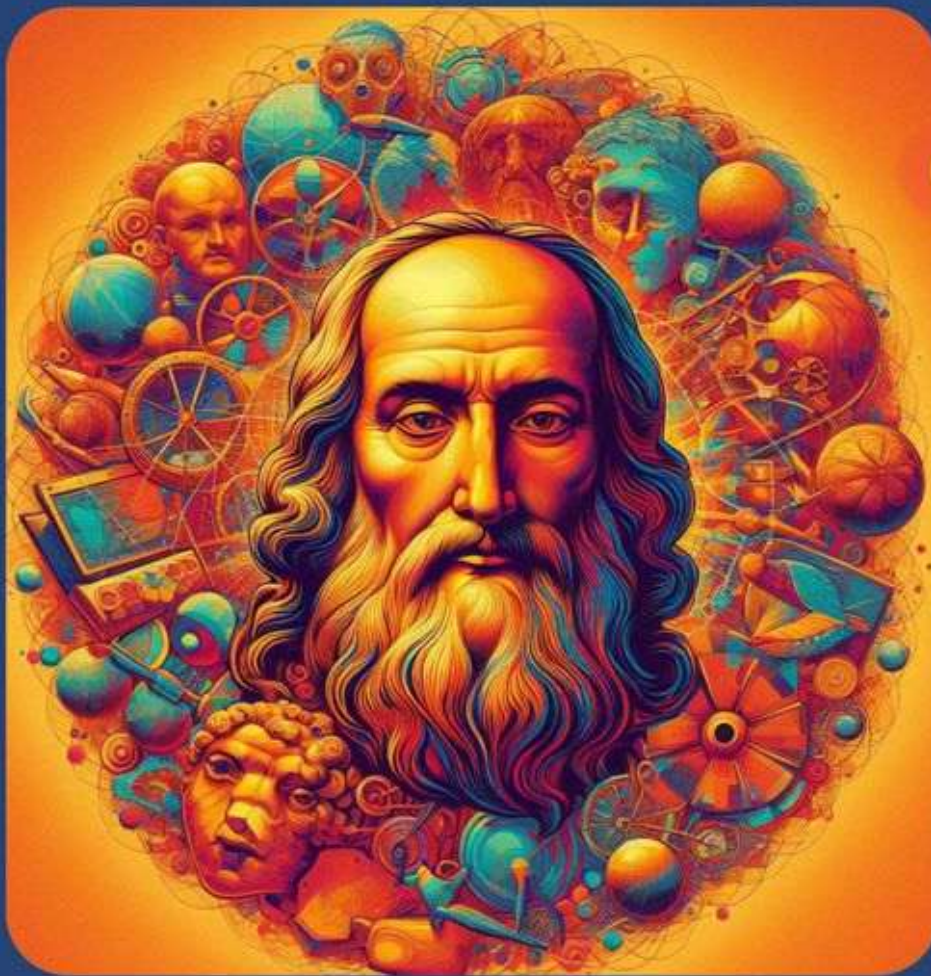




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Foreword

Welcome to the latest issue of the Journal of Contemporary Philosophical and Anthropological Studies (JCPAS). As we delve into the rich tapestry of ideas and inquiries presented in this volume, it is with great pleasure that we continue our journey through the diverse realms of philosophy and anthropology. The contributions within these pages reflect the vibrant and evolving landscape of contemporary thought, offering fresh perspectives and engaging dialogues that stimulate the intellect.

In this issue, our esteemed authors grapple with pressing questions, explore new methodologies, and push the boundaries of knowledge in both philosophical and anthropological domains. As we navigate through their thought-provoking analyses, we invite you to join us in the pursuit of deeper understanding and critical reflection.

The Journal of Contemporary Philosophical and Anthropological Studies remains committed to fostering a community of scholars dedicated to advancing our comprehension of the human experience. We extend our gratitude to the contributors for their valuable insights and to our readers for their continued support. May this collection of essays inspire further exploration and contribute to the ongoing dialogue in these dynamic fields.

Thank you for embarking on this intellectual voyage with us.

Nataliya Bhinder

Editor-in-Chief

Journal of Contemporary Philosophical and Anthropological Studies

Research Article

From Culture to Cultures: Understanding Edward Sapir's Prophecy through Herderian Lenses

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Abstract: In 1934, the American anthropologist, Edward Sapir made a scientific prophecy on the concept of culture which remained largely overlooked but have proved to be surprisingly accurate and relevant in the contemporary era. He was focused on conceptual pluralisation and fragmentation. By predicting the pluralisation of culture, Sapir captured a trend that we can witness nowadays in the continuously growing number of cultures, subcultures, counterculture, and new conceptual interpretations and ramifications. His use of the Herderian concept of culture(s) requires a close inspection facilitated by interdisciplinary methodologies such as historical epistemology. Widely credited as the creator of the term “culture” in its plural sense, Johann Gottfried von Herder played a crucial role for Sapir’s academic formation. In the ruptures and continuities that culture as a concept has experienced, one can find valuable epistemological insights. Sapir did not come up with a daring prediction out of an uninformed position. Putting Sapir’s prophetic statement in the context of his academic and professional journey and in the context of the general research trends of the twentieth century reveals a strong Herderian heritage intensified by the psychologisation of anthropology that has ultimately led to an increasingly powerful and progressively sophisticated pluralisation of culture.

Keywords: Sapir; Herder; culture; psychologisation; historical epistemology

1. Introduction

Culture has become a pluralizing notion that characterises the contemporary lifestyles. Our vocabularies have been invaded by numerous concepts from “Western culture”, “Oriental culture” and “Global culture” to “Sexual-psychopath culture” and “Police canteen culture” (Mridha, 2021). Culture, cultures, cultural are words that became part of our daily lives. Unlike other concepts, culture escapes comprehensive normativity demands and becomes increasingly fragmented and plural. As early as the 1930s, Edward Sapir, in his academic article, predicted this tendency:

I venture to predict that the concept of culture which will then emerge, fragmentary and confused as it will undoubtedly be, will turn out to have a tougher, more vital, importance for social thinking than the tidy tables of contents attached to this or that group which we have been in the habit of calling “cultures”. (Sapir, 1934, p. 415)

Sapir had a great contribution to the rise of the concept of culture to intellectual dominance (Steigerwald, 2004). As a Boasian, Sapir promoted a Herderian concept of culture. He explicitly used the term “cultures” in plural. His focus on the word “culture” and its pluralisation process has deep historical and epistemological implications. Predicting the pluralisation of culture required deep contextual insights into the epistemological structures that are dealt with. According to Guillan (2014), knowing something about the studied phenomena is sometimes insufficient to make a reliable prediction. The more complex the studied phenomenon, the more difficult it is to obtain this prediction. Yet, Sapir achieved an impressive level of accuracy for the characterisation of extremely complex cultural tendencies that continue to unfold nowadays.

This study’s distinct contribution is in presenting the concept of culture from a new perspective. It expands on Herder’s work by examining a short article by Edward Sapir, which was first published in 1934, and putting it into its historical and epistemological context. The

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main aim is to decrypt Sapir's prophecy and to offer a detailed critique. Exploring it could help researchers figure out the complex epistemological links that form the concept of culture. Within this study, culture is defined as a scientific construction arising out of a specific community's historical and epistemological context. The present research shows that Sapir's prophecy has a cyclical connotation and a heavy Herderian heritage.

Although the notion of prediction intersects with our general idea of science, philosophy of science has never given it a great consideration. Prediction has been a topic studied mainly indirectly in the context of theorisations on testing or explaining (Brenner, 2020). Yet, scientific predictions and prophecies have always attracted scholarly attention. Articles such as "The Prophecy of George Grant" (Badertscher, 1980) and "The Prophecy of Ulrich Beck: Signposts for the Social Sciences" (Mythen, Burgess, & Wardman, 2018) illustrate this tendency in fields such as philosophy, political science and sociology. The fascination for scientific prophecies bypassed Sapir's works. His 1934 prediction remained largely overlooked by the academic community. Researchers such as Babcock (2012) make reference to this statement made by Sapir but its importance, scope and accuracy were not properly analysed in academic works. Other predictions on the concept of culture were made, but even three decades after Sapir's bold statement, researchers seemed perplex as they tried to examine the future of the concept of culture:

Conceiving culture as an ideational subsystem within a vastly complex system, biological, social and symbolic, and grounding our abstract models in the concrete particularities of human social life, should make possible a continuing dialectic that yields deepening understanding. Whether in this quest the concept of culture is progressively refined, radically reinterpreted, or progressively extinguished will in the long run scarcely matter if along the way it has led us to ask strategic questions and to see connections that would otherwise have been hidden. (Keesing, 1974, p. 94)

Conceptual pluralisation represents a complex process that requires a careful epistemological attention. In her article "Step toward an Epistemological Pluralization of the Museum", Scholz (2017) analyses the concepts of cosmopolitan memory and shared heritage in order to reflect on the dilemmas that surround the museums and their working processes. Despite the abundance of studies on culture as an academic notion, there has been a very limited body of research that present the Herderian concept of culture within a historical and epistemological context. According to Despres (1995), a large portion of contemporary academic literature constantly befuddles its readers by giving to the concept of culture the status of a nice but mostly intractable idea. Culture will maintain this confusing, idle and unproductive status for as long as accommodates the structure of the general fetish with linear causality, control and bureaucratic paradigms. One cannot achieve theoretical precision on the concept of culture without understanding epistemological bounds and interfaces with recent historical dynamics.

In his statement, Sapir explicitly indicates the predictive nature of his reflection by using the verb "predict". As Force (1982, p. 464) states "a prophecy is a prediction and to prophesy is to predict". For this reason, in this article, the terms "prophecy" and "prediction" are used interchangeably.

Sapir's prediction hasn't an esoteric character. Based on his knowledge and the analysis of contemporary and historical variables, Sapir accurately predicted the trajectory of a concept that has always had a highly instable nature. In this specific case, one can discuss Sapir's statement as a scientific prophecy. According to Adam and Groves (2007), the rise of scientific prophecies has complex historical configurations interlaced with religious influences. Throughout centuries, many scholars have tried to predict and forecast phenomena. From a scientific and epistemological point of view, prophecies have become an object of major academic interest. While Taylor (1998) focuses on William James's prophecy on the demise of positivism in American psychology, Loye (2001) analyses Darwin's striking capacity for scientific prophecy. In the light of science, prophecies come into a close alignment with the historical analysis that requires a broad and informed consideration.

Predictions have a very difficult nature. Uncertainty adds another layer of complexity. When dealing with a limited body of knowledge, various competing theories, and consequently conflicting predictions may arise. Despite existing in natural sciences, conflicting predictions concern social sciences to a greater extent (Guillan, 2014).

Often scholars assume divergent positions regarding the same phenomena. Sapir's prophecy could be viewed as a bold and risky statement. Other philosophers and researchers had different views on the future of the concept of culture. During the 1930, scholars such as E.C. Cline called for the extension of the concept of culture:



Culture is the product of everyone to the extent that he uses his tools in his endeavors to make the best contributions that he can make. The concept of culture must, however, be extended still further. Culture is more than the product of individuals, more than the number of such products extant at any time; culture also includes the capacity to use for human betterment, individual and social, the existing cultural products. The measure of the level of culture in any given society must take cognizance of both these phases: the culture produced and the culture used. (Cline, 1939, p. 498)

Despite some similarities between Sapir's and Cline's views, one should acknowledge that the extension of the concept of culture and its pluralisation are not the same processes. The tension between conceptual narrowing and extending has divided the academic community. For example, Kessing (1974) argued that "the challenge in recent years has been to narrow the concept of "culture" so that it includes less and reveals more" (p. 73). Sapir's unique perspective goes beyond the dilemma between narrowing and extending conceptual links by accentuating the increasingly plural nature of culture

2. Materials and Methods

Unlike other notions, culture seems to have a significant epistemic element. For this reason, from a methodological perspective, this is a theoretical study that seeks to advance through historical epistemology the definition and the understanding of the concept of culture, more particularly, its pluralisation.

From the point of view of historical epistemology, scientific prophecies represent an extremely fruitful topic. According to Guillan (2014), explanation has a causal linkage of knowledge that is epistemologically much clearer. Predicting something, on the other hand, involves a careful consideration of multiple alternatives. Historical epistemology seems to defy this challenge by drawing on the strength of structural concepts in scientific discourses and knowledge. It may help explaining complex dynamics in social and academic environments, and their impact on conceptual frameworks.

Weir (2008) notes that historical epistemologists define scientific truth as a provisional product. Science is not stable or uniform. Historical epistemology brings to light internal ruptures that overturn previously accepted theories. Scientists and researchers need to acknowledge and work with these ruptures. The complex interplay of ruptures and continuities carries a tremendous amount of valuable information. Dissociating itself from the idea of science as the process of constitution of cumulative and permanent truths, historical epistemology uses ruptures and continuities to build a more complete and multi-dimensional picture of scientific discourse.

The dominant conception of prediction has a formal nature (Brenner, 2020). It seems important to emphasise that a prediction can be scientific or non-scientific. According to Guillan (2014), an essential feature of a prediction consists in the theoretical existence of multiple possibilities around a phenomenon that has not yet occurred. In the case of a scientific prediction, uncertainty emerges as a critical issue that may directly affect the production of scientific knowledge. As a consequence, uncertainty becomes a key element in the consideration of the epistemological limits of a prediction. The scientific requirements add a new layer of complexity.

The book chapter "Evolving realities: Scientific prediction and objectivity from the perspective of historical epistemology", by Brenner (2020), represents a particularly important reference for reflecting on the link between scientific prophecies, predictions and their understanding through the lens of historical epistemology. A scientific prediction remains highly dependent from the context in which its author lived and worked. Brenner (2020) gives a special attention to historical epistemology insights as a way to provide coherent accounts of genuine scientific knowledge and practice. For Brenner (2020), predictive power has a highly rational value despite the fact that it may vary during the course of history. Since predicting refers to a complex act of judging, researchers have at their disposal numerous techniques that need to be complemented by a deep historical analysis.

3. Results and Discussion

Sapir's prediction was not spontaneous. It had a very specific objective. Brenner (2020), defines a prediction as a singular statement deduced from a set of premises. Despite its relative lack of specific details, Sapir's statement gave important clues about the evolution of the concept of science. Guillan (2014) argues that any prediction about the future of science must

have a generic character. Cognitive indetermination dictates this rule because the more detailed the prediction is, the less confidence and precision one can attribute to it.

One cannot separate Sapir's prediction from the rest of his work and academic activity. Given the complexity of reality, formulating a singular concrete prediction necessarily must include a multilayered network of knowledge (Brenner, 2020). This network of knowledge requires a careful analysis that takes into consideration the rich historical and epistemological context in which Sapir developed his activity.

Brenner (2020) notes that one may define a prediction as a simple derivation of a consequence from a determined hypothesis. However, this definition does not capture the motivations of researchers and scientists. Brenner (2020) emphasises the temporal and psychological dimensions by describing predictions as surprising, informative and novel statements. As a matter of fact, to have value, predictions should introduce something new and meaningful to the existing body of knowledge.

3.1. *Sapir's Intellectual Baggage*

Sapir was born in Prussia in a family of Lithuanian Jews. During his childhood, the family moved several times, from Prussia to England, and then to the United States. At fourteen, he won a Pulitzer scholarship to attend the prestigious Horace Mann High School, but he used it to for his undergraduate education at Columbia University. Entering Columbia, Sapir completed in only three years a four-years Bachelor's in German. He received his M.A in German but his Ph.D. was in anthropology (Darnell, & Irvine, 1997). Sapir submitted in 1905 his master's thesis on Johann Gottfried Herder's *Treatise on the Origin of Language* (Reichel, 2020). His M.A. Degree marked the transition from linguistics to anthropology. This transition was a relatively smooth one. Sapir's thesis reflected the influence of his mentor, Franz Boas (Darnell, & Irvine, 1997).

Akil et al. (2018) establish parallels between the theories of Herder and Sapir. As a matter of fact, Sapir followed many Herderian postulates. For both of them, language became a critical component in the analysis of culture. To answer complex questions such as "How did language come about?", Sapir turned to the works of Herder (Frost, 1992). He conceptualised language as an operating guide to culture. The bound between language and culture served as an opening to psychological dimensions. While Sapir defended the relativity of thought, his work was predominantly concentrated towards cultural relativity. In this equation, languages came to carry the essential symbolic elements that guide cultures (Everett, 2013).

3.1.1. The Herderian Heritage

Herder has had an enormous influence on the concept of culture. The Boasian school of American anthropology actively used the Herderian notions to establish the most influential modern meanings of culture (Kroeber, 1992). The notion of *Volksgeist* has a special importance in the Herderian tradition. Herder argued for the existence of tight links between a nation's language and culturally influenced cognitive styles. Since individuals learn to think and to perceive reality through words, language represents an essential element in the formation of the whole of human knowledge (Omenukwa, 2023).

Sapir's M.A. thesis was on Herder's theory of language. His fascination for the German culture started long before meeting Boas. However, it was Boas who introduced Sapir to anthropological texts that were profoundly influenced by German traditions (Gonçalves, 2012). Sapir's concept of (genuine) culture has had a critical importance in his work (Brown, 2008). Without making any reference to Herder, Sapir promoted ideas that have an explicit Herderian tone: "To deny to the genius of a people an ultimate psychological significance and to refer it to the specific historical development of that people is not, after all is said and done, to analyze it out of existence" (Sapir, 1924, p. 406). By using not only similar notions and but also arguments, Sapir had a great contribution the popularisation of the Herderian concept of culture.

3.1.2. Herder's *Treatise on the Origin of Language*

During the beginning of the 20th century, Sapir had a major role in elevating language as an essential determinant that shapes our perception of reality and the world around us (Zamruddin, 2017). The controversial link between culture and language has deep roots that can be traced back to Herder's *Treatise on the Origin of Language* (Lafontant, 2002).

At its root, Sapir's concept of culture has a great Herderian load. According to Solanki (2022), in his prize-winning essay written for the Berlin Academy of Arts and Sciences, Herder insisted not only on the link between language and culture but also on his unique

conceptualisation of cultural diversity. Besides analysing the origins of language, the Treatise features Herder's aural theory of cultural diversity built around arguments that critically reflect on the encounters between Europeans and non-Europeans. Unlike most of his contemporaries, Herder did not establish immutable hierarchies and did not conceptualise cultural differences in terms of visible features such as skin colour.

"We can listen, and, as it were, listening, think of words much longer, almost perpetually. - Hearing is, therefore, to the soul, what green, as the central colour, is to the eye. Man is a creature formed for speech" (Herder, 1772/1827, p. 54). One of the main features of Herder's Treatise on the Origin of Language is listening to difference. As Solanski (2022) argues, listening to difference "involves an openness to listening to the voices and sounds of the othered by listeners who recognise their distinct situated, embodied positionalities. It offers alternate possibilities to conceive of human diversity as continually in formation" (p. 1). For Herder, audition is more important than vision. "Hearing is the central sense, with respect to the time to in which it operates, and therefore the sense for language" (Herder, 1772/1827, p. 54). Through his emphasis on fluid dimensions such as time, Herder attributes to the act of hearing/listening a new layer of complexity and importance in the equation of culture.

"The arts and sciences, culture and language, have refined nations upon one grand system of progression, the most refined principle of cultivation, which nature could have selected (Herder, 1772/1827, p. 114). Language served as a starting point to understand cultural differences. Herder established a complex conceptualisation of cultural diversity based on the articulation of voice and situated performances of spoken and sung language. He rejected the ideas of hierarchy and regarded cultural diversity as a process that is continually in formation (Solanki, 2022). The idea of continuity seems to have links to the phenomena of pluralisation of culture which has a continuous multilayered dynamic. "The Roman obtained his culture from Greece, the Greek from Asia and Egypt. Thus, the chain is continually extending from its first link" (Herder, 1772/1827, p. 108).

For Herder, language serves as a portal for understanding and analyzing the human mind and nature. In the Treatise on the Origin of Language, he uses the expression "language of the soul". The triad language - soul - culture acquires much weight as a result of its sensitive interdependence. In his analysis of Herder's *Ursprung der Sprache*, Sapir (1907) emphasises the role of the individual and the individual differences by going beyond the simplistic readings that remains limited to the concept of nation. Sapir (1907) presents Herder's chain of linguistic processes through "the development in the individual, in the family, and in the nation" (p. 27).

Sapir's post-M.A. conversion linguistics-anthropology represents a complex set of continuities and discontinuities. According to Reichel (2020), in the analysis of the Treatise on the Origin of Language, Sapir dismisses many of Herder's claims such as a penchant for fluctuations in primitive languages and discards the allochronisms in Herder's theory of the origin of language. However, Sapir adopted the Herderian concept of culture with a highly individualistic character and used it throughout his career.

