَرَّ الخَيَالِ كَأَنَّهُ   مُحَجَّبُ أَعْلَى قُبَّةِ الْمَلْكِ أَبْلَخُ[48]

"At night, my beloved's phantom came to visit me in my amber oil smeared bed, embraced me with the wings of darkness like a big eagle embracing its young ones in its nest.

I saluted the phantom that was moving away and said, 'God bless you always', he turned away from me as if his neck was stiff, as if he was a veiled noble in the highest dome of the king's palace." [49]

---

[44] Divânu Îbn Hânî, p. 280.

[45] el-Hafâcî, Muhammed Abdulmunim, Kıssatu'l-Edeb fi'l-Endelus, Mektebetu'l-Mârif, Beirut, p. 181, 190.

[46] Ali, Zâhid, Tebyînu'l-Me'ânî fî Şerhi Divani İbn Hani el-Endelüsi el-Mağribi, Cairo, Matba'atu'l-Mârif, 1352 AH, p. 45.

[47] el- Hafâcî, Muhammed 'Abdulmun'im, el-Edebu'l-Andelüsi elt-Tatavvur ve'l-Tecdîd, Dâru'l-Ceyl, Beirut, (I. Edition), 1412 / 1992, p. 446.

[48] Divânu Îbn Hânî, p. 84.

[49] Ali, Zâhid, Tebyînu'l- me 'ânî fî Şerh Dîvân İbn Hânî, Egypt 1352, p. 183.

In this poem, Ibn Hani blends the words of ghazal and the words of praise for al-Mu'izz al-Fatimi and uses them together.

In another poem, we can observe that Ibn Hani lends some controversial divine features to Al-Mu'izz, which the poet expresses in accordance with the principles of the Ismaili creed that the poet believes in, which is that there is an imam, to whom obedience is obligatory, and it is obligatory for him to be the caliph of the Ummah and the ruler of the state. The Imam is different from other people since he has the characteristics and qualities that other common people lack:

<div dir="rtl">

ما شِئتَ لا ما شاءتِ الأقدارُ   فاحكم فأنتَ الواحد القَهّارُ

وكأنما أنت النبيُّ محمّدٌ   وكأنما أنصارُك الأنصار [50]

</div>

"What you wish happens, not what destiny wants, you judge because you are the only one with the destructive power! As if you were Prophet Muhammad, as if your followers were Ansar."

These doctrinal beliefs are among the topics that characterize his art. This is clearly seen in his poems. This is due to his devotion to the Ismaili Fatimids in Andalusia and his sincerity in his loyalty to their faith, which is why he was also tested in Andalusia. The following verses are from one of his poems revealing this belief. Here, he describes the faith of the Fatimids and the spiritual authority of the Fatimid sultan: [51]

<div dir="rtl">

أَمّا كَوَاكِبُهَا لهُ فخوَاضِعٌ   تُخْفِي السُّجُودَ ويظْهَرُ الإيمَاءُ

هذا الشفيعُ لأمّةٍ يأتي بها   وجُدُودُهُ لِجُدُودِهَا شُفَعَاءُ

هَذَا أمينُ اللهِ بَيْنَ عِبَادِهِ   وَبِلادِهِ إنْ عُدَّتِ الأُمَنَاءُ [52]

</div>

"The stars of the sky bow down to him. They conceal the prostration but reveal it by implication.

This caliph is the intercessor of the Ummah, he will fulfill his duty. His ancestors are also intercessors for the ancestors of the Ummah.

When the trustworthy people are considered, he is the most reliable among the servants and the lands of God." [53]

One of the prominent features of Ibn Hani's poems is horse descriptions. When he spoke of al-Mu'izz's horse, he states that it was a noble horse. He also states that it was very fast, and it stood out among other horses with its large size. Ibn Hani says:

---

[50] Divânu Îbn Hânî, p. 14; 'Ali, Zâhid, Tebyînu'l-me 'ânî fî Şerh Dîvân İbn Hanî, Egypt 1352, p. 365.

[51] See, Mecellet Kulliyet'l-Terbiyyeti'l-Islâmiyye (Journal of the Faculty of Islamic and Human Sciences), University of Babylon, issue 19, February 2015, p. 640.

[52] Divânu Îbn Hânî, p. 4, 5.

[53] Ali, Zâhid, Tebyînu'l-Meâni fi Şerhi Divanî İbn Hani el-Endelusî al-Mağribi, Cairo, Matbatu'l-Mârif, AH 1352, p. 18.

والأُعْوَجِيَّاتُ التي إِنْ سُوبِقَتْ   سَبَقَتْ وَجَرْيُ المذكياتِ غَلاءُ

الطَّائِرَاتُ السَّابِحَاتُ السَّابِقا   تُ النَّاجِيَاتُ إِذاً اِسْتُحِثَّ نَجاءُ

فالبَأْسُ في حَمْسِ الوغى لكَماتُها   والكِبْرِياءُ لهُنَّ وَالخُيَلاَءُ[54]

"When a race is held, the horses of Hilali descendants win. Smart horses' run is precious.

They gallop, swim, carry, outrun when they are spurred, and they save.

In the midst of war, power comes from their kicks. Hugeness and gorgeousness are also unique to them."[54]

Apart from horses, Ibn Hani also depicts ships. In his various qasidas, he also describes al-Mu'izz's ships that fought the battles with the polytheists. In one of these qasidas, he talks about the naval battle between the Muslims and the Romans. He says: These ships run in the water with their sails set, and the winds push them gently, it should also be known that these ships are unmatched in terms of the beauty of their structures. Ibn Hani describes the ships as follows:

وَلَكَ الجَوَارِي المُنْشَآتُ مَواخِراً   تجري بِأَمْرِكَ وَالرِّيَاحُ رَخاءُ

والحَامِلاتُ وكُلُّهَا مَحْمُولةٌ   والنَّاتِجَاتُ وكُلُّهَا عَذْراءُ[55]

"The ships gliding away with their sails set are yours. By your command they sail in pleasant winds. The ships carrying loads, carrying goods are all full, all are brand new ships."

Ibn Hani is also distinguished by the purpose of describing battles and clashes in his poems. When al-Mu'izz received the news that Egypt had been conquered by his commander, Jawhar, Ibn Hani described this conquest, the news about it, and its political consequences in a qasida:

تقولُ بنو العبّاس هل فُتِحَتْ مِصْرُ   فقلْ لبني العبّاس قد قُضِيَ الأمرُ[56]

"The Abbasids say, has Egypt been conquered?   Tell the Abbasids that the job is done!"

Ibn Hani also talks about al-Mu'izz's wars against the Romans in his al-Mu'izziyât.

As for the elegy, his diwan is almost devoid of it. It was not found that he lamented anyone except two people who were not related to him by kinship. One of them is Ibrahim Ibn Jafar's younger son.[57] Ibn Hani wrote an elegy for him. He also wrote two elegies for Ummu Cafer.[58] The following couplets are from his elegy:

---

[54] Divânu Îbn Hânî, p. 7-8.

[55] Divânu Îbn Hânî, p. 7.

[56] Ibid.

[57] Tebyînu'l-Me'ânî fî Şerhi Divani İbn Hâni, p. 245.

[58] See., 'Ali, Zâhid, Tebyînu'l-Meâni fi Şerhi Divani İbn Hâni, p. 311; Mecelletu Kulliyyeti'l-İslamiyye li'l- 'Ulûmi't-Terbeviyye ve'l-İnsâniyye, p. 648.

<div dir="rtl">

غلبَ النُّورُ عليهِ فاتَّقد   ماتَ مَنْ لوْ عاشَ في سِرْبالِهِ

مَنْ رَآهُ وَهُوَ حَيٌّ فَسَجَدْ ⁵⁹   قَدْ رَآهُ وَهُوَ مَيْتٌ فَبَكى

</div>

"(That child) died, if he had lived (grown up) in his armor, the light of his face would have dominated his armor and illuminated everywhere.[59]

Those who prostrated (because of his beauty) when they saw him alive, saw him dead and wept."

As for the Ghazal, those who research Ibn Hani's divan for the purpose of finding ghazals, cannot find the ghazal theme much. In most of his poems, he adopts the feature of narrative poetry with all its elements and artistic components.[60]

The following poem is an example of that:

<div dir="rtl">

إيْهاً لَكِ النُّعْمَى على فَأَنْعِمي   وَبَرِئْتِ مِنْ حَرَجِ السَّلامِ فَسَلِّمي

للهِ مَوقِفُ عَاشِقٍ ومُعَشَّقٍ   مِنْ ظالِمٍ مِنَّا وَمِنْ مُتَظَلِّمِ

بَادَرْتُ مَوطِئَ نَعْلِهِ حَتَّى إِذا   عَفِرْتُ خَدِّي في الثَّرَى الـمُتَنَسِّمِ

اعْتَلَّ مِنْ وَجَناتِهِ فَأَجَالَ فِيْ   صَحْنِ الْعَقِيقِ جَدَاوِلاً مِنْ عَنْدَمِ

أجْرَى عَلى ذَهَبِيِّها عَصَبِيَّها   وَدَنا لِسَفْكِ دَمي بِوَرْدٍ مِنْ دَمِ⁶¹

</div>

"Increase your blessings on me further. You got rid of the hassle of saying hello, now greet me.
The attitude of the lover and the beloved is for God. Because of the one who oppresses us and complains about oppression. I ran to the place where the soles of his feet tread so that I could rub my face on the ground that had the scent of his feet.
His cheeks turned red, and lines formed like red bands on an agate stone.
He poured the color of asabiyye (red Yemeni paint) on the gold color. He approached to pour my blood upon a blood red rose."

It is considered that Ibn Hani al-Andalusian did not love anyone in his life, because we could not find the name of a girl that he loved and mentioned a lot, as it was the tradition for the poets who have lovers.[62]

Satire is clear in his poetry. In particular, Ibn Hani satirized the sons of Abbas (the Abbasids), who were considered the enemies of the Fatimids, which led him to take revenge on them and denounce their faults:

---

[59] Divânu İbn Hânî, p. 114.

[60] See, Mecelletu Kulliyyeti'l-Islâmiyye li'l- 'Ulûmi't-Terbeviyye ve'l-İnsâniyye, p. 653.

[61] Divânu İbn Hânî, p. 341; 'Ali, Zâhid, Tebyînu'l- me'ânî fi Şerhi Divân İbn Hânî, p. 708.

[62] See, Mecelletu Kulliyyeti'l-İslâmiyye li'l- 'Ulûmi't-Terbeviyye ve'l-İnsâniyye, p. 654.

بَني نثْلةٍ مَأْ أوْرَثَ اللهُ نثْلةٌ   وَمَا نسَلتْ هَلْ يَسْتوي الْعَبْدُ وَالحُرُ

وَأنَّى بِهَذا وَهِيَ أعْندتْ بِرِقِّهَا   أبَاكُمْ فإيَّاكُمْ وَدَعْوَى هِيَ الْكُفْرُ

ذَرُوا النَّاسَ رُدُوهُمْ إلى مَنْ يَسُوسُهُمْ   فمَا لكُمْ في الأمْرِ عُرْفٌ وَلأْ نُكْرُ[63]

"Let the sons of Netle (the Abbasids) be cut off, let them die out, can a slave and a free man ever be equal?

How can it be? Ummu Netle bewitched your father, do not try to sue your father, your cause is ingratitude. Leave people alone, leave them to those who will rule over them, how do you know what the commanding right and forbidding wrong is?"

Scholars such as Munîr Nâcî, Ebu'l-Kasım Muhammed el-Karî, Ahmed Khalid, Muhammed 'Ali el-Harfî and Ahmed Hasan Bîsek conducted independent research on the life and poems of Ibn Hani.[64]

3. The Divan and Commentaries of Ibn Hani

Ibn Hani's divan has attracted the attention of researchers and scholars. Therefore, the number of manuscripts in important libraries in the world and in private libraries of Shiite Ismaili scholars in India has reached twenty-eight.[65] The first edition of the Divan was published in Bulak (1274 / 1857) with the biography of the poet written by Ibn Halikan along with explanations and definitions of some words. A relatively more legible edition of this publication, without giving an explanation of the words, was made in Beirut (1302/1884, 1304/1886). There are several other editions as well.[66]

Ibn Hani's divan has also been discussed, added commentary on, and analyzed by researchers. The most important commentaries are:

3.1. Ibn Hani's Divan: Kerem al-Bustani, Beirut Press Publishing House, Beirut 1400/1980. In this work, Muhakkik also wrote an introduction to the divan, explained Ibn Hani's upbringing, beliefs and status in the Fatimid State, and declared his status in literature. Surely, he also made explanations for the obscure and ambiguous words in his divan in the footnotes.

3.2. Tebyînu'l-Meânî fi Şerhi Divani Ibn Hanî al-Andalüsi el-Mağribî: It is the work of Dr. Zâhid 'Alî. In this work, Zâhid 'Ali corrected the divan using a few manuscripts and published a preface included the corrected the errors. (Matba'atu'l-m'ârif, Egypt AH 1352) The work is approximately nine hundred pages. The commentary also explained the reason for choosing this divan for printing. He also mentioned the number of printed copies of the Divan. It is stated that there are three copies of it. The first one printed in AH 1273 in Egypt, second in Beirut, then in A.D. 1886 and once again AH 1326. He stated that it was printed there in AH 1326. He also mentioned and made explanations about the manuscripts. He reported that he had eighteen manuscripts, of which thirteen were kept in European and Egyptian libraries, and five in private libraries of scholars in India.

---

[63] Divânu Îbn Hânî, p. 124; Tebyînu'l-Meâni fi Şerhi Divani İbn Hânî, p. 337-338.

[64] See., M. Faruk Toprak, İbn Hânî, DİA, 20/ 28.

[65] For more information, see Muhammed el-Ya'levî, İbn Hânî el-Mağribî el-Endelüsî, p. 31, 41

[66] See, M. Faruk Toprak, İbn Hani, DIA, 20/ 28.

Dr. Zâhid 'Alî, after this introduction, wrote about Ibn Hani's life and described his birth, lineage, upbringing and education. He also talked about his murder and explained the reason for it. Moreover, in this context, he also talked about the views of those who criticize his poetry. Then he mentioned the features of his poetry and explained their five characteristics. Later, he referred to the flaws of his poetry. At the same time, he compared the poems of Ibn Hani with those of al-Mutanabbi. He also talked about his contemporary poets who were influenced by Ibn Hani's poems. Then, he also mentioned Ibn Hani al-Ashgar, who is known for reviewing his poems (en-Nazmu'l-mühezzeb). Further, he provided information about the lives of those praised by Ibn Hani and explained the events related to the writing of the odes. At the end of his research, he mentioned and explained the idioms and beliefs of the Shiite Ismaili sect.

Conclusion

We can summarize the results of our research as follows:

- The literary position of Ibn Hani al-Andalusian in his age has been introduced. So much so that Ibn Khallikan said about him: Among the Moroccans, there is no one like him in his stratum, neither from the previous ones nor from the later ones. He was undoubtedly their best poet. He was like al-Mutanabbi in the east in the eyes of the Maghreb. Both were contemporaries.

- The place of the Fatimid caliph in the eyes of Ibn Hani: Despite the difference in their status, the poems he wrote about the Fatimid caliph can also be evaluated differently. Among them, there are the ones in literary form, which are the ones that Ibn Hani wrote about the praise of al-Mu'izzin. They constitute the best examples of qasida in terms of literature. They were regarded as important and highly appreciated by literary critics so they made the literary critics proud of those poems. There are also some of those poems that have historical value. For, aside from the political positions, his al-Mu'izziyât, which consists of his poems about al-Mu'izz, are the main works in the history of the most important events in the Maghrib towns.

Especially when the Fatimid Caliph al-Mu'izz received the news that Egypt had been conquered by the commander Jawhar al-Siqilli, Ibn Hani described this conquest, the news of the conquest and its political outcomes in a magnificent way.

- Ibn Hani represents a new trend in terms of the features of his poems. In his poetry, he opposed the poetry movement that rebelled against the characteristics of ancient Arabic poetry. This new trend was traditionalist, on the one hand, and innovative on the other. He preserved the poetic method of the eulogy in terms of language and music. However, he is considered innovative from the perspective of meanings and forms of poetry.

- From Ibn Hani, only a divan, where his eulogies are collected alphabetically, has survived until today. It is not known whether he wrote prose or not. His divan, which consists of nearly four thousand couplets, mostly contains eulogy-type poems. Although rare, there are also elegy and satirical eulogies.[67]

---

[67] See, Mustafa Aydın, İbn Hânî el-Endelüsî, p. 3.

References

- 'Ali, Zâhid, Tebyînu'l-Meâni, fi Şerhi Divan Îbn Hânî el-Endelüsi el-Mağrîbi, Cairo, Matbatu'l-Mârif, AH 1352.

- el-Behbîtî, Necîb Muhammed, Târîhu'ş-Şiri'l-Arabî Hatta Âhiri'l-Karni'l-Sâlisi'l-Hicrî, Dâru'l-Kutubi'l-Mısriyye, Egypt, 1950.

- ed-Dâye, Muhammed Rıdvân, Fi'l-Edebi'l-Endelüsî, Dâru'l-Fikr, Damask 1412 / 2000.

- el-Hafâcî, Muhammed 'Abdulmun'im, Kıssatu'l-Edeb fi'l-Endelüs, Mektebetu'l-Mârif, Beirut, n.d.

- el-Hamevî, Şihabuddin Yâkût b. 'Abdullah, Mu'cemu'l-Udebâ', Critical ed. İhsan Abbâs, Dâru'l-Ğarbi'l-İslamî, Beirut, 1414 /1993.

- Heykel, Ahmed, el-Edebu'l-Endelüsî mine'l-Fethi ilâ Sukûti'l-Hilâfe, Dâru'l-Mârif, (I. Edition), Cairo, 1980.

- İbnu'l-Esîr, Ebu'l Hasan, Ali b. Ebi'l Kerem, Muhammed b. Muhammed, el-Kâmil fi't-Târîh, Critical ed. Omar Abdussalam Tedemmurî, Dâru'l Kitâbi'l-'Arabiyye, (1st Edition), Beirut, 1417/1997.

- İbnu'l- Cevzî, Cemâluddin, Ebu'l-Ferec, Abdurrahmân b. 'Alî, el-Muntazam fi Târîhi'l- Umemi ve'l-Mulûk, Critical ed. Muhammed Abdulkâdir Atâ, Mustafa Abdulkâdir Atâ, Dâru'l-Kutubi'l-'İlmiyye, (I. Edition), Beirut, 1412 / 1992.

- İbnu'l- 'İmadi'l- 'Akrî, Abdulhay bin Ahmed bin Muhammed, Şezerâtu'l-Zeheb fi Ahbâr men Zeheb, Critical ed., Mahmud el-Arnavut, Dâr İbn Kesîr, (1st Edition) Damascus-Beirut, 1406 / 1986.

- İbn Hallikân, Ebu'l-Abbâs Şemsuddin Ahmed bin Muhammed, Vefeyâtu'l-Ayân, Dâr Sâdr, Beirut, n.d.

- İbn Masûm, Sadruddin el-Medenî, 'Ali b. Ahmed, Selâfetu'l- 'Asri fi Mehâsini'l-Şu'arâ bi-kulli Mısr, Mektebetu'l-Hancı, Egypt, 1324 / 1906.

- İbn Hânî, Divanu Îbn Hânî el-Endelüsî, Dâr Beyrut li't-Tıbâ ve'n-Neşr, Beirut, 1400/1980.

- 'Imâdu'd-Dîn, İdrîs, Târîhu'l-Hulefâ'i'l-Fâtımiyyîn bi'l-Mağrib, Critical ed., Muhammed el-Ya'lâvî, Dâru'l-Garbi'l-Islami, Beirut, n.d.

- Kehhâle, Ömer Rızâ, Mu'cemu'l-Mu'ellifîn, Mektebetu'l-Musennâ, Dâr İhyâi't-Turâsi'l- 'Arabî, Beirut, Critical ed.

- Mecellet Kulliyet'l-Terbiyyeti'l-Islamiyye ve'l-Insâniyye (Journal of the Faculty of Islamic and Human Sciences), University of Babylon, issue: 19, February 2015.

- el-Makkarî, Şihâbuddîn, Ahmed b. Muhammed, Nafhu't-Tîb min Ğusni'l-Endelüsîi'r-Ratîb, Critical ed. İhsan Abbas, Dâr Sadr, (1st Edition), Beirut, 1968.

- el-Makrîzî, Ahmed b. 'Ali b. 'Abdulkâdir, el-Mevâiz ve'l-İ'tibâr bi-zikri'l-Hıtati ve'l-Âsâr, Daru'l-Kutubi'l-İlmiyye, (I. Edition), Beirut, 1418.

- M. Faruk Toprak, İbn Hânî, DIA, XX, 27-29, Istanbul, 1999.

- Mustafa Aydın, Îbn Hânî el-Endelüsî, (unpublished article study).

- 'Umeyrî, Semîre Behlûl Nûra, el-Hayâtu's-Sekâfiyye li'd-Devleti'l-Fâtımiyye bi-bilâdi'l-Mağribi'l- 'Arabî, M.A. Thesis, Supervisor: Yasin Buderia, es-Senetü'l- Cami'iyye, 1435-1436 / 2014-2015.

- Ramazan Şeşen, Cevher es-Sikilli, DIA, VII, 456-457, Istanbul, 1993.

- Reşîd Nâzım, el-Edebu'l Arabi fi'l Asrı'l-Abbasi, Dâri'l-Kutub Press and Publication Directorate, University of Mosul, 1410 / 1989.

- es-Safedî, Selahuddin Halil bin Aybek, el-Vâfî bi'l-Vefeyât, Critical ed. Ahmed el-Arnavut and Türkî Mustafa, Dâr İhyâi'l-Turâsi'l-'Arabî, Beirut, 1420 / 2000.

- ez-Zirikli, Hayruddin b. Mahmud, el-Alâm, Dâru'l- İlm li'l-Melâyîn, (15th Edition), Beirut, 2002.

Research Articles

Modalities, Disciplinarity and Multiliteracies: the digital culture of higher education and the false promise of technological determinism

Jonathan J. FELIX [1]

INTRODUCTION

The COVID-19 pandemic is yet another world-changing event which has contributed to shifts in the social and material worlds human beings inhabit [1], as well as putting a spotlight on Modern attitudes and assumptions toward technologies and the contexts of their use. While both utopian and dystopian narratives of Modernity have been presented in popular texts, technology itself is commonly regarded as a necessary element to contemporary human life within this social and historic context. Some of the ideas which underpin Modernity as a time period involve discursive formations that emphasise the importance of rationality and the corresponding operationalisation of natural, human, and semiotic spheres towards greater measures of efficiency in advancing the multifaceted constitution of societies [2]–[5].

Modernity has been characterised by several scholars as a time period in world history marked by turbulent shifts in the social and material realities

[1] *RMIT University, School of Communication and Design, Vietnam*
International and Comparative Education (ICE), Universiti Brunei Darussalam,
Bandar Seri Begawan, Brunei

humans inhabit as a result of events, inventions, and occurrences predicated on particular ways of seeing the world [6]–[8]. While the invention of various technologies and their enduring impact is one of many key factors which shape interpersonal relations and broader social structures, natural and man-made events and occurrences such as the national independence of several countries from many years of colonial rule and diverse natural disasters are also examples of the makings of the Modern world [9], [10].

Popular discursive formations often feature the idea of technology as important to human advancement and also being an important aspect of living within the context of Modernity as evidenced by the several ways in which technology use is represented in popular texts such as Hollywood films, novels, advertising, and related social practices [11]–[13]. Like F. T. Marinetti and the Italian Futurists of the early 20th century, an affirmative sense of the utility, necessity, and to some degree excitement regarding technology is characteristic of Modern thinking [14], [15].

Nevertheless, the COVID-19 pandemic has led to arguably more losses than gains, given the negative impact of this event on human lives and livelihoods the world over [16]. As social institutions and the subjects which constitute them bear the fallout of this disruptive and historyaltering event, constituents of higher education institutions must now contend with reimaging the role and function such an entity within the discontinuities of Modernity and more recently, the post-COVID world [17]–[19].

The disruptive nature of the pandemic created a large-scale scramble to translate offline modes of instruction to online teaching [20]–[25]. As such, this massive shift in teaching and learning in general and higher education, in particular, has seen digital technologies used for teaching and learning offer convergent modalities for synchronous and asynchronous classroom delivery. However, despite the affordances of such technologies in providing interesting opportunities for teaching and learning, it has in no way has it definitively proven to be as emancipatory or revolutionary as some proponents of educational technology have argued before the pandemic occurred.

Without rehashing the realities and ramifications of this worldwide event, as this has already been documented by scholars interested or operating within perhaps almost every national and disciplinary context [26]–[30], in this article I would like to engage with the notion of the pandemic raising more pertinent issues regarding the pre-pandemic discourse on technology use, particularly in higher education, as having a 'salvific role in universally elevating education standards' [31, p. 2]. In previous work, I have both discussed and alluded to this utopian-type discourse, especially as an underlying technological determinism is often present with technology-based and technology-focused initiatives, particularly in higher education [32].

The forced experience of distance education mostly through online and mobile learning during the pandemic has foregrounded multimodal communication and the very socio-cultural nature of university learning and formal education more broadly. Moreover, I will comment on the implications of the social ecosystem of the university, the nature of disciplinarity and knowledge production, and the social production of teachers and learners taking into account the unstable and disruptive conditions brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Critiques of technological determinism in higher education

Without relying on a dystopian logic, academics have argued against the misuse of technology, often ironically expressed by an optimistic naivety regarding its use as a signifier of Modernity [33]–[35]. Yet, it has been pointed out by scholars that such ideas have been rooted in the neoliberal orientation of higher education across the globe, which has been part of the drive towards the massification of the sector in which technology often believed to play a central role in development and assumed sustainability [36]–[40]. Kirkwood cautions against an uncritical, yet not unoptimistic view of technology in higher education in stating:

'University policy-makers, managers and teachers need to apply 'joinedup thinking' to technology use. This involves identifying and specifying the aims and purposes of using technology to support teaching and learning, bearing in mind that terms such as these are open to a variety of interpretations by those involved. Further, changes in any one organisational area are likely to have consequences in a number of others… Above all else, educational goals and purposes should take precedence over implicit technological determinism' [35 pp. 217-218].

Comparable arguments have been made by other scholars exploring the nature of higher education institutions as they function within a complex network of relationships between entities and actors in modern societies [41]–[43]. While Guthrie [42] reiterates the linkage between technology use in higher education and its role in shaping and accelerating knowledge production by highlighting challenges related to the 4th Industrial Revolution, a study by Mohammid & Sinanan [43] draw attention to the social and cultural embeddedness in digital media use in higher education, as technology use in this context are appropriated and reappropriated in multiple ways by human agents. Yet, Perrotta [41] takes a more philosophical line of reasoning in pointing out the notion of underdetermination which refers to non-linear relationships between interdependent variables as a frame of reference for understanding technology use in higher education, but not as a means of positively predicting or engineering preferred outcomes.

What is especially pronounced here is the fact that multifaceted use of technology in higher education or perhaps any other context for that matter is one in which the elements of human agency and technological affordance need to be taken into account, in addition to a range of contextual factors notwithstanding other considerations which lie beyond the control of any kind of technology itself and those that use it. As such, underdetermination offers a means of avoiding the problematic of the false promise of technological determinism, but thinking in far broader terms than the capabilities or operationalisation of an invention used in a given context.

Negotiating the role of digital technology in higher education in the 21st century

In keeping with this notion, the COVID-19 pandemic has in more ways than one highlighted and undermined utopian determinations of technology use in higher education, which was often posited by educational technologies before the pandemic and critiqued in with the same measure as it was defended by its proponents [44]–[47]. Yet before the advent of COVID-19, since the beginning of the 21st century higher educational globally was undergoing a period of transition and negotiation in determining suitable strategies and approaches to optimise their operations within the contexts and constituents they serve [48]–[54].

However, COVID-19 has in some senses made questions of purpose and relevance even more urgent for higher education institutions, while at the same time putting a spotlight on questions of how the use of technologies or the lack thereof in a social ecosystem can and often does reflect, highlight, or exacerbate inequalities, divisions, and conflicts in the real world. As such, the biological nature of the pandemic, in terms of the global public health disaster which occurred, certainly presents the shortcomings of the technological in a very different light [55].