3.2. Tracing the Pluralisation of Culture

The link between Sapir and Herder goes beyond the importance of language in cultural phenomena. Analysing Sapir's prophecy of the pluralisation and fragmentation of the concept of culture requires a close examination of the Herderian ideas that allowed the beginning of this process. I propose to clarify the mystery behind the global popularisation of the Herderian concept of culture by restoring its historical and epistemological context.

3.2.1. The Herderian Concept of Culture

Sapir, as a Boasian relativist (Handler, 1989), was heavily influenced by his teacher and mentor. For example, both Boas and Sapir emphasised the link between culture and language (Rhode, Voyer, & Gleibs, 2016). This link had an enormous significance in Herder's work. As a matter of fact, to a certain extent, the Herderian ideas can be seen as an anticipation to the theories developed by Sapir and his students according to which language determines psychological processes of thought and behaviour (King, 2016). Despite assuming a critical position on multiple of Herder's views, Sapir actively employed Herder's spiritual notion of a culture's soul. The spiritual dimension obtained a special position in the conception of culture developed by Sapir (Pupavac, 2012). This could be explained by his fascination for psychology discussed in the next chapters.

"No thought of the human soul was ever lost, but also no perfect skill came suddenly into existence" (Herder, 1772/1827, p. 108). By underlying the role of education, "Herder's

characterisation of humans as essentially cultural beings” (Gare, 2016, p. 309) goes hand in hand with Sapir’s conceptions. In his prophecy, Sapir (1934) explicitly uses the word “cultures”. Given his academic background, one can interpret it as reference to the Herderian ideas. It seems important to emphasise that Herder was the first to use the word “cultures” in the plural sense (Gare, 2016).

3.2.2. The Sapirian Concept of Culture

Thanks to Sapir, the term “culture” became a social science instrument (Begaye, 2007). Culture acquired an unseen importance and power in science. “Sapir’s concept of culture as something active, which each person interacts with individually” (Ramage, & Shipp, 2009, p. 278) carries a cryptic Herderian legacy that has remained largely overlooked.

For Sapir “language acts like a polarizing lens on a camera in filtering reality” (Zamruddin, 2017, p. 83). In other words, culture became a multi-functional tool for understanding the surrounding world. Sapir’s amorphous concept suits culture for numerous purposes. Given the subjective and abstract features of the concept of culture, contemporary human beings have started to define culture by what sort of music they listen, what sort of television they watch, what sort of clothes they buy. As a consequence, nowadays we talk about hip-hop culture, Trekkie culture, “tweener” culture and NASCAR culture” (Steigerwald, 2004).

The concept of culture “is necessarily something of a statistical fiction and it is easy to see that the social psychologist and the psychiatrist must eventually induce him to carefully reconsider his terms” (Sapir, 1932, p. 237). By adding a very explicit and powerful psychological element, Sapir made the concept of culture more permeable to subjective interpretations. Generally speaking, “culture is whatever we want it to be” (Steigerwald, 2004, p. 28). In this way, the pluralisation of culture is inevitable. Pluralisation made the concept of culture more multi-functional than ever. Steigerwald (2004) orients our attention to the lack of precision surrounding the concept of culture. The psychological element encourages and intensifies this tendency: “Culture, then, varies infinitely, not only as to manifest content but as to the distribution of psychologic emphases on the elements and implications of this content” (Sapir, 1932, p. 239). With respect to the definition of culture, Sapir (1932) makes a clear delimitation between the “the cultures of groups and the cultures of individuals” (p. 239) which reflects an intersection between anthropology and psychology during the twentieth century.

3.3. Contextualizing the Prophecy

Throughout his career Sapir showed a great interest in psychology. The analysed prophecy is a part of Sapir’s 1934 article “The Emergence of the Concept of Personality in a Study of Cultures” which was published in the *Journal of Social Psychology*. One needs to be aware that Sapir’s prophecy was not written in a vacuum. According to Stern (2022), during the 1930s, Sapir built his theoretisations around a unique construction of the individual as an active shaper of history, rethinking the concept of culture itself.

Given the similarity between the Sapirian and Herderian concepts of culture, the historical and epistemological context of psychologisation of anthropology emerged partly out of the Herderian heritage. In his 1934 paper, Sapir gave a special attention to psychological processes in order to go beyond the formal statements of culture and understand the interconnections between behavioural systems. Psychologised anthropology came out as response to the epistemological problems and dilemmas of the twentieth century (Spindler, 1978).

3.3.1. Psychologisation as an Historical and Epistemological Process

The penetration of psychological knowledge into academic circles and cultural milieus induces a new set of questions and problems. Similarly to Fils (2019), one can read the process of psychologisation from an epistemological point of view. Psychologisation reveals many epistemic paradoxes in science (De Vos, 2011). At the same time, this phenomenon seems to solve the problems that the academic community faces. In fact, “psychologizing is an epistemic adjustment” (Margolis, 1997, p. 301).

Society does not remain isolated from the changes that occur in science. Psychologisation of society can be defined as an epistemological expansion (Adolfsson, 2022). It inevitably leads to pluralisation of concepts, models and frameworks. Psychologizing logic and knowledge may include diverse positions and currents (Margolis, 1997). Epistemologically speaking, psychologisation represents a complex process that has occurred over a long period of time through the (re)interpenetration of the existing scientific

approaches.

3.3.2. The Role of Psychology in the 20th Century United States

Due to the unique Protestant and Jewish context, America's psychologised discussions of human nature have a special importance (Heinze, 2001). The capitalistic mentality also encouraged this tendency (Parker, 2010). In the twentieth century, American anthropology started to focus on psychological questions (Spindler, 1978). Leading anthropologists such as Sapir oriented their efforts towards understanding the psychological dilemmas and contradictions of American life (Stern, 2022). In 1932, Sapir wrote for the *Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology*:

There is much tacit mythology in such hugely complex societies as our own which makes it possible for the personal significance of sub-cultures to be overlooked. For each individual, the commonly accepted fund of meanings and values tends to be powerfully specialized or emphasized or contradicted by types of experience and modes of interpretation that are far from being the property of all men. (Sapir, 1932, p. 238)

Psychology became a major concern in many academic circles. The interaction between psychological behaviour and cultural processes raises multiple unsolved problems. If culture consists of complex configurations of activities, as Sapir theorised, then mental development varies according to random cultural and psychological fluctuations (Murray, 1995). Combining psychology and anthropology brings to light several historical and epistemological questions that may lead to an engaged process of inquiry. Psychologisation has become a worldwide phenomenon. Lerner and Rivkin-Fish (2021) link the process of psychologisation with the intensive Americanisation that occurs in the contemporary era.

3.3.3. Psychologisation of American Anthropology

The interest for indigenous populations reinforced Herder's role in American academia. Dueck (2020) classifies Herder as the father of the indigenous psychology. The author emphasises how Herder focused on the plurality of cultures and the sense of belonging to a particular community through the invisible ties of language, history, habit, tradition, memory and feeling. The fascination for indigenous psychology is a stable feature of Sapir's oeuvre. Early works also show this tendency:

We may conceive, somewhat schematically, the development of culture and language to have taken place as follows: A primitive group, among whom even the beginnings of culture and language are as yet hardly in evidence, may nevertheless be supposed to behave in accordance with a fairly definite group psychology, determined, we will suppose, partly by race mind, partly by physis environment. On the basis of this group psychology, whatever tendencies it may possess, a language and a culture will slowly develop. As both of these are directly determined, to begin with, by fundamental factors of race and physical environment, they will parallel each other somewhat closely, so that the forms of culture activity will be reflected in the grammatical system of the language. (Sapir, 1912, p. 240)

Sapir wrote his prediction in a unique historical and epistemological context. He had an essential role in refining the link between culture and psychology. American Anthropology became more permeable to the ideas that originated in psychology. According to Spindler (1978), the psychologising of anthropology had a powerful effect in the American academic environments where it found a generally supportive response, while in other countries, such as the United Kingdom, this trend went largely unheeded. By the mid-thirties, the so-called personality and culture school gained a continuously growing popularity in the United States. Conceptual exchange between psychology and anthropology was very strong. In 1948, the Boasian anthropologist Clyde Kluckhohn wrote for American Psychologist: "We have given you the concept of culture which is now part of psychological thinking. We ask from you in return a formulation of the human nature which is the raw stuff that all cultures act upon" (p. 442).

The potentially problematic psychologisation of scientific disciplines did not start recently (Busse, 2017). Psychologizing logic and knowledge may occur under many forms. From a contextual point of view, one should not underestimate the impact that psychoanalysis had on science during the first half of the twentieth century which started to actively psychologise the individual experience (Parker, 2010). Nowadays psychological theories dominate an increasing number of social and individual spheres (Lerner, & Rivkin-Fish, 2021). Psychologisation is a powerful process with deep and long-term effects on academic,

political and social phenomena (De Vos, 2011).

4. Conclusions

The predictive power motivates and encourages the pursuit of science (Brenner, 2020). This paper presents Sapir's prediction and its remarkable accuracy by taking into consideration the historical background in which it was produced. As Brenner (2020) notes, successful predictions have an impressive power by highly reinforcing our belief in scientific classifications and revoking the idea of theories as purely artificial systems. The scientific prophecy made by Sapir in 1934 may astonish us by its accuracy. Today, nearly a century after this prophecy, the pluralisation of the concept of culture seems as a natural process. The scientific community has given up the search for a singular notion. Authors such as Wijsen and Tanner (2002) firmly state that a unitary concept of culture cannot emerge from any detailed and rigorous research into any society. Even in the smallest and hypothetically most uniform societies, a singular construct cannot be achieved.

Concepts belong to the historical and epistemological contexts in which they emerged and evolved. "Sapir's individualistic concept of culture" (Stern, 2022, p. 171) has an enormous theoretical importance. It is essential to position Sapir's prophecy in its scientific, historical and epistemological contexts, to consider what it can teach us about the value of our conceptual frameworks.

The pluralisation of the concept of culture occurred through its gradual psychologisation. Sapir's analysis of Herder's Treatise on the Origin of Language played an important part in his academic career. It marked significant interdisciplinary transitions. Despite continuous shifts, throughout his life, Sapir remained faithful to the Herderian conception of culture. In the light of these links to Herder and his pioneer ideas on the plural term "cultures", the prophecy of conceptual pluralisation acquires new meanings and explanations. Sapir's interest in psycho-logical variables goes hand in hand with his individualistic conception of culture. Its further evolution and pluralisation need a careful analysis of historical and epistemological contexts and their intersections

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Research Article

The Study of Segregation and its Consequences in the Kabul City

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Abstract: This study investigates urban segregation in Kabul, the capital of Afghanistan, utilizing a multifaceted theoretical framework that integrates various explanatory models of segregation. The research targets the general population of Kabul, with a sample size of 233 individuals selected through a non-probabilistic cluster sampling technique. Data were collected using a comprehensive questionnaire focused on the Afghan context, incorporating insights from relevant studies. The analysis was conducted using SPSS software, employing both descriptive and inferential statistical methods. Demographic characteristics and participant responses in ethnically dominated areas were summarized using frequencies and percentages, while key variables were examined using measures of central tendency, dispersion, and distribution, including mean, standard deviation, variance, skewness, and kurtosis. The segregation tendencies of Kabul residents were analyzed using T-test, ANOVA and Spearman correlation. The results reveal a pronounced level of segregation within Kabul, with significant implications including the reinforcement of ethnocentric attitudes, the preservation of distinct subcultural identities, enhanced feelings of community security, and increased intra-group political and social engagement. The study found that followers of Shia Islam tend to segregate themselves from other religious groups, while the Pashtun ethnic group shows the lowest tendency toward segregation. Additionally, Kabul citizens tend to live among their own religious groups and the lower the level of education of individuals, the greater their tendency to separation.

Keywords: segregation; subculture; ethnocentrism; feelings of security

1. Introduction

In general terms, the concept of segregation is related to the idea of distance and separation between different population groups, and/ or relative social distance occupied by a wide array of ethnic groups (Reardon & Firebaugh, 2002; White et al., 2005). In sociology, segregation means social distance and ethnic preference dynamics (Fossett, 2006). In fact, cities, as products of division of labor, not only allocate social and economic values to different occupations but also reflect this division in residential spaces, particularly along ethnic and religious lines. Thus, urban life can be characterized by distinct separations.

From another point of view, segregation can be broadly defined as the degree of spatial separation between two or more population groups in a region (Yao et al., 2019) and according to Firman; there are three theoretical approaches to explain patterns of spatial segregation. The first approach is the human ecology approach, which views the city as a whole and examines changes in the city due to competition for space. The second approach, social and ecological factor approach, maps the spatial patterns of economic and social characteristics of the city through principal component analysis, encompassing social, economic, and ethnic dimensions. The third theory is the behavioral approach, focusing on housing market demands such as demographic structures, household income levels, access to bank credits, and interest rates (Firman, 2004).

In the theory of polycentric city, Harris and Ullman consider multiple nuclei instead of a single core, where each nucleus is associated with a specialized activity. Different nuclei may have emerged from the city's early stages based on division of labor (Harris & Ullman, 2020). Louis Wirth identifies the main sociological issue as discovering specific social actions and social organizations within relatively permanent residential areas that are densely populated

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and are socially heterogeneous. He views the city as a vast, permanent, and densely populated residence of socially heterogeneous individuals (Wirth, 2012). According to him, a larger population leads to increased spatial segregations based on race, ethnicity, and status. In his article titled "Urbanization as a Way of Life," Wirth attempts to analyze the urban cultural diversity through three independent variables: population size, population density, and cultural heterogeneity. His fundamental argument is that urban life is characterized by social isolation and disorganization, as all cities are large, dense, and heterogeneous.

Ernest Burgess stated that the typical tendency of urban growth is the expansion radially from its central business district by a series of concentric circles, as (a) the central business district, (b) a zone of deterioration, (c) a zone of workingmen's homes, (d) a residential area, and (e) a commuters' zone. manifest the paradigms of united concentric zones, each with its own distinct characteristics (Burgess, 2015).

Jami have investigated the spatial-social segregation of educational and occupational groups in Ardabil through quantitative research with a descriptive-analytical approach. The research findings show a moderate separation between the strata in the city indicating that the spatial structure of Ardabil city exhibits a concentrated pattern, and areas experiencing the highest urban deprivation are located in the northwest and southeast, primarily encompassing informal settlements, areas with irregular structures, and areas with a rural background (Jami et al., 2022).

Similarly, in a study titled "Analysis of the Impact of the location of Ambassadors and Foreigners in the Evolution of the Socio-Spatial Segregation Structure of Tehran During the Qajar Era" historical and descriptive-analytical methods were employed. It shows that foreigners during the Qajar period occupied prominent residential areas of Tehran in various intervals and contributed to the expansion and strengthening of the phenomenon of social-spatial segregation in Tehran (Hosseini, 2023).

Balali and Makhdoomi, in their 2021 study using a survey method, examined spatial segregation or social segregation? a comparative study of marriage patterns of women in the high- and low-class regions of Hamadan province. The research results indicate that spatial segregation aligns partially with social segregation in certain cases (Balali & Makhdoomi, 2021).

Meshkini and Rahimi investigated spatial segregation patterns in Tehran using the variables of household, ethnicity, and religion. The research demonstrates significant spatial segregation in Tehran; ethnicity and religion show higher levels of binary and multi-group segregation compared to other variables. Using standard deviation, it was revealed that Tehran exhibits a highly dualistic structure based on house area. Contrary to prevailing theories, increase in household aspect is not aligned with increase in the area of residency rather population-dense houses with small areas are situated in the southern part of the city, while larger houses with fewer residents are found in the north (Meshkini & Rahimi, 2012).

Monshi Zadeh, have concluded that in the villages surrounding Nourabad city, changes in flows, relationships, and interactions between the studied villages and Nourabad city, influenced by demographic, physical, and spatial transformations due to the influx of migrants as well as urban capital formation, have significantly transformed the pattern of social segregation. In such a way that today in this region, the establishment of residential units is largely based on the economic status of their owners, and the role of ethnic and tribal affiliations in this regard has greatly diminished (Monshi Zadeh et al., 2011).

Azam Azadeh has examined the pattern of residential segregation in Tehran. According to him, while the segregation of various social groups in large cities is an accepted phenomenon, this hypothesis has not been adequately studied through scientific methods and appropriate indexing. In this article, considering the diverse consequences of residential segregation in cities, spatial-segregation among various socio-economic groups has been tested using various statistical indices based on secondary data, confirming the separation of different social bases and its dimensions according to verified areas (Azam Azadeh, 2003).

As a multi ethnic country Afghanistan is among the fastest urbanizing countries in the world with an annual urban growth rate of 5 percent and if this trend continues, the urban population could increase by 15 million by 2060, with half of the population residing in cities (Beall & Esser, 2005). This is due to fragile security situation, poor economic conditions, lack of basic services and public utilities in the rural areas and social preferences (Ahmadi, 2019; Sarwari & Ono, 2022). Following 2001, Afghanistan's major cities, especially Kabul, experienced significant population growth due to the influx of internally displaced persons (Chaturvedi et al., 2020) and massive return of refugees and migrants (Ahmadi, 2019). As its consequence, the city population reached over six million by 2017 (Hidayat & Kajita, 2019).

As the largest city of Afghanistan, Kabul has an ethnic urban landscape (Hidayat & Kajita, 2019) and the city's ethnic landscape is divided among Pashtun, Tajik, Hazara and Uzbek groups, each settled in distinct areas based on historical and geographical factors (Sarwari & Ono, 2023). Ethnic fragmentation and/or segregation and socio-economic diversity in Kabul pose challenges for urban planning and development (Habib, 2011).

In Kabul city, the segregation not only leads to consequences like poverty, inequality, and the formation of crime-prone areas but also prevents urban society from embracing its differences. In Afghanistan, with pronounced ethnic-religious divides (Ishtiaq et al., 2024), this issue can particularly and significantly affect urban life in Kabul city. Realities indicate that some of Kabul's ethnic-religious conflicts stem from an unwillingness to accept cultural differences, and due to segregated choice of Kabul citizens, the conflict became sever. The examples of such conflicts as historical realities of Afghanistan could be observed in the ethnically concentrated areas of Kabul. Segregation of ethnicities and sects in Kabul has reduced inter-ethnic interactions, leading to a lack of communal belonging among different ethnic groups (Sarwari & Ono, 2022). Consequently, ethnic-religious divides have widened, often resulting in inter-group conflicts.

Meanwhile, (Habib, 2011), argue that one of the serious issues in major cities of Afghanistan, particularly Kabul, is the phenomenon of segregation, where social integration has failed to occur, leading to increased social distance among Kabul's citizens. The consequences of such segregation can be observed in the inability to accept differences, wider inequalities, and an increase in crime and distrust among Kabul's residents. Governmental and executive bodies in the Kabul city such as the Ministry of Urban Development, Ministry of Refugees, Kabul Municipality, and other institutions have not made sufficient efforts to tackle segregation, its causes and consequences.

Therefore, it is required to investigate the extent and intensity of segregation, as well as its influential factors and consequences. Reliable and systematic information obtained through scientific research in this area will contribute to a precise understanding of this issue and will assist activists in achieving more effective solutions. Given these, the current research, which focuses on an exploratory approach, examining segregation and its consequences at the Kabul city, can be perceived as significant both theoretically and practically.

Theoretically, there has been a lack of serious and impactful research in identifying the factors and consequences of segregation in major cities of Afghanistan. This research can help fill the knowledge gap and address the lack of scientific knowledge regarding segregation. From a practical point of view, it is expected that this research, by identifying the extent and consequences of segregation in Kabul city, will be utilized by governmental and urban planning entities to promote social integration and mitigate segregation effects.

Research Objectives

Segregation, its extent and intensity as well as its consequences in the city of Kabul are the main issues of this study. Considering these the objectives of this study are specifically as following:

1. Identification of the extent and intensity of segregation in the Kabul city through analysing the segregation tendency of it's residents.
2. Analysing the consequences of segregation in the Kabul city through describing the socio-political activities of ethnic groups.

2. Materials and Methods

Methodologically, the present study is descriptive-analytical as a frequently used method (Ischak et al., 2019; Mehri & Davoudpour, 2019), focusing on describing the extent and intensity of segregation in the Kabul city. In terms of objective, this is an applied study (Niiniluoto, 1993); in terms of data nature, it is quantitative (Bloomfield & Fisher, 2019; Gunter, 2013; Holton & Burnett, 2005); in terms of data collection tool, it is survey-based (Nardi, 2018); and in terms of unit of analysis, it is non-case oriented. The statistical population under study is Kabul city, and using non-probabilistic cluster sampling method (Levy & Lemeshow, 2013; Peregrine, 2018), a sample size of 233 individuals residing in various districts of Kabul were surveyed by employing Krejcie and Morgan (Chuan & Penyelidikan, 2006).

A questionnaire was used for data collection, selected as it aligns with the dominant approach and method of this research. The questions were developed and formatted based



on previous studies in different regions and with input from relevant stakeholders to ensure compatibility with the demographic conditions of the research population. Various tests were conducted to assess the validity (face, construct) and reliability (Cronbach's alpha) of the measurement tool. The initial form of the questionnaire was reviewed by researchers, university professors, experts, and the statistical community to ensure validity. Cronbach's alpha was also utilized to confirm the reliability of the measurement tool. Likert scale was used to measure the main variables of the research: cultural preservation, ethnic centrality, intra-group socio-political activities, sense of security and tranquility, and identity separation.

Results and conclusions drawn from the statistical community were incorporated into the final formulation of the measurement tool for the current research. The Cronbach's alpha for each of the above variables is shown in Table 1 indicates the satisfactory reliability across all spectra.

Table 1. Cronbach's alpha of the study variables

Variables	Type of variable	Number of questions	Cronbach's alpha
Segregation	Independent	10	0.74
Protection of subcultures	Dependent	7	0.77
Ethnocentrism	Dependent	6	0.70
Feeling of security	Dependent	8	0.74

In this study, the sample size was determined using the Cochran formula based on the variance of the population. Initially, 30 questionnaires were distributed to respondents according to the sampling method. Subsequently, based on the data obtained from these 30 respondents, the variance and sampling error were determined to be 0.60 and 0.10, respectively. Using the Cochran formula, a sample size of 230 individuals was calculated for the study. The following table 2 shows the demographic characteristics of the respondents of this study. To mitigate potential questionnaire reduction, the sample size was increased to 233 individuals.

Table 2. Demographic characteristics of the respondents

Characteristics	Categories	Unanswered	F	%	VP	CP
District	4th district		46	19.7	19.7	19.7
	6th district		70	30.0	30.0	49.8
	11th district		65	27.9	27.9	77.7
	12th district		52	22.3	22.3	100
Age	More than 25 years old		54	23.2	24.4	24.4
	21-25 years old	12	60	25.8	27.1	51.6
	16-20 years old		83	35.6	37.6	89.1
	Less than 15 years old		24	10.3	10.9	100
Gender	Male	9	149	63.9	66.5	66.5
	Female		75	32.2	33.5	100
Ethnicity	Uzbek		46	19.7	19.7	19.7
	Hazara		76	32.6	32.6	52.4
	Tajik		65	27.9	27.9	80.3
	Pashtun		46	19.7	19.7	100
Sect	Shia	6	98	42.1	43.2	43.2
	Sunni		129	55.4	56.8	100
Marital status	Married	6	92	39.5	40.7	40.7
	Single		134	57.5	59.3	100

Using SPSS (Allen et al., 2014), the analysis and processing of findings in this study were conducted at three levels of statistical analysis (descriptive statistics, analytical statistics, and inferential statistics). Demographic variables were examined and assessed using descriptive statistics. At the analytical statistics level, for the main research variables, quantitative indicators were first constructed for each variable, and then analyses of central tendency measures and dispersion statistics of the respective indicators were conducted. Additionally, at the inferential statistics level, linear regression was employed to assess the simultaneous effect of independent variables on the dependent variable. Furthermore, other tests such as the t-test, one-way ANOVA, and Pearson correlation coefficient were also conducted, and the results obtained from these tests were examined.



3. Results

The findings of this study are described at three levels: the tendency of respondents toward the preservation of subcultures, ethnocentrism, and feelings of security and calmness; the evaluation of the ethnic socio-political activities of the residents; and the analysis of residents' tendencies toward segregation.

4.1. Quantitative Description of Research Indicators

According to table 3, the sample size for measuring the preservation of subcultures was 233, all of whom responded to questions related to this indicator. The results related to the quantitative indicator of subculture preservation indicate that the minimum value of this variable was 1.67 and the maximum value was 5. The statistic mean shows that the average subculture preservation among the examined sample is 3.55. The standard deviation also indicates that the average dispersion of subculture preservation in the sample from the mean is 0.80. The obtained skewness coefficient is highly positive at 0.10, indicating that subculture preservation is generally lower than the mentioned average among the majority of sample size. Additionally, the kurtosis coefficient is highly negative at -0.74, indicating that the similarity among sample members in terms of subculture preservation is less than normal.

Table 3. Quantitative indicator of preservation of sub-cultures

Indicators	Values
Mean	3.55
Standard Deviation	0.80
Variance	0.65
Skewness	0.10
Skewness error	0.16
Kurtosis	-0.74
Kurtosis error	0.19
Minimum value	1.67
Maximum value	5.00

According to the table 4, the sample size for ethnocentrism measurement is 233 individuals, all of whom have responded to the questions related to this indicator. The quantitative results for ethnocentrism show that the variable ranges from a minimum of 2.43 to a maximum of 4.77. The average (mean) statistic indicates that the average level of ethnocentrism among the examined sample is 3.47. The standard deviation, which measures the average dispersion of ethnocentrism around the mean, is 0.46. The obtained kurtosis coefficient is strongly positive at 0.32, indicating that ethnocentrism tends to be lower than the mentioned average among the majority of sample. Additionally, the skewness coefficient is negative at -0.49, suggesting that there is less ethnocentrism than normal among sample size in terms of its presence.

Table 4. Quantitative indicator of ethnocentrism

Indicators	Values
Mean	3.47
Standard Deviation	0.54
Variance	.214
Skewness	0.32
Skewness error	.159
Kurtosis	-0.49
Kurtosis error	18.3
Minimum value	2.43
Maximum value	4.77

According to table 5, the results related to the quantitative indicator of sense of security and calmness indicate that the minimum value of this variable was 1.89 and the maximum was 4.78. The mean statistic shows that the average sense of security and calmness among the sample under study is 3.42. The standard deviation also indicates that the average dispersion of sense of security and calmness among the sample from the mean is 0.65. The obtained skewness coefficient is -0.10, indicating that the majority of sample members have a lower sense of security and calmness than the mentioned average. Additionally, the kurtosis coefficient is a strongly negative -0.64, suggesting that the similarity among sample members in terms of sense of security and calmness is less than normal.



Table 5. Quantitative indicator of felling of security and calmness

Indicators	Values
Mean	3.00
Standard Deviation	0.65
Variance	4.35
Skewness	-00.1
Skewness error	.159
Kurtosis	-44.6
Kurtosis error	18.3
Minimum value	.891
Maximum value	4.78

4.2. The activities of ethnic groups in Afghanistan, both intra-group and inter-group

Table (6), shows the level of socio-political activities of ethnic groups in Pashtun dominated areas of Kabul. In total, out of 25 respondents regarding the extent of ethnic activities in Pashtun areas, 6 respondents believe that Pashtuns are very active in these areas, 28 respondents believe that they are active, 51 respondents believe that the activity is moderate, 42 respondents believe that it is low, and 40 respondents believe that it is very low. Therefore, from these statistics, it can be concluded that the activities of various ethnic groups, including Pashtuns, in Pashtun areas of Kabul are moderate, with the highest activities being intra-group and intra-ethnic.

Table 6. Level of socio-political activities of ethnic groups in Pashtun dominated areas of Kabul

Ethnicity/ Scale	Very active	Active	Moderately active	Passive	Very Passive	Total
Uzbek	3	2	9	7	8	29
Hazara	3	6	10	13	20	52
Tajik	4	8	16	20	11	59
Pashtun	15	12	16	2	1	46
Total	25	28	51	42	40	186

Table 7 illustrates the level of social-political activities of ethnic groups in Tajik dominated areas of Kabul city. Overall, among the respondents, 38 individuals believe that ethnic groups are very active in these areas, 43 individuals consider the activity to be high, 48 individuals perceive it as moderate, 40 individuals describe it as low, and 20 individuals think it is very low. Therefore, based on these statistics regarding the activity of ethnic groups in predominantly Tajik areas of Kabul, it can be concluded that the activity of various ethnic groups, including Tajiks themselves, is primarily moderate. Secondly, the most significant activities of ethnic groups are both intra-group and inter-group.

Table 7. Level of socio-political activities of ethnic groups in Tajik dominated areas of Kabul

Ethnicity/ Scale	Very active	Active	Moderately active	Passive	Very Passive	Total
Uzbek	4	4	13	7	3	31
Hazara	3	8	19	14	8	52
Tajik	26	25	3	4	5	63
Pashtun	5	6	13	15	4	43
Total	38	43	48	40	20	189

Table 8 shows the level of social-political activities of ethnic groups in Hazara dominated areas of the Kabul city. Out of 42 respondents regarding the extent of ethnic activities in Hazara dominated areas, 10 believe there is very high activity, 25 believe there is high activity, 41 believe there is moderate activity, 53 believe there is low activity, and 38 believe there is very low activity among ethnic groups in Hazara dominated areas. Therefore, from these statistics, it can be concluded that the highest level of activity among various ethnic groups, including the Hazara ethnic group itself, in Hazara dominated areas of Kabul has been intra-group and intra-ethnic, and has been relatively opposed to extra-group activities.

Table 8. Level of socio-political activities of ethnic groups in Hazara dominated areas of Kabul

Ethnicity/ Scale	Very active	Active	Moderately active	Passive	Very Passive	Total
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Uzbek	12	5	14	4	4	39
Hazara	24	13	10	10	5	62
Tajik	3	4	10	15	24	56
Pashtun	3	3	7	24	5	42
Total	42	25	41	53	38	199

Table 9 shows the level of social-political activities of ethnic groups in predominantly Uzbek areas of Kabul. Out of 67 respondents regarding the extent of ethnic activities in Uzbek dominated areas, 6 individuals believe that ethnic groups are very active in these regions, 9 believe they are quite active, 27 believe they are moderately active, 53 believe they are inactive, and 76 believe they are very passive. Therefore, the conclusion drawn from these statistics regarding the extent of ethnic activities in Uzbek dominated areas is that the highest level of activity among various ethnic groups, including Uzbek themselves, in Uzbek dominated areas of Kabul has been within intra-group and intra-ethnic activities, showing significant opposition to extra-group activities.

Table 9. Level of socio-political activities of ethnic groups in Uzbek dominated areas of Kabul

Ethnicity/ Scale	Very active	Active	Moderately active	Passive	Very Passive	Total
Uzbek	1	1	3	5	15	25
Hazara	4	3	11	9	22	49
Tajik	0	4	8	17	27	56
Pashtun	1	1	5	22	12	41
Total	6	9	27	53	76	171

Table 10 shows the level of social and political activities of ethnic groups in the minority groups dominated areas in Kabul. In total, 21 respondents believed in very high activities of ethnic groups. Furthermore, 16 respondents believed that ethnic groups are active, 33 respondents believed that they are moderately active, 36 respondents believed that they are passive; and 72 respondents believed that they are very passive. Therefore, from these statistics, it can be concluded that the highest level of ethnic activities in minority groups dominated areas has been intra-group and intra-ethnic.

Table 10. Level of socio-political activities of ethnic groups in minority groups dominated areas of Kabul

Ethnicity/ Scale	Very active	Active	Moderately active	Passive	Very Passive	Total
Uzbek	3	3	4	5	10	25
Hazara	11	5	13	7	19	55
Tajik	3	7	13	18	16	57
Pashtun	4	1	3	6	27	41
Total	21	16	33	36	72	178

Finally, based on the statistics obtained from tables number 6 to 10, which indicate the nature and extent of socio-political activities of various ethnic groups in Afghanistan in their respective areas, it can be concluded that all ethnic groups in Afghanistan show a greater tendency towards intra-group and intra-ethnic social-political activities. Their extra-group activities are mostly at a relatively moderate level, while their completely open and extra-ethnic activities are relatively low and very low.

4.3. Segregation Tendency of the Participants

The segregation tendency of the participants taken place using three analytical tests including T-test, ANOVA and spearman correlation test. These analytical tests are as the following:

4.3.1. Segregation Tendency Based on t-test

Considering the demographic characteristics of the respondents the segregation tendency of the respondents of the study was analyzed. The data in table 11, compare the results of the independent T-test between Kabul citizens and demographic variables. The T-test results between gender and marital status with the segregation tendency among Kabul citizens showed no significant difference as the significance level was greater than 0.05. However, a significant difference exists between religion and the segregation tendency among Kabul citizens, with a P-value less than 0.05. Followers of Shia Islam had the highest average



scores. Therefore, it can be said that there is a significant difference in the segregation tendency based on religion among the research sample.

Table 11. Segregation tendency based on t-test

Variables	Groups	Frequency	Mean	SD	Significancy
Religion/ Sect	Shia	97	3.8247	0.98964	0.007
	Sunni	125	3.4080	1.13661	
Gender	Male	146	3.5822	1.08759	0.496
	Female	73	3.6164	1.11343	
Marital status	Married	90	3.6111	1.08818	0.777
	Single	131	3.5496	1.11088	

4.3.2. Segregation Tendency Based on ANOVA

Table 12, shows the results of ANOVA among the variables of ethnicity, age, and family income with the segregation tendency of Kabul citizens. The results of the ANOVA among the age group and family income variables with the segregation tendency of Kabul citizens indicate that there is no significant difference, as the significance level for both variables is greater than 0.05. However, the results between the ethnicity variable and the segregation tendency of Kabul citizens show a significant difference, with the Pashtun ethnic group having the lowest average score compared to other ethnic groups

Table 12. Segregation tendency based on ANOVA

Variables	Groups	Frequency	Mean	SD	F	Significancy
Ethnicity	Uzbek		3.5870	1.16573	6.495	0.000
	Hazara	76	3.8026	0.96636		
	Tajik	62	3.7581	0.93538		
	Pashtun	44	2.9773	1.22927		
	Total	228	3.5877	1.09312		
Age	Over 25 years		3.5000	0.91823	1.372	0.252
	21-25	59	3.4407	1.23555		
	16-20	81	3.7654	1.02800		
	Under 15	24	3.7500	1.11316		
	Total	216	3.6111	1.07689		
Income	>60 thousand Afs		3.2941	1.15999	1.274	0.274
	50-59 thousand	26	3,3462	1.12933		
	40-49 thousand	17	3.5882	1.17574		
	30-39 thousand	28	3.7143	1.21281		
	20-29 thousand	56	3.5179	0.95329		
	10-19 thousand	44	3.9091	0.96009		
	< 10 thousand	216	3.5787	1.08834		
	Total	17	3.2941	1.15999		

4.3.3. Segregation Tendency Based on Spearman Correlation Test

The data in table 13 show the results of the Spearman correlation test among the research variables. The correlation coefficient for the variable of religious similarity is 0.183 with a significance level of 0.006, and the correlation coefficient for the increase in the educational level is 0.228 with a significance level of 0.001. These results indicate a strong, statistically significant negative correlation at the 0.01 significance level between these variables and the segregation tendency of Kabul residents.

Table 13. Segregation tendency based on spearman correlation test

Dependent Variable	Groups	Correlation coefficient/ r	Significancy
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Segregation tendency of Kabul residents	Religion/ Sect similarities	-0.183**	0.006
	Preferring to live among one's own ethnic group		
	Increase in Education Level	-0.228**	0.001
	Preferring to live among one's own ethnic group		

Therefore, it could be stated that considering the religious/ sectarian variable, the followers of Shia Islam meaningfully tend to segregate themselves from other religious followers. Moreover, the analysis of segregation tendency based on ethnicity variable indicate the lowest tendency of the Pashtun ethnic group in living in segregation. Finally, the significant negative correlation between segregation tendency of Kabul residents and religious similarities and increase in educational levels. This mean that the Kabul citizens tend to live among their own religious groups and avoid living among members of other religious groups. Additionally, the lower the level of education of individuals, the greater their tendency to prefer separation.

4. Discussion

As Wirth (2012) views the city as a vast, permanent, and densely populated residence of socially heterogeneous individuals, with increased segregation based on race and ethnicity, Kabul city exemplifies this concept. The city is populated by individuals from various ethnic groups (Pashtun, Tajik, Hazara, and Uzbek) and religious identities (Shia and Sunni). The ethno-religious characteristics of Kabul's residents significantly influence their lifestyles, which is a primary focus of this study. This study aims to explore the extent and intensity of segregation in Kabul, along with its influential factors and consequences.

Education level, a key characteristic of the population, has attracted significant scholarly attention regarding its role and effectiveness in segregation. Jami et al. (2022) found moderate separation between educational and occupational groups in Ardabil city. In alignment with Jami's study, the current research found a significant negative correlation between the segregation tendencies of Kabul residents and their educational levels. Specifically, lower educational attainment was associated with a greater tendency toward segregation and a preference for living among one's own ethnic group.

Socially distinguished and segregated populations often spatially segregate themselves. Kabul, with its pronounced ethnic-religious divide (Ishtiaq et al., 2024), exhibits severe segregation, which hinders the urban society from embracing its diversity. This aligns with Balali and Makhdoomi's (2021) observation that spatial segregation often partially reflects social segregation.

Meshkini and Rahimi investigated spatial segregation patterns in Tehran, focusing on household, ethnicity, and religion variables. Their research revealed significant spatial segregation, with ethnicity and religion showing higher levels of binary and multi-group segregation compared to other variables. The current study, focusing on the ethno-religious characteristics of Kabul's population, found a significant correlation between these characteristics and residents' tendencies toward segregation (see Tables 11, 12, and 13).

Contrary to findings by Monshi Zadeh et al. (2011), who argued that residential unit establishment in Nourabad city was primarily based on economic status, the current study highlights the continued importance of ethnic and tribal affiliations in determining residential areas in Kabul. Previous studies by Hidayat and Kajita (2019) and Sarwari and Ono (2022) also noted that Kabul is divided based on ethnic groups, with each group historically and geographically settling in distinct areas.

Although previous studies have identified socio-cultural challenges caused by the segregated choices of Kabul's citizens, such as an unwillingness to accept cultural differences (Ishtiaq et al., 2024), the current study did not find significant tendencies among respondents to preserve sub-cultures. Despite a low similarity in responses, there was no significant intention to preserve sub-cultures (see Table 3). Similarly, while responses related to ethnocentrism were low, there was no uniform response among the sample population (see Table 4). Nonetheless, respondents reported feeling less secure and calm regarding other ethno-religious groups.

The study also examined the socio-political activities of ethnic groups in five areas of Kabul, each dominated by a specific ethnic group (Pashtun, Tajik, Hazara, Uzbek, and other minority groups). The findings indicate significant intra-ethnic and intra-group socio-political

activities (see Tables 6, 7, 8, 9, and 10). Spatial and social segregation, associated with ethnic and religious diversity in Kabul, has led to lower inter-ethnic and inter-group socio-political activities and has instead fostered significant intra-ethnic and intra-group interactions.

5. Conclusions

Segregation in the Kabul city not only leads to consequences such as poverty, inequality, and the formation of crime-prone areas but also prevents urban society from embracing its differences. In Afghanistan, being a multi-ethnic society, deeply entrenched ethnic and religious divides significantly impact urban life in Kabul. Evidence shows that some ethnic-religious conflicts in Kabul stem from a lack of cultural acceptance, exacerbated by residential segregation. Examples of such encounters can be observed throughout Afghanistan's historical reality.

Poverty and inequality further exacerbate the segregation in the Kabul city, dividing neighborhoods along ethnic lines due to unequal distribution of resources, leading to severe economic disparities. Understanding the extent and intensity of segregation in the Kabul city, its contributing factors, and its impact on urban life, including mapping different areas based on the severity of segregation, have been subjects of investigation. Research has precisely identified that segregation tendencies exist prominently in the Kabul city, with its citizens segmented into various social groups based on influential factors such as ethnicity, religion, race, and language.

Moreover, such conditions and structuring within Kabul itself have created a chain reaction, generating additional circumstances where certain social groups are marginalized from active social participation. This phenomenon has intensified ethnic-centric activities and intra-group dynamics, ultimately transforming trust, security, and tranquility into a realm fraught with distrust and unrest. Consequently, it perpetuates various forms of social inequalities within these segmented groups.

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Research Article

Faith and Reason: Reinventing Scholasticism in Postmodern Philippine Catholic Education

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Abstract: This paper aims to present the necessity of a new scholastic movement as an intellectual and religious movement and to reinvent it in the context of 21st Century Philippine Catholic Education. This reinvention of Scholasticism aims to design a curriculum for Senior high school students in order to equip them in understanding and defending the Catholic Faith and Teachings. Since the Catholic Church is facing the problems given by postmodernism and atheism, there is a need for another scholastic movement to counter these problems. This paper uses in-depth and comprehensive analysis of texts related to reinvention of scholastic movement in the 21st Century. The researcher used Purposive Sampling technique to carefully select the articles based on their relevance to the reinvention of scholastic movement. This paper uses updated and relevant research papers for analysis. In addition, to argue that there is a need for a new scholastic movement in Philippine Catholic education, the Hegelian dialectic was used, the idea of history repeating itself became the start point of this paper to argue that this is philosophical sound and valid. This paper examines the necessity of the 21st Century Philippine Catholic Education to the reinvented scholastic movement and it also offers a comprehensive curriculum design to reinvent scholasticism in education. Since, it aims to craft a curriculum which is anchored to apologetics and scholasticism, this proposed curriculum can equip the students to be effective Christians who will defend the church and its teachings. With this, the Religious Education for Grade 11 and Grade 12 will be a strong foundation of Catholic Faith in the 21st Century Philippine Education for Catholic schools.