For example, some scholars have commented on the criticality needed to address how the internationalisation of higher education might be reimagined in the post-COVID world, by pointing towards the social conditions in which 'the consequences of inequality, insecurity, and political polarization' might flourish thereby limiting virtues of equity and sustainability [56]. Considering this, Taşçı [56] has argued implicitly that technology presented a clearer view of problems than it did provide answers within the context of COVID-19.

A more explicit presentation of this argument takes into account the notion of 'intersectional inequalities' through a series of convergences and entanglements that make the idea of technological determinism untenable while at the same time acknowledging the importance of digital technology in higher education and other areas of modern societies across the globe [57]:

'…it is important not to let the overemphasis on 'digital solutions' disguise or divert from the more fundamental and deep-seated issues of segregation, division and hegemony…it is likely that digital technology will play an even more important role in shaping the post-pandemic world. It is critical to keep asking whether digital technology makes a better world [p. 5].

Digital technologies, modalities and the multiliteracies of teaching and learning

Now, as disciplinarity aids in understanding the complexity of the human experience, in the much the same way, modern technologies also mirror this idea, with digital technology use in higher education something that is used to engage with the various multiliteracies or the differing modalities of human communication – the visual, linguistic, aural, spatial, and gestural [58], [59].

At turn of the 20th century up until this time, scholars have been critiquing the very limited definition of 'literacy' as understood in relation to studies in education in general and higher education in particular.

Academics and researchers have highlighted the fact that the usefulness of the concept of literacy must be expanded to take into account not just the various modalities of human communication but also the ways in which individuals and groups navigate and negotiate their way through the complexities of modern societies [60]–[64]. As such, multiliteracies engage with communication and meaning-making in the interaction between human beings and the interconnected, mediated environments that are characteristic of late Modernity. These engagements take into account social, visual, technological, and cultural literacies which are not mutually exclusive domains of knowledge generation, dissemination, and consumption.

Hayles [64] has argued for greater engagement in academia with understanding how varying literacies work within this context, yet at the same time acknowledging the importance of digital technologies in shaping teaching and learning experiences in 'information-intensive environment(s)' (p. 61). In referencing several studies across the natural and social sciences, as a scholar of the humanities, Hayles [65] has also argued that digital technologies in higher education can be problematic insofar as it can it can create several issues including that of hyper attention, in which persons perform a highly stimulative, oscillating focus between numerous multiple points of reference, which presents cognitive challenges to the competing alternative of deep attention which requires more sustain attention.

Nevertheless, while the affordance of digital technologies in higher education offers opportunity for multiliteracies in keeping with the varied modalities of human communication, Hayles [65] also observes that both hyper attention and deep attention are equality important as they can both be usefully employed in varying contexts which may be beneficial approaches to engagement depending on the task one is required to complete. It is worth pointing out that both hyper attention and deep attention often relate to engagement with the visual, linguistic, aural, and even gestural modalities, through digital technologies in higher education. However, of all these varied modes of engagement that can be offered to students via

technological means, perhaps the spatial engagement may have been an undervalued modality, in terms of the implications of prepandemic foci, eclipsed by its more 'active' counterparts being the visual, aural, linguistic and gestural.

The academy, disciplinarity, and the role of the spatial

Alongside the priority placed by multiple constituents of the higher education sector globally on returning to college and university campuses to be part of the activities that occur within the physical infrastructures of these environments [66]–[69], there is little doubt the spatial modality is important as it relates to the performance of interrelated roles in the process and practice of teaching and learning. As such, meaning and identity are generated not only from the performative function of language in defining the actors within the higher education ecosystem [70], but also from physical environments and the interactions that take place in relation to these all the same.

Furthermore, higher education institutions operate as key sites for social reproduction in modern societies, having a significant role in shaping the identities of modern subjects and in turn the character of the social worlds inhabited by individuals and groups [71]–[73]. Part of this identity formation relates to the performative use of language as I have argued in previous work [70], [74], [75], but also as it relates to how the roles of teaching, learning, and higher education institutions are conceptualised under the unstable and disruptive conditions brought about by the COVID19 pandemic.

As online instruction offers opportunities for both synchronous and asynchronous classroom delivery, the impact of COVID-19 influenced major largescale spatial restrictions, lockdowns, and social distancing all over the globe which in turn reinforced physical distance among the constituents of higher education institutions, leading to concerns regarding the sustainability of student and faculty motivation and attention, notwithstanding social and mental health concerns, despite the affordances of digital technologies [55], [76]. While the promise of Modernity involves the use of digital technologies in manipulating time and space in advantageous and efficient ways [4], [77], so far the forced use of these technologies have been suboptimal in terms of their employment out of

sheer necessity and desperation, rather than through careful and highly calculated means.

Educators to date have critiqued the simplistic idea of 'put(ting) lectures online' in response to the limitations presented by the COVID-19 pandemic, as a problematic approach to providing relevant, timely and quality educational experiences with any beneficial immediate or longterm benefit [77]. Within the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, research in higher education have spotlighted the importance of belonging as a major mechanism that promotes holistic well-being given the sociological functions of higher education institutions and their role in developing human capital in social, economic, cultural, and political senses [79].

Talarico [91] has stated that the significance of the spatial modality as it relates to the activities that occur within higher education institutions has not just to do with the cost-benefit of tuition fees, or psycho-social support, but with the sense of belonging or belongingness that is established when a community of practice congregates for interrelated reasons. Belonging or belongingness is defined as a biological and psycho-social need expressed in one's objective identification in addition to one's subjective feeling of being part of a broader, situated ecosystem of relations [80], [81].

This is idea of belonging is also present in the work of several education scholars [19], [78], [82]–[85], including that of Brown et al. [93] in which they investigate the entanglements of rural-based teenagers in middle school and the relationship between their social identities and the education institutions in which they study. What is of interest here in these instances of education-based scholarship, including many others, is how closely tied the idea of belonging is with not only disciplinarity, and the evolving role of the academy as a social institution, but how this is connected with the spatial, particularly in terms of materiality, in contrast to the actuality of virtual spaces offered through the affordances of digital technologies used within this context.

CONCLUSION

The COVID-19 pandemic saw innumerable higher education institutions across the globe make a dramatic shift to online learning with very uneven and perhaps precarious results overall [23], [24], [86]–[88]. However, as noted by Lee et al., [86] the pandemic presented 'limits to how much we can institutionalize and instruct student experiences at a distance' (p. 168). Such a sentiment also corresponds with previous studies which also highlight the importance of face-to-face teaching and learning and the nature of higher education ecosystems as social environments in which close interpersonal interactions are deemed as important [89]. Indeed, digital technology in higher education is hardly a magic bullet to address the issue of the sector in light of the realities of the post-COVID world, while it can be leveraged to ensure that some progress is made, as is the case with online teaching moving from a marginal pedagogical practice to a widespread social phenomenon.

Academics the world over have observed new vistas and frontiers that have been afforded through the pandemic, however, these point towards considerations for disciplinarity and the socialising role of human agents within the context of the academy, with far less emphasis on technology being a driver for change and more focus placed on how human agents negotiate technology use in a mindful way [78], [83], [90]–[92]. For example, researchers in India have expressed concerns regarding the teaching of agricultural sciences, which includes a highly practical range of subjects, in that digital technology use does not present a viable longterm solution for appropriate pedagogical measures [91]. This instance represents just one of several others where moving to online teaching exclusively or even in hybrid mode teaching can present practical issues in terms of how disciplinarity is practiced in addition to how teaching and learning may be conducted.

Scholars in various contexts have commented on the various entanglements that inform the development of the social identity formation process in education institutions and the corresponding capitals generated by individuals and groups [82], [93]–[96]. Yet these conceptualisations have not taken into account the role of digital technologies, and distance learning in particular, in shaping the interactions and identities of constituents who operate within the higher education ecosystem. While the far-reaching

impacts of the pandemic may only be clearly seen retrospectively, it does add yet another layer of complexity to evolving function and role of higher education institutions across the globe. While the institutional reflexivity that is characteristic of late Modernity has led constituents to the higher education system to sector-wide reconsiderations of how tertiary-level study can the best possible social outcomes, there might no longer be the several concrete possibilities or futures to envisage, but rather ambiguous situations that require greater degrees of responsiveness to new information and realities that present itself as 'new normals'.

REFERENCES

[1.] C. Bryce, P. Ring, S. Ashby, and J. K. Wardman, "Resilience in the face of uncertainty: early lessons from the COVID-19 pandemic," J.

Risk Res., vol. 0, no. 0, pp. 1–8, 2020, doi: 10.1080/13669877.2020.1756379.

[2.] G. K. Bhambra, Rethinking Modernity: Postcolonialism and the Sociological Imagination. Chippenham and Eastbourne: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007.

[3.] B. Latour, An Inquiry into Modes of Existence: An Anthropology of the Moderns. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2013.

[4.] M. O'Brien, S. Penna, and C. Hay, Theorising Modernity: Reflexivity, Environment and Identity in Giddens' Social Theory. Oxon: Routledge, 2013.

[5.] D. Gauntlett, "Giddens, Modernity, and Self-Identity," in Media, Gender and Identity: An Introduction, Wiltshire: Routledge, 2002.

[6.] A. Giddens, The Consequences of Modernity. Cambridge: Polity Press, 1996.

[7.] K. Gardner and F. Osella, "Migration, modernity and social transformation in South Asia: An overview," Contrib. to Indian Sociol., vol. 37, no. 1–2, pp. v–xxviii, 2003, doi: 10.1177/006996670303700101.

[8.] A. Mouzakitis, "Modernity and the Idea of Progress," Front. Sociol., vol. 2, no. March, pp. 1–11, 2017, doi: 10.3389/fsoc.2017.00003.

[9.] P. Duara, A Companion to Global Historical Thought. 2014.

[10.] J. O'Connor, Modernity and Postmodern Culture, vol. 5. 2000.

[11.] D. Holmes, Communication theory: Media, technology, society.

London: SAGE Publications, 2005.

[12.] R. Foshay, The Digital Nexus: Identity, Agency, and Political Engagement. Edmonton: AU Press, 2016.

[13.] P. Bory, The Internet Myth: From the Internet Imaginary to Network Ideologies. 2020.

[14.] S. Redhead, We Have Never Been Postmodern: Theory at the Speed of Light. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2011.

[15.] M. Rampley, Exploring Visual Culture: Definitions, Concepts, Contexts. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2005.

[16.] L. M. Hite and K. S. McDonald, "Careers after COVID-19: challenges and changes," Hum. Resour. Dev. Int., vol. 23, no. 4, pp. 1– 11, 2020, doi: 10.1080/13678868.2020.1779576.

[17.] M. Nandy, S. Lodh, and A. Tang, "Lessons from COVID-19 and a resilience model for higher education," Ind. High. Educ., 2020, doi: 10.1177/0950422220962696.

[18.] R. C. Kalloo, B. Mitchell, and V. J. Kamalodeen, "Responding to the COVID-19 pandemic in Trinidad and Tobago: challenges and opportunities for teacher education," J. Educ. Teach., vol. 00, no. 00, pp. 1–11, 2020, doi: 10.1080/02607476.2020.1800407.

[19.] M. A. Peters et al., "Reimagining the new pedagogical possibilities for universities post-Covid-19: An EPAT Collective Project," Educ. Philos. Theory, vol. 0, no. 0, pp. 1–45, 2020, doi: 10.1080/00131857.2020.1777655.

[20.] J. Crawford, J. Butler-Hunderson, K Rudolph, M. B., M. Glowatz, R. Burton, and S. M. S. Lam, "View of COVID-19: 20 countries' higher education intra-period digital pedagogy responses," J. Appl.

Learn. Teaching, vol. 3(1), no. 1, 2020, [Online]. Available: https://journals.sfu.ca/jalt/index.php/jalt/article/view/191/163.

[21.] M. P. A. Murphy, "COVID-19 and emergency eLearning: Consequences of the securitization of higher education for postpandemic pedagogy," Contemp. Secur. Policy, vol. 41, no. 3, pp. 492– 505, 2020, doi: 10.1080/13523260.2020.1761749.

[22.] G. Korkmaz and Ç. Toraman, "Are We Ready for the PostCOVID-19 Educational Practice? An Investigation into What Educators Think as to Online Learning," Int. J. Technol. Educ. Sci., vol. 4, no. 4, pp. 293–309, 2020, doi: 10.46328/ijtes.v4i4.110.

[23.] O. N. Jacob, I. Abigeal, and A. E. Lydia, "Impact of COVID-19 on the Higher Institutions Development in Nigeria," Electron. Res. J. Soc.

Sci. Humanit., vol. 2, no. I, pp. 168–172, 2020.

[24.] C. M. Toquero, "Challenges and Opportunities for Higher Education amid the COVID-19 Pandemic: The Philippine Context," Pedagog. Res., vol. 5, no. 4, p. em0063, 2020, doi: 10.29333/pr/7947.

[25.] R. C. Kalloo, B. Mitchell, and V. J. Kamalodeen, "Responding to the COVID-19 pandemic in Trinidad and Tobago: challenges and opportunities for teacher education," J. Educ. Teach., vol. 46, no. 4, pp. 452–462, 2020, doi: 10.1080/02607476.2020.1800407.

[26.] K. MacMullin, P. Jerry, and K. Cook, "Psychotherapist experiences with telepsychotherapy: Pre COVID-19 lessons for a post COVID-19 world," J. Psychother. Integr., vol. 30, no. 2, pp. 248–264, 2020, doi: 10.1037/int0000213.

[27.] S. A. Zahra, "International entrepreneurship in the post Covid world," J. World Bus., vol. 56, no. 1, p. 101143, 2020, doi:

10.1016/j.jwb.2020.101143.

[28.] A. M. Yohannes, "COPD patients in a COVID-19 society: depression and anxiety," Expert Review of Respiratory Medicine. pp. 1–3, 2021, doi: 10.1080/17476348.2020.1787835.

[29.] A. W. Kruglanski, E. Molinario, and E. P. Lemay, "Coping with COVID-19-induced threats to self," Gr. Process. Intergr. Relations, vol. 24, no. 2, pp. 284–289, 2021, doi: 10.1177/1368430220982074.

[30.] A. Marciano, "Dialogue Israel's Mass Surveillance during COVID-19 : A Mised Opportunity," Surveill. Soc., vol. 19, no. 1, pp.

85–88, 2021, [Online]. Available: https://ojs.library.queensu.ca/index.php/surveillance-andsociety/index.

[31.] J. J. Felix, "Higher education in times of instability and disruption: Rethinking notions of values, value creation and instructional practices in Vietnam and beyond," Front. Commun., vol. 6, no. Cultural Changes in Instructional Practices Due to Covid-19, 2021, doi: 10.3389/fcomm.2021.647471.

[32.] J. J. Felix, "Doomed by Hope - Rethinking the Logic of Digital

Technology Use in Higher Education," 2019, [Online]. Available: https://youtu.be/VgfWL2IJR-Q.

[33.] A. Feenberg, "The Online Education Controversy and the Future of the University," Found. Sci., vol. 22, no. 2, pp. 363–371, 2015, doi: 10.1007/s10699-015-9444-9.

[34.] A. Kirkwood and L. Price, "Missing: evidence of a scholarly approach to teaching and learning with technology in higher education," Teach. High. Educ., vol. 18, no. 3, pp. 327–337, 2013, doi:

10.1080/13562517.2013.773419.

[35.] A. Kirkwood, "Teaching and learning with technology in higher education: blended and distance education needs 'joined-up thinking' rather than technological determinism," Open Learn., vol. 29, no. 3, pp. 206–221, 2014, doi: 10.1080/02680513.2015.1009884.

[36.] S. J. Ralston, "Higher Education's Microcredentialing Craze: a Postdigital-Deweyan Critique," Postdigital Sci. Educ., no. Gallagher 2018, 2020, doi: 10.1007/s42438-020-00121-8.

[37.] T. Elyas and M. Picard, "Critiquing of higher education policy in Saudi Arabia: Towards a new neoliberalism," Educ. Bus. Soc. Contemp. Middle East. Issues, vol. 6, no. 1, pp. 31–41, 2013, doi: 10.1108/17537981311314709.

[38.] H. T. Ngo, "'Standing between the flows': Interactions among Neoliberalism, Socialism and Confucianism in Vietnamese Higher Education Ha," in Higher education in market-oriented socialist Vietnam, L. H. Phan and N. B. Doan, Eds. Palgrave Macmillan, 2020, pp. 1–23.

[39.] [39] I. Roderick, "Recontextualising employability in the Active Learning Classroom," Discourse Stud. Cult. Polit. Educ., vol. 0, no. 0, pp. 1–17, 2019, doi: 10.1080/01596306.2019.1613020.

[40.] K. H. Mok and J. Jiang, "Massification of higher education and challenges for graduate employment and social mobility: East Asian experiences and sociological reflections," Int. J. Educ. Dev., vol. 63, pp. 44–51, 2018, doi: 10.1016/j.ijedudev.2017.02.003.

[41.] C. Perrotta, "Underdetermination, Assemblage Studies and

Educational Technology: Rethinking Causality and Re-Energising Politics," J. New Approaches Educ. Res., vol. 9, no. 2, p. 43, 2021, doi: 10.7821/naer.2021.1.638.

[42.] K. M. Guthrie, "Challenges to Higher Education's Most Essential Purposes," Ithaka S+R, p. 12, 2019.

[43.] S. Mohammid and J. Sinanan, "'Why Didn't You Just Google It?': Digital Media and Informal Contexts for Learning," Caribb. J. Educ., vol. 41, no. 2, pp. 46–65, 2020.

[44.] P. Wheelan, "Education Technology: Is it All Hype with No

Return?," EdSurge, 2016. https://www.edsurge.com/news/2016-0125-education-technology-is-it-all-hype-with-no-return (accessed Apr. 23, 2019).

[45.] P. C. Herman, "Online learning is not the future," Inside Higher Ed, Jun. 10, 2020. https://www.insidehighered.com/digitallearning/views/2020/06/10/online-learning-not-future-highereducation-opinion (accessed Jan. 19, 2021).

[46.] H. E. Pence, "Artificial Intelligence in Higher Education: New Wine in Old Wineskins?," J. Educ. Technol. Syst., vol. 48, no. 1, pp. 5–13, 2019, doi: 10.1177/0047239519865577.

[47.] S. J. Ralston, "Postdigital Prospects for Blockchain-Disrupted

Higher Education: Beyond the Theater, Memes and Marketing Hype," Postdigital Sci. Educ., vol. 2, no. 2, pp. 280–288, 2020, doi: 10.1007/s42438-019-00091-6.

[48.] V. Perselli, Education, Theory and Pedagogies of Change in a Global Landscape: Interdisciplinary Perspectives on the Role of Theory in Doctoral Research. London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016.

[49.] F. Findler, N. Schönherr, R. Lozano, D. Reider, and A. Martinuzzi, "The impacts of higher education institutions on sustainable development: A review and conceptualization," Int. J. Sustain. High.

Educ., vol. 20, no. 1, pp. 23–38, 2019, doi: 10.1108/IJSHE-07-20170114.

[50.] R. Vasilescu, C. Barna, M. Epure, and C. Baicu, "Developing

university social responsibility: A model for the challenges of the new civil society," Procedia - Soc. Behav. Sci., vol. 2, no. 2, pp. 4177– 4182, 2010, doi: 10.1016/j.sbspro.2010.03.660.

[51.] L. T. Mai and J. Hutnyk, "An intuition of innovative new institutions," Educ. Philos. Theory, vol. 52, no. 11, pp. 1120–1125, 2020, doi: 10.1080/00131857.2020.1757395.

[52.] A. J. Kezar, Understanding and Facilitating Organizational Change in the 21st Century: Recent Research and Conceptualizations. San Francisco: Wiley, 2001.

[53.] N. Bowman, "Taking Responsibility : A Call for Higher Education ' s Engagement in a Society of Complex Global Challenges," Natl. Forum High. Educ. Public Good, pp. 1–104, 2006.

[54.] C. H. Nguyen and M. Shah, Quality assurance in vietnamese higher education: Policy and practice in the 21st century, no. October. 2019.

[55.] N. K. Hayles, "Novel corona: Posthuman virus," Crit. Inq., vol. 47, no. S2, pp. S68–S72, 2021, doi: 10.1086/711439.

[56.] G. Taşçı, "The impact of COVID-19 on Higher Education: Rethinking internationalization behind the iceberg," Int. J. Curric. Instr., vol. 13, no. 1, pp. 522–526, 2021, [Online]. Available: http://ijci.wcci-international. org/index.php/IJCI/article/view/579/268. [57.] Y. Zheng and G. Walsham, "Inequality of what? An intersectional approach to digital inequality under Covid-19," Inf. Organ., vol. 31, no. 1, p. 100341, 2021, doi: 10.1016/j. infoandorg.2021.100341.

[58.] M. Kalantzis, B. Cope, and A. Harvey, "Assessing multiliteracies and the new basics," Int. J. Phytoremediation, vol. 21, no. 1, pp. 15– 26, 2003, doi: 10.1080/09695940301692.

[59.] B. Cope and M. Kalantzis, "From literacy to 'multiliteracies': Learning to mean in the new communications environment," English Stud. Africa, vol. 49, no. 1, 2006, doi: 10.1080/00138390608691342.

[60.] C. Westby, "Multiliteracies: The changing world of communication," Top. Lang. Disord., vol. 30, no. 1, pp. 64–71, 2010, doi: 10.1097/ TLD.0b013e3181d0a0ab.

[61.] K. A. Mills, "Multiliteracies: Interrogating competing discourses," Lang.Educ.,vol.23,no.2,pp103–116,2009,doi: 10.1080/09500780802152762.

[62.] P. Smeyers, International Handbook of Philosophy of Education, Volume 1. Cham: Springer, 2018.

[63.] D. Fam, L. Neuhauser, and P. Gibbs, Transdisciplinary Theory, Practice and Education: The Art of Collaborative Research and Collective Learning. Cham: sp, 2018.

[64.] N. K. Hayles, How we think: Digital Media and Contemporary Technogenesis. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2012.

[65.] N. K. Hayles, "Hyper and Deep Attention: The Generational Divide in Cognitive Modes," Profession, vol. 2007, no. 1, pp. 187– 199, 2007, doi: 10.1632/prof.2007.2007.1.187.

[66.] G. Yamey and R. P. Walensky, "Covid-19: Re-opening universities is high risk," BMJ, vol. 370, pp. 20–21, 2020, doi: 10.1136/bmj.m3365.

[67.] B. Caulfield, S. Browne, M. Mullin, S. Bowman, and C. Kelly, "Re-open our city and campus post-Covid: A case study of Trinity college Dublin, the University of Dublin," Case Stud. Transp. Policy, no. January, 2021, doi: 10.1016/j.cstp.2021.02.016.

[68.] J. Deshmukh, "Speculations on the post-pandemic university campus – a global inquiry," Archnet-IJAR, vol. 15, no. 1, pp. 131–147, 2021, doi: 10.1108/ARCH-10-2020-0245.

[69.] D. R. Smith, " University campuses need people in them † ," EMBO Rep., no. March, pp. 1–2, 2021, doi: 10.15252/embr.202152591.

[70.] J. J. Felix, "Challenges in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) Teaching and Learning Research: Why Engagement With Theory Is Needed to Avoid Disciplinary Stagnation," in Stagnancy Issues and Change Initiatives for Global Education in the Digital Age, T. D.

Neimann, J. J. Felix, S. Reeves, and E. Shliakhovchuk, Eds. Hershey: IGI Global, 2020, pp. 111–139.

[71.] M. Bunn, S. Threadgold, and P. J. Burke, "Class in Australian higher education: The university as a site of social reproduction," J.

Sociol., vol. 56, no. 3, pp. 422–438, 2020, doi: 10.1177/1440783319851188.

[72.] B. Green, "International higher education and global citizenship education: The rise of critical cosmopolitanism's 'personhood' in the age of covid-19," Knowl. Cult., vol. 8, no. 3, pp. 55–59, 2020, doi:

10.22381/KC8320208.

[73.] J. E. Trinidad and E. N. P. Leviste, "Toward greater access and impact: Directions for a sociological understanding of Philippine higher education," Ind. High. Educ., 2020, doi:

10.1177/0950422220954062.

[74.] J. J. Felix, "Autonomy and Motivation in Higher Education: Rethinking the Culture of Teaching and Learning," in Challenges and Opportunities in Global Approaches to Education, T. D. Neimann and U. M. Stelson, Eds. Hershey: IGI Global, 2019, pp. 164–177.

[75.] J. J. Felix, "Agency as Culture: Learner Autonomy and Motivation as Ordinary," in Proceedings of the International Conference on Language Teaching and Learning Today 2019: Autonomy and Motivation for Language Learning in the Interconnected World, 2019, no. April, [Online]. Available:

http://ffl.hcmute.edu.vn/Resources/Docs/SubDomain/ffl/LTLT 2019/ Booklet LTLT 2019.pdf.

[76.] S. Chen, "Interpersonal Communication Instruction During COVID-19: Challenges and Opportunities," Front. Commun., vol. 6, no. February, pp. 1–4, 2021, doi: 10.3389/fcomm.2021.652241.

[77.] P. Wagner, "Interpretations of modernity and the problem of world-making," Pap. Rev. Sociol., vol. 100, no. 3, p. 267, 2015, doi: 10.5565/rev/ papers.2130.

[78.] B. Whalley, D. France, J. Park, A. Mauchline, and K. Welsh, "Towards flexible personalized learning and the future educational system in the fourth industrial revolution in the wake of Covid-19," High. Educ. Pedagog., vol. 6, no. 1, pp. 79–99, 2021, doi:

10.1080/23752696.2021.1883458.

[79.] G. Arslan, "Loneliness, college belongingness, subjective vitality, and psychological adjustment during coronavirus pandemic: Development of the College Belongingness Questionnaire," J. Posit. Sch. Psychol., vol. 5, no. 1, pp. 1–15, 2020, [Online]. Available: https://journalppw.com/index.php/JPPW/article/view/240.

[80.] K.-A. Allen, M. L. Kern, C. S. Rozek, D. M. McInerney, and G. M. Slavich, "Belonging: a review of conceptual issues, an integrative framework, and directions for future research," Aust. J. Psychol., vol. 00, no. 00, pp. 1–16, 2021, doi: 10.1080/00049530.2021.1883409.

[81.] K. L. Gratz, M. T. Tull, J. R. Richmond, K. A. Edmonds, K. M. Scamaldo, and J. P. Rose, "Thwarted belongingness and perceived burdensomeness explain the associations of COVID-19 social and economic consequences to suicide risk," Suicide Life-Threatening Behav., vol. 50, no. 6, pp. 1140–1148, 2020, doi: 10.1111/sltb.12654.

[82.] L. H. Phan, Transnational Education Crossing "Asia" and "the West": Adjusted Desire, Transformative Mediocrity and Neo-colonial Disguise. Oxon: Routledge, 2017.

[83.] B. Bruggeman, J. Tondeur, K. Struyven, B. Pynoo, A. Garone, and S. Vanslambrouck, "Experts speaking: Crucial teacher attributes for implementing blended learning in higher education," Internet High. Educ., vol. 48, no. July 2020, p. 100772, 2021, doi: 10.1016/j.iheduc.2020.100772.

[84.] L. Rowan et al., "International students in the first years of senior secondary schooling in Australia: Longing for belonging," Int. J. Educ. Dev., vol. 81, no. November 2020, p. 102347, 2021, doi: 10.1016/j.ijedudev.2020.102347.

[85.] J. C. K. Lee, Z. H. Wan, S. K. F. Hui, and P. Y. Ko, "More student trust, more self-regulation strategy? Exploring the effects of selfregulatory climate on self-regulated learning," J. Educ. Res., vol. 112, no. 4, pp. 463–472, 2019, doi: 10.1080/00220671.2018.1553840.

[86.] K. Lee, M. Fanguy, X. S. Lu, and B. Bligh, "Student learning during COVID-19: It was not as bad as we feared.," Distance Educ., vol. 42, no.

1, pp. 1–9, 2021, doi: 10.1080/01587919.2020.1869529.