Keywords: Scholasticism; Philippine Catholic Education; Postmodernism; Catechism; Catholic Apologetics; Catholic Theology

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1. Introduction

As Hegel (2011) implied that “History repeats itself” within the lens of his dialectic, we can notice that our education is facing the same problems that the Christian philosophers and theologians encountered during the Middle Ages and the scholastic movement are their synthesis to reconcile the challenges served by atheism and Christian heresies. To support this paper with a solid philosophical and scientific background, it is also anchored within the philosophy of Scholasticism, Hegelian Dialectic, Jean-Francois Lyotard and other related and updated articles from other researchers.

This reinvention of the Scholastic movement in the 21st century aims to combat the influence of postmodern thoughts. It requires the cooperation of the Church and the Catholic schools. Postmodernism promotes the idea of subjectivism and relativism where knowledge is socially constructed.

According to Lyotard (1979) Postmodernism is a threat in religion and education, he argued that postmodern thoughts challenge religious beliefs, and emphasized that skepticism weakens the authority of the church. As argued by Lyotard (1979), Postmodernism rejects universal and objective truth, he believes that postmodernity promotes subjectivism and relativism which can lead to weak and unorganized beliefs and also pedagogical approaches in Education. In his *The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge* (1979) he emphasizes that Education must be the foundation objective of truth, values and knowledge, however, this essence of education and even religion is now changing because of

postmodernism.

In addition, Zygmunt Bauman (2000) a critique of postmodernism, agreed on his Liquid Modernity that postmodernity gives weak social relationships where he saw that relationships become more casual that may lead to feelings of loneliness and isolation. He also argued that postmodernity leads people to existential questions about their purpose and meaning. That is why, postmodernist thoughts must be combated by the reinvention of scholastic movement in the 21st century.

In the 21st Century Philippine Education, postmodernism is at its peak. In the 2020 survey conducted by Philippine Statistics Authority 43,931 Filipinos answered that they have no religious affiliation. This statistics is surprising because this is the first time that in a religious country like the Philippines, a significant number of individuals who have no religious affiliation was recorded (Mapa, 2023). This is concrete proof that postmodernism reaches Philippine Education through the media. As studied by Enders et al. (2021), social media is the main distributor of conspiracy theories, misinformation and most importantly subjective thoughts. The 21st Century Philippine Education is an age of social media which can influence and manipulate the beliefs of students. That is why the 21st century learners are prone to misinformation and manipulation from the media. In every high school and college classroom nowadays, there are students who support abortion, divorce, death penalty and other social issues that may involve morality.

The Filipino students in the 21st Century Philippine Education are exposed to atheism and agnosticism which lead them to abandon their religious affiliation and their objective morality to support atheistic moral standards. As argued by MacIntyre (1981), secularization in education has an impact on the morality of students that may lead them to atheism. The Catholic schools and universities are targeted by Postmodern thoughts to separate them from the Christian teachings of objective truth and morality.

This paper aims to present the necessity of Scholastic movement as an intellectual and religious movement and to reinvent it in the context of 21st Century Philippine Education. This reinvention of Scholasticism aims to design a curriculum for Senior high school students in order to equip them in understanding and defending the Catholic Faith and Teachings. This proposed curriculum is anchored in the concept of Scholastic movement and Catholic apologetics. This paper aims to examine the necessity of scholastic movement in the 21st Century and to reinvent it in Philippine Education to counter the postmodern thoughts that encourage students to doubt their religious beliefs. It also aims to inculcate Catholic Apologetics in the proposed curriculum as the starting-point of the reinvention of scholasticism.

2. Materials and Methods

This paper uses in-depth and comprehensive analysis of texts related to reinvention of scholastic movement in the 21st Century. There are two criteria for the texts to be selected, first, they must be relevant to the main point of the paper, lastly, they must be updated for the accuracy of the data. The researcher decided to use Purposive Sampling to accurately show in this paper that there is a need for the reinvention of scholasticism in 21st Century Catholic Education in the Philippines.

Through textual analysis of related literature and study chosen by the researcher using Purposive Sampling technique, the texts have been examined to support the proposed curriculum for religious Education subject of Senior high school. The researcher solely based with the two criteria for selecting the relevant texts for analysis, any article which did not reach the standards given by the researcher was rejected.

To argue that there is a need for a new scholastic movement in Philippine Catholic education, the Hegelian dialectic was used, the idea of history repeating itself became the start point of this paper to argue that this is philosophically sound and valid. The researcher intended to include the Hegelian dialectic to philosophically show that the Philippine Catholic Education needs another scholastic movement to counter the challenges posed by postmodernism.

For the discussions, the proposed curriculum for Grade 11 and Grade 12 was anchored with the Catholic teachings of the Catholic Church. The researcher made a comprehensive table to show the design of the curriculum. Additionally, the discussions became clearer and valid by focusing on the reinvention of the scholastic movement in the 21st century Philippine Catholic Education.

The researcher cited an updated research study by Quimson (2020) and Bella (2024) to



show that teaching of catechism has an impact on the students' lives. With these, the researcher made strong arguments for the reinvention of scholastic movement in the Philippine Catholic Education. To validate the results of this paper, the researcher cited relevant research papers emphasizing the importance of coping up with 21st Century Religious Education.

3. Results and Discussion

In the context of Hegelian dialectic, during the middle age there were a lot of skeptics who questioned the religious dogmas of Christianity, and to answer them, Christian thinkers came up with a philosophical system called "Scholasticism" to fix those problems with sound arguments from faith and reason. The main goal of scholasticism was to reconcile faith and reason in order to solve doubts and help the Church to develop Herself into an intellectual institution. This is what the 21st Century Philippine Education needs, another scholastic movement to counter the questions offered by postmodernity, especially atheism.

According to Patte (2010) Scholasticism is a method of learning anchored with dialectical reasoning to resolve contradictions. It is a movement conducted by Christian theologians and philosophers to reconcile Christian theology and late antiquity philosophy of Plato and Aristotle. The pinnacle of scholastic movement can be traced from Saint Thomas Aquinas and his work *Summa Theologica* on 1265-1274 A.D, Aquinas' reconciliation of Christian faith and Aristotelian metaphysics marked the flourishing of Scholastic movement in the world. However, Saint Anselm of Canterbury was credited as the 'Father of Scholasticism' for addressing Atheism by his 'Ontological argument' for proving God's existence through deductive philosophical reasoning.

As the Hegelian dialectic implies that history repeats itself, where the Thesis and Antithesis must be solved with a Synthesis, like how the Medieval philosophers reconcile atheism and skepticism through Scholasticism, The Church and Education must work together to combat Postmodernism like what the Scholastic philosophers did to atheism and heresies to provide quality education where objective truth within faith and reasons must be prioritize for Christians and other religious affiliations.

Scholasticism emphasized that scholastic thinkers used the universities to defend the Christian faith against atheism and heresies. It can be argued that education played an important role as the center of the scholastic movement. Colleges and Universities became the training ground of the future Christian apologists who will defend the faith against heresies and atheism.

To support this, the study of Bella (2024) concluded that scholasticism had a good influence on education because he saw that the students were encouraged to engage in critical discussions and developed a culture of analytical thinking and intellectual inquiry. Therefore, it can be concluded that for the scholastic movement to be reinvented in 21st Century Philippine education, it should start at education where students will be trained to defend the faith.

Since the Catholic schools offer Religious Education as one of their core subjects; Christian Apologetics, Catechism and Basic Systematic Theology can be integrated. Theology is a Science of God, it requires deep studies in Philosophy, History, Culture and Languages, therefore, implementing this in the Catholic School Curriculum compliments the idea of lifelong-learning. Table 1 below suggests Religious Education Curriculum for Grade 11 and Grade 12.

Table 1. Proposed religious education for Grade 11.

Grade 11	
First Semester (Religious Education 1)	
Sacred Scripture	
Preliminary	Old Testament
Midterm	New Testament
Pre-Finals	Hermeneutics
Finals	Exegesis
Second Semester (Religious Education 2)	
Catechism of the Catholic Church	
Preliminary	The Profession of Faith
Midterm	Celebration of the Christian Mystery
Pre-Finals	Life in Christ



Finals	Christian Prayer
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Table 1 shows the proposed curriculum for Grade 11. It is aligned to the structure given by the Kto12 Program in which the school year for Grade 11 is divided into two semesters. The first semester is designed to equip the students to read, understand and interpret the Sacred Scripture. The researcher argued that the basic foundation to defend the faith is by learning the Sacred Scriptures. It is designed to help the students to study the Words of God scientifically and systematically. The Preliminary term focuses solely on understanding the content of the Old Testament that includes Literary Genres, History, and Language (Hebrew). After an in-depth study of the Old Testament, the New Testament will follow as the prerequisite. The students' learning from the Old Testament must be used to read, understand and interpret the content of the New Testament. With this, the constructivist approach of learning is applied. In continuation, the Pre-final and Final term focus on the science of interpretation which the students will be equipped in Hermeneutics that will help them to consider the Historical, Cultural and Linguistics aspects of the Bible for proper interpretation.

The proposed curriculum for the Second semester of Grade 11 focuses on the Catechism of the Catholic Church (CCC). According to the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith (2002), Catechism is not a theology book, it is a book of Catholic Faith. The CCC is actually the proclamation of faith and a clear presentation of the Catholic Teachings. This curriculum is designed to equip the students to understand the Catholic Faith and Teachings through Catechism of the Catholic Church. As studied by Quimson (2020), teaching catechism has a significant impact on the senior high school students in different cultures and faith. According to Quimson (2020), the teaching of the Catholic faith helped the students to understand and appreciate God in their lives. Based on the respondents, because of the teaching of catechism they were able to know more about Jesus Christ, also helped them to improve their prayer and spiritual life and most importantly because of Catechism they understood the teachings of the Catholic Church better. Therefore, through these results, it can be concluded that it is necessary to not just include the Catechism of the Catholic Church in the curriculum for Senior high school, but it must be studied in a whole semester for mastery.

Table 2 shows the proposed curriculum for Grade 12. This curriculum is designed to equip the students in Catholic Apologetics which is the core of the reinvention of scholasticism in 21st Century Philippine Education. Catholic Apologetics is an art on defending the Church and her teachings and dogmas. According to Cardinal Levada (2010), there is a need for 'New Apologetics' for the Church in the 21st Century, he argued that the main challenge of the catholic apologists is to let people know the reason for our Catholic faith and hope with all courtesy and respect as he anchored it with 1 Peter 3:15. Since, the Church is facing the challenges given by postmodernism and atheism. The catholic institutions must teach and train the students Catholic apologetics in order for them to live with their faith with reason and confidence and defend it if necessary. As presented in Table 2, the lessons are designed to equip the students to be Catholic faith defenders.

Table 2. Proposed religious education curriculum for Grade 12.

Grade 12	
First Semester (Religious Education 3)	
Catholic Apologetics	
Preliminary	God's Existence
Midterm	Defending the Sacred Sacraments
Pre-Finals	Defending the Church Magisterium
Finals	Defending Four Marian Dogmas
Second Semester (Religious Education 4)	
Church and Community Service	

The second semester of Grade 12, this is the last semester for senior high school before moving to college, every candidate for graduation is required to be an intern to their local parishes or community. This is designed to allow the students to apply the learnings that they have learned, they have to put their knowledge into practice by serving their local church as Catechists, Catholic defenders, Youth leaders and Church administrators. In the current times, there is not a part of any Religious Education curriculum. That is why a Church and Community internship must be required to help the students feel that they have obligations to the Church and Community.

In the study of Woocher (2012) about Jewish Education, he also argued that Jewish

education should also be reinvented in the 21st Century. He emphasized the importance of reinventing the Jewish Education to accommodate 21st century learners. In his paper, he highlighted that the reinvented Jewish Education should be student-centered, relationship-infused and life-relevant. This conclusion of Woocher (2012) in the reinvention of Jewish education in his context validates the design of this paper's proposed curriculum.

These findings relate to the paper of Cacho (2015), she concluded that the real challenge of Religious Education especially in the Philippines is crafting a curriculum that promotes the core values of the Gospel, she emphasized that the students must actively participate in learning Religious Education and not just memorizing lessons. This also validates the proposed curriculum of this paper that active participation of the students is the main priority. Therefore, the Grade 12 students will be required to have a Church or Community internship for a whole semester before graduation.

4. Conclusions

As emphasized, the Catholic Church is facing the same problem as She encountered during the middle age. To address these problems, Christian thinkers came out with a solution by starting a movement called "Scholastic Movement" to counter the arguments given by the heresies and atheism to stop the Church from reaching her goals for humanity. The scholastic movement became an effective way to stop the heresies. In the postmodern world, the Church is facing these problems again, therefore, it can be concluded that there is a need for the reinvention of scholastic movement in the 21st Century. As argued by the researcher, this reinvention of scholasticism must be begun with the initiative of Catholic schools. Since, education played a crucial role as the center of the scholastic movement. Colleges and Universities became the training grounds of the future Christian apologists who will defend the faith against heresies and atheism.

This paper proposed a curriculum designed to equip the students to be effective Christians who will defend the church and its teachings to counter atheism and postmodern thoughts. The alignment of the subjects and topics will help the students to understand the Catholic teachings better. This curriculum is not only designed to build their intellectual skills but also to build their spirituality by defending and serving the church and their community.

This paper recommends that for the reinvention of Scholasticism in the 21st Century Philippine Education to happen, the cooperation of the Department of Education and the Catholic Institutions such as Catholic Universities are highly needed. This paper can contribute to the catholic schools in the Philippines for them to create curriculum that can mold intellectual students with the light of faith and reason.

For further recommendation, if this curriculum will be implemented to senior high school and proven to be effective. The researcher recommends that the junior high school department should also adopt it. Since the Kto12 Curriculum uses a Spiral curriculum and is anchored with the concept of Lifelong learning. Philosophical topics and approaches can be emphasized in the minor and major subjects such as Science, Araling Panlipunan and most importantly Values Education. This is not intent only for religious purposes but it is proven that integrating philosophy in the academic subjects promotes critical and analytical thinking.

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Research Article

The Criticism of Human Rights Violations in Indonesia: Philosophical Analysis through *Summa Theologiae* of Thomas Aquinas and *Ethica* of Baruch de Spinoza

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Abstract: This study aims to analyze the concept of human rights violations in Indonesia by identifying human rights violation provisions in Indonesia and human rights violations in Indonesia based on the Philosophy of Ethics. This study uses a qualitative approach with a type of library research. The data analysis technique uses the flow charts model. The theoretical analysis technique uses the *Summa Theologiae* by Thomas Aquinas and the *Ethica* by Baruch de Spinoza. The 1998 tragedy is included in the gross human rights violations in Indonesia. Especially *Summa Theologiae* and *Ethica*, the statement of the state administrator, in this case, is that the MENKO-POLHUKAM is far from the existence of moral values and ethical virtues. This is based on the absence of moral values that should lead to action as a decision-making agenda through ethics and intellectual traditions. In this regard, the MENKO-POLHUKAM cannot construct a rational nature in the context of basic choices being dominated by “*lust*” through “*affectus*”. So, it tends to lead to the “*libertum atribium*” being free. Ethically, the MENKO-POLHUKAM, as a state administrator, is required to do good deeds and be able to respect victims of human rights violations.

Keywords: Human rights violations; Philosophy; *Summa Theologiae*; *Ethica*; Indonesia

1. Introduction

Yusril Ihza Mahendra, as the Coordinating Minister for Law, Human Rights, Immigration, and Corrections or MENKO-POLHUKAM in the red and white government cabinet under Prabowo’s leadership, said that the case that occurred in 1998 related to the refinement and murder of activists was not a gross human rights violation. In this case, Yusril Ihza Mahendra identified gross human rights violations as genocide crimes and ethnic cleansing; Yusril also stated that there is a pagan regarding something that is referred to as a gross human rights violation by Law Number 26 of 2000 concerning Human Rights Courts (Evandio, 2024). Yusril’s statement then became a public spotlight considering his position as the Coordinating Minister for Politics and Legal Affairs and also the problem of the 1998 tragedy in the years before it was inspired as a case of gross human rights violations. This also became a new problem related to the quality of the Indonesian Coordinating Minister for Political Affairs and Security, especially the red and white cabinet under the leadership of Prabowo.

The Human Rights perspective was initiated by a philosopher named John Locke, who referred to his theory of Natural rights (Locke, 1964). The fundamental aspects of the concept of Human Rights are classified into 3 parts: the first generation, the second generation, the third generation, relatedness, and interdependence. In the first generation, human rights tended to be dominant in discussing the freedom of civil society rights, which were then identified as civil and political rights which were also included in the ICCPR (International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights), the first human rights were referred to as human rights that had a negative, negative nature in the sense that the state could only provide protection and should not intervene in the rights of citizens. The second generation of human rights is based on the economic context; this is relevant to the initial idea of human rights initiated by Eastern countries by demanding the fulfilment of the financial status of citizens

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as a fundamental human right, which is also included in ICESCR (International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights) (Smith et al., 2023). The third generation fulfils rights based on ownership, identified as a right to own rights in material positions.

Fulfilling human rights has become a vital urgency in the international scope. However, in the conditions experienced by countries that are statistically considered developing countries, Human Rights are a guideline for developing countries to ensure that they actively contribute to the global political order. A person who tends to support the actions of his citizens to commit human rights violations or fail to implement the essence of human rights will be a concern and even blasphemy by the international community. However, factually speaking, this can also be used as a delicacy for other countries in implementing consolidation by conducting bilateral or multilateral treaties or international agreements, which will then be overshadowed by international sanctions on the political and economic status, which will later be detrimental to the country. The concept of human rights emphasizes a critical point in human nature that must not be deprived by others or even the state. In this case, human rights must be protected and respected by all human beings based on the universal nature of human rights. So, humans must be treated fairly, equally or equally. It covers several aspects, including social, political, cultural, economic, gender, etc.

Human beings must respect the dignity of human rights owned by others. They are required to respect the rights of others as a form of 'causal' reciprocal relationship. On the other hand, to defend human rights, the state has a role and contribution to protect the rights that humans naturally own. This can be done by committing responsibility to the social, political, legal, and economic sectors. The conditions for the formation of a country are critical to identifying the territorial boundary factor and the existence of its population in governance to be built. The international legal order indeed binds a country. The state is also one of the parties to international agreements required to fulfil the protection of human rights that must be implemented in the country. In this case, the state must protect human rights based on international law, which is then regulated by national law, which has the values of equality, freedom, and justice. Based on this background, this study seeks to analyze the application of human rights violations in Indonesia. Some of the previous studies are.

This research differs from previous studies; it is based on research questions conducted by identifying 1) human rights violation provisions in Indonesia and 2) human rights violations based on the Philosophy of Ethics. Analysis of theories using *Summa Theologiae* and *Ethica*, which Thomas Aquinas and Baruch de Spinoza initiated, respectively, this theory is oriented as an effort to prove and strengthen the essence of human rights, which John Locke emphasized on the concept of Natural Rights, which is implemented as an indicator in identifying human rights violations in Indonesia.

2. Materials and Methods

This research uses a qualitative approach to library research. The data collection technique uses the bibliographic method or through documents. The data in this study consists of secondary data sourced from the results of state studies (laws), research results from books and journals, and various literature studies relevant to answering the formulation of research problems. Data analysis techniques use the flow chart model, which includes (data collection, data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawn). The theoretical analysis technique uses two analytical tools: the *Summa Theologiae* from Thomas Aquinas and the *Ethica* from Baruch de Spinoza – conclusion-drawing techniques using inductive patterns or generalizations. In the first stage, the researcher will collect data on gross human rights violations in Indonesia and the provisions of international and national human rights law in Indonesia. Second, the researcher will reduce the data on gross human rights violations in Indonesia by analyzing *Summa Theologiae* and *Ethica*. Third, the researcher will present the data from the theory analysis. Fourth, the researcher will conclude using an inductive pattern or generalization.