[87.] W. Bao, "COVID -19 and online teaching in higher education: A case study of Peking University," Hum. Behav. Emerg. Technol., vol. 2, no. 2, pp. 113–115, 2020, doi: 10.1002/hbe2.191.

[88.] T. Trung, A. D. Hoang, T. T. Nguyen, V. H. Dinh, Y. C. Nguyen, and H. H. Pham, "Dataset of Vietnamese student's learning habits during COVID-19," Data Br., vol. 30, 2020, doi: 10.1016/j.dib.2020.105682.

[89.] S. Leaney and S. Mwale, "Campus closures and the devaluing of emplaced Higher Education : widening participation in neoliberal times," High. Educ., no. 0123456789, 2021, doi: 10.1007/s10734-02100696-6.

[90.] M. R. Kabir, A. Islam, and S. A. Deena, "Explaining the adoption of technology-based design of higher education during and after COVID 19 period from a developing country perspective," Interact. Des. Archit., no. 46, pp. 88–119, 2020.

[91.] T. Muthuprasad, S. Aiswarya, K. S. Aditya, and G. K. Jha, "Students' perception and preference for online education in India during COVID -19 pandemic," Soc. Sci. Humanit. Open, vol. 3, no. 1, p. 100101, 2021, doi: 10.1016/j.ssaho.2020.100101.

[92.] D. Talarico, "How to address the wants and needs of your audience in this 'new normal,'" Recruit. Retaining Adult Learn., vol. 23, no. 4, pp. 3–7, 2021, doi: 10.1002/nsr.30682.

[93.] S. Brown, P. Kelly, and S. K. Phillips, Belonging, Identity, Time and Young People's Engagement in the Middle Years of School. Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2020.

[94.] Y. L. Wong, "'Entitlement' and 'Legitimacy' as emotional capital: living out class through a critical educational failure by communitycollege students in Hong Kong," Stud. High. Educ., vol. 0, no. 0, pp. 1–14, 2020, doi: 10.1080/03075079.2020.1776244.

[95.] A. Voyer, "Of lads and ear'oles: School, work, and the microsociology of social reproduction," Ethnography, vol. 19, no. 4, pp. 565–576, 2018, doi: 10.1177/1466138118780153.

[96.] S. Duisenova, B. Kylyshbaeva, K. Avsydykova, and Y. Ishanov, "Sociological Analysis of Educational Strategies in the System of Higher Education in Kazakhstan," Sp. Cult. India, vol. 7, no. 4, pp. 181–193, 2020, doi: 10.20896/saci.v7i4.790.

INSTC (International North South Transport Corridor) connecting Eurasia and India

Shoaib Khan[1]

ABSTRACT

The ongoing developments in the creation of North-South transport routes linking markets in South Asia with Europe via Iran and Russia have been less noted. The three thousand years old South Asian relations with Central Asia comprising the old silk route which was the trading backbone of the two regions covering around 7000 miles which connects the regions of China, Central Asia, Northern India the Parthian, the Roman Empire. The significance of INSTC cannot be underplayed; however, what has experts concerned is Iran seizing the opportunities brought on by its geographical position and turning such opportunities into competitive advantages.

Key Words: *Central Asia, INSTC, Russia, China, Turkey, Iran, India.*

[1] *Visiting Faculty, Centre for Central Eurasian Studies, University of Mumbai, President, ALFAAZ Education and Cultural Society, Mumbai, Lecturer, Mahim Social Workers College, Mumbai. E Mail: shoaibk_92in@yahoo.com DOI: 10.17932/EJOSS.2021.023/ejoss_ v01i1003*

The Importance of Corridor

The United States along with the European Union during the previous five years have emphasized the important role of countries of the Caucasus and Central Asia in the development of East-West transportation and energyroutes, linking Central and South Asia with Europe. The ongoing developments in the creation of North-South transport routes linking markets in South Asia with Europe via Iran and Russia have been less noted. There has been a large focus on weapons and technology transfers from Russia to Iran in recent analysis of relations between the two countries, the nascent North-South transport corridor signals an attempt to restore the conventional commodities trade between South Asia and Europe which is historical. The common interest of regional countries is also being demonstrated in this project to multiply the number of trade route options that extend north and south, as well as east and west[1]

The interest of regional and extra regional powers has always been drawn by Central Asia because of its important geographical location connecting Europe and Asia. In the region, the presence of rich natural resources is another important reason to be in limelight for the major world powers. The historical Central Asia and South Asia relations which is economically and geopolitically linking the two regions. The three thousand years old South Asian relations with Central Asia comprising the old silk route which was the trading backbone of the two regions covering around 7000 miles which connects the regions of China, Central Asia, Northern India the Parthian, the Roman Empire. Recently Central Asia has drawn attention of major world powers to control the natural resources untapped in the area.[2]

The Indian Ocean and Persian Gulf to the Caspian Sea via Iran is presently being linked by INSTC route, and onward to northern Europe via St. Petersburg in Russia. The INSTC proposed movement of goods from

 Mumbai to Bandar Abbas in Iran by sea, from Bandar Abbas by road, and then from Bandar-e-Anzali to Astrakhan a Caspian port in the Russian Federation through Caspian Sea, and after that from Astrakhan to other regions of the Russian Federation and further to Europe by Russian railways[3].

It is for the connectivity initiative to succeed, it would be prudent to take

advantage of the existing transport initiatives in the Central Asian region. Towards Europe the BSEC is leaning heavily and the recent Ashgabat Agreement, which is more Central Asia-centric and are two most important.

The communication of Turkey with the Indian Ministry of Road and Transport according to many publications that Ankara is ready to provide information on linking the INSTC secretariat to the BSEC. There are however less details on its entails. Turkey, Russia and Ukraine among its 12 Eurasian members are included in the BSEC has seen limited progress in terms of initiatives implemented as a number of issues divide its members, making cooperation difficult. The European Union-supported Black Sea Ring Highway (BSRH) is one notable progress area.

The project as stated by the Turkish agency Anadolu is almost completed except some parts in the northern and western regions of the Black Sea and the Georgian section. On creating a BSEC certificate for trucks traveling along the highway the BSEC has also moved forward. Iran's ageing truck fleet as a result of decades of sanctions however is not authorized to drive on the roads of Europe as its trucks do not meet modern road standards according to Prof. Bahram Amirahmadian of University of

 Tehran. Upgrading its fleet to facilitate the BSRH to be utilised by Iran and setting up a mechanism assisting the issuing of the BSEC certificate to allow for trucks carrying consignments within Eurasia seemingly which for INSTC-BSEC cooperation would be a noteworthy goal[4].

International North-South Transport Corridor (INSTC) as decided by Russia, Iran and India, a multimodal network of sea, rail and road routes between India, Iran, Central Asia and Russia. The new configurations undergoing in the broader politics that may put to question the project's prospects, and the evolving security situation demands continuous appraisal, it is time that the economics of INSTC initiative be refocussed on discussion. To evaluate this is an easier factor which will determine ground implementation as well as the corridor's present and potential scope along with it is also the ideal angle with which to pursue the initiative. The commercial advantages of a transport corridor have been examined by analysts and factors discussed that, if taken into consideration, strengthen INSTC's economic case. The potential economic merits of the corridor against the broader geopolitics of the region should be taken into account[5].

The three founding members, Russia Iran and India, have agreed in 2000 and later it was ratified in the year 2002, the original multimodal route from Mumbai to Bandar Abbas and Bandar-e-Anzali the Iranian ports, following which across the Caspian Sea to Astrakhan, Moscow and St. Petersburg with sanctions on Iran had not seen much traction. The INSTC project recently has moved forward with Tehran back in the international fold and the 2016 agreement on Chabahar port which would likely be tapped as a second, or alternative, to the Bandar Abbas port.

The regional project has been joined by countries subsequently, in particular Azerbaijan, have been eager to connect to the INSTC and are pursuing projects that seek to diversify the original route. An alternate route pointed in a dry run conducted in 2014 using Azerbaijan's capital, Baku, as a transit point between Iran and Russia. In both Iran and Azerbaijan too, trial runs were conducted in August 2016. Goods will arrive in Russia through Azerbaijan via trains and trucks after being shipped to Bandar Abbas the southern Iranian port, avoiding the need to be shipped across the Caspian Sea as planned initially. Baku is being developed as a transport hub[6].

The progress on the route was slow since the agreement was signed in 2002. A meeting in New Delhi on 18th January, 2012 discussed the various modalities to take the project forward. Support were sought from other Central Asian nations and now the group has been expanded.

Iran, Russia, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Armenia, Belarus, Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, Oman, Syria, Turkey, Ukraine, India are the current members along with Bulgaria as observer. A formal membership has not been allotted to Turkmenistan but is likely to have road connectivity to the corridor. There have been heavy involvement of Azerbaijan and Armenia in the project with both countries building new train lines and roads to complete the missing links in the INSTC[7].

The Connectivity and Its Eurasian Integration

The International North-South Transport Corridor (INSTC) has great potential for improving Iran's economic and political standing. The significance of INSTC cannot be underplayed; however, what has experts concerned is Iran seizing the opportunities brought on by its geographical position and turning such opportunities into competitive advantages.

Currently, besides North-South and East-West corridors, 10 other domestic corridors exist inside Iran, connecting different parts of the country together and with neighbouring countries. The existing infrastructure in the southern ports of Iran makes INSTC the best itinerary for expanding transit. The development project carried out in the Shahid Beheshti Port of Chabahar and its proximity to Central Asia and CIS countries has created eagerness on the part of India and Russia to employ this corridor for their transit purposes.

INSTC is estimated to reduce transit time and expenses by respectively 30 and 25 percent when compared with the traditional transit route between Mumbai Port and the Baltic Sea which crosses through the Bab-el- Mandeb, the Suez Canal and the Strait of Gibraltar. The INSTC route passes through Mumbai, Indian Ocean, the Persian Gulf, Anzali Port, Astrakhan Port and Moscow to reach Northern and Eastern Europe[8].

Those countries which are already members of INSTC including the ones waiting to become members, are starting to realise that they cannot afford to deal with the aforesaid agenda at a later stage, considering the realities of geopolitics which changing at a rapid speed and emerging waves of Euro-Asian integration. An endeavour to that right away, not just among member states but crucially also with European partners, will increase the strength and utility of the corridor in the process. The economic interests of respective countries will be benefitted as well as the collective interests of the Euro-Asian community.

India might find itself walking on eggshells as it tries to maintain a delicate balance between its set of close allies and trading partners – the US, UK, Canada, Norway with the EU as well as Russia and Iran on other. The position that it could use to play as a leadership role in striking out a multi- party agreement for establishing rail, road and seaway connects it the Bothnian Corridors along with the Arctic, as well as to the North Sea- Baltic, Scandinavian-Mediterranean and Baltic-Adriatic Corridors, through the INSTC.

It would also be in the interest of the Baltic, Nordic and Arctic states to look out for new possibilities for facilitating Europe-Asia trade, so as to have the options of foreign investments available and remain open to the massive infrastructure development initiatives backed by non-Baltic,

non- Nordic and non-Arctic states while avoiding getting locked up in any one scheme, and ensure balance of power in the Baltic, Nordic and Arctic regions[9].

The ancient world cultures and its re-emergence is becoming the hallmark of the twenty-first century. China and India both have outgrown the term 'emerging market', in the decades of 2010s establishing themselves as movers and shakers in their own right. The transcontinental links recreated by the belt and road initiative that have criss-crossed Eurasia since antiquity, connecting the Roman, Persian, and Chinese empires and all the lands in between.

The new North-South corridors, linking Russia and South Asia and, here as well, all the lands in between are the emerging parallel development simultaneously. Though present-day India is still unsure as to whether her future lies with the rimlands of the Indo-Pacific or with the heartlands in Central Asia, there is little doubt that other than the factors historically and politically, the energy and transport infrastructure available at the time will determine the outcome.

The third largest in the world the Indian railway system with a track of over 66,030 kilometres. Freight volumes stand at number four globally. Out of the transported coal 90 percent which is equal to 50 percent of India's electrical power, is moved by rail. The strategy of the Indian railway is to raise the average speed on important tracks using conventional technology and, at the same time, upgrade some major connections by introducing state-of-the-art high-speed technologies.

A Russian-Indian oil or gas pipeline is another infrastructure project far off in the future. Geography and politics are both in the way for the time being. The route would possibly cross either Afghanistan which is conflict ridden and India's arch rival Pakistan, or the vast mountainous tracts of inner China. A memorandum of understanding has already been signed by Gazprom with Engineers India to conduct joint studies for a direct pipeline connection, a North-South Eurasian pipeline from Siberia to the Indian subcontinent might take decades to materialise[10].

The multimodal route connecting China, Kazakhstan, Azerbaijan, Georgia, and Turkey, and finally reaching Europe is the Trans-Caspian International Transport Route which is 4,766 kms long. This corridor that comprises

4,256 km by rail and 508 km by sea. A cargo train launched from China will be able to reach Europe with this route once connected with Baku-Tblisi-Kars railway. Azerbaijan, Georgia, and Turkey are connected through this project directly via rail links. There are certain disadvantages in this route that need to be addressed before this route becomes fully functional.

Across countries various regulations related to customs and railway tariffs exists in the route, which require cooperation to establish single tariffs and harmonised customs procedures. The links to be fixed which are the concerns the Baku–Tbilisi–Kars railway connection. The Baku to Turkey– Georgia border railway connection is already completed and modernised. The tunnel of 4 kms long that connects Georgia and Turkey has been constructed. The construction of a rail line in the Turkish part from the Turkey–Georgia border to Kars is the only left part which will help functioning of the railway connection of Turkey with the Caspian region. Once this section is completed, the transport route from China to Europe will be uninterrupted[11].

It is expected that an estimated INSTC cargo capacity of 20-30 million tons goods per year to provide faster and more efficient trade connectivity between Europe and Southeast Asia. In 2014 a dry run was conducted on the route, from Mumbai to Baku and Astrakhan via Bandar Abbas. There will be 30 percent cheaper transport and transportation period will be 40 percent shorter than the existing routes as per the results obtained.

After the Chabahar Port, the INSTC will be second corridor for India which will give access resource rich Central Asia and its market. The Chabahar port in coupled with INSTC will be a game changer for India's strategic and economic goals in the Eurasian region. Besides Iran's Bandar Abbas port the Chabahar port could get linkages to the INSTC. The route would be connected with various other connectivity projects that the five Central Asian and other Eurasian countries have undertaken among themselves[12].

The ultimate goal of these efforts is to dismantle trade barriers among countries in the region, and in turn, invigorate intra-regional trade and investments. However, regional trade at the expense of global-integration does not help to increase global welfare. The economic integration not necessarily leads to a higher level of welfare unless it is not the one of natural trading partners as argued by analysts[13].

Given emerging global production system in these days, the separation from global trade is costlier than before as it means the loss of opportunity to access the global value chains. The integration into global value chains requires efficient supply chains that involve transportation system without fragmentation. The transportation system efficiency encompasses not only physical infrastructure but also related institutions and practices [14].

This issue has been raised particularly with respect to the economic integration of Eurasian region and Russia[15]. The highly diversified political, economic and cultural systems, Eurasia is an extreme vast region. Even among Russia and the former CIS countries, there exist a big difference in institutions and government practices[16].

India and Its connectivity through INSTC

After India decided to join international customs convention TIR following cabinet approval the implementation of the INSTC has moved closer. The modalities of INSTC were discussed in order to make functional at a multi-stakeholder meeting. Delhi is working on INSTC which is one of the corridors as part of connectivity initiatives parallel to China's One Belt One Road strategy.

In India the Federation of Freight Forwarders' Associations conducted a study which showed that INSTC will be 30% cheaper and 40% shorter than the existing routes. Iran Railways, Azerbaijan Railways and logistics company ADY Express and Russia's JSC RZD on October 2017, organised the first test shipment on the INSTC. On September 22 the train left Mumbai and arrived in Russia's Kaluga Region on October 12. The transit time was 23 days. At the moment maritime routes for freight transport is being used by Russia and India, with goods reaching their destination in about 40 days.

The shipped containers were sent to the Iranian port of Bandar Abbas from Mumbai, then transported by rail to Iran's Rasht station and from there delivered by road to Astara which is in Azerbaijan, reloaded on the railway and finally delivered to the destination in Russia. On the INSTC two routes dry runs were conducted in 2014, the first from Mumbai to Baku via Bandar Abbas and the second from Mumbai to Astrakhan via Bandar Abbas, Tehran and Bandar Anzali. Chabahar port in Iran once functional and connected to the Iranian Railway network will also be part of INSTC[17].

The region of Central Asia can be of significant interest to India, not least of all due to its large untapped reserves of natural reserves of hydrocarbons and minerals. Kazakhstan for example has the 11th highest oil reserve in the world[18]. This poses for India an interesting potential as the country lacks in natural reserves of its own and was therefore also the 4th largest importer of LNG in the world in 2013[19]. Besides Russia other powers such as China, the United States and the European Union have shown an increasing interest in the region with their own multilateral projects, leading some to speak about a revival of the 'great game' that occurred in the 19th century between the Russian and British empires[20].

For both India and CARs energy is a major motivation to cooperate, as it is in the interest of CARs to diversify their economies in this way and in multilateral co-operations. A rare example on this scale is the role of Indian state-owned company ONGC (Oil and Natural Gas Commission), which took over a company with stakes in oil fields and a part of an exploration opportunity around the Caspian Sea[21]. The same company in 1997 had acquired the right to drill exploratory for 5 years in another region in Kazakhstan. This company had also invested in a region in Turkmenistan, but as noted above it turned out that there was not enough potential at that site[22].

In 2015 exploratory drilling began in the region around the Caspian Sea, but with mixed results. In another project in which ONGC was involved, the stakes given to the company were taken away and given to a Chinese company by the Kazakh government. While there can be several reasons for this, it is perhaps telling that the ONGC turned away another offer of a stake in an oilfield by the Kazakh government. India to engage in such projects lack operational power or some unwillingness as it may point, next to the possibility that the Chinese offered more money. More reasons provided for this difference is that China shares a border with several of the CARs, among which is Kazakhstan[23].

The economy of China is considerably bigger than India's, with a GDP of US $21.27 trillion compared to India's GDP of US $8.721 trillion in 2016. The Chinese government acquire more options with this, although a related analysis is being provided by Lee & Gill. The Indian economy due to several market reforms as argued is controlled mostly by the private sector and given the relatively small presence of the government in the

economy, its state-owned enterprises which cannot be provided by it is charged with investing in overseas resources with the same level of cheap capital that is available to Chinese state-owned enterprises. The economy of India is consumption driven rather than an export-led one unlike that of China, and the private sector has less risky opportunities to invest at home or elsewhere around the world than those offered in Central Asian states[24].

To develop its relations with the energy rich region of Central Asia, India has now started to think in ways which would give boost to its foreign policy on various aspects. There are many difficulties such as the presence of great powers in the region, limited trade and limited size of markets, for more than a decade Central Asia has gained valuable place in Indian foreign policy affairs. The Connect Central Asia Policy is the growing interest of this concrete indication, which is based on pro-active political economic and people to people connectivity with the region both individually and collectively.

Another side of the Central Asian coin are the increasing role of big powers to make their influence felt in the region. There have been attempts to explore in these contexts that how far geo-political calculation is a factor in India's new policy 'Connect Central Asia' and its implications for India. The evolving relations with the region having common interests on many issues in South and Central Asia from geopolitical, geo-economic and geo-strategic perspectives has been explored in the recent past[25].

It is a fact the big challenge in itself is the importance of Central Asia and there are several drawbacks in speeding up the relationships and governmental interactions of India with the region under the present circumstances. The South and Central Asia in its present settings seems to be very difficult to bring energy directly and easily from the region.

In order to establish connectivity with Central Asia to satisfy its energy needs in particular India is faced with some of the challenges as it lacks any direct land route. In establishing easy and sustainable connection this forms the challenge fundamentally. It is for India's trade with Central Asia that it poses a great challenge as it has to seek other options to connect with Central Asia. Land route connection plays a key role in developing trade and transport of energy materials[26].

 The weak border is the main geopolitical challenge for India and associated

problems. The hostility of neighbours like Pakistan and China with India. China's encircling India via Nepal, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and Pakistan poses problems for its security. The deteriorating relations with neighbours and the effect of weak borders such as Pakistan's excursion and infiltrating of militant into Kashmir, pressures of migration from Bangladesh, Tamils' identity in Sri Lanka and Nepal's open borders with illegal trade in many points which made India an isolated land which has to struggle for making presence across the region.

It is for the projects like the TAPI (Turkmenistan, Afghanistan, Pakistan, India) pipeline that these conditions are the major challenges as Indian government apprehends that relations with neighbours would jeopardize its energy security. The present political situation of Afghanistan is an added problem which is not conducive to this project[27].

India's gateway to expand trade and investment links with CAR nations and Eurasia will be INSTC. Indian goods to Russia and Central Asia currently move either via Rotterdam through sea or to St. Petersburg or from the port of Qingdao in China that takes over 50 days because of the absence of surface transport connectivity. Consequentially, India's trade volume with Central Asia is less than US $ 1 billion, which pales in comparison to Russia (US $ 30 billion) and China (US $ 50 billion), both of them have a shorter axis of transport.

To take shape only recently a gap of seventeen years has been dragged by the INSTC. The delay is primarily attributable to two major factors. First, Iran which is a major hub in this corridor got isolated globally and was confronted with sanctions on the pretext of developing nuclear arsenal. The corridor of this transport secondly includes various subprojects requiring bilateral and multilateral agreements, apart from funding issues which mired the project. Unlike the BRI, where China is doing the bulk of heavy lifting and herding the project. The two large players, Russia and India were reluctant to shoulder the responsibility for shaping and guiding the progress.

None of the participant countries had deep pockets to push the project which resulted in scarce supply of fruition funding the first requirement for such project. Central Asia's energy abundance, changing geopolitics, tremendous shrill created by the BRI acted as tailwind for INSTC. A lot of

progress has been witnessed in the past few years. Surprisingly, India has emerged as a pathfinder and has orchestrated synchronous acts to take the Corridor to its logical shape and direction[28].

CONCLUSION

Strides towards achieving a new framework is being made by the INSTC. To incorporate other interested states, including countries of the Caucasus, Central Asia, and Eastern Europe, and perhaps also Oman this project has the potentiality. History has been the witness to the difficulties in transport projects. Once an important strategic and economic project, the Trans-Siberian Railway now moves only about 10,000 containers per year mainly due to a lack of service reliability. The potential for militarization of the Caspian, are the threats strategically and politically. The danger that the route be abused for illicit drug and weapons trafficking have already been noted by Russian politicians, following existing routes from Afghanistan in the south via Central Asia into Russia and Europe.

Expanding trade volumes between INSTC members the importance of which is taken into account, fast-tracking the India-Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU) Free Trade Agreement would be a crucial step. It will allow for the use of all the connectivity infrastructure and mechanisms currently in the region besides increase in overall trade, justifying increased focus and investment from the government alongside the private sectors. Improved visa facilitation for the region's businessmen and investors in the medium-term should also be looked into.

To benefit from the advantages that INSTC provides, member countries need to coordinate their efforts. About participating in the corridor for which both Russia and India have been enthusiastic and partnership with Iran. India is Iran's key partner in developing Chabahar Port and coordinated the INSTC friendship rally. Russia is also seeking to utilize INSTC instead of the traditional Suez Canal route. A special centre has been established in Russia's ministry of transport to coordinate transport and logistics with Iran's ministry of roads and urban development. Azerbaijan is also contributing to the development of Rasht-Astara railroad, which will help fix the missing links of the corridor.

There are certain challenges that need to be addressed in INSTC. A comprehensive approach is required; one that is not solely focused on

infrastructure and transport but on added value, competitiveness and development. Agreements about customs and fees should also be competitive and include the private sector and traders. Additionally, awareness about competing in an international market should be established, especially in Iran where this gets overshadowed by the country's geopolitical advantages. International sanctions are also a significant challenge that needs to be addressed.

It needs to be truly transcontinental corridor for the INSTC, if it is to attain economic viability. Its physically connection with a greater number of countries in Europe is what it means, extending its reach beyond the present termination point of St. Petersburg in Russia and expanding towards the North along with the Western direction to get more integrated with European rail networks. There have been high-level discussions in recent months about stretching the corridor further to include countries such as Latvia, Estonia and Finland. This is taking place at a relatively slow pace and mostly on bilateral or trilateral terms, featuring two of the Nordic and Baltic states and then principally Russia, Iran, Azerbaijan, India and Afghanistan. In conjunction with the European Union (EU) the Baltic and Nordic regions are already collaborating on significant transport initiatives, it might be worth exploring that the European Union backed projects are often integrated with the INSTC.

The break in the connectivity of inland transportation and limited access to sea ports would inhibit Eurasian countries, in particular the countries of Central Asia, from efficiently managing regional supply chain and in turn, participating in the global value chain. Expansion of intra-regional connectivity requires improvements in cross-board infrastructure in terms of quantity and quality. The possible measures that should be accompanied includes upgrading TCR (Trans China Railway) and TSR (Trans-Siberian Railway), improving logistics facilities, streamlining customs procedures, harmonizing institution and standard such as customs documents and rail gauge and building capacity of logistics system management, and so on. These physical and institutional improvements, however, need large-scale and high-risk investments. That is why strategic investment plans are required. To investigate the impact of connectivity improvements on Eurasian economic integration it is essential works to this end.

On several fronts like anti-terrorism agenda, smuggling, economic

development, pipeline geopolitics, education improvement, e- connectivity, land reform project, hospital, fraternity, religious understandings on which Central Asia and India need to join hands and which are needed to be addressed carefully. In connectivity with the Central Asia under the present geopolitical realities there are difficulties which are being realised practically, India should adopt pragmatic strategies and should continue its political dialogues with CARs and other transit countries. The best strategy which suit its interests is that of cooperation and not that of the competition or confrontation. India needs to pursue its 'Connect Central Asia Policy' energetically, irrespective of its unimpressive gains so far, to achieve plausible breakthroughs in regional, economic, trade and energy cooperation with new states. The policy can play a role of anchor in increasing India's hard and large period planned attention in view of its further relations with Central Asia.

REFERENCES

[1.] Regine A. Spector, The North-South Transport Corridor, Brookings Institute, July 3, 2002.

[2.] Sandeep Singh and Amanpreet Kaur, "Connect Central Asia Policy" Factor in India's Soft Power Initiatives in CARs: Problems and Prospects", International Journal of Advanced Research in Management and Social Sciences, vol 3(12), 2014.

[3.] Roy, Meena Singh, "International North-South Transport Corridor: Re-energising India's Gateway to Eurasia", IDSA issue brief, 18 august 2015.

[4.] Roshan Iyer, Filling In the North-South Trade Corridor's Missing Links, The Diplomat, February 28, 2018.

[5.] Ritika Passi, Money matters: Discussing the economics of the INSTC, ORF Observer Research Foundation, Occasional Papers, 20th April, 2017.

[6.] "Iran-Azerbaijan Rail Linkup in a Month," Financial Tribune, January 15, 2017, https://financialtribune.com/articles/economy business-and-markets/57451/iran-azerbaijan-rail-linkup-in-a-month; Nigar Abbasova, "Date set for commissioning of Astara-Astara railway," AzerNews,

February 8, 2017, http://www.azernews.az/business/108582.html.

[7.] International North–South Transport Corridor (INSTC), https://www.clearias.com/international-north-south-transport- corridor-instc/.

 [8.] INSTC: Iran's Role and Future Development, Ministry of Roads & Urban Development Islamic Republic of Iran, 31 July 2018.

[9.] Hriday Sarma and Dwayne R Menezes, The International North-South Transport Corridor (INSTC): India's grand plan for northern connectivity, SADF South Asian Democratic Forum, 8 June, 2018.

[10.] Thomas Fasbender, Integrating Eurasia: Evolving Russian-Indian infrastructure links, DOC (Dialogue of Civilisation) Research Institute, Germany, August 15, 2017.

[11.] Hazar Strategy Institute (2015), 'Trans Caspian Rail Corridor to Transform   Europe-China Trade',   http://www.hazar.org/blogdetail/blog/trans_caspian_rail_corridor_to_   transform_   europe_china_trade_1348.aspx?currentCulture=en-US (accessed 27 August 2015).

[12.]   North-South corridor 'vital link' between Iran, Russia, CIS nations

– Indian official, Azernews, December 27 2018.

[13.]   Wonnacott and Lutz, 1989; Summers, 1991; Krugman, 1993.

[14.]   Arvis and Sheperd, 2013.

[15.]   Obydenkova, 2011.

[16.]   Atik, 2014.

[17.] Dipanjan Roy Chaudhury, International North South Transportation Corridor for better Indo-Russian connectivity inches towards reality, The Economic Times, Jul 12, 2018.

[18.]   Lee & Gill 2015, 112.

[19.]   Kulkarni & Nathan 2016, 183.

[20.]   Adnan & Fatima 2015, 188.

[21.]   Lee & Gill 2015, 113; Kavalski 2012, 101.

[22.]   Kulkarni & Nathan 2016, 188.

[23.]   Stobdan 2016, 17.

[24.]   Lee & Gill 2015, 113.

[25.]   Sandeep Singh, Connect Central Asia Policy, Factors in India's Soft Power Initiatives in Central Asian States: Problems and Prospects, Research Gates, December 2014.

[26.]   Foshko 2012: 8.

[27.]   Jacob 2005: 311.

[28.] Kunal Kashyap, Instc–India Breaches: The Great Wall of Pakistan, Centre for Land Warfare Studies, May, 2018.

Bibiliography

Balooch M (2009) Iran and India's cooperation in Central Asia. Central Asia Caucasus institute and Silk Road studies program. China and Eurasia forum quarterly 7: 25-29.

Bavar F (2010) Studying Chabahar commercial- industrial free zone map focusing on developing urban development.

Behuria A, Rizvi M (2015) India's renewed interest in Chabahar: Need to stay the course. Institute for defence studies and analysis.

Campbell I (2013) India's role and interests in Central Asia. Saferworld.

CAREC (Central Asia Regional Cooperation).2009. "Transport and Trade Facilitation: Partnership for Prosperity." Available from http://www.adb. org/documents/reports/CARECTranspo-Trade-   Facilitation/CAREC Transpo-Trade-Facilitation.pdf, Accessed 16.02.2011.

Costas, Alexopoulos. 2010. "Comparison study of maritime and rail transport along the Euro-Asia transport linkages", UNECE / Transport division. Available from http://www.unece.org/trans/main/wp5/wp5_ ge2_05.html Accessed 14.02.2011.

Dollar, D. 2017. "Is China's Development Finance a Challenge to the

International Order?" The Brookings Institutions: The New Geopolitics of Asia, Accessed November 9, 2017. https://www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/fp_20171109_china_development_finance.pdf.

Dreher, A., A. Fuchs, B. Parks, A. M. Strange, and M. J. Tierney. 2017. "Aid, China, and Growth: Evidence from a New Global Development Finance Dataset." AidData Working Paper, no. 46, Accessed October 10, 2017. http://docs.aiddata.org/ad4/pdfs/WPS46_Aid_China_and_Growth.pdf.

Enright, M. Developing China: The Remarkable Impact of Foreign Direct Investment. Abingdon: Routledge, 2017.

European Union. TRACECA Programme. International Logistics Centres/ Nodes Network in Central Asia at the Republic of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, Republic of Tajikistan, Republic of Uzbekistan and the Republic of Turkmenistan EuropeAid/125727/C/SER/MultiTask A Report - Kazakhstan, September 2009.

Guo, J. P. 2018. "Goujian Renlei Mingyun Gongtongti De Weida Shixian: Xie Zai Xi Jingping Zhuxi Tichu 'Yidaiyilu' Changyi Wu Zhounian." [The Great Practice of Building a Community of Shared Future for Mankind: Writing the Fifth Anniversary of President Xi Jinping's Proposal for the "Belt and Road Initiative".] Renminwang, October 4. doi:10.3168/jds.2017-14085.

Guojia Fazhan he Gaige Weiyuanhui, Waijiaobu, Shangwubu. 2015. "Tuidong Gongjian Sichouzhilu Jingjidai He 21 Shiji Haishang Sichouzhilude Yuanjing Yu Xingdong." [Vision and Action on Promotion of Building the Silk Road Economic Zone and 21st Century Maritime Silk Road.] Accessed March 28, 2015. http://www.ndrc.gov.cn/gzdt/201503/t20150328_669091.html.

Guowuyuan. 2015. "Guanyu Tuijin Guoji Channeng He Zhuanbei Zhizao Hezuo De Zhidao Yijian." [Guiding Opinions of Promoting International Industrial Capacity •And Equipment Manufacturing Cooperation.] Accessed May 13, 2015. http://www.gov.cn/zhengce/content/2015-05/16/content_9771.htm.

Karimikia A and Moqadam M (2012) Studying the attraction factors for

investment in Arvand free zone. Economic journal. Study of economic problems and policies magazine. No. 6, 7.

Mirzadeh A, Pad M, Salarzehi H, Abtin A (2014) Identification and prioritizing the investment opportunities in Chabahar free zone using analytical hierarchy:

Opportunities in Chabahar free zone using analytical hierarchy. International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences 4: 320-330.

Sial S (2016) The China-Pakistan economic corridor: An assessment of potential threats and constraints.

Zafar A (2015) India-Central Asia: Finding new synergies for greater engagement. Indian council of world affairs.

Healthcare in Oman Between Past and Present Achievements, Human Security and the COVID – 19 Pandemic

Elena Maestri [1]

ABSTRACT

This article results from research on the most recent effects of the COVID-19 pandemic in the Sultanate of Oman. Interdependence is investigated along with the inherent fragility of a health system made more vulnerable by the high reliance on migrants. As part of the history of modern Oman the health sector development was pursued with huge reforms during Sultan Qaboos' reign (1970-2020): the achievements of those years are valued and studied, against the backdrop of Omani cultural roots and peculiar social environment. The regional dimension emerges with the interregional networks of this country. The issue of human security comes to the fore and it is even more evident in relation with the challenges posed by the health emergency in 2020. At the beginning of Sultan Haitham's reign, new efforts are requested to address an unprecedented crisis, as underlined in the article, stressing also the importance of initiatives related with investments and re-qualification, within a regional and interregional dimension.

Keywords: *Oman, healthcare, immigrants, human resources, COVID-19.*

INTRODUCTION

The outburst of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 was soon perceived in the Sultanate of Oman, as it happened elsewhere, not only as a dangerous and concrete threat to the population's health and the healthcare system, as it was developed in the last 50 years, but also as a domestic crisis affecting internal balances related to the broader issue of human security. Rising interdependence with other countries, their expertise and human resources, aroused concerns and highlighted the fact that health security and human security are "inextricably linked concepts", which was particularly evident in front of such a global emergency in this country. This article results from some research on the most recent effects of the COVID-19 pandemic in this part of Arabia, in the awareness that "the nature of global health problems has the potential to transcend the traditional Westphalian state boundary system, whilst overwhelming many states' capacities for contending with these problems[2]".

The case-study of the Sultanate allows to shed some light on specific features of the healthcare system development in this area and on a series of cultural, political and social interlinkages affecting the same health sector until our century. The methodological criteria directing this research-work imply that the historical approach is complemented with the study of the environment and its social dynamics. Positive contribution offered by other disciplines is used to integrate the textual evidence, data and relevant information collected both online during the last year of global health emergency, and in fieldwork carried out in the Gulf region in previous years.

Interdependence of Oman at the regional, interregional and global levels was re-confirmed stronger than ever in this crisis that highlighted the inherent fragility of a system made even more vulnerable by the high reliance on migrants. Nonetheless, such a crisis was also confronted with strength, thanks to some important achievements and a development process of healthcare started in the 1970s. The historical approach allows to re-construct such a process and to define it in the light of the peculiar Omani social environment, where the social networks of the tribes matter,

---

[2] Robert L. Ostergard Jr. and Jeffrey A. Griffin, "Global Health and Human Security", in Colin McInnes, Kelley Lee, and Jeremy Youde (Eds.), The Oxford Handbook of Global Health Politics, p. 7

an Islamic-tribal paradigm keeps affecting the State's institutions, and cultural and religious beliefs have been affecting some approaches to health.

Looking back at history…

Healthcare was both shaped and shaped social, political and institutional realities in the history of modern Oman: social growth and human development largely depended on the modernisation of healthcare, and yet the latter was also affected by a set of values and a cultural identity founded on a rich Past, connecting Oman with the ancient tradition of medicine in Islam. Al-Mubasshir ibn Fatik, writing on the preservation and well-being of the people as a duty of the ruler in Islam in the 11th century reminds us that heritage here is rooted in the classical heritage of Islam[3]. Omani culture always held in high esteem physicians and rulers able to contribute to the preservation of health among their people. The 16th century physician Bin Omairah of Rustaq was a prominent personality in the field of medicine and pharmacy, who had travelled to Bahrain, Baghdad and Al Qatif to learn more and to write useful works, in which he recorded various diseases, he described the human organs and their functions along with their treatment. His scientific approach inspired his preparation of herbal medicines for his patients in his laboratory. The Omani National Commission for Education, Culture and Science in 2013 not by chance supported a nomination by UNESCO of this important Omani figure to include him among the world's most influential personalities in the global programme "Important historical and influential figures" at its 37th session of the General Conference in 2013[4].

---

[3] F. Rosenthal, The Classical Heritage of Islam, London, 1975, p. 35.

[4] Oman Daily Observer, Rashid bin Omaira — 16th Century Omani Physician, 9.02.2019, accessed online https://www.omanobserver.om/rashid-bin-omaira-16th- century-omani-physician/ 21.01.2021.

Manuscript by bin Omairah containing a poem on eye anatomy, copied by Mohammed bin Hamad bin Salam Al Harasi in 1305H (Source: Sultanate of Oman, Ministry of Heritage and Culture, Historical Manuscripts).

The emphasised link between this historical figure with the contemporary implementation of policies to give Omani people a modern and more efficient healthcare system can be seen as the expression of a nation-building process in need of identity symbols and points of reference since the 1970s…after an "obscure time", in which modern healthcare did not simply exist for Omanis. And yet, the days in which bin Omairah had lived, marked by the growing importance of his town in the centre of Oman, Rustaq, tell us that pre-modern times in this region had witnessed the presence of traditional laboratories for the extraction of herbal medicines and growing interest in improving treatments of various diseases. Rustaq controlled access to the harbours and cultivated fields of the Batinah, while being included in the political heart of interior, and emerging then as one of the capitals in the country's history[5]. Bin Omairah's travels to other important agricultural areas in Arabia, like al- Qatif and al-Bahrayn,

---

[5] J.G Lorimer, Gazetteer of the Persian Gulf, Oman and Central Arabia, vol.II, Geographical and Statistical, Superintendent Government Printing, 1908, p. 1369.

confirm the relevance of herbal medicines production and use in those times, which is something that continues until nowadays in the region. Folkloric medical heritage has been preserved: healthy herbal waters, like margadush, extracted from marjoram and origanum, recommended for abdominal pain, or al-zamuta, extracted from origanum and thyme, used against stomach acidity, and al-hilwa, extracted from aniseed, used as a vitamin, and hilba (fenugreek plant), thought to be good against breathing difficulties and to regulate the function of the liver and bladder, are just few examples of a long list of folk-medicines well known in the whole region[6]. Natural chemical-free products are re- evaluated today, as attested by the growth of local production, according both to the most modern techniques and the traditional use of herbs in the ancient medicine books of the Arab-Islamic culture. At one and the same time, the high rate of morbidity and mortality in pre-1970s Oman, like in the pre-oil era Arabia as a whole, is still inscribed in the old people's minds. The widespread use of rock salt as a disinfectant by Arab folk- medicine in childbirth could not prevent the extremely high rate of mothers' death before the introduction of modern medical facilities in all the Arab Gulf countries, also because the possibility to store and handle these items hygenically was scarce[7].

The political decision to establish the Ministry of Health in Oman in 1970 was crucial for a government determined to legitimise itself also by improving the population's health and hygenic condition through strict coordination with the World Health Organisation (WHO) and its assistance, which was a shared approach in the Gulf. The College of Medicine, established in 1986 in Sultan Qaboos University soon started attracting students from other countries of the GCC (Gulf Cooperation Council), in particular Bahrain. Regional and international healthcare networks have been emerging and consolidating since then.

The Nahda and the creation of a modern health system

When Sultan Qaboos assumed power in 1970, the so-called Nahda (Renaissance) started in the country: it led both to important achievements

---

[6] Cf. Mahdi Abdallah Al-Tajir, Language and linguistic origins in Bahrain, Kegan Paul International, London, 1982, pp. 140-141.

[7] Cf. Frauke Heard-Bey, From Trucial States to United Arab Emirates, Longman, London, 1999, p. 148

in terms of economic and social development, and to new efforts to adapt the local Islamic religious discourse (Ibadism) and its value-system to the modernization process. The traditional and conservative approach of the official Ibadi doctrine did not always help, but far-sighted plans were implemented, and delicate balances were pursued between the various components of the Sultanate and the powerful tribes of the interior. Continuity and innovation apparently merged, affecting welfare and health sector as well.

As part of the history of modern Oman the health sector development was pursued with huge reforms, financed through the oil and gas revenues: in July 1970, when life expectancy was 49 years, there were only two hospitals, run by an American Mission, and ten clinics and dispensaries in the whole country. Three years later there were already nine fully operative hospitals at Ruwi, Salalah, Tanʿam, Matrah, Muscat, Nizwa, Rustaq, Sohar and Sumail, and rising numbers of health centres and dispensaries in each region[8]. It is not to be neglected the fact that the government's investment in this sector, following the patterns already implemented in the other Gulf Arab countries, contributed to gain people's support and to enhance its legitimacy in their eyes, considering that health care access was rare and difficult in a country where episodes of malaria, trachoma infection, pulmonary tuberculosis and hepatitis were widespread and could hardly be treated, given the very limited numbers of physicians[9]. The Ministry of Health developed the system in three main stages. Between 1976 and 1990 the focus was mainly on health infrastructure building, between 1991 and 2005 new strategies were adopted to establish a system of decentralised health centres, widely spread in eleven health administrative divisions throughout a country divided in seven administrative regions. In such a way, the right to free primary health services could rapidly be guaranteed to the Omani citizens almost everywhere, from urban areas to the most

---

[8] Quarterly commercial and economic progress reports on Oman, 1973 Jan 01 - 1973 Dec 31, p. 11, The National Archives, UK, accessed online at https://agda.ae/en/catalogue/tna/fco/8/2014

[9] Moeness M Alshishtawy, Four Decades of Progress. Evolution of the health system in Oman, SQU Med J, April 2010, Vol. 10, Iss. 1, pp. 12-22, Epub. 17th Apr 10, p. 13.

isolated rural and Bedouin's areas, from the mountains to the desert and the coasts.

In the 1980s and early 1990s, the Ibadi official discourse, while supporting the importance of scientific and medical education with health initiatives, could not prevent some religious scholars, like the Mufti Ahmed bin Hamad Al-Khalili, from re-affirm gender roles definition according to the most conservative interpretation of Islam. Paradoxically, the Mufti, like other non-Ibadi Muslim scholars, mentioned the views of the French author Alexis Carrel when he asserted that "chromosomes of women are dramatically different from those of men", thus making obvious biological differences between men and women the foundation of some decisions on gender roles and rights in the Omani society, which, in a way, were affected by specific demands for the respect of differences at schools, at universities, at the workplaces and in hospitals at that time[10]. Such a position, which was strengthened by tribal customary codes ('urf) hindered in a way a more extensive inclusion of Omani women in scientific sectors, but enhancing the presence of women in health care professions became all the same an important government's objective. Records regarding medical students provided by the Ministry of Health, by Sultan Qaboos University and by the Oman Medical Speciality Board attest a rise in health workforce feminization among doctors in the new century: the proportion of specialised female doctors reached 31% in 2015 compared to 21% in 1990, and female general practitioners reached 50% in 2015 compared to 30% in 1990. This trend is positive, and yet it does not seem to be able to affect the proportionately too large numbers of immigrant medical staff in a significant way in the medium term[11].

---

[10] Khaled Al-Azri, The Political Equilibrium: Legitimation and Modernization in Oman, in Valeria Fiorani Piacentini and Elena Maestri, From Tribe to State, CRiSSMA WP, vol, 1, n. 14, I.S.U. Università Cattolica, Milano 2007, p. 43.
11 Nazar A. Mohamed, Nadia N. Abdulhadi, Abdullah A. Al-Maniri, et al., "The trend of feminization of doctors' workforce in Oman: is it a phenomenon that could rouse the health system?", Human Resources for Health 16, 19 (2018).

All of that has an impact both on foreign human resources employed in the country's healthcare and on the general efficiency of the system. No continuity of professional care is guaranteed due to a huge turnover of personnel, often moving back to their home countries or to other countries after only few years. Uncertainty is a negative aspect both for the foreign medical staff and for the host country's patients.

Between 2006 and 2010 more comprehensive plans were conceived to involve both central health institutions and local structures in the various divisions, in order to better address the new challenges[12]. Health initiatives based on prevention became a top priority: while malaria and other infectious diseases had been eradicated in a few years, non-communicable diseases had started increasing with modernisation.

The relevance of a community-based approach comes to the fore: in 2000 Oman reached the World Health Organisation's top ranking for the ability to invest efficiently in health improvements, apparently without disparities[13]. Such an approach seems to be quite consistent with the Ibadi ethos, which contributed throughout the centuries to "weld together Omani society into a unity that was relatively little divided by social barriers[14]". The social principles of "justice, equality, and equal opportunities between Omanis" are also clearly expressed in article 12 of the Basic Statute of the State, declaring the state's responsibility "for public health and the means of prevention and treatment of diseases and epidemics", and adding that "the State endeavours to provide healthcare for every citizen and encourages the establishment of private hospitals, polyclinics and medical institutions[15]." The latest available data, related to the quality of health developed during Sultan Qaboos' reign, place Oman in line with the other

---

12 Al-sihha fi 'ahd al-nahdha al-mubaraka t'bur kull shabr bi-l-bilad, Al-Shabiba, 18 November 2019, https://www.shabiba.com/article/235544

13 Jeremy Jones, Nicholas Ridout, A History of Modern Oman, Cambridge University Press, New York, 2015, p 175.

14 John Wilkinson, Ibadism. Origins and Early Development in Oman, Oxford University Press, New York, 2010, p. 320.

15 Basic Statute of the State of Oman.

GCC member States and in the group of countries with the highest human

HDI RANK	Lost health Expectancy* (%)	Physicians	Hospital beds (per 10,000 people)
Very high human development	2017	2010-2018ᵃ	2010-2015ᵃ
35 United Arab Emirates	13.9	23.9	12
36 Saudi Arabia	13.7	23.9	27
41 Qatar	14.7	0.0	12
45 Bahrain	14.7	9.3	20
47 Oman	14.7	19.7	16
57 Kuwait	14.9	25.8	20

* Lost health expectancy: Relative difference between life expectancy and healthy life expectancy, expressed as a percentage of life expectancy at birth.
a Data refer to the most recent year available during the period specified.

Source: adapted by Elena Maestri from data in Dashboard 1, Human Development Report 2019.

Health and Omani environment

The Primary Healthcare System (PHS) based on the wilayat, or districts subdivision, is the closest to the community and it is well complemented by the services of mobile medical teams provided to the population living in remote mountainous and desert areas. Within PHS, a growing trend in the utilisation of health centres by the population is recorded, as they proved to be efficient in providing some preventive and curative primary health care. In addition, the extended health centres started to provide some specialty care as well, in coordination with local hospitals, also providing PHC services[16]. Despite the remarkable development of the system, many Omanis still trust traditional medicine, despite growing modernisation of their lifestyle. The PHS has been contributing to spread basic hygienic and health education among the population, by supporting informative campaigns against unhealthy practices either connected with ancient traditions (for instance, consequences in terms of hereditary diseases coming from tribal consanguineous marriages, still widespread in the country) or modern lifestyle (lack of physical exercise, unhealthy food, etc.). As far as folk medicine is concerned, some Sultanate's doctors and researchers have been considering the possible integration of it in the PHS services, provided it is scientifically founded.

The practice of traditional medicine varies from region to region in

---

[16] Moeness M Alshishtawy, op. cit., p. 18.

Oman, but the common belief that it is without risks, in comparison with pharmaceutical drugs, has led to its growing popularity and utilisation in modern times, despite the possible toxicity of herbs and the risk posed by some mechanical practices of folk medicine. All of that led to growing scientific interest in researching these aspects to integrate, when possible, traditional medicine in prevention and treatment, in the Sultanate, butinformation campaigns in this direction are considered crucial to avoid use of herbs and dangerous practices, such as the case of mechanical healing of cauterisation (wasam), "a crude method of applying a counter irritant " widely used by healers in Arabia and in Egypt since the most ancient times and often resulting in complications, such as septic shock and tetanus. A survey carried out in 2009 at the tertiary care teaching institute of the Sultanate stated that 62.3% with infectious keratitis sought traditional methods before an ophthalmologic visit; another study on 400 patients with risk factors for stroke stated that 19.5% of patients chose to be treated first with traditional methods, which included wasam, at home[17].

The last ten years, no doubt, witnessed some interesting research and related informative campaigns in this direction as well, but this is still an issue with a cultural and social dimension to be addressed with greater determination by the authorities, along with other relevant issues, like disabilities/special abilities and hereditary diseases, diseases resulting from social and lifestyles changes in the last decades, like hypertension, hypercholesterolemia, obesity and diabetes mellitus that are on the rise, and cardiovascular diseases and neoplasm that are the leading causes of deaths. Consequences of too high rates of car accidents among Omani male youth and the rising number of Omanis aged 60 and older are also implying the need of more health services to the population[18]. The habit to segregate children with special abilities in Gulf Arab societies is a thorny aspect requesting further efforts to be contrasted. It was publicly tackled for the first time in the area in 2005, during the International Rehabilitation Conference for the Arab Region in Bahrain. The rich Conference agenda

---

[17] Redha Shenoy, Alexander Bialasiewicz, Rajiv Khandekar, Badar Al Barwani, Habiba Al Belushi, Traditional Medicine in Oman: Its Role in Phtalmology, Middle East African Journal of Ophtalmology, April 2009, pp.93-94, accessed online from http://www.meajo.org.on on 27,01.2021.

[18] Oman's Minitry of Health, Annual Health Report 2019, Oman, p. 52.

focused on rights of people with special abilities highlighted the urgent need to improve their condition by rising awareness against some negative attitudes towards them in social and tribal contexts still more prone to hide them in closed family spaces rather than to allow them outside contact, education and access to health services. Such a need was shared by Oman, where the some interesting initiatives gained institutional support both in the light of Islam, that clearly stigmatises such attitudes, by urging parents to safeguard their children always, and in the light of Sultan Qaboos' pursued balance between the positive values of tradition and modernity. And yet, such a balance when it comes to children and youth with special abilities, is not so easy to achieve in this country, particularly in rural areas and for those citizens from financially and/or culturally disadvantaged backgrounds. Eradicating social stigma related with disabilities is a process already started, but still in need of more education and training programs, with specific initiatives aimed at the people of the interior in Oman, as well as an appropriate legislation that Oman and all the GCC countries have been promoting to protect some basic rights of persons with disabilities[19].

Regionalization of the Omani Health System

In Gulf Arab history, health has generally been a productive field for reconciliation among tribes and peoples, proved to be more able to establish and strengthen relations against disruptive forces when facing health emergency crisis. That was true when in 1920, the Saudi-Wahhabi Ikhwan attacked Kuwaitis at Jahrah, contesting, among other things, the presence of an American Mission Hospital, suspected to cover espionage activities against Ibn Saud's interests[20] 20 after their defeat, they were

---

[19] Profanter Annemarie, Stephanie Ryan Cate, Embraced or embargoed: Special ability and needs issues in the Arabian Gulf, Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences, Volume 15, 2011, pp. 1248-1256

20

Regionalization of the Omani Health System
In Gulf Arab history, health has generally been a productive field for reconciliation among tribes and peoples, proved to be more able to establish and strengthen relations against disruptive forces when facing health emergency crisis. That was true when in 1920, the Saudi-Wahhabi Ikhwan attacked Kuwaitis at Jahrah, contesting, among other things, the presence of an American Mission Hospital, suspected to cover espionage activities against Ibn Saud's interests;20 after their defeat,

they were treated at the Same American Mission Hospital without any discrimination between them and Kuwaitis: Medizinische Länderkunde / Geomedical Monograph Series (Beiträge zur geographischen Medizin / Regional Studies in Geographical Medicine), vol 4. Springer, Berlin, Heidelberg. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-642-65172-4_11, p.72

treated at the same American Mission Hospital without any discrimination between them and Kuwaitis: the defeated Ikhwan had lost about 800 men on that occasion, and they had as many more wounded, with high incidence of infection, but the equal treatment guaranteed by doctors and nurses there was a message that Abdulaziz Ibn Saud understood very well, which contributed to overcome tensions and re-establish good relations with Kuwaitis, starting from health[21]. Although under very different circumstances and without any war, most recently in 2021, the diplomatic and political crisis between Saudi Arabia, the UAE and Bahrain on the one

hand, and Qatar, on the other, was overcome during this century pandemic crisis and one of the first initiatives was Saudi decision to establish an health center at the Salwa border crossing with Qatar[22].

Oman, being part of this Islamic-tribal cultural environment, shares with its neighbours some priorities to improve healthcare regionally since old times. Being an active member of the Gulf Committee for Health Systems Development, which convened its first meeting in 2004, the Sultanate signed a document on strategic regional cooperation to improve education, training and employment of Gulf Arab human resources, health information systems, information and communication technology, management and accountability, coordination and burden of disease. The document was updated in the following years to cope with the evolving situation, with more emphasis on professional learning and training in medical professions, health and statistics, provision of infrastructure required for application of e-health, initiatives for elimination and prevention of communicable diseases, reduction of burden of disease due to non-communicable diseases and injuries, weak health research and surveys[23].

---

[21] Author's interview with the Director of Dar Al-Athar al-Islamiyya (Amricani Cultural Centre), Kuwait, December 2016. The Centre has established an interesting museum displaying the history and the role of the American Mission Hospital in the region and relevant documentation is made available on these pages of health history in the Gulf.

[22] Gulf News, "Saudi Arabia opens health centre at Qatar border", January 9, 2021.

[23] Tawfik A. Khoja, Gulf Committee Health Systems Development Document, 2012.

one in the Gulf[24]. All of that helped the Sultanate to catch up with the rest of the Arab Gulf countries, that had already started developing modern health systems in the first half of the 20th century, and in terms of medical education and training it was even able to overcome some of them, as it started in the 1990s to be recognized and appreciated as a very good destination for medical studies by Gulf Arab students.

Interregionalization and challenges ahead

The quality of healthcare in Oman, despite some important achievements, cannot always meet modern standards. That is a fact both in regional and sub-regional (muhafazat) hospitals, and in the main national hospitals. According to some surveys, the rates of Omanis who would prefer to get treatment abroad is still high (around 43%). This trend is particularly evident when it comes to the treatment of non-communicable diseases, which needs to be founded on the high quality of research. At the same time a recent study notes that Oman together with the other GCC states, is "currently experiencing an increased demand for health care services due to an immense population growth, increasing life expectancy and higher incidence of non-communicable diseases[25]". The spread of COVID-19 showed that the efficiency of the PHS and its closeness to the population contributed to limit the effects of the pandemic, but the role of human resources in the local and national hospitals was re- confirmed as a critical issue by the pandemic and the services required when hospitalization was necessary, in particular because most infections regarded immigrants and mainly low skilled laborers. The role of immigrant workers in the health sector to meet the expanding needs was re-confirmed as more critical than ever in the health sector, as occurred in all the GCC states, including the ones more committed to workforce nationalization programs, like Oman, Saudi Arabia and Bahrain. In 2020, the government of Oman tried and used the pandemic to accelerate its Omanization programme and

---

[24] Government of Bahrain, Annual Report, 1970, pp. 31-32. See also A.M. Rendel, "Rewarding and Hopeful Prospects after a Year of Historic Decision", The Times, December 16, 1971.