3. Results and Discussion

Based on John Locke's views, especially related to Human Rights, he defines that Human Rights are a right that human beings have since birth. Meanwhile, the implementation of human rights violations is based on the view that human rights are violations committed by someone or state apparatus intentionally or unintentionally against civil society. Thus, the 1998 tragedy is included in Indonesia's gross human rights violations. Through ethical

philosophy, especially *Summa Theologiae* and *Ethica*, the statement of the state administrator in this case is that the Coordinating Minister for Political Affairs and Legal Affairs is far from the existence of moral values and ethical virtues. This is based on the absence of moral values that should lead to action as a decision-making agenda through ethics and intellectual traditions. In this regard, the Co-ordinating Minister for Political Affairs and Legal Affairs cannot construct a rational nature in essential choices dominated by “*lust*” through “*affectus*”. So, it tends to lead to “*libertum atribium*” of free will. Ethically, the Coordinating Minister for Political Affairs and Legal Affairs, as a state administrator, is required to do good deeds and be able to respect victims of human rights violations.

3.1. Human Rights Violations Provisions in Indonesia

Based on John Locke’s perspective, Human Rights are natural rights bestowed directly by God on humans. Natural rights cannot be taken away or deprived because they are inviolable and inherent (Pureklolon, 2020). Human rights involve a privilege to protect and defend oneself against freedom, violence and even death. The right to liberty, in this case, can be interpreted as a right inherent in each individual, referring to their will to do something in the provision of not violating the rights of others. This instrument includes the right to religion, assembly, and expressing opinions in public spaces. There is also the right of human beings to have and or impose ownership, which is a legal right, such as property, work, and business (Locke, 1968).

According to John Locke, human existence is a natural condition that occurs to humans in situations where there is freedom, equality, and justice. So that humans can have the right to the self that is inherent in them (Kishardian et al., 2023). This natural condition is interpreted as a condition that can create peace and harmony in human life. Still, it must be underlined that human actions must not violate or contradict natural laws (Locke, 1968).

John Locke’s idea was then the background for the International regulations of ICCPR (International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights) and IESCR (International Economy, Social and Cultural Rights). Article 6, paragraph (1) of the ICCPR also excludes Human Rights as a natural right that no one, even the state, can take away. Referring to some of these concepts, it is concluded that human rights are natural rights humans naturally have as gifts from God. So, if a country commits an act of human rights violation, then the country concerned will deal with the International Court of Justice.

This is due to the universal nature of human rights, which is why countries are bound by international law. At the ASEAN level, a commission focused on fulfilling human rights in the ASEAN region is AICHR (Asean Intergovernmental Commission on Human Rights). The Commission was established in 2009 in Thailand, specifically at the 15th ASEAN Summit using the Cha-Am Hua Hin Declaration. Establishing the AICHR committee reflects the commitment given by 949 countries in the ASEAN organization to fulfil the rule of law, democratic rights, and good governance to civil society. The orientation for forming the AICHR, as stipulated in Article 1 paragraph (1), is to create solidity and fulfilment of human rights in the ASEAN organization. Furthermore, Article 1 paragraph (3) explains that the orientation ratified in the ASEAN Charter is intended to escalate economic sector stability, cooperation, and harmonization between ASEAN countries (ASEAN, 2017).

The concept of human rights, a representation of natural law, also needs to go hand in hand with enforcing human rights law. Definitively, human rights law enforcement is a legal mechanism that must be upheld. Indonesia is a legal country that recognizes the existence of human rights; this is evidenced by the 1945 constitution, which first appeared before the UDHR (Universal Declaration of Human Rights) (Aswandi & Roisah, 2019). In Indonesia, the fulfilment of human rights law enforcement is carried out through ad hoc courts. The government must take steps when there are human rights violations to ensure the public’s openness in handling them. The principle that prevails in this case is “*equality before the law*”, or all are equal in the eyes of the law. This is oriented as an effort to eliminate impunity. Human rights law enforcement also needs to create an institution that investigates cases of human rights violations.

The implementation of handling human rights law violations in Indonesia tends to experience many irregularities. In cases of human rights violations, Indonesia has a unique institution, namely KOMNAS HAM (National Commission on Human Rights). However, despite this, the public’s role is needed to ensure transparency and accountability in handling human rights law enforcement in Indonesia, by the 1945 Constitution and Law No. 39 of 1999 concerning Human Rights, as well as Article 1 paragraph 1 of Law No. 26 of 2000 concerning the Human Rights Court, which explains that human rights can be interpreted as

a right owned by human beings given by God which is obliged to be respected and upheld by citizens, law, as well as the government, as an effort to improve human dignity and dignity (HAM, 1999).

However, despite the implementation of human rights in the global political order, human rights violations still often occur, especially in Indonesia. Although it has ratified the ICCPR, ICESCR is incorporated into the national legal order, namely the constitution and human rights law. Human rights violations in Indonesia have always experienced a condition as prolonged. Based on historical data, there are several cases of human rights violations in Indonesia. Some of these cases are summarized in the table below.

Table 1. Historical data on various incidents of gross human rights violations that occurred in several provinces in Indonesia.

No	Case	Year	Territorial/Province	Death Toll
1	Trisakti, Semanggi I and II Incident	1998	DKI Jakarta	17
2	May 1998 Riots	1998	Cross Province	Disappear
3	Wasior and Wamena Incident	2001 dan 2003	Papua-West Papua	4
4	Enforced Disappearances	1997-1998	Cross Province	Disappear
5	Talangsari Incident	1996	Lampung	130
6	1965-1966 Incident	1965-1966	Cross Province	≥ 2.000.000
7	Mysterious Shooting	1982-1985	Cross Province	± 10.000
8	KKA Junction Incident	1999	Aceh	21
9	Jambu Keupok Incident	2003	Aceh	16
10	Murder of Shaman Santet	1998	West Java/East Java	± 200
11	House of Geudong Incident	1989	Aceh	10.000-30.000
12	Paniai Incident	2014	Papua	4
13	Kuda Tuli Incident	1996	DKI Jakarta	5
14	Tanjung Priok Riots	1984	DKI Jakarta	24

In Table 1, based on data from the Indonesian National Human Rights Commission, there are several cases of gross human rights violations in several provinces in Indonesia. Some of these cases are, first, the Semanggi I and II incidents in 1998 that killed 17 civilians and injured 456. Second, the May 1998 riots left 149 people wounded and 23 missing. Third, the Wasior and Wamena incidents in 2001 and 2003 resulted in 4 deaths, 1 sexual violence, 5 missing, and 39 torture. Fourth, the incident of enforced disappearances in 1997-1998 in the Cross Province recorded 23 student activists who disappeared by force. The five events of Talangsari in 1989 killed more than 130 people. 77 people were forcibly moved, 53 people were deprived of their rights, and 46 people were tortured. Sixth, the 1965-1966 incident in which the Indonesian state tried to eradicate suspected members of the PKI (Indonesian Communist Party) cost an estimated 78,000-1,000,000 lives (Armed Forces), 500,000-1,000,000 (Ben Anderson), and 2,000,000 PKI. Seventh, the mysterious shooting (Peter) that occurred in 1982-1985 is estimated to have reached 10,000 people.

The Simpang KKA incident that occurred in 1999 in Aceh killed at least 21 people and injured 146 people. Ninth, the Jambu Keupok incident that occurred in 2003 in Aceh killed at least 16 people who were identified as members of the GAM (Free Aceh Movement). Tenth, the murder of witch doctors in Banyuwangi in 1998 killed approximately 200 witch



doctors and religious leaders. Eleventh, the Rumah Geudong incident in 1989 in Aceh, according to Amnesty International, recorded between 10,000-30,000 people identified as GAM members. Twelfth, the Paniai incident in Papua in 2014, which killed 4 people and injured 21. Thirteenth, the Deaf Horse incident that occurred in 1996 by attacking the DPP-PDIP killed 5 people, injured 149 people, and 23 were missing. Fourteenth, the Tanjung Priok riot which killed 24 people. Based on this data, cases of gross human rights violations in Indonesia tended to occur more during the leadership of Suharto as President and former TNI (Indonesian National Army), who ruled authoritatively for 32 years, starting from 1967 to 1998 until it was successfully handed down during the Reform era in 1998.

The problem of human rights violations in Indonesia has become an ongoing problem; below are some reports of human rights violations that have occurred in Indonesia in the last 4 years.

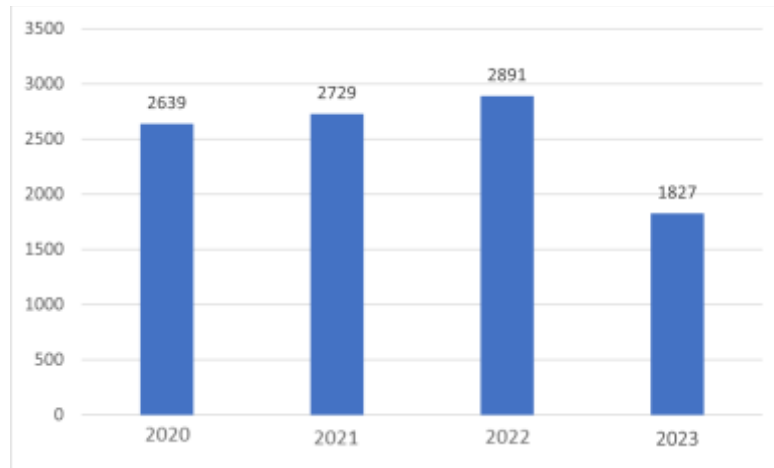


Figure 1. Data on reports on alleged cases of human rights violations in Indonesia in 2020-2023.

Based on Figure 1, the data on reports of alleged cases of human rights violations in Indonesia over the last 4 years reached (2639) in 2020, (2729) in 2021, (2891) in 2022, and (1827) in 2023. It increased by an average of 0.91%. The most reports were experienced in 2022.

Table 2. Reporting data on alleged human rights violations in 2020-2023 in Indonesia

Years	Report	Most Complained	Most Violated Rights
2020	2639	Police	Right to Welfare
2021	2729	Police	Right to Welfare
2022	2891	Police	Right to Welfare
2023	1827	Police	Right to Welfare
Total	10086	Police	Right to Welfare

Based on Table 2, the data on reports of alleged human rights violations in Indonesia in 2020-2023 reached 10,086 reports. Most reports show the direction towards the Police consistently in 4 years. Most reports of human rights violations refer to violations of welfare rights. To be more specific, below is the data on the number of complainants and the number of complaints against rights violated in 2020-2023.

Table 3. Data on the number of complaints and the most violated rights in 2020-2023.

Years	Complainer	Number of Complaints	Welfare Rights Complaints	Police Percentage	Percentage of Rights Welfare
2020	Police	758	1025	24,31%	25,05%



2021	Police	728	1009	23,35%	24,66%
2022	Police	861	993	27,61%	24,27%
2023	Police	771	1065	24,73%	26,03%
Total	Police	3118	4092	100,00%	100,00%

Based on Table 3, the number of complaints against the complainant (Police) reached 3,118; the highest percentage occurred in 2022, which reached 27.61%. Then complaints about welfare rights reached 4,092 per cent; the highest percentage occurred in 2023, which reached 26.03%. A violation of human rights is definitively a violation committed by a person, including the state apparatus, intentionally or unintentionally, with an effort to obstruct or limit human natural rights regulated in the provisions of the applicable law (Article 1 paragraph (6) Human Rights Law). Furthermore, gross human rights violations are classified into two, namely genocide crimes and crimes against humanity (Article 7 Law No. 26/2000). In this case, crimes against humanity, as referred to in Article 7 letter b, are acts that are referred to as directly planned, systematic, massive attacks directed directly at civil society; these contain references, namely murder, extermination, slavery, expulsion, deprivation of liberty, torture, sexual violence, enforced disappearances, persecution of ethnic minorities, and apartheid crimes (Article 9 Law No. 26/2000).

3.2. Human Rights Violations Based on Philosophy of Ethics

Referring to Immanuel Kant's view, soft argument forms are classified, namely "aposterior" and "a priori". In this case, posterior is an ideal form of argumentation; this justification is based on the existence of God's position identified and fictitious based on evidence. However, factually speaking, the arguments always found are a priori, which negates the existence of God and pre-existing entities by imparting it to the universe (Kant, 1998). Related to this, ethics based on philosophy tends to assume that the verification of the value of equality is universal or comprehensive for humans. This happened in the previous few centuries, which gave meaning to identifying the term gender, not making it a supporting aspect to provide distinction and privilege to one group. This concept describes idealism, although it does not give empirical empiricism. However, the idea offers a constant negation, meaning that it is clear that every human being has the right to get his rights, which contain several aspects related to dignity, dignity, and freedom based on the empirical method, namely happiness and pleasure (Kant, 1998).

However, the element that has become a long-term problem in ethical philosophy is the low relationship between moral philosophy and the economic and political order; this seems to define that philosophy is an assumption that can create naïve sentiments and even worse. In this case, an ethical philosophy that deliberately avoids social and economic aspects needs to be identified as a relevant action. However, this assumption does not seem to be able to have an exciting impact on the initial assumptions of philosophy. Philosophy makes an argument deliberately; in other words, philosophy begins with the quality of the human being identically correlated with a human being through biological identification by Aristotle, followed by intellectuals by Immanuel Kant, and psychologically by John Stuart Mills. This can be the basis for refuting the statement practically that philosophy should be to create a design to realize the orientation expected to grow the potential of the ideal society's life. However, this needs to be done by separating it into different sub-fields of philosophy, the field of philosophy being political philosophy (Spike, 2020).

3.2.1. *Summa Theologiae* of Thomas Aquinas

The natural law habit regarding his view of morality and jurisprudence refers to the ideas of Greek and Roman philosophy Kuni, which was developed comprehensively by Scholastic thinkers, one of them being Thoma Aquinas. The theory of natural law contributes to and plays a vital role in its influence on capital theory and modern politics, especially the ideas of Pufendorf, Hobbes, Grotius, and John Locke. The construction of some thinkers related to natural law shows that the initial ideas were radical in the tradition of Thomas Aquinas's moral and political perspective (Moschella & George, 2015).

The theological goal of Thomas Aquinas is to explain to man that the world is not the single and final dimension of man. Criticism of liberation theology involving the Christian desire for heaven as collateral as a form of indifference to the actual situation of people's lives is reasonable and necessary. Some liberation theologians say not to ignore all aspects of

Christian eschatology or man's relationship with God (Gutiérrez, 2003). However, the desire of the present time, especially the theology of some alterations, has always shaped the conditions under which eschatology is used to obscure human indifference to critical social issues (Sobrinho, 2015).

In this case, Thomas Aquinas cannot be identified as a political theologian, but his theological and theocentric ideas cannot exclude his focus on human relations with society (Williams, 1997). *Summa Theologiae* provides knowledge about the epistemological and ethical conditions related to the limitations of “*qua means fertur in Deum*” and indirectly maintains the substance of imperfection about self-consciousness “*omnium aliorum men's obliviscatur*”. Thus, it is negated that Aquinas is contrary to the absolute value of the essence of “*reditio complete*” based on the “*proclian*” model. This avoidance has a formal element in the instrument of *Summa Theologiae*, which deals with the imperfection of human self-awareness. Then, identify the findings in the initial presentation related to the middle of “*synderesis*” to a comprehensive and systematic presentation that lies in the review of prayer (Baumgarten, 2013).

The idea of “*conscientia*” or “*reditio complete*” has implications and has contributed to the sanctification of human individuality towards prayer in the medieval ages. It was initiated by Greek and Latin patristic and identified the fundamental phenomenon of “*parallelism*” between epistemology and the theory of the state of consciousness in the act of “*contemplation*”. Based on reflection that is carried out rationally, providing im-application to human beings can classify the essence of actions identified as truth. This can then provide instructions for integrally organizing the human will (Baumgarten, 2013).

This essence functions in general in all aspects; it is based on the provisions of basic human welfare motivated by human nature, which is fundamentally static. However, the factual implementation of this essence can vary by referring to conditions. So, natural law contains the concept of the value and substantive explanatory explanation related to human welfare, including all its instruments, and it is related to the theory of action as truth—moral provisions and essences direct actions in making ethical decisions (Aquinas, 2023). The essence of this concept needs to be related to the explanatory value of Virtue constructed as an intellectual tradition and the characteristics that can be relied upon in directing humans to take actions relevant to norms and morals so that it automatically makes it an essential aspect of human development.

Thomas Aquinas stated that natural law contains alterations of prepositions because natural law instructs man to lead to thoughts that inspire intrinsic value, something capable of being chosen by himself so that he does not base choice only as a mode to achieve further orientation. This is relevant to the alteration of human traits, where humans are creatures who need to fulfil welfare and various other dimensions. So, the fulfilment of the need to use theoretical and practical knowledge, including the truth about God (McGinn, 2019).

Some thinkers of contemporary natural law seek to provide a more detailed explanation of the nature of the essential goods; they consider that Thomas Aquinas only briefly reviews what they identify as a kind of example and does not explicitly give a more systematic and comprehensive explanation of the concept. Therefore, Finnis (2011) explains the form of Virtue as formative excellence that has aspects of integrity, including (desire, reasoning inner harmony), originality (relevance between human judgment and the actions of other human beings), and harmonious policies that occur with God, which are then verified as a transcendent source of existence and interpretation.

3.2.2. *Ethica* of Baruch de Spinoza

Some philosophers in the 19th century identified that the philosophy of Descartes influenced Spinoza's philosophy. This is identified through the statement that the philosophy of Descartes inspired Spinoza to change its concepts and doctrines. Spinoza's hypothesis evolved as an attempt to synthesize Cartesian metaphysical problems; this needs to be done by providing a solution to the dualism of mind and expansion. A similar statement was made by Harry A. Wolfson, who said that Descartes influenced Spinoza's doctrines. It is based on technical Latin terms and tends to lead to Hebrew Scholastic in the Middle Ages and the 16th century (Wolfson, 1958).

In this case, what is inspired by the concept of ethics, according to Spinoza, is something that correlates with the metaphysical problem called a beginning? In ethics, Spinoza discusses the doctrine of divine value, which contains instruments relevant to the side of God and the human mind. Based on Spinoza's view, the elements motivated by God will bring humans to the basis of knowledge about the mind and the highest happiness (Nadler, 2006).

In his thinking, Spinoza was influenced by the philosophy of Rene Descartes and

Aristotle and the Neoplatonic and Stoic views. Spinoza internalizes this in authentic and manifested forms, referring to the evolution of conditions observed during the Renaissance. In his view, Spinoza emphasized that human beings who have Virtue are required to eliminate pain and enjoy the plea of life not to make mistakes. In his pan-and-imagined views, Spinoza also has Machiavelli content, especially in writings related to politics, which also implicitly contain elements of tika, Where Spinoza gives the idea that humans act with an emphasis that action is a bad thing when in the norms and values that live in a society in which there is sadness. According to him, a verified ethical composition must be based on metaphysical and physical aspects. As an instrument of inquiry, ethical principles philosophically take explicit action behind something initiated by God. In this case, Spinoza seeks to direct human knowledge of the human mind as the “self” and the highest happiness (Chibuike Ezebuilo, 2020).

The ethics expressed by Spinoza are related to the concept of ethics by Aristotle. In ethics, Aristotle, especially in the book “*Nicomachean Ethics*”, states that all dogmas about ethics are verified. However, unlike mathematics, all have assumptions that are far from valid. However, the various approaches have methods that, in quotation marks, “may” be inaccurate; this refers to the importance and the lessons. Geometric methods with the properties of the structural framework of theorems, axioms, demonstrations, appendices, collocates, and scholia require a systematic and strict interpretation to understand Baruch de Spinoza’s ethical concept. Descartes slightly influenced this. The geometric method seeks to scientificize the concept of ethics, so implementing this method requires several ethical, physical, and metaphysical approaches. Thus, everything relevant to natural substances, God and humans requires a ratio between human actions and desires (Spinoza, 2018).

The fundamental aspect of Spinoza’s philosophical doctrine, especially related to ethics, is related to the Divine value, which contains its instruments, namely (view, ek-system, and Modi, which are considered to be a reflection manifested by human beings who have memorized Divine values. At the same time, the Divine itself is inspired by something eternal and infinite (Nadler, 2006). This is different from the Aristotelian concept, which tends to focus on physical substance. The relationship between the Divine values, including instruments and Modi, is identified as an accident. Everything is always trying to survive in its existence. The essence of this tends to dominate in all aspects that follow it. In this case, Spinoza gave it the term “*affectus*”, which is a description of universal emotions which he then also classified into passive influences, “*passions*”, and active influences, “*actions*” that exist in the human mind (LeBuffe, 2010).

Spinoza then affirmed the classification of “*affectus*” as the passive influence of “*passion*” that can not only be caused by the mind but also by other aspects. Thus, eliminating lust through reason is the climax of a passion motivated by “*passive*” thoughts caused by intuition, not thoughts (Mattern, 2013). This concept refers to the idea of stoicism, which also contains a description and is classified explicitly as “*lust*”. Spinoza redesigned the stoic concept, although there were some original concepts. It is classified into three elemental human passions, which are “*Laetitia*” or joy, “*tristitia*” or sadness, and “*cupiditas*” or desire. In these three primary clusters of passion, Spinoza degrades the “*tristitia*”; this is based on Spinoza’s belief that active influences will only have an impact on specific forms in the aspects of “*Laetitia*” and “*cupiditas*” (Kristeller, 1982).

Spinoza differed from the Aristotelian concept, which emphasized “*libertum ar-tribium*”, or free will, and “*voluntas*”, the ability of will. Spinoza conscientiously rejected the view of “*libertum artribium*” or “*voluntas*” willpower. Spinoza considered freedom an illusion, even though God was identified as “*free*” only by interpreting that God was not determined from the outside but in his essence and nature (Joachim, 2008).

Man does not have free will “*libertum atribium*” in his actions. However, man is free to create a rational nature in deciding on basic choices dominated by lust and to create “*Laetitia*” through the “*affectus*” approach, an active influence in his thinking. Thus, fulfilling this basic human decision without the “*libertum atribium*” does not make sense. There is an alteration between the dominance of lust and the intellect in the “*libertum atribium*” of human life. So, there are two forms of radical classification in human life: the will to live limited by lust and the free will over the intellect. Thus, humans have two choices between two forms of life (Joachim, 2008).

4. Conclusions

Based on the results of the above analysis, the researcher concludes that through the

analysis of ethical philosophy, in *Summa Theologiae*, moral provisions and essences that direct actions in making decisions based on ethics need to be related to the explanatory value of Virtue that is constructed as an intellectual tradition and characteristics that can be applied in directing humans to take actions that are relevant to norms and morals. In *Ethica*, man does not have free will, “*libertum atribium*” in his actions. However, man is free to create a rational nature in deciding on basic choices dominated by lust and creating “Laetitia” through the “*affectus*” approach, an active influence in his thinking. Thus, fulfilling this essential human decision without the “*libertum atribium*” does not make sense. The provisions for human rights violations in Indonesia are based on Article 1 paragraph (6) of Law Number 39 of 1999 concerning Human Rights, which then the classification of gross human rights violations is identified into two as referred to in Article 7, namely the crime of genocide and the crime of murder. The crime of murder, in this case, is also classified into several types by Article 9 of Law Number 26 of 2000 concerning Human Rights Courts, especially in Article 9 letter I, namely the enforced disappearance of persons.

The limitation of this study is that the researcher realizes that this research is still not as good as it needs to be perfected by other researchers. The researcher suggested that other researchers should conduct research, especially on the follow-up of police reports and demands for welfare rights in Indonesia.

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Research Article

The Memory-Method-Perspective Model: Three Dimensions to Thinking Historically

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Abstract: Historical thinking is an integrative and reflexive process, yet existing pedagogical frameworks often isolate its components, leading to conceptual fragmentation. This study introduces the Memory-Method-Perspective (MMP) model as a synthesis-oriented alternative to Seixas' influential six-part model. Anchored in the philosophies of Collingwood and contemporary cognitive theories, the MMP model reframes historical thinking into three interactive dimensions: Memory, encompassing substantive and procedural knowledge; Method, which ensures analytical precision and contextual interpretation; and Perspective, fostering ethical and critical reflexivity. The model's triadic structure provides a unified lens through which historical inquiry transcends procedural rigidity to engage with the past as a dynamic interplay of thought, action, and moral reflection. By emphasizing integration and ethical responsibility, the MMP model not only addresses the fragmentation in contemporary historical education but also equips educators and students with tools to combat misinformation and cultivate nuanced historical consciousness. This work invites further dialogue on the philosophical and practical implications of holistic frameworks in history education.

Keywords: historical thinking skills; Memory-Method-Perspective Model; Collingwood; Seixas; cognitive models, critical pedagogy, misinformation resilience

1. Introduction

Is it arrogant to believe we can fully understand the past? Perhaps. But doesn't this arrogance stem from a deeper need – a primal urge to make sense of the interplay of memory, causation, and meaning? Engaging with history entails a deep reflection on our collective identity and trajectory (Ruin, 2019). How can we know where we are headed if we do not understand how we arrived here? Furthermore, being a historian is inescapable. The only option is whether to be a good one or not (Hughes-Warrington, 1996) This universal fascination and entanglement with the past underpins the frameworks we create to teach and think historically. Yet these frameworks themselves are not neutral; they are tools – imperfect, provisional, and deeply consequential.

Seixas' (2015) Canadian model of historical thinking has been one of the most influential tools in contemporary history education. Through six concepts – historical significance, primary source evidence, continuity and change, cause and consequence, historical perspective-taking, and the ethical dimension – it has guided generations of students and teachers. Its accessibility has enabled widespread adoption in the field. But as with all tools, its utility has limits. Seixas' framework presents six discrete tensions, but its lack of integration often results in conceptual fragmentation, challenging students and educators to synthesize these in isolation.

This paper proposes the Memory-Method-Perspective (MMP) model as a necessary alternative. If the Canadian model fragments historical thinking into isolated tensions, the MMP model reimagines it as an integrated whole. It reduces the six components to three dynamic dimensions: **Memory**, which anchors us in the substantive and procedural aspects of historical knowledge; **Method**, which equips us with tools to analyze, contextualize, and synthesize evidence; and **Perspective**, which challenges us to reflect ethically and critically on our positionality in relation to the past. These dimensions do not merely coexist – they interact, shaping and reshaping one another in a process that mirrors the complexity of

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historical inquiry itself.

The aim of this paper is not merely to critique the Canadian model but to provide an alternative. By offering a more parsimonious structure, the MMP model addresses the conceptual redundancies and inefficiencies of its predecessor. By emphasizing interaction over isolation, it offers educators and students a framework that is both philosophically robust and practically intuitive. If history is indeed an audacious attempt to make sense of our existence, let us at least equip ourselves with tools worthy of the task.

In the sections that follow, I will first critique the fragmentation and inefficiencies of Seixas' model, then outline the philosophical underpinnings and structure of the MMP framework. Previous research has the germ of the MMP but none has articulated it adequately so far (Pandan et al., 2023; Gentallan & Pandan, 2024). This paper seeks not only to advance a new approach to historical thinking but also to contribute to the ongoing dialogue about how best to navigate the complexities of the past.

2. Materials and Methods

What is historical thinking if not the haunting specter of our engagement with the past, demanding responsibility, yet offering no final absolution? This study dares to define historical thinking as the entirety of human acts through which individuals weave connections across space and time, acts that are neither cataloged in completeness nor neatly confined to a preordained list. To insist on such a list would be to betray the essence of the historical: a process, not a product. Here, the act of definition itself must mimic history—it must be tentative, evolving, open. This is not an escape from rigor but an invitation into discovery, a challenge to recognize in the fluidity of our encounters with the past a family resemblance among acts, all suffused with the inexorable pull of responsibility.

The philosophical-interpretive approach employed in this study draws its lifeblood from Collingwood's re-enactment theory, wherein history is neither the sterile arrangement of facts nor the passive regurgitation of events. No, history is thought. It is the struggle to inhabit the mind of the historical agent, to share in their agony, their triumph, their reasons made possible by a shared human way of being-in-the world (Retz, 2017). But how is this done? Through a dialectical interplay of **memory**, **method**, and **perspective**, three dimensions that, like history itself, are distinct yet indivisible: (1) **Memory** serves as the repository of substantive and procedural knowledge, the anchor from which historical inquiry departs; (2) **Method** provides the tools to interrogate the past, to synthesize, to contextualize, and to demand more from evidence than it is willing to give; and (3) **Perspective** integrates ethical reflexivity, linking the historian's positionality with the broader societal implications of historical inquiry, forcing the historian to gaze not just into the past but also into the mirror, acknowledging the limitations and biases that come with their place in time.

Developing the Memory-Method-Perspective (MMP) model involved iterative refinement through critique and analysis. It unfolded in three phases.

Formulation of the Model. Perhaps it is easiest to deconstruct before one constructs. So, this study began with a critical engagement with the theoretical underpinnings and practical implications of Seixas' model, a framework that slices historical thinking into six concepts as though history could be so neatly compartmentalized. Against this fragmentation, the MMP model emerged – not as a rejection but as a synthesis, a more parsimonious structure, drawing sustenance from cognitive theories, pedagogical insights, and the quiet strength of Collingwood's principles.

Analytical Application. To speak of a model is one thing; to let it breathe is another. The MMP model was applied to selected historical narratives and pedagogical practices, not to prove its worth but to test its soul. Could it integrate the brute facts of history with the delicate art of ethical reflection? Could it survive the brutal light of application and still stand? The answer, tentative as all answers must be in history, was a cautious yes.

Iterative Refinement. Philosophy, for all its audacity, must bow to the wisdom of dialogue. The model was subjected to the critique of peers, to the test of time, to the scrutiny of literature both ancient and modern. Feedback was not merely endured but sought, and with each iteration, the MMP model inched closer to coherence without forsaking complexity.

The work here presented is not a monument to certainty but a testament to process – a demonstration that the act of thinking historically is itself historical, an engagement not just with the past but with the restless, questioning mind that dares to face it.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1. Seixas' Model of Historical Thinking

Peter Seixas' six-concept model of historical thinking is structured around the idea of tensions – intrinsic dilemmas that characterize the historian's craft and the teaching of history. These tensions are not arbitrary challenges but arise from the very nature of historical inquiry, reflecting the complexities of how we engage with the past. Far from being a weakness, these tensions are the model's most profound insight, revealing the richness of historical thinking and its capacity to grapple with ambiguity and contradiction.

3.1.1. Historical Significance

The tension of historical significance lies in the historian's need to distill meaning from the infinite, chaotic expanse of the past. How does one determine what is worth remembering, teaching, or writing about? Seixas (2015) points to the contrast between antiquarianism—a fascination with the old for its own sake – and the historian's duty to tie events to a larger, meaningful narrative. This tension is compounded in an age where nationalistic grand narratives have given way to fragmented identities and competing perspectives. The historian must navigate between the universality of shared meanings and the solipsism of personal or localized interests. Yet, the resolution is never complete. The historian is forever suspended between these poles, constructing significance in a way that is contingent, contested, and subject to revision.

The question of historical significance is particularly resonant in debates surrounding the inclusion of pre-Hispanic history in Philippine education. Should greater emphasis be placed on the grandeur of the barangays – independent villages with established social hierarchies, trade networks, and cultural practices – or on the cataclysmic arrival of Ferdinand Magellan in 1521, marking the beginning of European colonization (Scott, 1994)? On one hand, emphasizing the pre-colonial period challenges the colonial narrative that the archipelago's history began with Spanish conquest. On the other hand, the Magellan narrative is central to the larger story of global maritime exploration and colonialism. This tension reflects the historian's task of linking local histories to broader narratives without subsuming one under the other.

3.1.2. Primary Source Evidence

The tension within primary source evidence arises from the disjunction between the past and the present. A document, artifact, or relic is always a product of its time, yet it reaches us severed from its original context, existing in a new temporal and interpretive frame. Seixas (2015) likens this to a “wild animal in a zoo,” fundamentally altered by its containment in the historian's present. The historian must reconstruct the original context to make sense of the source, but this reconstruction is mediated by contemporary concerns. Thus, working with evidence is not merely a technical task but a negotiation between the text's pastness, its historical context, and the present questions that give it meaning.

Consider the documents on José Rizal's eventual execution, the Philippines' national hero. To what extent can we trust these documents as evidence of his revolutionary intentions, given their origin in a colonial power determined to suppress dissent (Schumacher, 1978)? The historian must grapple with the context in which these documents were produced – an empire asserting its dominance—while using them to address contemporary questions about Rizal's role in inspiring Philippine nationalism. This tension mirrors Seixas' observation of evidence as a “wild animal in a zoo,” torn from its original habitat and transformed by the lens of the present.

3.1.3. Continuity and Change

Historians are often tasked with explaining both the persistence of structures over time and the moments of rupture that defy continuity. Seixas highlights the epistemological tension between the historian's search for patterns and the reality of discontinuity. Are changes in history merely superficial, masking deeper continuities, or do they represent profound transformations? This tension also extends to the relationship between the past and the present, where historical narratives often oscillate between emphasizing the familiar and the alien. The historian's challenge is to navigate these layers of continuity and change without succumbing to the simplicity of linear progression or abrupt disconnection.

The Philippine Revolution of 1896 against Spanish rule exemplifies the tension between continuity and change. While the revolution marked a radical break with the colonial past, many of the elites who led it – the *principalia* – maintained their socio-economic privileges in

the subsequent American and post-independence periods (Simbulan, 2005). This raises a critical question: did the revolution truly transform Philippine society, or did it merely reconfigure the structures of power? The historian's challenge is to account for both the ruptures and the continuities, resisting simplistic narratives that either overstate the revolution's impact or dismiss its significance altogether.

3.1.5. Cause and Consequence

The tension of cause and consequence centers on the historian's attempt to explain how and why events unfold. Seixas frames this as a duality between human agency and structural determinism. History is shaped by the actions of individuals, yet those actions are constrained by inherited conditions and broader social forces. If causation is framed too rigidly within structures, human agency disappears, reducing history to an inevitable march of impersonal forces. Conversely, overemphasizing agency risks romanticizing individuals as wholly autonomous, divorced from the contexts that shaped their decisions. The historian, caught in this tension, must craft explanations that balance freedom and constraint, intention and consequence.

The assassination of Senator Benigno Aquino Jr. in 1983 illustrates the tension of cause and consequence. His death galvanized the People Power Revolution of 1986, leading to the fall of the Marcos dictatorship. But was this event a result of deliberate choices by political actors, or was it the culmination of systemic forces – widespread corruption, economic decline, and repression – already at play?

While Aquino's assassination provided a focal point for resistance, the historian must also consider the broader structural conditions that made a revolution inevitable. This duality reflects Seixas' emphasis on balancing human agency with structural constraints in understanding historical causation.

3.1.5. Historical Perspective-Taking: Understanding the Other Across Time

Perhaps the most intricate of the tensions, historical perspective-taking, involves the attempt to understand the thoughts, feelings, and worldviews of people from vastly different historical contexts. The difficulty lies in the interplay between continuity—the aspects of human experience that transcend time – and difference – the particularities of a given era. The historian must grapple with the impossibility of fully escaping their own contemporary lens while striving to reconstruct the mental frameworks of the past. This effort requires both imagination and evidence, a balance that resists both the naivety of projecting modern sensibilities onto the past and the nihilism of absolute incomprehensibility.

Understanding the Moro Wars during Spanish colonization requires grappling with the radically different perspectives of the Christianized lowlanders and the Muslim Sultanates of Mindanao (Angeles, 2024). For the Spanish colonizers and their allies, the Moros were “pirates” disrupting trade and imposing a threat to Christianity. For the Moro communities, the wars were acts of resistance against colonial aggression and cultural erasure. To navigate this tension, historians must reconstruct the Moro worldview – rooted in Islamic traditions and sovereignty – while acknowledging the Christianized lowlanders' lens shaped by Spanish influence. This effort resists the simplifications of presentism, revealing the deep cultural and ideological divides of the time.

3.1.6. The Ethical Dimension

The ethical dimension encapsulates the tension between the historian's dual role as a recorder of the past and a moral agent in the present. Seixas identifies three key challenges: judging historical actors by present-day standards, grappling with the legacies of past injustices, and fulfilling memorial obligations to those who have suffered or sacrificed. These challenges demand that the historian reflect on their own positionality and the moral implications of their work. Yet, as with the other tensions, there is no resolution – only the ongoing negotiation between fidelity to the past and responsibility to the present.

The Martial Law period under Ferdinand Marcos (1972–1986) epitomizes the ethical challenges of history. How should we judge Marcos' actions, including the suppression of dissent and widespread corruption, against his regime's claims of development and national security? Moreover, what is our obligation to the victims of human rights abuses during this era? This tension persists in contemporary debates about the historical rehabilitation of Marcos' legacy, particularly in light of his family's return to political power. Was there a need to neutralize the legacy's past with misinformation or does it suffice to acknowledge the non-transferability of guilt from father to son (Guiang, 2022)? Historians must balance moral judgment with an understanding of the conditions that allowed such abuses to occur,

engaging with both the victims' narratives and the broader socio-political context.

Seixas' (2015) model represents a pragmatic attempt to distill historical thinking into discrete, actionable components. Each of the six concepts – historical significance, primary source evidence, continuity and change, cause and consequence, historical perspective-taking, and the ethical dimension – is presented as a unique tension, inviting educators and students alike to wrestle with the complexity of historical inquiry. Its strength lies in its accessibility: educators can isolate a specific concept and teach it as a standalone skill. However, this very accessibility is its limitation. By presenting these concepts in isolation, the model often leaves learners struggling to connect the pieces, resulting in an experience that mirrors the fragmented nature of the historical record itself rather than its cohesive interpretation. Let us now therefore turn to the alternative, the Memory-Method-Perspective Model.

3.2. Major Dimensions of Historical Thinking

Historical thinking defies simple definitions, requiring a nuanced approach. Yet, it beckons us irresistibly, demanding clarity if we are to engage with the past responsibly. It is not merely a set of processes or instincts—it encompasses interconnected dimensions of memory, perspective, and methodology. Ellis and Vincent (2020) may be right to warn us that “any attempt to characterize historical thinking is fraught” (p. 216), yet this challenge is precisely why we must proceed. To retreat from definition would be to concede to incoherence, to abandon the historian's task of meaning-making.

At its core, historical perspective is paradoxical. It is partly static, a lens shaped by time and deeply rooted within the historian's intellectual and emotional being. Yet it is also dynamic, actively mediating between memory and method, shaping the way the historian interrogates and interprets the past. It is, as Duquette (2015) expresses it, the lens, disposition, or habit of mind through which the past is seen and made meaningful (p. 52). Without perspective, history is either a sterile collection of facts or a chaotic stew of actions without coherence.

Perspective connects with method, another vital element of historical thinking. Method is the engine of history's movement, the inferential processes through which the historian makes sense of the past. It is action and rigor, structure and discipline. And yet, method relies on something even more fundamental: memory. Historical knowledge – or what Collingwood (1946) calls “remembering” – grounds the historian's work, serving as the raw material for inquiry (p. 247). It is static, waiting for activation by perspective and method, and without it, the historian's questions are untethered, drifting in a sea of speculation.

If these three elements – memory, perspective, and method – are the pillars, their unity forms the edifice of historical thinking. To think historically is to engage in a set of acts that are critical, deliberate, and, above all, responsible. Responsibility, here, is not a mere ethical addendum but the distinguishing mark of true historical engagement. Santiago and Dozono (2022) critique the term “critical historical thinking,” arguing that criticality is intrinsic to historical thinking itself. Their insight underscores the need for precision: historical thinking is not just about engaging with the past but doing so in a way that honors its complexity and humanity.

This insistence on responsibility also explains why historical thinking must be described as mental acts rather than mere processes. Processes imply pure dynamism, but acts encompass both the stable and the active, the static and the evolving. This conceptualization, borrowed from Aristotelian logic (Piñon, 1995), allows for a richer understanding of how historical thinking unfolds.

Yet no model is complete without interrogating the relationships between its components. Thinking itself, as noted by Pelczer, Singer, and Voica (2014), spans a continuum from static to dynamic. Historical thinking mirrors this duality. Memory, static and propositional, waits for recall and application. Method, dynamic and action-oriented, moves history forward. Perspective, the bridge between these extremes, is both a condition and a commitment, a static lens that dynamically frames action. Paul and Kleinberg (2018) describe perspective aptly as “commitment,” capturing its dual nature.

This interplay between the static and the dynamic is what gives historical thinking its power. It is neither frozen in place nor untethered motion; it is the tension between memory, action, and orientation. Rescher (2003) captures this balance, noting that knowledge is a condition one occupies, not an act one performs (p. 16). And yet, memory without method is inert, and method without perspective is blind.

To think historically is to navigate this triad, to inhabit the delicate interplay between what is known, what is questioned, and what is imagined. It is an intellectual and moral act, a

way of honoring the past not as a dead artifact but as a living dialogue. Historical thinking is not just a skill – it is a way of being in the world, a commitment to understanding what has been so that we may better face what is to come.

Historical thinking defies easy containment. It is not a process to be distilled into sterile formulas nor a skill to be mechanized. It is, instead, a set of mental acts—acts that make one’s engagement with the past responsible, meaningful, and human. Ellis and Vincent (2020) remark that “any attempt to characterize historical thinking is fraught” (p. 216), and rightly so. To define it risks flattening its essence, yet without definition, we are left adrift. This study dares to face that fraught task, weaving a definition from the strands of literature and the necessity of intellectual rigor.