[25] Cf. Francis Owtram, Annemarie Profanter, Elena Maestri, "In Oman, no security for the migrant health workers fighting the pandemic", https://www.opendemocracy.net/en/north-africa-west-asia/in-oman-no-security-for-the- migrant-health-workers/, 23 July 2020.

the number of immigrant workers in the Sultanate, where some decline was announced in June 2020: 1.9 million expatriates were registered in comparison with 2.1 million of three years before, but the numbers vary in the different governorates (muhafazat) (see Figure 2). The health crisis spurred authorities to push for further decline, but at the same time the need for medical staff was a fact, which shed new light both on immigrant workers safety and relations with their origin country. Despite a surge in COVID -19 cases in summer, with 70,000 cases and over 330 deaths in the month of July, the curve of the infection rate soon declined in the following months.

Figure 2 – Health governorates and national/immigrant population distribution rates

Governorate	Total Population	% Immigrants
Muscat	1,421,409	61%
Dhofar	452,194	51%
Musandam	45,401	34%
Al-Buraymi	115,658	50%
Al-Dakhliyah	485,323	25%
Al-Batinah North	782,507	34%
Al-Batinah South	437,818	28%
Al-Sharqiyah South	320,788	33%
Al-Sharqiyah North	284,064	35%
Al-Dhahirah	223,388	28%
Al-Wusta	49,379	49%
Total	**4,617,927**	**43%**

Source: elaborated by the Author on 2018 estimates of Oman's National Centre for Statistics and Information.

The extension of free testing and treatment both to nationals and to regular immigrants was a decision taken in line with the rest of the GCC States, and that is another factor contributing to the encouraging results in limiting the effects of the pandemic in the whole area, but all of that did not prevent a deep sense of insecurity from spreading among the immigrant population, above all the Indian community, and its health sectors professionals in Oman, which probably contributed to place the country last in the region (see Figure 3).

Figure 3 - Ranked comparison of the average performance over time of GCC countries in managing the COVID-19 pandemic in the 36 weeks following their hundredth confirmed case of the virus on a total of 98 countries

Rank	Country	Average
35	UAE	57.5
44	Bahrain	50.2
50	Qatar	47.1
64	Saudi Arabia	38.5
80	Kuwait	28.9
91	Oman	20.3

Source: elaborated by the Author on estimates of Lowy Institute, www.lowyinstitute.org.

The politics of citizen versus migrant labour is founded on the kafala (sponsorship) system in Oman, and that is a feature shared with all the GCC States, where migration flows are mainly governed by the requirement that either institutions or citizens sponsor migrants. The Omani administrative complex regulating migration issues is an integral part of the regional political landscape[26], and it shaped the political decisions related to the pandemic containment as well, through the application of the "deportation mechanism". A number of migrant workers, mainly Bangladeshi, Indian, Pakistani and Philippine citizens, convicted of violating the rules against the spread of the coronavirus, like mass gatherings, failing to wear a mask and bans on movement, were deported from Oman, after their names and photos were showed in the local press. That was only the peak of the iceberg of greater insecurity suffered by the tens of thousands of low skilled labourers in the region where they live in overcrowded buildings and camps[27]. The promotion of preventive measures in such contexts simply did not exist and the most followed practice shared by Oman in the region was either to repatriate them or deport them in case of violation of the rules established by Oman's Supreme Committee, which was instituted

---

[26] See Omar Hesham AlShehabi (2019): Policing labour in empire: the modern origins of the Kafala sponsorship system in the Gulf Arab States, British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies, p.19.

[27] Ramadan Al Sherbini, "Oman expats face deportation over COVID-19 violations",Gulf News, 4 December 2020.

by Sultan Haitham in 2020 with the specific aim to fight the pandemic. If, on the one hand, origin countries could plan some return flights, it was not easy for their citizens regularly working in the Gulf to take the decision to lose their job. Most of them did not accept to leave, if their employer had not sacked them, as a consequence of the negative economic effects of the pandemic on the local economy; some of them continued to reside in the host country in an irregular status, which enhanced the number of irregular migrants, who were obviously much more vulnerable to the COVID-19 health threat, and started even being feared by the population as "the ones who spread the virus". At the same time, those infected people among nationals, who were hospitalised, realised that they owed a lot for their treatment to the immigrant qualified foreign nurses and doctors, who, in Oman, are mainly from India[28].

A few words are worth as far as India's involvement in the Omani health sector is concerned. "Indian migration to Oman…points to a confluence of various economic, political, social and cultural interactions, resulting in a process of 'virtual' inter-regionalisation[29]". Such "inter-regionalisation"

has been shaping the Omani health sector in a relevant way in a double direction. Indians in medical and paramedical professions are present in great numbers and above all nurses, which crated tension between these workers and Omani authorities in 2020, when the Indian press emphasised that "frontline workers Indians face the highest risk from the [Corona] virus"[30], but the involvement of India in this inter-regionalisation of the Omani healthcare sector is also relevant as one of the main destinations of Omani patients abroad. Therapeutic journeys are a habit that Omani citizens largely share with other GCC citizens affected either by hereditary (often related with the endogamy tribal practice and with non-communicable diseases). This health care habit strengthened relations with the Indian hospitals and private clinics, and it created new relations

---

[28] This fact emerged in the author's conversation with some GCC nationals in November 2020.

[29] Samir Pradhan, Oman-India Relations:Exploring the Long-Term Migration Dynamics, in Steffen Wippel (Ed.), Regionalising Oman, Springer, New York, 2013, p. 126.

30 The Hindu, Indian health workers on edge in Oman, 18.06.20.

with hospitals in other Asian countries as well, like Pakistan, Thailand and China, as well as with East Africa and, last but not least, Europe. This is a practice attesting that, despite the rapid development of a modern healthcare system, Omani citizens still look abroad for treatments that are either unavailable in their country or of lesser quality. Seeking treatment abroad can be either a personal decision or an initiative recommended and sponsored by the Ministry of Health. All of that points out that there are still many challenges ahead as regards national human resources training as doctors and medical staff, although expanding "health connections" are useful to train Omanis in some excellent hospitals and laboratories in countries like the UK and France[31]. Omanization programs and specific initiatives to involve more nationals in post-graduate medical training and care specialisation programs are still too limited. The excessive reliance on immigrants in the health sector will not change soon in the whole Arab Gulf region, where migration and citizenship policies neither favour naturalisation of immigrants nor their integration on a social and cultural level. If the numbers of immigrant workers range from 30-80 percent of the total resident population within each GCC state, the effective number of nurses and doctors is composed of immigrants in rates which do not seem to be less than 50 percent, even in those countries that reached comparatively high rates in workforce nationalisation, like Oman, Bahrain and Saudi Arabia. As far as Oman is concerned, some estimates seem to attest interesting progress, but human resources nationalisation in the health sector highly depend on policies aimed at enhancing the quality of medical education and graduate and postgraduate training, at establishing and upgrading hospitals as teaching hospitals, and at providing of course qualified teachers and trainers (see figure 4).

---

[31] Claire Beaudevin, Of Red Cells, Translocality and Origins: Inherited Blood Disorders in Oman, in Steffen Wippel (Ed.), Regionalising Oman, op.cit., pp. 99-100.

Figure 4 – Some percentages of national healthcare staff in 2019

	2019
Physicians	29%
Dentists	20%
Laboratory technicians	50%
Radiographers and physiotherapists	53%
Pharmacists	27%
Nurses	ww54%

Source: elaborated by the Author on estimates of the Oman's Ministry of Health, Annual Health Report 2019, p. 63.

In 2018/2019, the total number of students enrolled in Oman College of Health Sciences reached 656 (175 Male and 481 Female, out of these 482 were nursing students[32], but the most recent statistics on healthcare staff in the country seem to suggest that the rates of foreigners employed in the sector are

still very high and estimates are not so accurate if we consider their distribution both in the public and the private sector. Nursing in the public sector is emerging as an "appropriate field" for Omanis as well, but the process is much slower than in other fields, since this profession is mainly perceived as feminized one, involving work with both female and male patients: all of that certainly represents a challenge to the local mentally and to the gender norms of a conservative society. Wider recognition of skills and expertise of immigrant nurses has been helping this category to be more "protected" than others in a way. Constant transnational interaction of a series of state and non-state actors of sending and receiving states as far as nursing is concerned is a well-established fact. It has been helping to limit among migrant nurses that "sense of insecurity" which, nonetheless, seemed to be stronger in the private sector rather than in the public one in the past[33].

Healthcare improvement in Oman will continue to depend highly from

---

[32] Oman's Ministry of Health Report, 2018.

[33] Chrystal A. Ennis - Margaret Walton-Roberts, "Labour market regulation as global social policy: The case of nursing labour markets in Oman", Global Social Policy, 2018, Vol. 18(2) 169–188.

regionalisation and interregionalisation in this century, in particular for tertiary healthcare. The need to work for a "strong, responsive and sustainable primary health care (PHC) system" in the country is re confirmed, being considered the backbone of healthcare. That is even more important as it seems to have contributed effectively to contain the COVID-19 pandemic, under the umbrella of the governorates' health authorities empowered to detect, investigate and react to the public health emergencies, according to the national policy, with a system decentralised since 2005[34].

Ensuring sufficient investments in PHS is a priority for the future. Healthcare, Islamic humanism and Islamic investments have been developing new interesting links in the Omani environement: the setting up of a Health Endowment Fund (HEF) by Sheikh Abdullah bin Mohammed al-Salmi, Minister of Awqaf and Religious Affairs of the Sultanate is an interesting initiative in this direction. This Endowment Fund for Enhancing Health Services adheres to Sharia code provisions, laws and systems on regulating endowment funds. Its funds constitute revenues to be invested in enhancing activities and programmes of health services in the Sultanate and the whole process is established under direct supervision and monitoring of the Ministry of Awqaf and Religious Affairs, which will audit the fund's tasks. The goals of the HEF include solidarity and social collaboration, reactivation of the developmental role of the Islamic institution of Waqf (pl. Awqaf, endowments) in healthcare and services, attraction of donations (grants and wills dedicated to health services), regulation and investment of them to finance medical treatment, set up health establishments, procure medicines and provide medical equipment. The same Waqf is also aimed to support medical research, within a sustainability approach and according to the Sharia rules on awqaf. The Minister of Health, Dr. Ahmed bin Mohammed al-Sa'eedi was appointed as Chairman of the HEF, which is allowed to seek the assistance of anyone who might contribute to its tasks with his/her expertise[35]. Social Solidarity

---

[34] Oman's Ministry of Health, Annual Health Report 2019, pp. 36-37.

[35] 35 Oman News, "Awqaf Minister's Decision Sets Up Health Endowment Fund", 24.03.2020, https://omannews.gov.om/NewsDescription/ArtMID/392/ArticleID/10675/Awqaf- Ministers-Decision-Sets-Up-Health-Endowment-Fund, accessed online on 20 June 2020.

and an Islamic economic approach to healthcare improvement go hand in hand in this interesting initiative, which seems to open new perspectives.

CONCLUSION

Against this backdrop, one can argue that a more coherent and constructive development of the healthcare in Oman is to be founded on a renewed and more inclusive approach, in which both nationals and immigrants will continue to play a role in the medium term.

Further improvement of the educational system, according to the country's Islamic and cultural values, and in the light of the positive historical achievements of Sultan Qaboos' era in this domain is crucial. Promoting a wider synergic approach with the other Arab Gulf States and selected foreign partners having achieved high quality healthcare is another step forward to be taken, in order to develop truly integrated health systems, more able to tackle health emergency crisis at the global level within a framework inspired both to cooperation and transparency. New scientific educational opportunities related with healthcare for national students,including in rural areas and across genders, and above all the quality of educational institutions focused on scientific and medical fields demand further institutional support. Enhanced scientific education quality can effectively contribute to in-house research and training in the health field, which was largely neglected in the last fifty years in Oman and the GCC. Strengthening regional and international networks within the healthcare domain also means for Oman, its neighbours and international partners, creating a new framework able to review the philosophy of the 1990 UN Migrant Worker Convention. Ensuring protection of any type of migrant cannot set aside the need to address the issue of migrants' healthcare in times of health emergency with a renewed coordinated humanitarian approach[36].

---

[36] Ahmet İşduygu, "Stranded irregular migrant workers during the COVID-19 crisis: The question of repatriation", IOM UN Migration, August 2020.

REFERENCES

[1.] Al Sherbini Ramadan, "Oman expats face deportation over COVID-19 violations", Gulf News, 4 December 2020.

[2.] Al-Azri Khaled, The Political Equilibrium: Legitimation and Modernization in Oman, in Valeria Fiorani Piacentini Valeria and Elena Maestri, From Tribe to State, CRiSSMA WP, vol, 1, n. 14,

I.S.U. Università Cattolica, Milano 2007, p. 43.

[3.] AlShehabi Omar Hesham, (2019): Policing labour in empire: the modern origins of the Kafala sponsorship system in the Gulf Arab States, British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies

[4.] Alshishtawy Moeness M, Four Decades of Progress. Evolution of the health system in Oman, SQU Med J, April 2010, Vol. 10, Iss. 1, pp. 12-22, Epub. 17th Apr 10.

[5.] Al-sihha fi 'ahd al-nahdha al-mubaraka t'bur kull shabr bi-l-bilad, Al-Shabiba, 18 November 2019, https://www.shabiba.com/article/235544

[6.] Al-Tajir Mahdi Abdallah, Language and linguistic origins in Bahrain, Kegan Paul International, London, 1982, pp. 140-141.

[7.] Beaudevin Claire, Of Red Cells, Translocality and Origins: Inherited Blood Disorders in Oman, in Steffen Wippel (Ed.), Regionalising Oman, Springer, New York, 2013.

[8.] Ennis Chrystal A. - Margaret Walton-Roberts, "Labour market regulation as global social policy: The case of nursing labour markets in Oman", Global Social Policy, 2018, Vol. 18(2).

[9.] Ffrench G.E., Hill A.G. (1971) Trauma, Temperance, Tuberculosis and Toxoplasmosis. In Kuwait. Medizinische Länderkunde / Geomedical Monograph Series (Beiträge zur geographischen Medizin

/ Regional Studies in Geographical Medicine), vol 4. Springer, Berlin, Heidelberg. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-642-65172-4_11, p.72.

[10.] Government of Bahrain, Annual Report, 1970, pp. 31-32. [11.] Government of Oman, Basic Statute of the State of Oman

[12.] Gulf News, "Saudi Arabia opens health centre at Qatar border", January 9, 2021.

[13.] Heard-Bey Frauke, From Trucial States to United Arab Emirates, Longman, London, 1999, p. 148.

 Elena Maestri

[14.] IOR/R/15/1/522, 'File 53/57 I (D 35), Jariyah [Jahra] Affair and Boundary Dispute between Bin Saud and Shaikh of Kuwait, Qatar Digital Library.

[15.] İşduygu Ahmet, "Stranded irregular migrant workers during the COVID-19 crisis: The question of repatriation", IOM UN Migration,

August 2020

[16.]   Jones Jeremy, Nicholas Ridout, A History of Modern Oman,

Cambridge University Press, New York, 2015

[17.] Khoja Tawfik A., Gulf Committee Health Systems Development Document, 2012.

[18.] Lorimer John Gordon, Gazetteer of the Persian Gulf, Oman and Central Arabia, vol.II, Geographical and Statistical, Superintendent Government Printing, 1908, p. 1369.

[19.] Mohamed Nazar A., Nadia N. Abdulhadi, Abdullah A. Al-Maniri, et al., "The trend of feminization of doctors' workforce in Oman: is it a phenomenon that could rouse the health system?", Human Resources for Health 16, 19 (2018)

[20.]   Oman Daily Observer, Rashid bin Omaira — 16th Century Omani Physician, 9.02.2019, accessed online https://www. omanobserver.om/rashid-bin-omaira-16th-century- omani-physician/ 21.01.2021.

[21.]   Oman News, "Awqaf Minister's Decision Sets Up Health Endowment Fund", 24.03.2020, https://omannews.gov.om/ NewsDescription/ArtMID/392/ArticleID/1 0675/Awqaf-Ministers-Decision-Sets-Up-Health-Endowment-Fund, accessed online on 20 June 2020.

Healthcare in Oman Between Past and Present Achievements, Human Security and the COVID – 19 Pandemic

[22.]   Oman's Ministry of Health Report, 2018

[23.]   Oman's Ministry of Health, Annual Health Report 2019

[24.]   Oman's Minitry of Health, Annual Health Report 2019, Oman, p. 52.

[25.] Ostergard Robert L. Jr. and Jeffrey A. Griffin, "Global Health and Human Security", in Colin McInnes, Kelley Lee, and Jeremy Youde (Eds.), The Oxford Handbook of Global Health Politics.

[26.]   Owtram Francis, Annemarie Profanter, Elena Maestri, "In Oman, no security for the migrant health workers fighting the pandemic", https://www.opendemocracy.net/en/north-africa-west-asia/in-oman- no-security-for-the-migrant-health-workers/, 23 July 2020.

[27.]   Pradhan Samir, Oman-India Relations:Exploring the Long-Term Migration Dynamics, in Steffen Wippel (Ed.), Regionalising Oman,

Springer, New York, 2013

[28.] Profanter Annemarie, Stephanie Ryan Cate, Embraced or embargoed: Special ability and needs issues in the Arabian Gulf, Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences, Volume 15, 2011, pp. 1248-1256.

[29.] Quarterly commercial and economic progress reports on Oman, 1973 Jan 01 - 1973 Dec 31, p. 11, The National Archives, UK, accessed online at https://agda.ae/en/catalogue/tna/fco/8/2014

[30.]   Redha Shenoy, Alexander Bialasiewicz, Rajiv Khandekar, Badar Al Barwani, Habiba Al Belushi, Traditional Medicine in Oman: Its Role in Phtalmology, Middle East African Journal of Ophtalmology, April 2009, pp.93-94, accessed online from http://www.meajo.org.on on 27,01.2021.

 Elena Maestri

[31.]   Rendel A.M., "Rewarding and Hopeful Prospects after a Year of Historic Decision", The Times, December 16, 1971.

[32.]   Rosenthal Franz, The Classical Heritage of Islam, London, 1975, p. 35.

[33.]   The Hindu, Indian health workers on edge in Oman, 18.06.20.
[34.]   Wilkinson John, Ibadism. Origins and Early Development in

Oman, Oxford University Press, New York, 2010.

Between Coronavirus and COVID-19: Influence of Nigerian Newspapers' Headline Construction on Audience Information- Seeking Behaviour

Babatunde Raphael OJEBUYI[1], Mutiu Iyanda LASISI[2], Umar Olansile AJETUNMOBI[3]

ABSTRACT

Since the onset of the new coronavirus, the mass media, across the globe, have continued to draw special attention to the disease by adopting different pragmatic and rhetoric strategies. In Nigeria for instance, the news media have continued to draw people's attention to the virus by using COVID-19 and coronavirus as synonymous lexical entities in the headlines of their news stories. These lexical choices are believed to have some influence on how the audience understand and seek information about the virus. However, existing studies in media and health communication have not copiously explored the relationship between the lexical choices by media to report the COVID-19 pandemic and people's information-seeking behaviour about the virus. This study was, therefore, designed to investigate how Nigerian journalists used coronavirus and COVID-19 as the key terms to report the virus and how the pragma- semantic implicatures of the lexical choices influenced audience information-seeking behaviours. Pragmatic Acts and Information-Seeking theories were employed as the theoretical framework while online survey and content analysis were adopted as methods. Findings show that although Nigerian journalists used coronavirus (SD=2.090) more often than COVID-19 (SD=1.924) in the headlines, the audience employed COVID-19 (M=2.23, SD=.810) more than coronavirus (M=1.88, SD=.783) while searching information

[1] *Department of Communication and Language Arts, University of Ibadan, Nigeria ojebabson@gmail.com; ojebuyi.raphael@dlc.ui.edu.ng https://orcid.org/0000-0002-1383-7630*

[2] *Infoprations Limited, Nigeria mutiu.iyanda@gmail.com https://orcid.org/0000-0003-0022-711X*

3 *Infoprations Limited, Nigeria ajetunmobiumarolansile@gmail.com https://orcid.org/0000-0002-3670-5251 DOI: 10.17932/EJOSS.2021.023/ejoss_ v01i1005*

about the virus. Besides, journalists' use of COVID-19 in the headlines to educate (Chi-square =37.615, df=11, P<.000), warn (Chi-square =26.153, df=11, P<.006), assess (Chi-square= 24.350, df=11, P<.011) and sensitise (Chi-square =24.262, df=11, P<.012) facilitated audience interest in seeking information about the virus than when coronavirus is used as a keyword in the headlines. The lexical choices made by journalists to report a health crisis such as the COVID-19 pandemic have implications for citizens' knowledge about the crisis.

Keywords: *Coronavirus, COVID-19, Lexical choices by Nigerian journalists, Pragma-semantic implicatures, Information-Seeking behaviour of news audience*

INTRODUCTION

In late December 2019 when the first case of new Coronavirus was reported in Wuhan, China, scientists identified it as 2019-nCoV, standing for 'novel Coronavirus 2019.' Later, on February 11, 2020, the World Health Organisation (WHO) officially tagged it COVID-19 (Guarner, 2020 & Berkeley, 2020). According to Berkeley, CO refers to Corona, VI for Virus, D for Disease (WHO, 2020) while 19 stands for the year the virus was first recorded in Wuhan. The World Health Organisation submits that the rationale for naming the novel virus as COVID-19 was to avoid racial discrimination, stigmatisation, unnecessary framing and public panic. Essentially, the organisation adopted the taxonomy as a risk communication strategy to control international crises that might arise from the virus that has infected and killed millions of people worldwide (Worldometer, 2021).

When the new virus began to ravage the world, the mass media in their global coverage immediately started to draw special attention to issues around COVID-19 (Colvin, 2020). In Nigeria for instance, it has been observed that the print media especially used 'COVID-19 and coronavirus in their headlines to draw people's attention to the pandemic. These two words—coronavirus and COVID-19—have continued to keep appearing in the news headlines as if the two lexicons were synonymous. 'Coronaviruses are a large family of viruses which may cause illness in animals or humans' while 'COVID-19 is the infectious disease caused

by the most recently discovered coronavirus' (WHO, 2020). It has been reported that COVID-19 is the 7th coronavirus family documented to have infected humans (Al-Jazeera, 2020). Thus, getting two different names for the novel virus in the media implies that the audiences are likely to select the name that resonates with their initial awareness.

Just as argued by Dong and Zheng (2020), the mass media is a powerful information source people rely on during health crises. Besides, the presence of the news media online has further provided better platforms for citizens to participate in public debates about issues such as politics, health, security and national unity (Ojebuyi, 2016; Ojebuyi & Lasisi, 2019). What the audience consume in the media determines, to a large extent, their perspectives about such issues raised by the media. As such, what guides people to news stories (such as headlines) must be crafted in a manner that does not confuse the mass audience or alter reality (Dong & Zheng, 2020). Given the fact that two different names—coronavirus and COVID-19—are constantly used to cast headlines in Nigerian newspapers, there is the need to investigate how interpretations of the two terms (coronavirus and COVID-19) could influence Nigerians while searching for news about the virus. This is the primary focus of this study.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Evidence from literature shows that scholars have conducted some empirical studies on semantic and pragmatic analyses of news headlines at different levels in Nigeria and beyond. For instance, Molek- Kozakowska (2014) explored the use of coercive metaphors in news headlines of a UK newspaper, using a cognitive-pragmatic technique while Dong and Shao (2016) did a pragmatic presupposition in English news headlines in China. Similarly, Al-Hindawi and Ali (2018) analysed headlines cast by CNN and BBC on civil unrest in Syria. Xie's (2018) analysed the intertextuality of English news headlines in China. Using the same pragmatic approach, Al-Saedi and Jabber (2020) analysed headlines in an Iraqi newspaper, while Rahman, Hossain, Islam, Chowdhury, Rafiq and Md. Badruzzaman (2019) had earlier analysed context-based news headlines in five major global newspapers with the help of Machine Learning. Other scholars worked on sentiment analyses (Bostan, Kim & Klinger, 2019) and semantic analyses of news headlines (Chavan, 2018; Khan, Hassan, Hassan & Ghanni Khan, 2018; Mohammed, Eid, Badawy & Hassan, 2019). Specifically in

Nigeria, studies in these areas concentrated on usage of prepositions in newspapers headlines (Ibrahim & Yunus, 2017; Ibrahim, Haruna, Bashir & Yunus, 2018), pragma- semantic silences (Nwala & Umukuro, 2017) and ambiguity in news headlines (Chinelo & Macpherson, 2015) as well as language use in news headlines (Robert, 2020).

However, there is a dearth of literature on the combination of pragmatics and lexico-semantics to analyse health-related news headlines (especially pandemic) in Nigeria. Two, existing studies have not established how health-related news headlines influence Nigerians' information-seeking behaviour, especially news about the COVID-19 pandemic. This study was, therefore, designed to fill these gaps by examining the lexical items that Nigerian newspaper editors selected to cast headlines of COVID-19-related news stories. This was done to establish the pragma-semantic implications of the headlines for audience information-seeking behaviour and perception of the virus. Specifically, we set three questions to guide the study: (1) Between coronavirus and COVID-19, what name do news audience prefer to call the new virus? (2) How does the media presentation of the new virus in their headlines influence the name that the audience give to the virus? (3) What are the pragma-semantic implicatures of lexical items in newspaper headlines and their implications for the information-seeking behaviour of the audience? We employed Pragmatic Acts and Information-Seeking theories as the theoretical framework while we used the mixed-method design comprising online survey and content analysis as methods.

LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Headlines Construction and Implications for News Interpretation by Audience

Journalists' roles in educating, informing and sensitising the public, and surveying the environment are vital to society, especially during health crises. One of the ways through which the journalists perform these functions is headline casting. Jiang, Xu, Wu and Guo (2020:2) submit that in casting news headlines about health, journalists adopt 'verbal techniques, selectivity and negativity' to attract the attention and influence the behaviour of their audiences. They also use positioning for driving attention in news headlines. The use of larger font sizes, which are connoted by kickers, is another strategy.

Good news headlines provide a succinct summary of news stories (Scacco & Muddiman, 2019) with connotative and denotative functions (Prather & Thadphoothon, 2017). When a headline is used denotatively, its meaning is direct and literal. On the other hand, connotative meanings of headlines are interpreted contextually based on the emotions or mental pictures associated with the headlines. To Scacco and Mudiman (2019), headlines are also used to generate readers' interest, satisfy their immediate information need and direct their attention to issues. Interpretatively, headlines are powerful storing-telling tools that influence the way and how readers think about an event, interpret it and act on it.

In journalism, different types of headlines are identified. Some of these include banner, crossline, flush, and kicker headlines (Sharma, 2017). Banner headlines grab readers' attention, and as such are cast in big type fonts. As the name implies, crossline headlines cover the entire width of a news page. Flush headlines consist of two or three unequal heads flushed left or right of a news story. Although there are arguments that a kicker is a strategy for headline casting, the fact remains that a kicker introduces the headline. Always the first word or phrase in a kicker headline can be written in capital letter, italics or underlining with a colon to attract readers' attention. In essence, anytime each of the headline types is used by the editor, certain behavioural responses are generated from the readers in terms of the attention such headline and the entire story get from the audience. The degree of believability with which the audience read and how they interpret the entire story may be determined, largely, by the nature of the headline the editor has used to drive the story. Therefore, because of their importance in how news stories are deconstructed, news headlines construction is always reserved for editors with more professional exposure and skills.

News Media and Citizens' Health Behaviour in Health Crises

In crises, people turn to different sources to seek information that may, partly or may not answer their information-seeking desires. Research has shown that in a health crisis like the COVID-19 pandemic, people seek more information about the pandemic from the Internet and the news media. This information-seeking behaviour, especially online, has become the trend in understanding health issues (Jiang, Xu, Wu & Guo, 2020 and Nielsen, Fletcher, Newman, Brennen & Howard, 2020). Because of the

potential social impact of how an outbreak is reported, journalists are saddled with the responsibility of truthful, unbiased, ethical and accurate reporting, especially during health crises. Therefore, timely, accurate and non-sentimental reportage and clarifications in a pandemic reduce the uncontrolled, indiscriminate flow of information (UNESCO, 2020). However, because of novelty in emerging diseases (such as COVID-19) and the need to report them as being newsworthy, the media tend to conceptualise themes that create fear in people (Smith, et al., 2013).