The first strand is **perspective**, a concept that resides in paradox. Perspective is partly static, enduring within the historian across time, shaping their perception like sedimentary layers beneath a river. Yet it is also dynamic, actively framing how memory and method are applied. Perspective is not a mere viewpoint; it is a nexus – a mediator between what is known and what can be done. It is, as Duquette synthesizes from Seixas (2010), the lens through which the historian sees and interprets (p. 52). Without it, the past remains a blurred tableau, its shapes incoherent.

The second strand is **method**, the engine that animates historical inquiry. It is here that perspective transforms memory into understanding, employing disciplined inferential processes to draw the past into focus. Method is dynamic by nature, a structured movement of thought and action. It is not satisfied with what is given but probes, questions, and reconstructs. And yet, method cannot stand alone. Without perspective to guide it, method is blind, and without knowledge to ground it, method is hollow.

The third strand is **memory**, the raw material of historical thinking. Collingwood (1946) calls this “remembering,” the act of bringing the past into the present as a foundation for understanding (p. 247). Memory, formerly called “knowledge” by the author, is static; it waits, patient and inert, until activated by perspective and method. Yet even in its stillness, it is indispensable. For without knowledge, what is there to inquire into? What is there to interpret?

From these three strands – **perspective**, **method**, and **memory** – emerge a definition. Historical thinking, we propose, is the set of mental acts necessary for responsible engagement with the past. Responsibility, here, is no mere adornment but the very criterion that distinguishes historical thinking from its counterfeits. Santiago and Dozono (2022) critique the term “critical historical thinking,” arguing that all true historical thinking is inherently critical. Responsibility is what ensures that engagement with the past transcends superficial recollection or ideological manipulation.

Responsibility also requires precision in language. This is why we describe historical thinking as a set of acts, not processes. Processes are purely dynamic; they suggest constant motion, leaving no room for the static foundations upon which historical thinking depends. Acts, on the other hand, encompass both the static and the dynamic, capturing the dual nature of historical thinking as both contemplation and action. This conceptualization draws from Aristotelian logic (Piñon, 1995), which emphasizes the unity of thought and being.

But what are historical thinking skills (HTS)? Callaway (2020) provides a helpful entry point, describing them as “discipline-specific skills” through which historical thinking manifests (p. 1). HTS are the tangible expressions of memory, perspective, and method. They are the ways in which historians engage with the past, reconstructing it not as a dead artifact but as a living dialogue.

This study builds upon these foundations to construct an integrated cognition model of HTS. Drawing on Domínguez-Castillo, Arias-Ferrer, Sánchez-Ibáñez, Egea-Vivancos, García-Crespo, and Miralles-Martínez (2021), Seixas (2015), and others, the model identifies three categories: knowledge (or remembering), perspective, and method. These categories mirror the core elements of historical thinking, providing a coherent framework for analysis. Figure 1 visualizes this synthesis, offering clarity amidst complexity.

Yet even the most elegant framework requires an understanding of the relationships it maps. Thinking itself, as Pelczer, Singer, and Voica (2014) note, spans a continuum from static to dynamic. Historical thinking reflects this duality. **Knowledge** resides at the static extreme; it is already-existent data, waiting for recall. Rescher (2003) observes that “[k]nowing a fact is not something that one does; it is a condition one has come to occupy in relation to information” (p. 16). **Method**, on the other hand, is entirely dynamic – a movement, an action. **Perspective** occupies the middle ground, bridging the static and the dynamic. It is both a condition and a commitment, shaping how knowledge is translated into action. Paul

and Kleinberg (2018) describe it aptly as “commitment,” capturing its active and orienting nature.

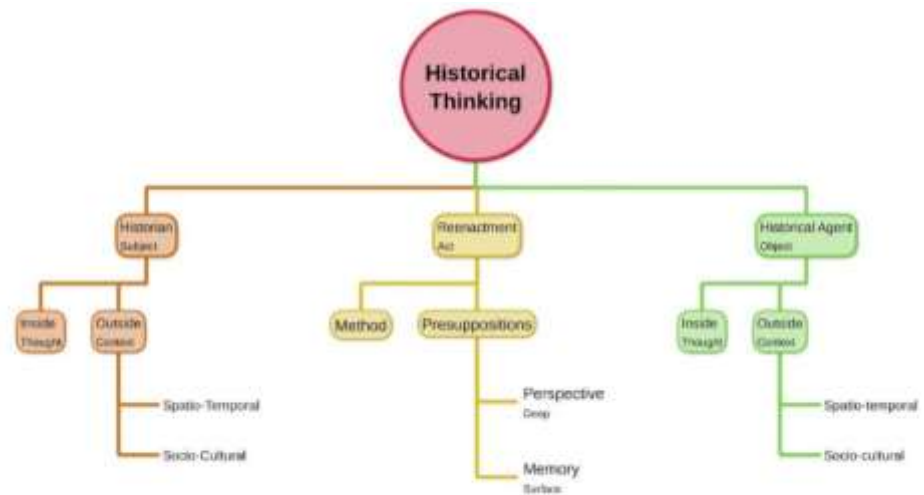


Figure 1. Historical thinking as re-enactment.

This interplay between the static and the dynamic is not a mere technicality; it is the essence of historical thinking. To think historically is to balance memory with action, stability with motion, the given with the imagined. It is a triadic harmony that transforms inert facts into living history.

Historical thinking, then, is not simply an academic exercise. It is an act of responsibility, a way of engaging with the past that honors its complexity and its humanity. It is a moral act, for to engage with the past irresponsibly is to risk perpetuating harm – to ourselves, to others, to truth itself. It is, perhaps, the only way we have of navigating the infinite expanse of time, not as passive observers but as participants in the ongoing dialogue of what it means to be human.

3.3. *Memory in Historical Thinking*

Memory, in its essence, is the sine qua non of responsible historical thinking – a repository of remembered facts that underpins every attempt to engage with history meaningfully. Knowledge acquired through rigorous investigation may bear a veneer of complexity, but its distinction from memory is, at best, ambiguous. This study employs the broader, more encompassing definition of memory, for it subsumes even those fruits of prolonged inquiry. Memory, as Domínguez-Castillo, Arias-Ferrer, Sánchez-Ibáñez, Egea-Vivancos, García-Crespo, and Miralles-Martínez (2021, p. 33) argue, is the cornerstone of Historical Thinking Skills (HTS), the foundation upon which all other categories of historical engagement rest. Without memory, the edifice of historical thinking collapses; there is nothing to contextualize, analyze, or interpret.

Bain (2015) elucidates this by invoking Collingwood’s (1946, p. 247) insight: all historical thinking presupposes a bedrock of knowledge already attained. The empirical findings of Waldis, Hodel, Thünemann, Zülsdorf-Kersting, and Ziegler (2015) reinforce this claim, demonstrating that familiarity with content markedly enhances HTS test performance. Collingwood (1999) crystallizes this point in a striking observation:

A man who [was] taught history badly [...] when he was at school, and has never worked at it since, may think there is nothing in it except events and dates and places: so that wherever he can find events and dates and places, he will fancy himself in the presence of history. But anyone who has ever worked intelligently at history knows that it is never about mere events, but about actions that express the thoughts of their agents; and that the framework of dates and places is of value to the historian only because, helping to place each action in its context, it helps him to realize what the thoughts of an agent operating in that context must have been like.

History, for Collingwood, is a dialectical process: the historian re-enacts the thoughts of historical agents within “the context of his own knowledge” (p. 215). Here, historical knowledge bifurcates. On one side, it appears static – a catalog of conclusions drawn from prior inquiry. On the other, it embodies dynamism: the would-be conclusions of an ongoing dialectic, the fruits of re-enactment. This tension between stasis and fluidity mirrors

Wineberg’s (2018) provocative inversion of Bloom’s Taxonomy, where knowledge, paradoxically, crowns the hierarchy as the apex skill built upon all others. In both dimensions, knowledge retains its static quality relative to the methods it informs, achieving immutability only when it attains truth – a pursuit arduous, yet not beyond reach.

This vision of memory and knowledge does not merely describe a cognitive mechanism but delineates a moral imperative: to remember well is to think historically, and to think historically is to fulfill the ethical responsibility of engaging truthfully with our past.

The conceptualization of Figure 2 – an synthesis of insights from VanSledright (2011), Domínguez-Castillo, Arias-Ferrer, Sánchez-Ibáñez, Egea-Vivancos, García-Crespo, and Miralles-Martínez (2021), Fordham (2017), the *K to 12 Gabay Pangkurikulum: Araling Panlipunan* (Department of Education, 2016), Seixas (2015), Nokes (2022), Elder, Paul, and Gorzycki (2011), Waldis, Hodel, Thünemann, Zülsdorf-Kersting, and Ziegler (2015) – represents more than a mere intellectual collage. It emerges from an enduring dialectic between these scholarly voices, each refracting the light of historical understanding through its unique lens.

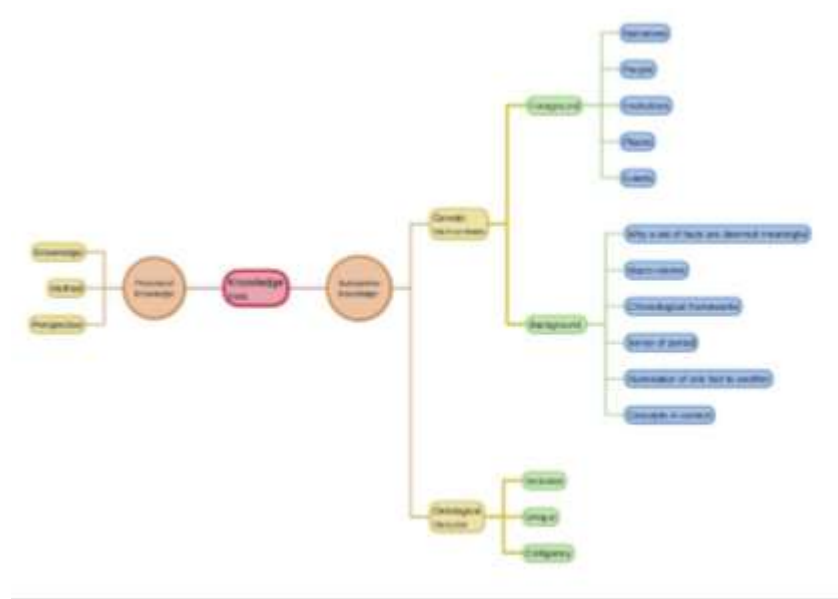


Figure 2. Taxonomy of historical memory.

At its core lies the bifurcation of knowledge into two interdependent realms: *substantive* and *procedural*. This taxonomy, articulated by VanSledright (2011, p. 50) and echoed in kindred terminologies by others, including Domínguez-Castillo, Arias-Ferrer, Sánchez-Ibáñez, Egea-Vivancos, García-Crespo, and Miralles-Martínez (2021), becomes the scaffolding for this exploration. Procedural knowledge, though synonymous in some circles with “methodological knowledge,” bears a greater economy of expression – a simplicity that gathers within itself the breadth of historical thinking.

Substantive knowledge stands as the scaffolding of history itself: the raw, unprocessed grain from which the historian draws sustenance. It encompasses “specific facts about history” (Fordham, 2017) and is indispensable for constructing any coherent argument. To know the past, after all, is to be burdened – and blessed – with the material of thought. Fordham’s insight here is poignant: without substantive knowledge, argumentation collapses into vacuity.

But what does substantive knowledge *do*? We propose a dual division: *genetic* (via *inventionis*) and *ontological* (via *iudicii*). These divisions signal a deeper metaphysical tension. Genetic categorization reflects the chronology of human discovery – a subjective, temporal order, while ontological categorization mirrors the objective relations intrinsic to the historical reality itself. VanSledright’s (2011) distinction between *foreground* and *background* substantive knowledge exemplifies genetic categorization. Foreground knowledge – names, dates, and events – offers a surface-level orientation, the visible skyline of history’s cityscape. Background knowledge, by contrast, dwells in the unseen architecture of periods and contemporaneous contexts, subtly shaping the contours of historical thought. Fordham’s (2017) taxonomy aligns seamlessly here, its narrative coherence extending from micro-stories to macro-stories, weaving a fabric where each thread finds its place within a larger pattern.

In contrast, Nokes's (2022) categorization of substantive knowledge exemplifies the ontological. Inclusive concepts, like "democracy," span disciplines, shimmering with abstract universality. Unique concepts, such as the "Battle of Lexington," ground history in the particularities of time and place. Colligatory concepts, like the "Roman Empire," impose order, uniting disparate events into coherent wholes. Together, these ontological distinctions offer a kaleidoscopic vision of historical reality.

Procedural knowledge, however, is the how of historical thinking – the compass that guides the historian through the wilderness of facts. Unlike substantive knowledge, which concerns the *what*, procedural knowledge encompasses the meta-concepts of method, as Nokes (2022) aptly terms them. Seixas (2015, p. 5) emphasizes this distinction, reminding us that procedural knowledge does not dwell in the realm of "what history is about" but instead in "how history is done." It is, in this sense, the grammar of the historian's language – a set of rules and structures that renders thought intelligible.

This procedural grasp extends across three dimensions, each corresponding to a key element of historical thinking. The first dimension, procedural knowledge of memory, demands an explicit awareness of the facts necessary for responsible historical engagement. It is a meta-awareness, a knowing of what must be known. The second, procedural knowledge of method, pertains to the skills of historical inquiry, such as discerning primary from secondary sources – a competency enshrined in the *K to 12 Gabay Pangkurikulum: Araling Panlipunan* (Department of Education, 2016, p. 7). The third, procedural knowledge of perspective, encompasses the orientations and habits required to engage with the past ethically and critically.

This trinity of procedural knowledge is indispensable because, as Nokes (2022, p. 12) observes, understanding the nature of historical inquiry is often a prerequisite for engaging in it effectively. Without such understanding, historical thinking devolves into mere imitation. Elder, Paul, and Gorzycki (2011) reinforce this, urging historians and instructors alike to be "explicitly aware of, and deliberately target," the cognitive processes underlying historical thought.

Having thus mapped the contours of historical memory, the discourse now turns to historical method, where these theoretical distinctions find their application.

3.4. Method in Historical Thinking

This discourse now pivots to the second pillar of HTS: **Method** – that vital architecture of actions and processes through which the historian ensures his engagement with history achieves intellectual integrity and moral responsibility (figure 3). To dissect the anatomy of **Method** in this inquiry, we adopt the framework articulated in *AP Historical Thinking Skills* (2015, p. 11), comprising four cardinal elements: *Analyzing Historical Sources and Evidence*, *Making Historical Connections*, *Chronological Reasoning*, and *Creating and Supporting a Historical Argument*. But let us not misstep into a reductionist trap; one essential cornerstone, glaring in its absence, must be appended – basic information literacy, the unsung scaffolding of all responsible historical method.

A closer exploration of each component invites a renewed appreciation of their distinctive roles and intricate interplay. These are not mere procedural checkboxes, but dynamic processes, each pulsating with intellectual rigor and ethical accountability, challenging the historian not merely to recount the past, but to grapple with its complexities, tensions, and silences. Thus, we begin to discern **Method** not as sterile protocol but as an act of existential confrontation – a deliberate, meticulous dance with the shadows of time and truth.

This study's categorization draws from a diverse and esteemed body of literature encompassing scholars, historical frameworks, and curricula. Such a breadth of sources underscores the interdisciplinarity and richness of historical thinking as both a theoretical construct and a pedagogical practice.

In its most constrained operational sense, basic information literacy refers to the capacity to locate and access relevant information efficiently. For instance, the K to 12 Gabay Pangkurikulum articulates this skill as the ability to use technological tools to source references, encapsulating a crucial modern competency (Department of Education, 2016, p. 7). Meanwhile, the skill of source criticism, or "sourcing," involves evaluating the reliability of historical evidence. This ability is reflected in competencies from the same curriculum, such as identifying sources and critically engaging with texts to understand their historical context, the author's motivations, and perspectives (Department of Education, 2016, p. 7). Sourcing involves examining the incompleteness and biases of sources to assess their

trustworthiness concerning a research question. Primary sources – documents or artifacts created by direct participants or eyewitnesses of events, are distinct from secondary sources, which lack this firsthand provenance.

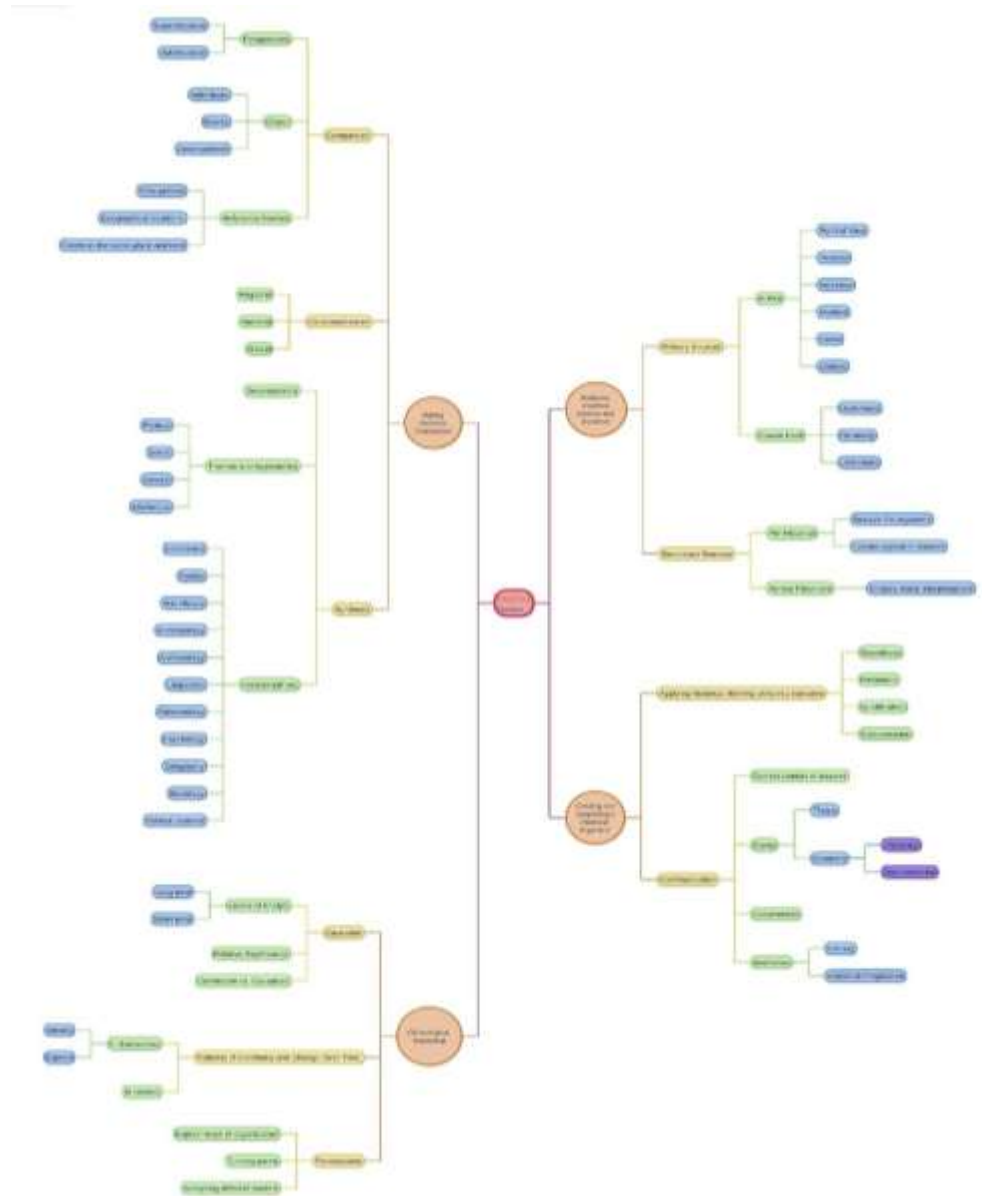


Figure 3. An integrated taxonomy of historical method.

The researchers chose to use “source” rather than “document”. This shift acknowledges Nokes’ (2022) observation that historical evidence encompasses a spectrum far broader than documents, including artifacts, ecofacts, and other material evidence. This comprehensive view aligns with the dynamic and multifaceted nature of historical inquiry.

The analysis of primary sources, as described in the *K to 12 Gabay Pangkurikulum* (Department of Education, 2016), entails extracting data from firsthand accounts, emphasizing both internal and external criticism. Internal criticism examines the credibility of the author, considering elements such as perspective, purpose, audience, and historical context (Nokes, 2022). External criticism, by contrast, scrutinizes the authenticity and physical reliability of the source itself. These dual facets enable historians to engage deeply with primary materials, a process foundational to constructing sound historical arguments.