In a study by Bento, Nguyen, Wing, Lozano-Rojas, Ahn and Simion (2020) for instance, the moment the first case of COVID-19 was recorded in the United States in January 2020, her citizens' search pattern showed that Coronavirus was used more as a search term. When recorded cases began to rise, searching for Coronavirus decreased. Instead, people started searching for terms such as Coronavirus symptoms and hand sanitiser. According to the researchers, announcements by relevant agencies increased the rate at which US citizens sought more information about the pandemic. A similar search pattern was established by Showkat and Gull (2020).

Also, the submission of Liu (2020) shows that the information-seeking behaviour of Chinese about COVID-19 as influenced by the news media was connected to health behaviour change. With the level of contents they consumed on different media platforms, the Chinese were able to adopt COVID-19 preventive measures. According to Liu's findings, his Chinese respondents' health behaviour was prevention-centric because their searches about the new virus heightened their anxiety. Following precautions reported by the media thereby became their priority (Showkat & Gull, 2020). Suffice to note that as journalists develop themes around certain words in health-related headlines, such themes come with inherent pragmatic acts (implicatures) that make news consumers interpret headlines differently in the pandemic-centric context.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Jacob Mey's (2001) Pragmatic Acts Theory and Information-Seeking Behaviour Theory are used as a framework for this study. Mey's Pragmatic Acts Theory is an extension of the Speech Act Theory by Austin [1962] as modified by Searle (1976). This is because the theory is Mey's attempt to remedy some inherent weaknesses of the Speech Acts Theory. According

to Searle (1976), speaking (or writing) a language is performing a speech act. Therefore, to give commands, to make promises, to express feelings, or to ask questions is regarded as a speech act, which is made possible with specific rules for using the language. As Searle contends, speech acts are actions of speaking through which the source (speaker/or writer) presents their intention to the receiver. Whereas the classification by Austin is driven by performative verbs, Searle's classification is based on rules (Searle, 1979; Ogungbe, 2014).

In response to the tenets of Speech Acts Theory by Austin (1962) as modified by Searle (1976), Mey (2001) posits that acts should not be attributed to speech as a speech by itself does not act. On the contrary, in the long run, utterances made (speech acting) and the meaning they suggest are a function of the situation (context) in which the speech acting occurs. Therefore, to realise any speech acts, such acts must be situated in an identifiable context. In essence, pragmatic acts are situated speech acts. This means that in pragmatic acts, communication (utterance/speech), context and meaning co-occur. It is this co-occurrence of these elements that define any pragmatic acts (functions) performed by a communicative situation. Instead of emphasizing performative verbs and rules as suggested by Austin (1962) and Searle (1976), respectively, pragmatic acts manifest in, and is conditioned by, a definite context (Odebunmi, 2006; Hoye & Kaiser, 2007; Ogungbe, 2014). Pragmatic acts are all- encompassing as they embrace the whole communication activities: linguistics (lexis/ semantics, syntax, and phonology), and non-verbal communication (body language and visual images) in the communication context (Mey, 2001; Ogungbe, 2014).

In Mey's Pragmatic Acts, there is a higher rank of discourse called Pragmeme, which has "activity" and "textual" components. The "activity" component specifies the roles of the participants of the discourse also called interactants, while the "textual" component refers to the various contextual variables that exist and interact in discourse situations. Pragmatic Acts Theory pays attention to the environmental variables that determine what the discourse participants (interactants) can say, what they are saying, and what they cannot say in communicative contexts. Mey explains that the interaction between "activity" and "textual" components produces what is called "ipra" ("pract") and "allopract". For instance, the "ipra" (also

known as "pract") starts a pragmatic act to realize a "pragmeme". In this process, each "pract" is simultaneously a specific production of a definite pragmeme called "allopract" (Emike, 2015). A "pract" is the knowledge that the interactants have on a communicative subject and the effects of such an event on the discourse participants in that particular discourse situation. As the discourse participants interact in a discourse situation, they produce speech acts, conversational acts, physical acts, psychological acts and prosodic acts, all of which are realised in varied contexts: INF (inference); REF (reference); VCE (Voice); SSK (Shared Situation Knowledge); MPH (Metaphor); and M (Metapragmatic Joker) (Mey, 1962; Ogungbe, 2014; Emike, 2014). The metapragmatic joker refers to some signals or cues that enable the discourse participants to interpret and share meanings in a certain discourse situation. Indexical expressions are context-specific; they are expressions whose meanings can change as the discourse contexts change. Therefore, metapragmatic indexicality is the term that explains how pragmatic acts generate discourse, and how the discourse participants use the context to construe meanings, which could be explicit (clearly or plainly expressed) or implicit (inferred or indirect).

We consider Mey's (2001) Pragmatic Acts Theory relevant to this current study because the study focuses on how lexical items in the headlines of COVID-19 and Coronavirus stories in Nigerian newspapers are constructed and their pragmatic implications. The construction of the newspapers' headlines represents a discourse phenomenon that could perform some pragmatic acts in terms of the influence they are likely to have on the media audience. The lexical and semantic properties of Nigerian newspaper headlines, specifically in the context of COVID-19 pandemic reporting, could provide some context-specific metapragmatic indexicals with both explicit and implicit meanings. The pragmatic acts of such indexicals in the news headlines could be any of confirming, warning, convincing, educating, forecasting, castigating, sympathising, sensitizing, condemning, urging, commending, or recommending. When citizens interact with the headlines, the pragmatic acts of the metapragmatic indexicals in the headlines of Coronavirus or/and COVID-19-related news could have some influence on the citizens' knowledge of, and information-seeking behaviour about, the virus.

Similarly, the basic assumption of Information-Seeking Theory traced

to Wilson's Model of Information Seeking Behaviour (1981) holds that people have information needs they require answers to, and while seeking answers, they approach communication infrastructure (media) available to them (whether formal or informal). Their source(s) of information can either be reliable or unreliable, thereby influence (s) their interpretation and adoption of the information retrieved.

Such needs according to Wilson include physiological, affective and cognitive needs of information seekers. The information they are seeking is regarded as resources, data and knowledge gathering in their environment. In what is described as a communication process, people become unsatisfied with their information needs if such information fails to answer their questions (Koja-Odongo & Mostert, 2006). Also, this theory argues that information seekers become stressed up if accessing prompt and objective information and topical analyses becomes cumbersome. However, Wilson hypothesises that two forms of behaviour are exhibited in information-seeking behaviour: passive search and passive attention. In a passive search, people search for information unintentionally, but their information-seeking urge enables them to acquire new and relevant knowledge. The same thing happens in passive attention, but the only difference in passive attention is that individuals unconsciously acquire information by consuming media contents. In this study, we postulated that Nigerian newspapers with an online presence (aggregated by Google News because of their ability to generate unique and constant news reports to the Nigerian audience) become the sources where newsreaders get information about the new coronavirus. Besides, the lexical items selected by the news editors to cast the headlines would have some pragma-semantic influence on how Nigerians seek information about the COVID-19 pandemic.

METHODS, DATA AND ANALYSES

To account for the pragma-semantic implications of lexical items of news headlines for audience information-seeking behaviour and perception of COVID-19, we adopted the descriptive survey and content analysis. We relied on data generated from the news contents, real-time data and survey. Categorised and aggregated headlines of COVID-19-related news stories were the first source of data for the study while the real-time data from Google Trends (a search normalised tool from Google) and online survey were the second and third sources respectively. We used the propositions

of Pragmatic Acts and Information-Seeking theories to construct the study instruments. We adopted the two terms (COVID-19 and coronavirus) to generate the primary categories (kicker, rider and blur) for each of the two keywords, respectively. This produced a six-category coding sheet (content categories) as the instrument for the content analysis. We defined a kicker as a headline that is prefixed with a word or two-word clause followed by a colon; a rider as a headline also with few word-count placed without a colon before adding more clause or phrase; and a blur as a headline with a keyword or term situated at the extreme (Dick, n.d).

For the survey, an online questionnaire for the news audience formulated and validated by authors through a face validity approach constituted the instrument. Nigerians (news audience) who participated in the study were selected through available and pooled sampling procedures. We employed these procedures because of the non-availability of a comprehensive and accurate national citizen database that could help in adopting probability sampling techniques. Besides, given the lockdown and enforcement of social distancing as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic at the time of collecting the data, the techniques were adopted as safer and the most cost-effective (Caudill, 2010) means for reaching the citizens who participated in the study.

A total of 252 COVID-19 related news headlines were selected using the purposive sampling technique. From 27 February 2020 to 31 May 2020, news headlines that had coronavirus and COVID-19 as keywords or terms were selected using Google News, which normalised Nigerian newspapers' websites on the Internet. Microsoft Excel sheet was the main data collection tool for the extraction of real-time data from Google Trends. The tool was set to Nigeria region, study period's data and news category. The setting assisted the researchers in downloading public search interest in the two keywords/terms during the study period into a Microsoft Excel sheet. The interest ranged from 0 to 100, according to the Google Trends normalisation algorithm.

For the data generated through the survey, nominal and ordinal scales were used for measuring responses from 219 news audiences. A nominal measurement scale was used for measuring variables associated with the data (headlines) from the content analysis. Besides, to extract the possible metapragmatic indexicals in the news headlines, we used explicit

pragmatic acts (such as convincing, sensitizing, warning, urging, educating, recommending, condemning, forecasting, confirming, and sympathising) to construct the analytical categories. Binary options (Yes as 2, and No as 1) were adopted for coding the categories formulated for headline and pragma-semantic analyses. For instance, when a category appeared in the content, we coded it as Yes using 2 as a value. When it did not occur in the content, we adopted No and used 1 as the value in the dataset.

Combined data from the two phases—real-time and survey—were analysed using descriptive statistics (Mean, Standard Deviation, and Range among others), discriminant analysis and multinomial logistic regression. Discriminant analysis was adopted because of the need to reveal which of the categories for the headline construction and pragma- semantic presentation of the issues and needs about the virus the audience Between Coronavirus and COVID-19: Influence of Nigerian Newspapers' Headline Construction on Audience Information-Seeking Behaviour considered appropriate for understanding the disease while searching information on the Internet. Multinomial logistic regression was considered a suitable statistical approach because of the need to establish the category that significantly contributed to the audience understanding of the virus using the keywords (COVID-19 and coronavirus).

The inter-coder reliability test of the content categories was carried out using the absolute agreement criterion associated with Krippendorff's Alpha. Two coders independently coded 11 headlines sampled from the corpus. Four of the headline type categories were reliable absolutely (100), while two were within the moderate threshold (51-99). Two each of the pragmatics and semantics acts were reliable absolutely while 6 and 7 of semantics and pragmatics were reliable moderately respectively. One act each was also found to be within near moderate reliability threshold (26-50) for the studied pragmatics and semantics acts. The results of the inter-coder reliability test proved that the content categories were reliable.

FINDINGS

Findings show that journalists used both Coronavirus and COVID-19 as key operators in the news headlines. However, Coronavirus was used more than COVID-19 in the headlines to report the pandemic. In these two usages, the two terms appeared as kickers, blurs and riders. But

Coronavirus as a kicker (first word or phrase separated by a colon in the headline) dominated the news headlines analysed. This had implications for the search behaviour of news audiences about the virus. The results are presented under three themes that represent the research questions set for the study.

Between coronavirus and COVID-19: what name do the news audience prefer to call the virus?

Findings in Table 1 reveal that audience preferred COVID-19 to coronavirus as the search term while journalists used coronavirus than COVID-19 in headlines. The high Standard Deviation of 2.090 for coronavirus usage has established the higher intensity of using coronavirus than that of COVID-19 (SD=1.924) by the journalists. From the findings, the news audience appropriated COVID-19 (M=2.23, SD=.810) than coronavirus (M=1.88, SD=.783) while searching for the needed information about the virus.

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics for Aggregated Data of Use of Keywords by Journalists and Audience

	Journalists' use of COVID- 19	Audience Degree of using COVID-19 while searching	Journalists' use of coronavirus	Audience Degree of using coronavirus while searching
Mean	3.30	2.23	3.30	1.88
Std. Deviation	1.924	.810	2.090	.783
Minimum	1	1	1	1
Maximum	7	3	7	3

Min (for Journalists) = During Coverage (1); (for Audience) = Not Often (1)
Max (for Journalists) = During Writing and Editing (7); (for Audience) = Very Often (3)

This result is made clearer with the findings presented in Table 2, where the audience reported that their exposure to the keywords in the headlines influenced them to use the keywords for information retrieval. From the findings as presented in Figure 1, Coronavirus was found to be used most (49.25%) in March compared to other months in the news category of Google Trends. Over 42% of the audience indicated that they saw coronavirus in the headlines of the news they read during the month.
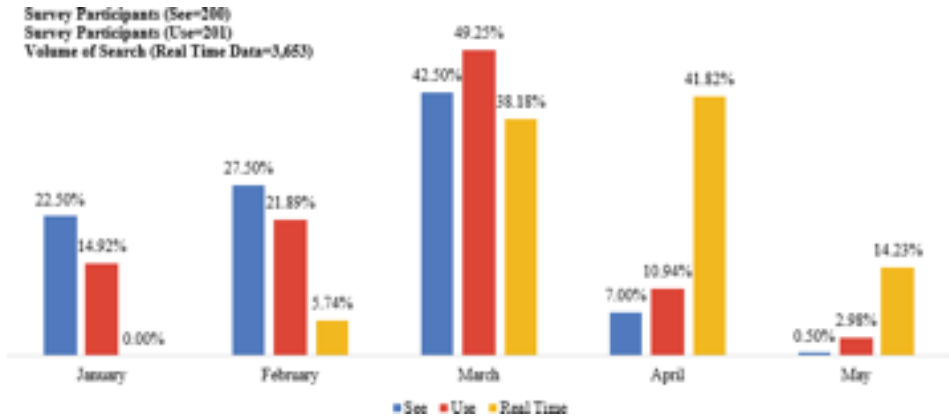
Survey Participants (See=200)
Survey Participants (Use=201)
Volume of Search (Real Time Data=3,653)

Figure 1. Frequency of Using Coronavirus as a keyword by audience per month

Despite that more than 49% of the audience used the keyword while searching for information about the virus, less than 40% (38.18%) of the volume of search occurred in the month. However, in April 2020, while over 41% of the volume of search occurred, less than 10% of the audience saw coronavirus but 10.94% used it as the keyword.
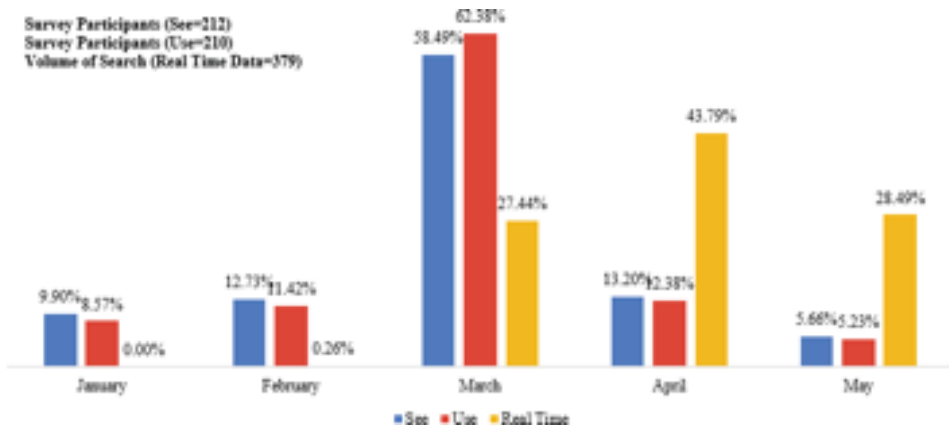
Survey Participants (See=212)
Survey Participants (Use=210)
Volume of Search (Real Time Data=379)

Figure 2. Frequency of Using COVID-19 as Keyword by audience per month

As presented in Figure 2, the use of COVID-19 to search information about the virus by the audience accounted for more than 60% compared to the use of Coronavirus (49.25%) in the same month of March 2020 (See Figure 1). Over 58% of the participants also said they saw the keyword in the headlines of the news reported by the journalists. Surprisingly, the volume of search for the month was less than 30% (27.44%) compared to

more than 38.18% recorded for coronavirus. From the findings, it is also established that the volume of search about the virus using COVID-19 in April was higher (43.79%) than what was obtainable when coronavirus was used (41.82%).

Table 2. Conclusion by Audience on How they Used Coronavirus/COVID-19 to Search for the Virus after Seeing the Terms in News Headlines

Conclusion	After seeing headlines, term or keyword used for searching		Total
	COVID-19	Coronavirus	
The pandemic is called COVID-19	30 (75.0%)	10(25.0%)	40 (100%)
The pandemic is called coronavirus	1(10.0%)	9(90.0%)	10 (100%)
The pandemic is either called coronavirus or COVID-19	105 (62.1%)	64 (37.9%)	169 (100%)

Findings in Table 2 reveal that participants were divided on whether the virus is COVID-19 or coronavirus. More than 62% of 169 participants believed that the virus is called coronavirus or COVID-19, but sought information about the virus using COVID-19, while 37.9% of the same participants were of the same view, but used coronavirus as a search term. Over 70% of 40 participants who believed that the virus is called COVID-19 also used COVID-19 as a term or keyword while searching for information about the virus.

Media Presentation of COVID-19 in the News Headlines and Public Discriminant of the Virus Search through the Internet

Table 3. Results of Wilks' Lambda Analysis of Association between Headline Types and Audience Search Interest Volume

Test of Function(s)	Wilks' Lambda	Chi-square	df	Sig
Coronavirus as kicker through coronavirus as blur	.119	189.447	174	.200
Coronavirus as rider through coronavirus as blur	.288	110.901	114	.565
Coronavirus as blur	**.633**	**40.685**	**56**	**.938**
COVID-19 as kicker through COVID- 19 as rider	**.740**	**22.114**	**20**	**.334**
COVID-19 as rider	**.965**	**2.604**	**9**	**.978**

Table 3 presents the results of Wilks' Lambda analysis that establish an association between headline types and audience search interest volume during the studied period. Five functions were explored using kicker, rider and blur headline types as exemplified earlier. Contrary to our expectation, we did not find a significant association between the two variables. However, we found more than 50% variation of coronavirus as a blur in audience volume of search interest about the virus (Wilks' Lambda =.633, Chi-square =22.114, P>.334), of COVID-19 as kicker through COVID-19 as a rider (Wilks' Lambda =.740, Chi-square =40.685, P>.938), and of COVID-19 as a rider (Wilks' Lambda =.965, Chi-square =2.604, P>.978). These variations can be explained by the degree of freedom. For instance, the variation of coronavirus as a blur is linked with the search interest 56 score threshold. The variation level of COVID-19 as a kicker through COVID-19 as a rider picked when the interest is at the 20 score threshold. COVID-19 as a rider had the lowest search interest score threshold (n=9). These results imply that coronavirus as a blur is much better than COVID-19 as a kicker through COVID-19 as a rider and COVID-19 as a rider in influencing audience information seeking about the virus within the context of search interest threshold. However, COVID-19 as a kicker through COVID-19 as a rider and COVID-19 as a rider is better in terms of variation of the headlines in total search interest volume. Both data patterns are explicated further in Table 4.

Table 4. Tests of Equality of Group Means

	Wilks' Lambda	F	**df1**	**df2**	**Sig.**
Coronavirus as kicker	.485	1.134	58	62	.313
Coronavirus as rider	**.600**	.713	58	62	.902
Coronavirus as blur	.454	1.283	58	62	.167
COVID-19 as kicker	**.774**	**2.050**	**10**	**70**	**.041**
COVID-19 as rider	-	-	-	-	-
COVID-19 as blur	**.946**	.397	10	70	.944

Based on the data presented in Table 4, it could be inferred that COVID-19 as a kicker significantly contributed to audience information search interest about the virus (Wilks' Lambda=.774, F=2.050, P<.041) than other headline types. The data also establish that COVID-19 as blur (Wilks' Lambda=.946) and coronavirus as a rider (Wilks' Lambda=.600) had better variation than coronavirus as a kicker (Wilks' Lambda=.485)

and coronavirus as a blur (Wilks' Lambda =.454). These results imply that when COVID-19 was used as a kicker, it enhanced audience search interest more than when used as rider and blur.

Table 5. Classification Coefficients

Select Search Interest Score Range	Coronavirus as kicker	Coronavirus as rider	Coronavirus as blur
2	**31.919**	**73.767**	28.515
34	**30.628**	**51.747**	29.444
65	29.764	**51.443**	30.066
100	29.764	**51.443**	30.666
Select Search Interest Score Range	**COVID-19 as kicker**	**COVID-19 as rider**	**COVID-19 as blur**
1	8.634	-	**14.166**
4	**10.992**	-	**14.399**
8	**13.874**	-	**14.683**
11	8.634	-	**14.166**

Fisher's Discrimination Function

From the use of coronavirus for COVID-19 as the keyword in the headlines, findings presented in Table 5 indicate that coronavirus as a rider increased search interest more than being used as kicker and blur. As the findings show, coronavirus as rider increased search interest by 73.7% when the search interest reached two scores out of the expected 100 score threshold. Over 51% increase was recorded when the search interest reached 34, 65 and 100 score. However, there is no significant difference in percentage contribution of coronavirus as a rider to search interest score when coronavirus was used as a kicker, rider and blur when the search interest score range was at 65 and 100. The findings in Table 5 also reveal that COVID-19 as a kicker, rider and blur contributed less to search interest score. In line with the data, one can infer that COVID-19 usage in the select news headlines increased search interest by less than 15%. There are several possible explanations for these results. One of the explanations is that the dominant use of coronavirus in the early coverage of the virus could be adduced for the significant contribution of coronavirus as kicker, rider and blur had on the search interest score. To further understand this, we carried out a structure matrix analysis using three function scenarios. This is imperative because of the need to see how the headline type linked with the search interest volume and expose the appropriate type that contributed to the information seeking of the audience.

Table 6. Structure Matrix

	Function		
	1	**2**	**3**
Coronavirus as kicker	-.007	.999*	-.031
Coronavirus as rider	.558	-.596*	-.578
Coronavirus as blur	.300	-.142	.943*
COVID-19 as kicker	.979*	.205	-
COVID-19 as rider	-	-	-
COVID-19 as blur	-.279	.961*	-

*Largest absolute correlation between each variable and any discriminant function

As shown in Table 6, one unit of coronavirus as a kicker in the headlines increased audience search interest by 99.9% (r2=.99.9). This is equally attained for COVID-19 as blur, but the percentage increase was 96.1% (r2=.961). Coronavirus as blur performed better in the third function (r2=.943) than the first function (r2=.300) and second function (r2=-.142). In the second function, coronavirus as rider correlated with the search interest negatively (r2=-.596), while it had a positive connection in the first function (r2=.558). This implies that when one unit of using coronavirus as rider increases search interest by 55.8%, it reduces the interest by 59.6% when it was used as a rider too. Meanwhile, COVID-19 as a kicker performed better in the first function (r2=.979). Following the same interpretation pattern, the result suggests that one unit of appropriating COVID-19 as a kicker increases search interest by 97.9%. In general, it seems that journalists and audiences did not always have specific keywords/terms while reporting the virus and seeking knowledge about it. Therefore, both the journalists and audience discriminated while employing the keywords. Since they discriminated, we further explored the place of pragma-semantic presentation of the headlines by the journalists in audience information seeking about the virus.

Influence of Pragma-Semantic Interpretations of Newspapers' Headlines on Audience Information-Seeking Behaviour

From the findings in Table 7, it is clear that the audience understood the headlines within sensitising (Chi-square =37.853, df=11, P<.000), warning (Chi-square =31.460, df=11, P<.001) and confirming (Chi-square =30.549, df=11, P<.001) features than educating and assessing before searching for additional information about the virus using COVID-19 as a term/keyword. The findings also suggest that when coronavirus was used as a keyword, the audience earlier understood the headlines within confirming (Chi-square= 79.086, df=58, P<.034) and warning (Chi- square= 78.320, df=58, P<.039) pragmatic features.

Table 7. Likelihood Ratio Tests of Select Pragmatics Presentation in the Headlines on Public Volume of Search

Effect	Model Fitting Criteria	Likelihood Ratio Tests		
COVID-19	-2 Log Likelihood of Reduced Model	Chi-Square	Df	Sig.
Intercepting	144.944	.000	0	-
Educating	153.703	8.759	11	.644
Warning	**176.404**	**31.460**	**11**	**.001**
Sensitising	**182.797**	**37.853**	**11**	**.000**
Assessing	160.105	15.161	11	.175
Confirming	**175.493**	**30.549**	**11**	**.001**
coronavirus				
Intercepting	225.383	.000	0	-
Educating	292.601	67.218	58	.191
Warning	**303.703**	**78.320**	**58**	**.039**
Sensitising	294.059	68.676	58	.159
Assessing	275.918	50.535	58	.746
Confirming	**304.469**	**79.086**	**58**	**.034**

The findings in Table 7 are similar to those presented in Table 8. The significant difference only lies with the fact that the data in Table 7 focus on the likelihood ratio of occurrence of semantics features in the headlines and interpretation by the audience before seeking information about the virus.

Table 8. Likelihood Ratio Tests of Select Semantics Presentation in the Headlines on Public Volume of Search

Effect	Model Fitting Criteria	Likelihood Ratio Tests		
COVID-19	**-2 Log Likelihood of Reduced Model**	**Chi-Square**	**Df**	**Sig.**
Intercepting	127.169	.000	0	.
Educating	**164.783**	**37.615**	11	**.000**
Warning	**153.322**	**26.153**	**11**	**.006**
Sensitising	**151.431**	**24.262**	**11**	.012
Assessing	**151.519**	**24.350**	11	**.011**
Confirming	134.363	7.194	**11**	.783
coronavirus				
Intercepting	777.617	.000	0	.
Educating	**1015.633**	**238.016**	58	**.000**
Warning	563.942	.	**58**	.
Sensitising	267.095	.	58	.
Assessing	540.194	.	58	.
Confirming	661.533	.	**58**	.

As presented in Table 8, the findings show that the use of COVID-19 in the headlines to educate (Chi-square =37.615, df=11, P<.000), warn (Chi-square =26.153, df=11, P<.006), assess (Chi-square= 24.350, df=11, P<.011) and sensitise (Chi-square =24.262, df=11, P<.012) enhanced audience interest in seeking information about the virus than coronavirus as a keyword in the select headlines. Educating (Chi-square =238.016, df=58, P<.000) as a semantic feature only aided audience information search when coronavirus was used as a keyword.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The study has established some level of divergence in journalists' and audiences' use of COVID-19 and coronavirus as a name for the pandemic. Despite the declaration of the disease as a pandemic several days before Nigeria reported her first index case, Nigerian newspapers, as manifested in the analysed COVID-19-related news headlines, failed to use COVID- 19 significantly as a lexical choice while stressing the severity of the virus. Instead, they used coronavirus more prominently. From the pragma- semantic perspective, it could be inferred that the journalists used coronavirus more often because they wanted the public to know about

the virus rather than warn them about its severity or create panic about the disease. The behaviour exhibited by the Nigerian journalists in this instance seems to contradict what some previous studies have established. For instance, Smith et al. (2013) found that when an event is a novel, the media do create fear in people and conceptualise themes that resonate with the public mood to establish the significance of the event. However, the audience, as exemplified by the survey participants, exhibited a contrary behaviour by using COVID-19 more than coronavirus to seek the needed information about the virus. Although some participants claimed that they used COVID-19 more than coronavirus for information seeking, the findings reveal a high volume of search online for coronavirus. This further reinforces the finding that shows that audiences were divided on whether the virus is COVID-19 or coronavirus. This could be attributed to the use of the two terms or keywords erratically by the newspapers.

This information-seeking behaviour by Nigerian citizens is similar to what has been captured in the previous studies and supported by the propositions and assumptions of the theories that guide the current study. For example, Showkat and Gull (2020) have found that coronavirus and COVID-19 were among the most used keywords by people globally in the early wave of disease transmission to understand and gain more knowledge about the virus through Google News.

The current study has also established that while the use of COVID-19 as a kicker significantly contributed to audience information search interest than other headline types, coronavirus as a rider increased search interest more than being used as kicker and blur. But discriminate scenario analysis suggests that COVID-19 as kicker performed better in the first scenario than other categories of headlines. Also, the study has shown that using COVID-19 as a pragmatic feature with inherent implicit meanings in news headlines to report the virus could better aid audience interpretation within the indexicals of educating, warning, assessing and sensitising and eventual information seeking than using coronavirus. Educating as a semantic feature (with explicit meaning) only aided audience information search when coronavirus was used.

The foregoing findings are in consonance with several existing studies, scholarly views and propositions of the theories adopted for the study. Jiang et al. (2020) have asserted that journalists could be selective and

negative in their quest of attracting and influencing the public on important health issues and needs with the adoption of kickers. The use of COVID-19 in the news headlines has also reinforced the fact that journalists believe in facilitating audience clicking, reading and using news reports for further information needs for immediate benefits (Pan & Meng, 2016; Jiang, et al., 2020; Scacco & Muddiman, 2019). With the results that indicate that the lexical items in news headlines educate, warn, sensitise and assess within pragma-semantic features, our findings align with previous findings of some scholars (e.g. Ismail, 2016; Al-Saedi & Jabber, 2020) that established expressives and assertives as the pragmatic attachments newspapers had in their headlines and that pragma-semantic features play knowledge storage and information interpretation roles in the mind of the audience about the reported phenomenon.

In summary, the results of our current study align with the Speech Acts and Information-seeking theories. Words are used and interpreted by discourse participants based on the prevailing phenomenon in the discourse context (Mey, 2001, Odebunmi, 2006; Ogungbe, 2014). As established by our study, Nigerian journalists' lexical choices to construct social, environmental and political realities around the COVID-19 pandemic have established the power of news media to determine topic of discourse that could equip the public with the needed information (Searle, 1979; Koja-Odongo & Mostert, 2006). The Pragmatic Acts and Information-seeking theories have collectively provided the framework to justify the fact that the audience can construe both the explicit and implicit meanings of lexical items used by journalists to construct the pandemic. The terms or keywords used by journalists to construct headlines while reporting the COVID-19 pandemic could also influence audience behaviours while seeking the required information about the virus.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Nigerian journalists use coronavirus and COVID-19 inconsistently as the main keywords in the headlines of news reports. There is a discrepancy in how the journalists and the audience use the two keywords: While the Nigerian journalists use coronavirus more frequently in news headlines to describe the virus, the audience use COVID-19 more often to search for information about the pandemic. Despite this apparent divergence in their usage, the terms, as deployed in news headlines, have some pragma-

semantic implicatures such as warning, sensitizing, assessing, and educating, which could equip the audience with some level of knowledge while searching for information about the virus online. Through lexical choices by Nigerian journalists to construct social, environmental and political realities around the COVID-19 pandemic, the news media have determined the topics of discourse and conditioned the cognition of the media audience in Nigeria about the pandemic.

The evidence from this study suggests that Nigerian newspapers need to be consistent in using the keywords in their subsequent news reports about the virus and other health issues. Further studies with a focus on stylo- pragmatic analyses of COVID-19-related news and exploration of audience information-seeking behaviours using the two key terms are, therefore, suggested to establish direct relationships between the style of constructing news stories about the pandemic and audience knowledge, belief and attitudes.

REFERENCES

[1.] Al-Hindawi, F.H. & Ali, A.H. (2018). A Pragmatic Study of CNN and BBC News Headlines Covering the Syrian Conflict. Advances in Languages and Literary Studies9 (3). http://dx.doi.org/10.7575/aiac.alls.v.9n.3p.43.

[2.] Austin, J. (1962). How to Do Things with Words. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

[3.] Al-Saedi, H.T. and Jabber, K.W. (2020). A Pragmatic Study of Newspaper Headlines in Media Discourse: Iraq as a Case Study. International Journal of Linguistics, Literature and Translation 3(3), pp. 48-59.

[4.] Al-Jazeera (2020) Coronavirus: All you need to know in under 500 words. https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2020/01/china-coronavirus-500-words-200127065154334.html

[5.] Berkeley, J. (2020). World Health Organization names the new coronavirus: COVID-19.'https://www.cnbc.com/2020/02/11/world-health-organization-names-the-new-coronavirus-COVID-19.html

[6.] Bhowmik, S., Rony, M.M., Haque, M.M., Swain, K.A. & Hassan, N. (2019). Examining the Role of Clickbait Headlines to Engage Readers with Reliable Health-related Information. arXiv preprint arXiv:1911.11214.

[7.] Bostan, L., Kim, E., and Klinger, R. (2019). Good News Everyone: A Corpus of News Headlines Annotated with Emotions, Semantic Roles, and Reader Perception. arXiv preprint arXiv:1912.03184.

[8.] Bento, A. I., Nguyen, T., Wing, C., Lozano-Rojas, F., Ahn, Y.Y. & Simon, K. (2020). Evidence from Internet Search Data Shows Information-Seeking Responses to News of Local COVID-19 Cases. Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences, 117(21), pp. 11220-11222.

[9.] Chavan, S.S. (2018). Sentiment Classification of News Headlines on India in the US Newspaper: Semantic Orientation Approach vs Machine Learning. A PhD dissertation, Dublin, National College of Ireland.

[10.] Caudill, S.P. (2010). Characterizing Populations of Individuals Using Pooled Samples. Journal of Exposure Science & Environmental Epidemiology 20, pp. 29–37. https://doi.org/10.1038/jes.2008.72.

[11.] Colvin, K. (2020). The people versus COVID-19. European Medical Journal 5(1), pp. 20-23.

[12.] Chinelo, J.E. & Macpherson, N.A. (2015). A Stylistic Exploration of Lexical Ambiguity in Newspaper Headlines." Humanity and Social Sciences Journal 10(2), pp. 63-72.

[13.] Charlse, M.K. (2019). Newspaper Framing of a Health Crisis and Public Perception in Kenya: The Case of Kenyatta National Hospital Wrong-Patient Brain Surgery. An MA Thesis at School of Communication, Cinematics and Creative Arts. URI: http://erepo.usiu.ac.ke/11732/5008.

[14.] Dong, M. & Zheng, J. (2020). Letter to the editor: Headline stress disorder caused by Netnews during the outbreak of COVID-19. Health Expectations 23, pp. 259-260. 10.1111/hex.13055.

[15.] Dong, T. & Shao, P. (2016). The Analysis of Pragmatic Presupposition in English News Headlines. 2nd International Symposium on Social Science. Atlantis Press.

[16.] Dick, M. (n.d.). Search Engine Optimisation in UK News Production. https://bura.brunel.ac.uk/bitstream/2438/8348/2/Fulltext.pdf

[17.] Emike A.J. (2015). The Pragma-Crafting Theory: A Proposed Theoretical Framework for Pragmatic Analysis. American Research Journal of English and Literature, 1(2), pp. 21-32.

[18.] Guarner, M.D. (2020). Three Emerging Coronaviruses in Two Decades: The Story of SARS, MERS, and Now COVID-19. American Journal of Clinical Pathology 153 (4), pp. 420–421.

[19.] Ibrahim, B. & Yunus, K. (2017). The Usage of Spatial Prepositions for Political Aspirations in the Headlines of the Nigerian Newspapers. International Journal of English Linguistics 7(6), pp. 246-254.

[20.] Ibrahim, B., Haruna, H.H., Bashir, I. & Yunus, K. (2018). The Usage of Spatial Prepositions in the Headlines of Major Nigerian Newspapers. International Journal of English Linguistics 8(7), pp. 13- 22.

[21.] Jiang, T., Xu, Y. & Wu, X. (2020). The Effects of Evidence Type on Online Health Headline Selection–A Moderation of Thinking Style. iConference 2020 Proceedings.

[22.] Koja-Odongo, R. & Mostert, J. (2006). Information Seeking Behaviour: A Conceptual Framework. South African Journal of Libraries and Information Science 72. 10.7553/72-3-1112.

[23.] Khan, M. Z., Hassan, M. A., Hassan, S.U. & Ghanni Khan, M.U. (2018). Semantic Analysis of News Based on the Deep Convolution Neural Network. 14th International Conference on Emerging Technologies, Islamabad, pp. 1-6. Doi: 10.1109/ICET.2018.8603653. [24.]   L i u , P.L. (2020). COVID-19 Information Seeking on Digital

Media and Preventive Behaviors: The Mediation Role of Worry. Cyberpsychology, Behavior, and Social Networking, 23 (10), pp. 1-6.

[25.] Laidlaw, T. (2019). Pandemic Stories: Rhetorical Motifs in Journalists' Coverage. Minerva 57, 433–451. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11024-019-09383-4

[26.] Mohammed, P., Eid, Y., Badawy, M. & Hassan, A. (2019). Evaluation of Different Sarcasm Detection Models for Arabic News Headlines.

International Conference on Advanced Intelligent Systems and Informatics, pp. 418-426.

[27.] Molek-Kozakowska, K. (2014). Coercive Metaphors in News Headlines: A Cognitive-Pragmatic Approach. Brno studies in English 40(1).

[28.] Mey, J. (2001). An Introduction to Pragmatics. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing.

[29.] Nielsen, R.K., Fletcher, R., Newman, N., Brennen, S.J. & Howard,

P.N. (2020). Navigating the 'infodemic': How people in six countries access and rate news and information about coronavirus. Reuters Institute.

[30.] Nwala, M.A. & Umukoro, B.A. (2017). Investigating the Meaning of Newspaper Headlines: The Issue of Ambiguity. African Research Review 11(3), pp. 87-96.

[31.] Odebunmi, A. (2006). A Pragmatic Reading of Ahmed Yerima's Proverbs. In Yemoja, Attahiru, and Dry Leaves on Ukan Trees. Intercultural Pragmatics 3.2, pp. 153-169.

[32.] Ogungbe, E.O. (2014). A Critical-Pragmatic Approach to Reading Photo News in Nigerian Newspapers. Journal of Language and Communication Art 6. A Publication of the Department of Communication and Language Arts, University of Ibadan.

[33.] Ojebuyi, B.R. and Lasisi, M.I. (2019). Speaking Up or Staying Silent? Citizens' Engagement of Pro-Biafra Protests and Farmers-Herders Crises in the User generated Content of Selected Nigerian Online Newspapers,'Ethiopian Journal of the Social Sciences and Humanities 15(2), pp.25-51. https://www.ajol.info/index.php/ejossah/article/view/194567.

[34.] Ojebuyi, B.R. (2016). Negative Rhetoric in the User-generated Content of Nigerian News Media. Journal of Communication and Language Arts, 7(1), pp. 85-106.

[35.] Prather, E. & Thadphoothon, J. (2018). A Discourse Analysis of Newspaper Headlines Containing the Words 'China' or 'Chinese': A Case Study of Two English Language Newspapers in Thailand.

Communication and Culture for a Sustainable Society, 46.

[36.] Rahman, S., Hossain, S.S., Islam, S., Chowdhury, M.I., Rafiq, F.B. & Md. Badruzzaman, K. (2019). Context-Based News Headlines Analysis Using Machine Learning Approach' In Nguyen N., Chbeir R., Exposito E., Aniorté P., Trawiński B. (eds). Computational Collective Intelligence. Vol 11684. Cham: Springer.

[37.] Robert, E. (2020). Language Use in Selected Newspaper Headlines. Journal of Arts and Humanities, 9(1), pp. 91-103.

[38.] Showkat, N. & Gull, M. (2020). The Study of Google Search Trends for an Effective Communication during COVID-19 Pandemic. Sage Submissions   Preprint. https://doi.org/10.31124/advance.12138732.v1.

[39.]   Smith,K.C., Rimal, R.N., Sandberg, H., Storey, J.D., Lagasse, L.,

Rhoades, E.,Barnett, D.J., Omer, S.B. & Links, J.M. (2013). Understanding Newsworthiness of an Emerging Pandemic: International Newspaper Coverage of the H1N1 Outbreak. Influenza Other Respir Viruses7(5), pp. 847–853.

[40.] Searle, J.R. (1976). The Classification of Illocutionary Acts. Language in Society 8, pp. 135-151.

[41.] Scacco, J.M. & Muddiman, A. (2019). The Current State of News Headlines.   https://mediaengagement.org/wp-   content/ uploads/2019/05/the-current-state-of-news-headlines.pdf

[42.]   Sharma, A. (2017). News, Types of News, Types of Headlines.' https://www.slideshare.net/Arpita615/news-types-of-news-types-of-headlines

[43.] UNESCO (2020). World Trends in Freedom of Expression and Media Development: Journalism, Press Freedom and COVID-19. France.

[44.]   WHO (2020). Naming the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) and the   virus   that   causes it.   https://www.who.int/emergencies/ diseases/novel-coronavirus-   2019/technical-guidance/naming-the-coronavirus-disease-(covid- 2019)-and-the-virus-that-causes-it

[45.] Worldometer (2021). COVID-19 Coronavirus Pandemic. https://

www.worldometers.info/coronavirus/https://www.worldomete   rs.info/coronavirus/

[46.]   Ward, J. K. (2020). Journalists and Science 2: diversity in the media coverage of the 2009 pandemic flu vaccine's safety in France. https://doi.org/10.31235/osf.io/75tnh

[47.] Xie, Q. (2018). Analysis of Intertextuality in English News Headlines. Theory and Practice in Language Studies 8 (8). http://dx.doi.org/10.17507/tpls.0808.13

Research Articles

The Impact Of Foreıgn Dırect Investments On Balance Of Payment Trends In Montenegro

Zdravko Tomic[1]

ABSTRACT

This paper examines the impact of foreign direct investments (FDI) inflow on balance of payment trends of Montenegro in the pre-crisis and post-crisis period. The motivation of this paper is based on the strong effect of previous FDI inflow on current account balance of payment trends. The main contribution of the paper is reflected in the identification of effects of the foreign investment process on the current account balance of payment trends. The results of the paper will show that the foreign investment process has led to deterioration of the balance of payment imbalance. The paper also presents the necessary measures that should be undertaken in order to gradually decrease the long-standing deficit in the goods account, as the main cause of external imbalance.

Keywords: FDI, balance of payment, current account balance of payment, exports.

INTRODUCTION

This paper examines the impact of FDI inflow on balance of payment trends of Montenegro in the pre-crisis and post-crisis period.

The current account balance shows a country's inflows and outflows arising from trade in goods, services, income and current transfers between residents and non-residents, i.e., on the occurrence of obligations to and claims on abroad arising from the aforesaid transactions. The current account balance does not represent an economic policy variable such as, for example, money in circulation, but it is one of economic policy objectives like the inflation rate or a GDP level. Movements in the current account represent important sources of information for economic policy

---

creators and they are also the reflection of monetary policy.[2]

Apart from the current account, the balance of payments also includes its other part: the capital and financial accounts, which explain how the current account is financed (in case of a deficit) or where the current account surplus funds are invested (in case of a surplus). The main components of the capital account are capital transfers and acquisition/sale of non-produced, non-financial assets. The financial account covers all financial categories classified in accordance with the investment type or functional classification (direct investment, portfolio investment, other investment, reserve assets). In cases when there is a current account surplus, the capital and financial account balance will be negative (for the purpose of balancing) and will show us where such current account surplus funds have been used (whether the country's foreign exchange reserves have been increased, or the scope of investments abroad and foreign lending has been increased or if there has been an increase of funds in so-called foreign exchange accounts).

Usually, the current account determines the movements in the overall balance of payments account, but this has started to change recently. The rapid development of the financial market and the emergence of a multitude of new financial instruments have led to a high supply of foreign capital in the form of direct and portfolio investments and loans. All this – especially in the case of Montenegro – has had direct consequences for all current account items (goods, services, factor income and transfers).

Effects of FDI on the balance of payments

When assessing the impact of FDI on the balance of payments, it is necessary to take into consideration the impact of FDI on the country's imports and exports. It is well known that FDI usually finance the imports of equipment, machinery and missing raw materials, and thus influence the deterioration of the current balance of countries in transition. Negative effects on the current balance are especially prominent if the investments are oriented towards production for the domestic market (even more so if the aim of the FDI is the circumvention of customs duties). However, if

---

[2] *Central Bank of Montenegro (2008), Sustainability Analysis of the Current Account Deficit of Montenegro, Podgorica.*

such investments imply the subsequent substitution of import inputs with domestic products (through the establishment of stronger ties with domestic producers) or if they are export-oriented (along with better exploitation of existing resources in the host country), then FDI can contribute to a decrease in the trade deficit and their effect on the current balance can be positive.

The inflow of FDI is simultaneously a substitute for the country's foreign borrowing for the purpose of covering the current account deficit. Since borrowing implies the fixed repayment of the principal and interest in proportion with the interest rate – whereas the income from FDIs depends on their profitability – FDIs are the preferable way of financing the balance of payments current account imbalance. As long as the net inflow of FDIs is higher than the outflow of income on the basis of direct investments, FDIs have a positive impact on the domestic balance of payments. Having in mind the importance of increasing the value of goods and services exports, both for the trade deficit decrease and for more favourable values of some indicators of external solvency and liquidity, export-oriented FDIs manifest stronger overall effects on the balance of payments. The most favourable type of capital inflow from the perspective of the balance of payments are greenfield investments, especially those investments directed towards the construction of production capacities which produce exchangeable products. In addition, greenfield investments offer better possibilities for the transfer of foreign technology to the domestic economy and pave the way for advanced technology spillovers in other segments of the domestic economy.

Beside the import growth, another negative effect of FDIs on the host country's balance of payments is the repatriation of profits. FDIs are undertaken in order to generate a certain profit, which is then reinvested or transferred to the home country. The repatriation of profits represents an FDI outflow, which means: the higher the transfer of profits, the lower the net FDIs which serve to cover the current balance deficit. However, the transfer of profits can only happen if the respective subsidiary operates profitably, meaning that FDIs, regardless of the repatriation of profits, are preferable to foreign loans which must be repaid irrespective of the profitability of their use.

For the purpose of a more comprehensive and more complete understanding

of the effects of FDIs on the balance of payments, it is necessary to consider the movements of direct investment income. The category of direct investment income is registered in the current balance primary income account, whereas FDI flows are recorded in the financial account. Therefore, the comparison between these two categories can serve for the assessment of the financial impact of FDIs on the balance of payments, i.e. if the FDI net income is deducted from the FDI net inflows, the result is a balance which can serve as the basis when reaching a conclusion on the effects of FDIs on the balance of payments. The primary income account includes reinvested earnings, in the category of equity (or more precisely as an item of investment income), in accordance with IMF's methodology. However, reinvested earnings are also recorded in the balance of payments financial account in the same amount, so the impact of this category on the balance of payments is neutral[3]. Still, in cases when the current account balance is negative, when reinvested earnings are recorded in the primary income account, the negative current account balance is increased. In such cases, caution should be exercised when assessing whether a specific amount of the current account deficit is sustainable or not. In fact, it may seem paradoxical that reinvestment increases the current account deficit, whereas in reality it can imply the purchase of domestic inputs for the extension of production, which does not require foreign exchange financing[4].

The above leads to the conclusion that FDI have a stabilising effect on the balance of payments when the FDI net inflows are higher than the outflows of their income in the balance of payments primary income account. As long as this balance is positive, FDIs will be improving the balance of payments. However, with the ever-increasing FDI funds in the domestic economy, it can be expected that the outflow of income which they generate will grow in the long term, with a real chance that this outflow will surpass

---

[3] *The primary income account shows the overall profit from FDIs, which includes reinvested earnings. Reinvested earnings are in their entirety included in the balance of payments financial account as well. These are in fact retained savings of foreign investors in the country, which are transformed into investments. Reinvested earnings can also be negative in some cases, e.g. if a company operates with losses or if the paid dividends are higher than the earnings. Negative reinvested earnings are treated as withdrawal of capital.*

[4] *Kovačević R. (2016), Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) as a factor of stabilization Serbia's balance of payments, Discussion paper, The Faculty of Economics University of Belgrade.*

the FDI net inflow at some point. That is the moment when FDIs start to worsen the balance of payments.

3 The primary income account shows the overall profit from FDIs, which includes reinvested earnings. Reinvested earnings are in their entirety included in the balance of payments financial account as well. These are in fact retained savings of foreign investors in the country, which are transformed into investments. Reinvested earnings can also be negative in some cases, e.g. if a company operates with losses or if the paid dividends are higher than the earnings. Negative reinvested earnings are treated as withdrawal of capital.

In order to get a more complete grasp of the financial flows generated by FDIs, it is certainly recommended to use the results of the research carried out by Brada and Tomšík (2003). In their famous and highly quoted paper, Brada and Tomšík (2003) point out three financial stages through which FDIs go. The first stage implies the investment in the host country with the aim of establishing a foreign company's subsidiary. This stage, according to said authors' findings, is characterised by operating losses due to initial difficulties, which may arise during the launch of operations. It is the opinion of these authors that this stage is especially prominent in the case of green field investments, where it can be longer, while on the other hand it can be shorter in the case of an acquisition, because an acquired firm can quickly become profitable. After the initial difficulties are overcome, the subsidiary should enter the zone of profitable operations, but at this stage, the company reinvests the majority of its earnings for the purpose of expanding operations or eliminating structural problems. As opposed to the previous stage – where the focus is on financing with the help of intracompany loans – at the second development stage, the company demonstrates a growing reliance on financing sources in the host country. At the third stage, the company enters the 'maturity' zone, and the profit margins and market share in the host country are stabilised at this financial stage, which is why the parent company can decide to withdraw a major part of the profits from the subsidiary in the form of dividends and invest these funds in other places in the world which offer a better yield. Reinvested earnings become smaller and smaller at this stage. That moment can be delayed by stimulating foreign investors to reinvest the generated profits and dividends in the domestic economy. At this stage,

companies usually don't need any explicit help from the parent company, and instead they rather rely on the domestic banking system as the source of financing.

The movement of FDI flows and Montenegro's current account deficit

Montenegro's current account deficit in the years of strong economic growth and investment boom was the highest in Europe (in % of GDP for the period 2005-2008). The main source of financing the current account deficit of Montenegro were FDI. According to the IMF, the current account deficit could be considered a balanced response of a system to a large inflow of foreign private capital and a high credit growth rate. The annual amounts of FDI in Montenegro were relatively moderate by 2005, primarily due to the volatile macroeconomic and political situation. The opening of the economy, macroeconomic stability, stabilization of the political situation, the banking sector recovery that resulted in the arrival of strong banks, increase in salaries and banking loans, creation ofbusiness-friendly environment for foreign investors and large FDI inflows, a higher credit rating of the country, and growth in construction investments are some of the factors which directly influenced an increase in domestic demand and the import of goods which resulted in the high current account deficit. The Montenegrin economy could not meet growing demand for goods arising from the increased purchasing power and greater investments. This induced exceptionally high growth in visible imports which was followed by much lesser visible exports.

The year-on-year FDI inflow in 2005 increased by 7.5 times and being even 9 times larger than in 2003. The uptrend in FDI inflow continued in 2006 and 2007 when EUR 644.3 million and EUR 1,007.7 million of gross FDI were received, respectively[5]. Strong FDI inflow during 2005 induced a strong growth in imports in the second quarter of 2006, when it increased from EUR 230 million, as was the average from the previous nine quarters (as of 2004), to over EUR 400 million. During 2005, net FDI investments completely covered the current account deficit, while in the following year this coverage was 88%. The current account deficit in 2007 amounted to EUR 1,058.7 million, compared to 2006, this was an 89.7% growth. Net

---

[5] *Central Bank of Montenegro (2008), Sustainability Analysis of the Current Account Deficit of Montenegro, Podgorica.*

FDI inflow covered only 52% of the current account deficit in 2007[6]. The financing of the current account deficit from FDI inflow is good from the aspect of capital maturity (there is neither an increase in the external debt nor there is any tendency towards rapid capital withdrawal), but the problem is the structure of direct investments by activities. In 2007, 51% were real estate investments, 37.5% was invested in banks and companies, and the remaining was in the form of intercompany debt (investments between associate companies). The aforesaid leads to a conclusion that the existing FDI structure is not good.

There is a great difference between Montenegro's spending (investments) and that what it is able to produce[7].

**Graph no. 1:** FDI inflows and the current account deficit (% of GDP)
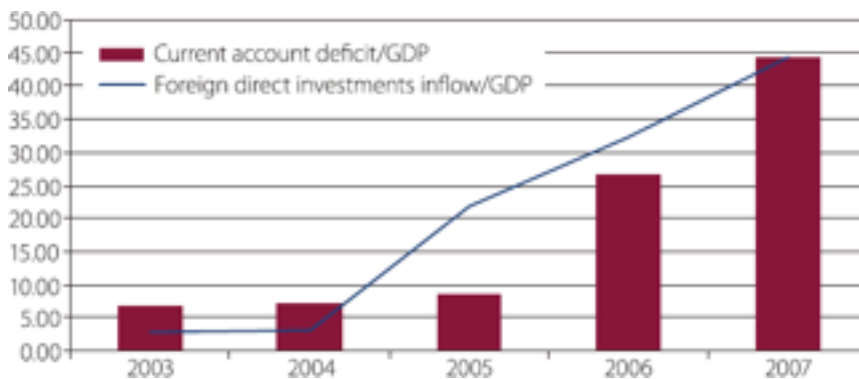
Source: CBM

Therefore, FDI had a direct impact on the increase of the deficit of the balance of payment current account. On one hand, this is a result of the accelerated growth, because the foreign investors have made additional investments in the companies that they have purchased in order to increase their competitiveness. As Montenegro's economy did not produce most of the material necessary for the investment process, foreign investors imported everything they needed: construction material, machinery and other equipment, raw material, furnishings and the like. Second flow was

---

[6] *Central Bank of Montenegro (2008), Foreign Direct Investments as a Driver of Economic Development of Montenegro, Podgorica.*

[7] *Central Bank of Montenegro (2008), Sustainability Analysis of the Current Account Deficit of Montenegro, Podgorica.*

due to the fact that many individuals have increased their living standards thanks to the sale of real estate. This has resulted in the large growth of the car sales, furniture sales, etc. These are all permanent consumption goods that are not produced in Montenegro, therefore the result was the increase of imports. The above can be confirmed by regression analysis. The initial assumption of the analysis is that FDI in the period of strong economic growth (2005-2007.) directly affected on the growth of the current account deficit. Movements of the relationships between the FDI inflow and the increase of the current account deficit is presented in the following graph:

Graph no. 2: Regression between FDI and the current account deficit (2005- 2007.)
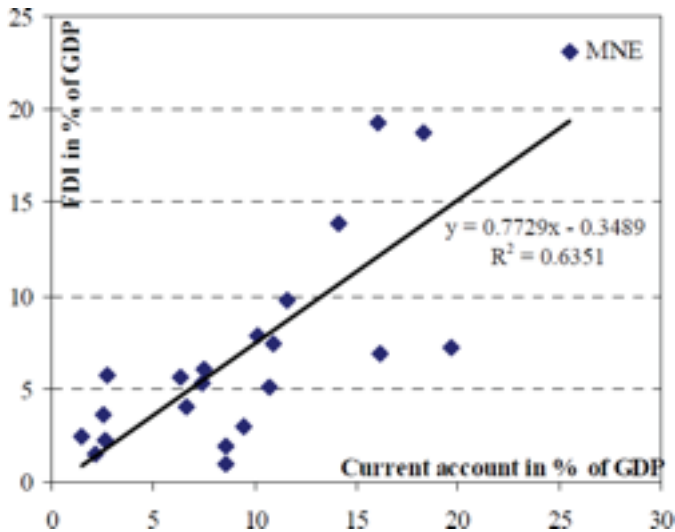

Source: World Economic Outlook

As the inflow of FDI funds started to increase so did their outflow. The purchase of land, real property construction and then its sale with the price difference, showed as a profitable business, but this time the incentive for further export growth is foreign borrowing. In addition, residents started to directly invest abroad. However, the secondary effects are positive and reflect in an increase in tourism revenues and declines in interest rates, unemployment, expenses for telecommunications etc.

The balance of payments data of Montenegro show that in recent years (2011- 2018) there is a gradual decrease in the current account deficit compared to the pre-crisis period (2005-2008). The decreasing trend in

the current account deficit characterized the period since the crisis began, and largely a result of the crisis adjustment of the economy and reduction in aggregate demand. Due to the reduction in capital inflows, a part of the current account deficit has self-correcting effects, that is, the cessation of FDI inflow will lead to a substantial reduction in imports. However, despite a reduction external imbalance, it is evident that the foreign trade deficit is significantly high and constantly present.

Although the current account deficit is to a large extent the consequence of the accelerated growth, the reason for concern is the fact that it is less covered by FDI, while the private external debt increases.

Graph no. 3: Current account components (% of GDP, 2005−2017)
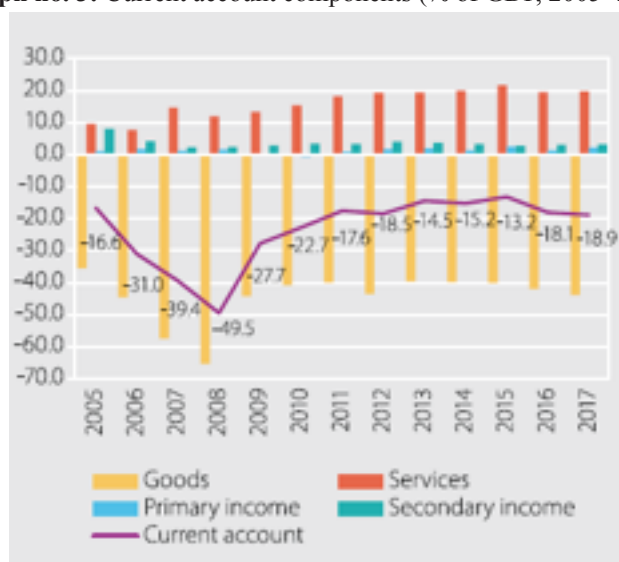
Source: CBM, Monstat

The deficit of the current account balance amounted to 799.3 million euros in 2017 or 18.9% of GDP, which is a significant reduction in view of the high values achieved in the pre-crisis years (2005-2008), where it is only in 2008 achieved the deficit of the current account of the 50.6% of GDP. The goods account deficit widening was driven by an increase in the visible imports, to an extent, such a rise in the goods deficit was to be expected in view of the implementation of significant infrastructure projects. As in the previous years, the 2017 deficit was primarily funded by FDI and their net inflow of 474.3 million euros or 11.2% of GDP. Also, historically, constant current account deficit was also funded by foreign portfolio investments

and other foreign investments with pronounced debt features. Moreover, debt instruments (intercompany debt) also accounted for a portion of FDI so the „other side" of current account deficit was in fact the accumulation of external debt of Montenegro of all resident sectors, the government included, although the external government debt was the most prominent[8].

Sustainability of the current account deficit

A current account deficit that has accumulated over the years requires continuous funding sources: through net FDI inflows, portfolio investments, credit transactions or through reducing a country's foreign exchange reserves. However, the main question is what does the term "sustainability" actually imply? The opinion of many economists and economic policy creators regarding a country's external imbalance has changed significantly over the last decades. Today there is no common, generally accepted stance on the current account level that could be considered unsustainable or about the actual effects of a high current account deficit on other macroeconomic indicators. For many years, the IMF`s and other international financial institutions` standpoint on the current account level that is considered unsustainable is that which exceeds 5% of GDP. However, there are examples of many countries that have succeeded in sustaining and financing the current account deficit higher than the aforesaid threshold for many years and then turning it into a surplus; however, there are also many countries that ran a low current account deficit but could not avoid the balance of payments crisis (Mexico, Chile). All this has led to the abandoning of such a strictly established criterion. The advocates of the thesis that "the balance of payments crisis is largely a politically charged phrase" point exactly to the countries such as the USA, Spain, Slovakia, etc. They claim that a country can run the current account deficit for years, yet the economy will not suffer if the deficit is used for private financing of investments. On the other hand, the budgetary deficit can cause default in foreign obligations, that is, actually induce the balance of payments crisis. However, the opinion that the current account

---

[8]*Central Bank of Montenegro (2018), Financial System Stability Report for 2017, Podgorica.*

deficit is not important if it is a result of the private sector deficit (Lawson doctrine)[9] was discredited by the Asian financial crisis which occurred during 1997 and 1998. The crisis occurred due to a large external exposure of the private sector regardless of the balanced budget[10].

If we begin with the fact that each deficit has to be financed, that is, should have the sources of financing, then it could be said that the current account deficit is sustainable to the degree and within time limits the creditors consider sustainable. The current account deficit is sustainable if the continuation of the country's current economic policy and/or the behavior of the private sector and possible external shocks will not call for the introduction of significant changes in the economic policy nor induce the balance of payment crisis. As long as financial markets have confidence that the debtor country will duly service its obligations, the debtor crisis will not occur. In the previous period the main source of financing the current account deficit of Montenegro were FDI.

Therefore, it could be stated that there is no unique criterion for the assessment of the current account deficit sustainability which could be applied to all countries. When performing an assessment one should take into consideration specific characteristics of each country and other macroeconomic indicators (inflation rate, GDP growth rate etc.), monitor the current account trends, the structure of imported goods (consumer goods or investment goods), the capital- financial account situation (foreign direct and portfolio investments, loans and their maturity structure and purpose).

As for Montenegro, the current account deficit /GDP growth ratio can be taken as the criterion for the sustainability of the current account deficit. If the deficit increase is higher than GDP growth over long-term, then the current account deficit will be unsustainable. This indicator should not be observed in short- term, because a short-term deficit can indicate that it has been financed by investment which will influence GDP growth in

---

[9] *According to the Lawson doctrine, named after Nigel Lawson, as long as the current account balance reflects the private sector savnigs-investment decisions, there are no disturbances and expectations are rational, then there is no reason for a government to intervene.*

[10] *Central Bank of Montenegro (2008), Sustainability Analysis of the Current Account Deficit of Montenegro, Podgorica*

the forthcoming period. In the eurosation conditions, the current account deficit entails less risk than in countries having their own currency, but the options for its elimination are narrowed in the absence of exchange rate policy. In a euroised and highly- opened economy with low transaction costs, local and foreign products become substitutes and households easily turn to imported products. Therefore, the current account deficit over a longer period of time, when dried up funding sources and the time comes to repay the loan, it can lead to a decrease in the money supply, which can have the effect of recession on the economy.

There is still a significant inflow of FDI provide enough foreign accumulation for financing the current account deficit, but it is on the other side of one of the factors creating the deficit. Long-term deficits in the account of goods represent the main causes for external imbalances. Relatively low values of export, combined with higher values of import represent the reason for the deficit in the visible trade. In addition to this, export is dominated by a small number of low- processed manufacturing goods which include low levels of added value and generate fewer benefits from export. In order to change the existing situation, it is necessary to change the export structure and reduce import dependence. What is also required is a better structure as well as greater levels of export that is based on technology-intensive products and innovations. The structure of import is also unfavourable. It would be significant to make the import structure more oriented towards equipment, machinery and technologically advanced products that would generate new business processes and new products for export instead of towards goods for personal consumption.

Thus, strengthening and diversification of exports while increasing productivity and competitiveness are the imperatives of the Montenegrin economy development in the future. Montenegro has comparative advantages and great potential for export growth in sectors such as tourism, energy and agriculture.

Each country has limited capabilities to absorb FDI inflow, but it is certain that they are still not used in Montenegro, meaning that Montenegro may count on large FDI inflows in the medium-term period of three to five years. Thus, it will not be possible to significantly reduce the current account deficit. On the other hand, initial investments in the construction of roads (highway Bar-Boljare), power capacities or the implementation of some

other large announced projects will certainly lead to growth in imports. This is the development component of the deficit, which bring positive effects in the long-term. In addition, as a result of large FDI inflow in the upcoming period, we should expect larger export revenues, which are now obvious in tourism. This means that corrective measures do not have to be undertaken when this development is in question. Of course, it would be of exceptional importance to influence the change of the FDI structure, that is, their redirection from real estate to other fields.

Still, it should be kept in mind that FDI net inflows represent an alternative source of deficit funding, which mitigates the burden of foreign debt. But, with this type of capital inflows, attention must be paid to the possibility of the repatriation of profits and possible withdrawal of capital, which would make the funding of the achieved current account deficit more difficult.

Among concrete measures for reducing the foreign trade deficit – which is the main cause for the Montenegrin balance of payments current account deficit – we should point out the increase/stimulation of exports and substitution of imports, as follows:

- Reducing the import dependency by increasing the domestic production in sectors where Montenegro has comparative advantages, such as: agriculture and food industry (production and processing of food for the needs of both the country's own citizens and tourists during the tourism season) and energy industry (construction of new production capacities, where natural potential exists),

- Increase of exports and better exploitation of available industrial capacities (steel, aluminium, bauxite, timber, etc.),

- Increase of tourism-generated revenues and better exploitation of the natural potential.

Having in mind the importance of increasing the value of goods and services exports for the reduction of the trade deficit, export-oriented FDIs exhibit stronger overall effects on the balance of payments. Thereby, FDIs contribute to the stabilisation of the balance of payments, especially those investments which are aimed at the construction of production capacities which produce exchangeable products. To that end, it is very important to apply various economic policy measures to direct FDIs towards the sectors which can become the backbone of exports in the upcoming period.

The current account deficit of Western Balkan countries

The inflows of foreign capital to the Western Balkan countries before the outbreak of the global financial crisis in 2008. supported the growth of domestic demand, which was partially satisfied by imports (Wyplosz, 2013). This conditioned the growth of the current account deficit. The liberalization of foreign trade has facilitated imports and contributed to the growth of the trade deficit. The capital inflows into these countries have been increased as a result of the low interest rates as well as the increased amounts of available global liquidity. Strong domestic demand has generated high rates of economic growth. However, a significant increase in prices and wages, primarily due to the expected convergence of income, weakened the sector of tradable goods in these countries. The result has been a high increase in external debt, which could adversely affect debt servicing capacities, and weaken the competitiveness of the economy. The mitigating circumstance for these countries is the significant net inflow of FDI, as an important channel of financing the current account deficit. The countries of the region have made adjustments after the outbreak of the global economic and financial crisis, with the accompanying reduction in the current account deficit. However, the main direction for financing a sustainable current account deficit is to increase export competitiveness and export revenues. In this way, the trade deficit would be reduced, and the current account deficit may become sustainable.

The current account deficit of Western Balkan countries had an oscillatory dynamics in the period from 2000 to 2015. All Western Balkan countries have recorded a persistent current account deficit since 2001. Its highest value was achieved in the crisis year 2008 (extreme value deficit is achieved in Montenegro). In the period after 2008 there was a reduction of the deficit in the range of 0 to 20% of GDP. Borrowing abroad is the main source of financing the deficit in the Western Balkan countries. In this way, they bridge the gap between lower domestic savings and larger investments. If foreign funds are not used to build productive capacity, the country's ability to repay debts will be diminished, and insolvency is also inevitable. This raises the question of sustainability of the current account deficit. Problems can also arise due to sudden withdrawals of capital, in which case the countries would have to make a current account surplus which will be allocated for debt repayment. A steady current account deficit can

increase the economic vulnerability of these countries[11].

Graph no. 4: Current account balance in Western Balkan countries (% of GDP)
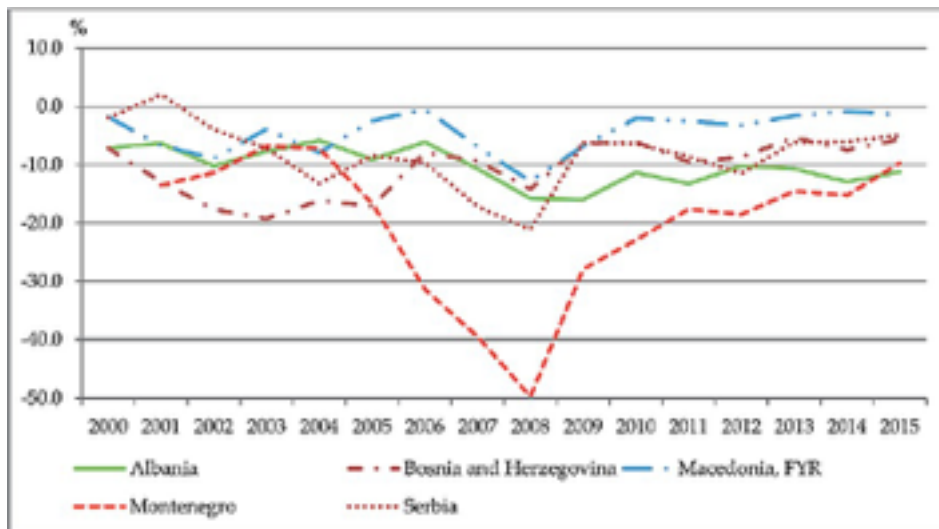
*Source: IMF, World Economic Outlook Database (October 2016).*

Some authors believe that the boom in domestic demand in the period before the 2008 was a more important cause of the current account deficit, than it was the loss of price competitiveness (Wyplosz, 2013).

Before the onset of the 2008 crisis the current account deficit was significantly supported by inflows of foreign capital. The decline of the interest rates on international capital markets facilitated borrowing under favorable terms, which accelerated the accumulation of foreign debt and the current account deficit increase. The increase in debt has not been accompanied by the increase in capacity to service this debt. The appreciation of the national currency, spurred by the large inflows of foreign capital, has led to the deteriorated export competitiveness. After the outbreak of the crisis, all countries recorded a reduction in their current account deficits, primarily due to the weakening of economic activity and the reduction of imports. The liberalization of foreign trade has had not only a positive impact on the competitiveness of the economy and the strengthening of competition on the domestic market, but has also opened

---

[8] *Kovačević R. (2017), Financing the current account deficit in Southeastern European countries, Bankarstvo, 2017, Vol. 46, Issue 3, Belgrade.*

up the channel for increasing the current account deficit. In this way, the increasing openness of the economy imposed the issue of sustainability of the growing current account deficit. Graph 5 shows the tendencies of the openness of the economy of the Western Balkan countries.

Graph no. 5: Trade openness of Western Balkan countries

Source: The World Bank, http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NE.EXP.GNFS.
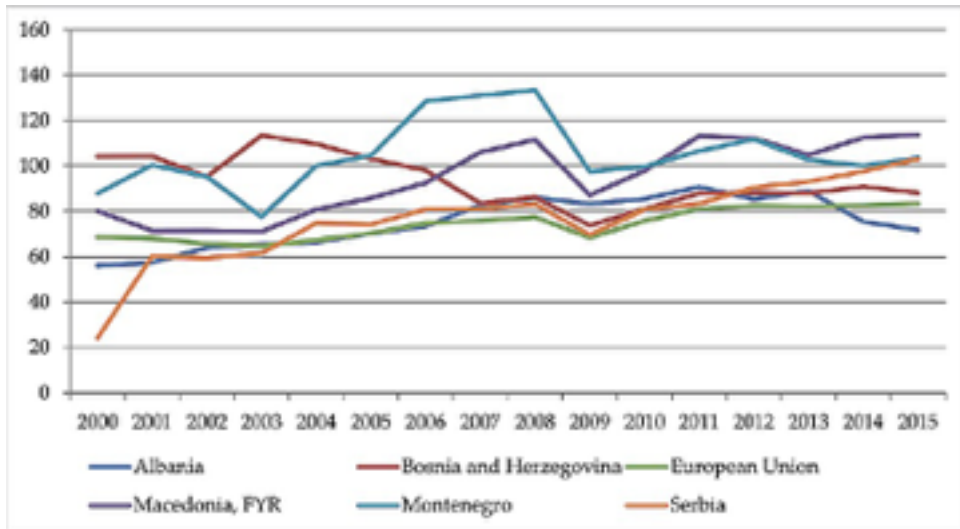
In most of the Western Balkan countries, the exports are dominated by labor and resource intensive products, or products of lower technological intensity. Unlike the Western Balkan countries, the EU countries have a high share of technologically intensive exports, and their specialization goes in that direction. With this picture, the Western Balkan countries will face the moment of joining the EU. The dynamic investment in infrastructure in the region, with a prominent role of the Chinese investments, is becoming an important factor in raising exports to a higher level. The well-developed transport infrastructure is an important prerequisite for the competitiveness of the region and its economic development.

Long neglected, this infrastructure in many cases is a limiting factor in the increasing of exports (Sanfey et al., 2016, p. 27). A stronger interconnection among the Western Balkan countries within the CEFTA agreement, as well as the signed EU Stabilization and Association Agreements, open the space for increasing the share of their export of goods and services in GDP.

The expansion of the current account deficit, stimulated by the acceleration of economic activity in the period before the outbreak of the global economic crisis in 2008, was largely financed by FDI inflows as well as foreign loans. However, a significant portion of this inflow was directed to the sectors that produce for the domestic market. As a result, these funds did not significantly affect the productivity growth or the expansion of production for export purposes. Along with the current account deficit increase, the surplus of the financial account in the Western Balkan countries has grown. This generated the tendency for growth of foreign exchange reserves, which doubled in comparison to the usual amounts. For most Western Balkan countries, FDI is the main source of external financing (The World Bank, 2016 p. 9).

In most countries in the region, there has been an increase in remittances inflows from abroad. This type of foreign exchange inflow is an important source for financing a part of the trade deficit. This is the reason to create incentive measures that would contribute to increasing the inflow of these funds through investment motivation.

Therefore, it is important to get FDIs largely directed into the export sector and the strategy of economic growth should be based on exports. However, the increase in interest rates on the international capital market implies an increase in the burden of debt servicing and less profits in the corporate sector, which can slow down the growth of net FDI inflows. In that case, the alternative way for financing the current account deficit is the additional external debt. However, this option has already been exhausted for some countries because their external debt is close to 80% of their GDP, the boundary when over- indebtedness becomes unavoidable. These countries cannot afford this luxury, because the transition to a state over indebtedness exacerbates the conditions of external borrowing, and an increasing part of the foreign exchange inflows is separated for the purpose of external debt servicing. In this situation, the countries should undertake a structural adjustment that would imply a further reduction of the current account deficit and bring it back within the borders that are sustainable from the point of view of available resources for its financing.

CONCLUSION

Montenegro's current account deficit in the years of strong economic growth and investment boom was the highest in Europe (in % of GDP). The main source of financing the current account deficit of Montenegro were FDI. According to the IMF, the current account deficit could be considered a balanced response of a system to a large inflow of foreign private capital and a high credit growth rate. The balance of payments data of Montenegro show that in recent years there is a gradual decrease in the current account deficit compared to the pre-crisis period. The decreasing trend in the current account deficit characterized the period since the crisis began, and largely a result of the crisis adjustment of the economy and reduction in aggregate demand. However, despite a reduction external imbalance, it is evident that the foreign trade deficit is significantly high and constantly present.

There is still a significant inflow of FDI provide enough foreign accumulation for financing the current account deficit, but it is on the other side of one of the factors creating the deficit. Long-term deficits in the account of goods represent the main causes for external imbalances. Relatively low values of export, combined with higher values of import represent the reason for the deficit in the visible trade.

Therefore, strengthening and diversification of exports while increasing productivity and competitiveness are the imperatives of the Montenegrin economy development in the future. Montenegro has comparative advantages and great potential for export growth in sectors such as tourism, energy and agriculture.

REFERENCES

[1.] Brada, J.C. and V. Tomšik (2003), Foreign direct investment and perceptions of vulnerability to foreign exchange crises: Evidence from transition economies, ZEI working paper, No. 543.

[2.] Canton, E. and Solera, I. (2016), Greenfield Foreign Direct Investment and Structural Reforms in Europe: What Factors Determine Investments?, Discussion paper 033, European Commission, Luxembourg.

[3.] Central Bank of Montenegro (2018), Annual Macroeconomic Report

of the CBM for 2017, Podgorica.

[4.] Central Bank of Montenegro (2018), Financial System Stability Report for 2017, Podgorica.

[5.] Central Bank of Montenegro (2008), FDI as a Driver of Economic Development of Montenegro, Podgorica.

[6.] Central Bank of Montenegro (2008), Sustainability Analysis of the Current Account Deficit of Montenegro, Podgorica.

[7.] Cesaroni, T., and De Sant, R. (2015), Current account "Core-periphery dualism" in the EMU, LEQS Paper No. 90/2015. London: LSE.

[8.] Drahokoupil, J. and B. Galgóczi (2015), Foreign direct investment in eastern and southern European countries: still an engine of growth?, in: B. Galgóczi, J. Drahokoupil and M. Bernaciak (Eds.), Foreign investment in eastern and southern Europe after 2008: Still a lever of growth?, ETUI aisbl, Brussels.

[9.] Gabrisch, H. (2015), Net Capital Flows to and Real Exchange Rate of Western Balkan Countries, Economic Annals, Vol. LX, No. 205 / April-June, DOI:10.2298/EKA1505031G.

[10.] Hanousek J., Kočenda, E. & Maurel, M. (2011). Direct and indirect effects of FDI in emerging European markets: A survey and meta-analysis. Economic Systems, 35 (3), pp. 301–322.

[11.] Kovačević R. (2017), Financing the current account deficit in Southeastern European countries, Bankarstvo, 2017, Vol. 46, Issue 3, Belgrade.

[12.] Kovačević R. (2016), Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) as a factor of stabilization Serbia's balance of payments, Discussion paper, The Faculty of Economics University of Belgrade.

[13.] Mencinger, J., (2016), Direct and indirect effects of FDI on current account, http://www.raumplanung.tudortmund.de/irpud/presom/fileadmin/d ocs/presom/external/13th_workshop / Mencinger. pdf Accessed on 12th October 2016.

[14.] Milessi-Ferretti, G.M. and A. Razin (1996), Current Account

Sustainability, Princeton Studies in International Finance, No. 81 (October), Princeton, New Jersey.

[15.]   Moura, R. and Forte, R. (2010). The effects of foreign direct investment on the host country economic growth-theory and empirical evidence, No. 390, Universidade do Porto, Faculdade de Economia do Porto.

[16.] Sanfey et al. (2016), How the Western Balkans can catch up, EBRD Working paper No. 186. London: EBRD.

[17.] UNCTAD (2017), World Investment Report 2017: Investment and Digital Economy. Geneva: UN.

[18.] World Bank Group (2016), South East Europe Regular Economic Report No.10: Resilient Growth Amid Rising Risks, Washington, DC: The World Bank.

[19.] Wyplosz, C. (2013), Europe's Quest for Fiscal Discipline, European Economy Economic Papers 498. Brussels: European Commission.

Belonging and Genocide: Hitler's Community, 1918-1945[1]

Cemre Aydoğan[2]

How did the concept of nation turn into a sacred union through lens of ordinary citizens in Germany? How does the degree of national belonging affect construction process of other identities? Why did the Germans voluntarily witness the Holocaust? Kühne's distinct essays aim to answer these questions in Belonging and Genocide: Hitler's Community, 1918-1945. Kühne critically analyses collective spirit of the German society in the Interwar Period and the World War II, and locates their request for being part of a group, German nation or Volksgemeinschaft (p. 24), into a larger framework: "the Nazi utopia" (p. 150). Just after its publication, Belonging and Genocide: Hitler's Community, 1918-1945 becomes a classic book in the Holocaust and genocide studies.

The book introduces the significance of "the Myth of Comradeship" (pp. 9-31) in order to demonstrate the landscape of the German society during the Second Reich, especially the years of the World War I. Kühne clearly discusses a dissonance in the German society in terms of the degree of national belonging among members of the nation. Different experiences about the WWI and its impacts on the people show why some people defended the importance of individualism, and others did not. The Belonging and Genocide: Hitler's Community, 1918-1945 (Thomas Kühne) construction process of the German nation was bound up with the losses of the WWI including the military failures; therefore, the consecutive part of the book, "Fabricating the Male Bond" (pp. 32-54), centralizes a certain need for emancipation of masculinity to be able to demarcate physical borders of the German nation against both internal and external enemies. Gender binary has an important role in the purification of the German

---

[2] *Sapienza University of Rome*

nation because innately-attached roles on gendered identities would also help to "other" the different segments of the society. Kühne also frames the women of Volksgemeinschaft as the watcher of the entire crimes of the Nazis (pp. 137-161). In other words, the women of the Nazi Germany generally voluntarily-witnessed the mass extermination, and they were also aware of their duties for the sake of their nation: being domesticated bodies who were respectful of the concept of wearing (Nazi) uniform.

Nazi elites conceptualized gender roles and in light with it, they planned the extermination of their enemies, the Jews, during the Interwar years. Further, Kühne argues that "the SS ideal hardness" (p. 62) makes a genocide possible and legitimate through the masculine, militant and totally loyal bodies to Hitler in part "Performing Genocidal Ethics Togetherness in Himmler's Elite" (pp. 55-94). "Invention of the morality of immorality" (p. 63) is connected to the destructive results of the WWI; therefore, resentment of the past also legitimated the genocide for the Nazis in line with the ideas and doctrines of the Nazi elites. Moreover, the part "Spreading Complicity: Pleasure and Qualms in the Cynical Army" (pp. 95-136) clearly demonstrates that "physical destruction – mass death all around – did not demoralize social productivity" (p. 136). In other words, the SS had no ethical code; thus, they were not critical of their lethal decisions, and life continued in the Nazi utopia.

While questioning the other identities and expressions of gender, such as masculinity and femininity, Kühne's book gathers different sources - memories of individuals, former interviews, and official documents-together, and combines with the former literature on genocide and the modern German history. Kühne emphasizes the suppression of individual preferences, orientations, and rights for the sake of Volksgemeinschaft that was formulated by the Nazi elites for the Aryan race, and analyses the ethic of mass destruction among the Nazi soldiers (interchangeable with the SS) for purifying the Aryanism. Sacralization of the national cohesion led to a collective blindness in the German society, and every member of Volksgemeinschaft accepted their attached roles for the sake of groupism, and Kühne successfully traces the vital decisions and acts of the Nazis in Belonging and Genocide: Hitler's Community, 1918-1945 which shed light on the roots of fascist politics.

WRITING RULES

The requested features of the papers are as follows:

The papers must be submitted in word format. Their size must not be under 40,000 characters (spaces included) and not exceed 60,000 characters (spaces included). We plan to publish at least 5 maximum 7 articles per number.

The font must be Times New Roman. The normal text must be 12 sized, the long quotations 11, the footnotes 10. The space between the lines must be 1.5. The first line of the paragraphs must start at 0.3.

The papers must include:

– The name of the author, her/his mail address, her/his professional affiliation, her/his ORCID iD number, her/his telephone number, a 7-8 lines summary and 3-4 keywords. Naturally the papers will be forwarded to the referees without the personal data.

– The papers must not include a separate final bibliography. A short survey of the literature concerning the topic can be included in the main text and/or in the first footnote and/or along the following footnotes.

– The authors should be consistent in their use of capitalization and use it for the main elements of the name of an institution: Ottoman Empire, Ministry of the Foreign Affairs, United Nations… but minister of the Foreign Affairs, the situation of the empire etc.

– The titles of quoted works must be in italics, the title of periodicals must be in high brackets. Words and phrases still felt as foreign words in English, as well as titles in other languages should be, both in main text and footnotes, in italics and followed with translation in square parentheses. Transliterations from other alphabets should be provided according to the rules of international transliteration.

– Illustrations, tables, maps and figures must be numbered consecutively in the text and captions identifying the source of any image or data should be used. The title of the figures should be below the picture; the title of the tables, above the table.

Examples:

Fabio L. Grassi, *L'Italia e la Questione Turca 1919-1923. Opinione pubblica e politica estera,* [Italy and the Turkish Question 1919-1923. Public opinion and foreign policy], Torino Zamorani, 1996, pp. 50-52.

Giuseppe Motta, *Giustizia, Affari Interni e Immigrazione in Bulgaria nel Processo di Integrazione,* [Justice, internal affairs and immigration in Bulgaria during the integration process], in Fabio L. Grassi / Roberto Sciarrone (eds.), I Bulgari e la Bulgaria in Europa [The Bulgars and Bulgary in Europe], Roma, Aracne, 2014, p. 140.

Fabio L. Grassi, *La Turchia nella Politica Francese e Italiana tra le due Guerre* [Turkey in the French and Italian policy between the two World Wars], in "Transylvanian Rview", vol. XV, N. 1, Spring 2006, p. 134.

After the first mention, a work must be mentioned as follows:

Motta, Giustizia…, p. 142.

It is advisable to concentrate as far as possible the remarks on a topic in a single footnote at the end of a paragraph. For any additional details, please contact the editor-in-chief and/or the co-editors at fabiograssi@ejoss.net, muzafferbaca@ejoss.net and hasansaygin@ejoss.net.