Secondary source analysis requires a similarly rigorous evaluation of claims and the evidence supporting them. Historians must critique interpretations within their broader historiographical context, as well as the effectiveness of arguments. This analytical practice fosters a nuanced understanding of diverse perspectives and encourages scholars to engage

critically with competing narratives.

Making historical connections emerges as a pivotal skill in this framework, encompassing comparison, contextualization, and synthesis. Comparison involves identifying and evaluating similarities and differences between historical phenomena. Additionally, insights into the interplay between superstructures and substructures provide tools for uncovering deeper ideological and sociocultural underpinnings.

Contextualization situates historical events within broader regional, national, or global milieus, enabling historians to draw conclusions about their significance. Christian (2018) extends this practice to universal contexts, emphasizing the interconnectedness of historical phenomena. Synthesis, akin to summarization but broader in scope, involves integrating insights from various disciplines. The K to 12 Gabay Pangkurikulum captures this capacity in competencies such as summarizing key facts and ideas (Department of Education, 2016, p. 7). Historians thus draw from economics, geography, sociology, and other fields, exemplifying the inherent interdisciplinarity of historical thinking. The synthesis of disciplinary perspectives enriches historical inquiry, aligning with Barton's (2017) observation that history shares substantial conceptual overlap with social sciences. Christian (2018) further underscores the dangers of hyper-specialization, advocating for a return to integrated, multifaceted approaches to knowledge.

Chronological reasoning, the third methodological category, includes causation, patterns of continuity and change, and periodization. Causation entails discerning the significance of events and distinguishing correlation from causation. Patterns of continuity and change require careful attention to nuance, recognizing the historical contingencies shaping human behavior. Periodization, meanwhile, involves organizing timelines, identifying turning points, and crafting coherent historical narratives.

Each of these skills contributes to a holistic understanding of history, reflecting the intellectual rigor and imaginative depth necessary for the discipline. By interweaving theoretical insights with practical competencies, this study advances a framework for historical thinking that is both comprehensive and adaptable, grounded in a rich tradition of scholarship and pedagogy.

3.5. Perspective in Historical Thinking

The third pillar of historical thinking skills, “perspective,” is perhaps the most elusive, yet it is indispensable (Salinas et al., 2012). It gestures toward the sum of orientations, habits, and stances that render one's engagement with the past responsible (figure 4). To include this category is to concede a profound truth: that historians cannot help but “begin with a particular historical point of view, based on their assumptions and the ways in which they conceptualize the issues” (Elder et al., 2011). This interplay of predispositions and deliberate habits is what makes history, despite its scientific rigor, irrevocably an art.

A historian worth their salt must carry within them an epistemological compass, an axiological sensitivity, and an ontological humility. These orientations, distilled from luminaries like Elder, Paul, and Gorzycki (2011), Nokes (2022), and the K to 12 Gabay Pangkurikulum (Department of Education, 2016), are not mere academic abstractions but the very essence of historical inquiry. Indeed, they are echoed in the works of Seixas (2015), Duquette (2015), and Lewis (1966).

Axiology within the historian's craft concerns the ethics and values that permeate historical engagement. To write history is not merely to document—it is to wrestle with the moral weight of narratives, to discern justice in the shadows of bygone eras, and to risk the vulnerability of judgment. The values of a historian invariably shape their choice of questions, the weight they give to evidence, and the silences they permit to echo in their prose.

Epistemology, by contrast, wrestles with knowledge itself: its origins, its limits, and its certainties. A good historian, like Paul and Kleinberg (2018), understands that to seek the past is to engage in a kind of paradox. For while the past is unchangeable, our access to it is always partial and mediated. As Murphey (1994) and Carroll (1996) remind us, historical knowledge is a mosaic crafted from fragmentary evidence, patterns discerned where none seem obvious, and truths cautiously inferred from the fog of time.

Finally, there is the ontological—concerned not with what we know, but what is. It asks: what is the nature of the realities history seeks to describe? VanSledright (2011) and Innset (2022) have remarked on the historian's perpetual confrontation with the ephemeral: nations that crumble, ideas that evolve, and lives that vanish into memory. To embrace historical ontology is to embrace transience, to see both the futility and the necessity of reconstructing worlds that no longer are.

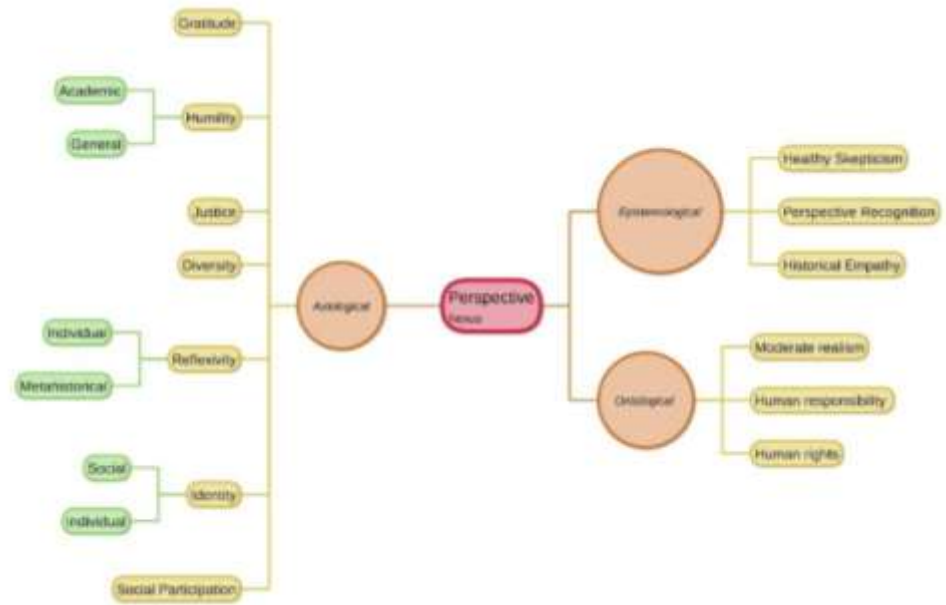


Figure 4. An integrated taxonomy of historical perspective.

Together, these perspectives do not merely shape history—they are history. They are the currents beneath the surface, pulling each generation of historians to confront their own humanity in the act of understanding those who came before. To ponder the past without perspective is to read a shadow of a text, devoid of color or dimension. With it, however, the past comes alive – not as a static tableau but as a living, breathing complexity, charged with the fullness of its tragedies, triumphs, and irreducible ambiguities. This breathing forth of life is precisely what good history teachers are able to do (Agoncillo, 1997)

If history is an art, it is one painted in perspective, where every stroke reveals not only what is known but the quiet humility of knowing it could always be otherwise.

The historian’s epistemology must breathe skepticism, embrace the nuance of perspective, and ache with empathy for the past. *Healthy skepticism*, as VanSledright (2011) explains, is not mere doubt but a disciplined stance. It shuns the dogmatic embrace of *naïve realism*, recoils from the paralyzing excess of *naïve relativism*, and steadies itself in the dynamic tension of *critical pragmatism*. This stance acknowledges the variability of historical accounts yet insists they be measured by rigorous criteria – those tools of the trade that enable one to sift through the sediment of evidence, situating fragments within their historical context (VanSledright, 2011, p. 66). Such skepticism defends history against the disorienting whirlwinds of extreme relativism, which Christian (2018) aptly notes it resists, for history dares to balance on the knife’s edge of the credible and the contestable (p. 12).

Yet skepticism alone does not suffice. The historian must engage in *perspective recognition* – an intellectual ascent that seeks to inhabit another’s mindscape. Nokes (2022) encourages this leap, urging us to trace the contours of the informant’s viewpoint, even when unfamiliar or repugnant. The *K to 12 Gabay Pangkurikulum: Araling Panlipunan* (Department of Education, 2016) captures this in its plea for awareness of bygone values and mores, fostering a consciousness of how they differ from or converge with the present (p. 7). Collingwood (1998) envisioned this as a metaphysical labor, one tasked with unearthing the “absolute presuppositions” embedded in historical thought – a process of reconstructive empathy that peels back the layers of human striving and folly (p. 47). It is here, in the collision of recognition and reconstruction, that historical empathy is born – a way of being with the past so intimately that it compels action in the present.

This triad – *skepticism, recognition, empathy* – coalesces into a foundational skill of *historical perspective-taking*: the cognitive disentanglement of the present from the past. Seixas (2015) names this the antidote to *presentism*, that insidious fallacy of imposing modern sensibilities on ancient realities. Beware, however, the equivocation with the metaphysical presentism of time’s ontology – a divergence that Koons (2022) clarifies with precision.

Epistemology alone, however, cannot carry the weight of historical thinking. It must be

undergirded by an axiological framework that prizes virtues such as gratitude, humility, and justice. Kidd (2014) extols gratitude as the antithesis of Lewis's (1966) "chronological snobbery" – the haughty dismissal of the past as primitive or irrelevant (p. 207). Collingwood (1994), in an indictment of Enlightenment hubris, calls for a reckoning with the concrete actuality of human effort, commingled as it is with both light and shadow (p. 102). Gratitude, then, is not mere sentiment but an intellectual discipline that tempers the historian's hubris.

Humility – both academic and existential – is another indispensable virtue. It is the recognition, as Nokes (2022) observes, that even our most esteemed efforts are corrigible in the face of better evidence (p. 11). It is the acknowledgment, as Church and Samuelson (2017) argue, of biases both in the archive and in ourselves. It is the clarity of mind that, as Wineburg (2018) notes, admits that no historian can reconstruct every era or every region in exhaustive detail. Without humility, the pursuit of history devolves into hubris; with it, it becomes a collaborative art.

And what of justice? This virtue demands more than impartiality; it calls for moral engagement. The *K to 12 Gabay Pangkurikulum: Araling Panlipunan* (Department of Education, 2016) identifies competencies like defending rights and fulfilling responsibilities. Seixas (2015) gestures toward its ethical dimension – the rendering of moral judgment on historical actions, alongside appropriate recompense or remembrance. Justice, in this sense, is not merely retrospective but anticipatory, shaping how we engage with the ongoing narratives of our shared humanity.

Amidst this axiological landscape lies the value for diversity, a commitment to tolerance and the enrichment of culture through difference. This value repudiates the atrocities of intolerance – epitomized by the Holocaust's brutal erasure of those deemed "other." Proper historical perspective insists that divergence need not incite division; rather, it can be a wellspring of cultural vitality.

Yet, historical thinking demands more than virtue. It calls for *reflexivity* – both individual and metahistorical. Peterson (2002) warns that without self-knowledge, the solemn vow of "never again" remains hollow, for the moral catastrophes of history were authored by people alarmingly like ourselves. To remember, we must first understand, and to understand, we must confront our own capacity for evil. This individual reflexivity, akin to metacognition, extends to metahistorical reflexivity: the interrogation of the very methodologies and assumptions that scaffold our historical inquiries (Innsset, 2022).

Finally, history invites us into an identity dialogue – social and individual. The *K to 12 Gabay Pangkurikulum: Araling Panlipunan* (Department of Education, 2016) emphasizes national identity, yet Christian (2018) and Harari (2014) beckon us toward a global consciousness, for our species now wrestles with challenges that transcend borders. Harari (2016) cautions, however, against hubristic anthropocentrism, asking whether we, as "dissatisfied and irresponsible gods," truly know what we want. History, then, becomes not merely an academic exercise but an existential imperative, a means of grounding identity amidst the chaos of modernity.

Ontologically, the historian must commit to a moderate realism, the ontological concomitant of what Nokes (2022) calls the criterialist epistemic stance. This commitment includes the affirmation of a knowable reality, the existence of other minds, and the causal intelligibility of human action (Murphy, 1994). Yet it also requires openness to possibilities that defy reductionism, lest history devolve into a dogmatic science devoid of wonder (Carroll, 1996).

In the end, historical thinking is not just an epistemic or axiological exercise; it is an ontological stance, a way of being in the world that seeks truth—not as an abstract ideal but as a lived commitment. For Pascal, the love of truth is the antidote to an age obscured by lies, and perhaps, it is this love that marks the historian's soul (Kreeft, 2015).

5. Conclusions

The research offers a sharp contrast between the established model of Peter Seixas and the proposed Memory-Method-Perspective (MMP) framework. On one side lies Seixas' six-concept model, deeply rooted in procedural clarity, but not without its conceptual fragmentation. On the other, the MMP model aspires to overcome this fragmentation through synthesis, offering an approach both broader and more demanding.

Seixas' model represents a pragmatic attempt to distill historical thinking into discrete, actionable components. Each of the six concepts – historical significance, primary source evidence, continuity and change, cause and consequence, historical perspective-taking, and

the ethical dimension – is presented as a unique tension, inviting educators and students alike to wrestle with the complexity of historical inquiry. Its strength lies in its accessibility: educators can isolate a specific concept and teach it as a standalone skill. However, this very accessibility is its limitation. By presenting these concepts in isolation, the model often leaves learners struggling to connect the pieces, resulting in an experience that mirrors the fragmented nature of the historical record itself rather than its cohesive interpretation.

In contrast, the MMP model reimagines historical thinking as a dialectical process. Memory, Method, and Perspective interact dynamically, creating a framework where historical inquiry is neither a static recollection of facts nor a mechanical application of techniques. Instead, it becomes a living, reflexive engagement with the past. The power of the MMP model lies in its integration: Memory anchors us in substantive and procedural knowledge; Method equips us with analytical tools to contextualize and synthesize; and Perspective compels us to engage ethically and critically with both the past and our positionality within it. However, this model's philosophical depth requires educators and students to possess a certain intellectual maturity, one not easily cultivated within the constraints of standardized curricula.

The divergence between these models is perhaps most evident in their focus. Seixas' approach emphasizes procedural clarity, encouraging students to approach history as a series of manageable problems. By contrast, the MMP model promotes holistic engagement, aligning with the complexities of historical inquiry. This is not merely a philosophical stance but an ethical one: by integrating perspective as a core dimension, the MMP model demands that learners reflect on their positionality and biases, challenging the neutral stance often implied in procedural methodologies.

Yet, neither model is without critique. The Seixas model, for all its practical utility, risks reducing historical thinking to a checklist of isolated skills, potentially leaving students ill-equipped to navigate the nuanced interplay between past and present. Meanwhile, the MMP model, though theoretically robust, requires significant investment in training and resources, making it less accessible in many educational contexts.

Ultimately, the choice between these models reflects a deeper tension in the philosophy of history education: is historical thinking best taught as a set of discrete skills or as a cohesive, integrative process? The table underscores this tension, inviting us to consider whether we ought to prioritize accessibility or depth, procedural clarity or philosophical coherence. What remains clear is that both models, in their own ways, challenge us to wrestle with the past not as a distant archive but as an ever-present dialogue, demanding responsibility and meaning.

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Research Article

Demystifying the Mitigation Devices in Philippine Presidential Speeches: A Political Discourse Analysis

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Abstract: This study examines the use of mitigation devices – specifically, hedges, euphemisms, and parenthetical verbs – in the speeches of Philippine presidents to reveal how linguistic strategies shape political discourse. Through a detailed political discourse analysis, this research identifies the critical functions of these devices in moderating assertions, deflecting responsibility, and managing audience perception. Hedges such as attribution and plausibility shields, euphemistic abbreviations, and parenthetical verbs like “I think” and “I believe” emerge as essential tools that enable leaders to introduce ambiguity, express tentativeness, and reduce the forcefulness of statements. These devices not only soften potentially controversial or sensitive information but also reinforce the speaker’s credibility by allowing space for interpretive flexibility. Findings highlight that mitigation devices are integral to the rhetorical frameworks employed by Philippine presidents, facilitating a careful balance between assertiveness and adaptability in high-stakes communication. Implications for political communication suggest that these linguistic tools serve not merely as rhetorical flourishes but as strategic elements in fostering trust, empathy, and relatability with the public. The study concludes with recommendations for further research in cross-cultural political discourse and audience perception of mitigation strategies, underscoring the broader applicability of these devices in shaping effective political communication.

Keywords: linguistics; presidential speeches; political discourse analysis; mitigation devices

1. Introduction

Political speeches, especially presidential addresses, play a pivotal role in shaping public opinion and guiding national discourse. One linguistic strategy often employed in these speeches is the use of mitigation devices – linguistic tools aimed at softening the impact of direct statements, thereby reducing the risk of confrontation or rejection. Mitigation can be seen as a crucial element of political rhetoric, serving to maintain rapport with the audience while subtly managing face-threatening acts, especially in highly publicized contexts like presidential speeches (Haverkate, 1992; Flores-Ferrán & Lovejoy, 2015; Obenza & Baradillo, 2023). Research on mitigation strategies has predominantly focused on political interviews and debates, examining how speakers use hedges, parenthetical verbs, euphemisms, and other linguistic devices to achieve persuasive, yet non-confrontational, communication (Vlasyan & Shusharina, 2018; Bull & Miskinis, 2015; Obenza et al., 2024).

Politicians use various sub-strategies for pragmatic mitigation, such as pragmatic empathy, hedges, vague deictics, indirect speech acts, and political euphemism, to balance relationships and achieve political goals. In crisis communication, mitigation strategies such as transcendence and differentiation are used to shape public perception and construct meaning. These strategies help political actors present their efforts as effective and hard-working (Chepurnaya, 2021).

Although studies have extensively covered mitigation in Western political contexts, particularly in American and European political speeches (Haverkate, 1992; Bull & Miskinis, 2015), limited research has explored how these devices are used in the unique political landscape of the Philippines. Philippine presidential speeches often involve not just conveying policy but also navigating a complex cultural terrain marked by expectations of politeness and indirect communication. Mitigation, in this context, is a crucial rhetorical device that allows

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politicians to address contentious issues without overtly alienating their audience. The lack of in-depth analysis of these mitigation strategies in Philippine political speeches presents an important gap in the literature that this study aims to address.

This research seeks to demystify the mitigation devices employed in Philippine presidential speeches by analyzing the linguistic strategies used to soften or mitigate the illocutionary force of these speeches. By examining a corpus of selected presidential speeches, this study will identify the key mitigation strategies – such as hedges, tag questions, and indirect speech – and evaluate their functions in the context of Philippine political communication. This study not only aims to contribute to the understanding of political rhetoric in the Philippines but also adds to the global body of knowledge on the strategic use of language in political communication.

In this study, Bruce Fraser's (1990) theory of mitigation is used as the primary theoretical framework. Fraser's work on mitigation provides a well-defined lens for examining how Philippine presidents employ specific linguistic strategies to soften, attenuate, or modify the illocutionary force of their speech acts, particularly within the complex dynamics of political discourse. By examining the language choices that serve to mitigate speech, this study aims to reveal how language functions not only as a medium of communication but also as a strategic tool to influence and persuade audiences.

1.1. Mitigation in Fraser's Theoretical Perspective

Mitigation, as originally described by Fraser (1990), involves the strategic deployment of linguistic devices to reduce the directness or forcefulness of a statement, thereby mitigating potential face-threatening effects. This concept underscores the pragmatic and intention-driven nature of language use, wherein speakers strategically adjust their utterances to navigate complex interpersonal dynamics, maintain social harmony, and balance authority with approachability (Fraser, 1990). Recent expansions of Fraser's theoretical framework emphasize mitigation's multifaceted nature as both a rhetorical and relational device, operationalized across domains such as courtroom discourse, therapeutic conversations, and cross-cultural pragmatics. For instance, mitigation in courtroom settings has been identified as a critical tool for managing vulnerability and conflict, often manifesting as anticipatory discourse strategies to handle disagreement and maintain credibility (Martinovski, 2006; Cheng et al., 2023). Similarly, therapeutic settings reveal mitigation as essential in maintaining rapport, where it balances the cognitive-pragmatic goals of face preservation and interactive harmony (Cheng et al., 2023; Marco & Arguedas, 2021).

Recent studies further explore mitigation's linguistic mechanisms, such as hedging, understatement, and modalization, as tools to soften illocutionary force and reduce backlash (Marco & Arguedas, 2021; Bates, 2020). These strategies extend Fraser's initial insights by integrating modern cognitive and affective dimensions of mitigation, showing its application in politically sensitive or socially stigmatized contexts, where mitigation serves both as a politeness strategy and a mechanism to navigate power imbalances (Delbene, 2004; Cheng et al., 2023). The dynamic, context-sensitive application of these strategies underscores their versatility across social and institutional domains.

1.2. Mitigation in Political Discourse

In political discourse, mitigation strategies are crucial tools for leaders who must address contentious issues, manage public perception, and uphold political decorum. Mitigation in this context is employed to reduce the illocutionary force of speech acts, thus allowing leaders to convey directives, criticisms, or contentious views in a less confrontational or more palatable manner (Chilton, 2004; Fairclough, 2001). Within Fraser's framework, such language modifications are seen not as mere rhetorical flourishes but as essential to the function of political discourse, where the stakes of miscommunication or perceived aggression are high.

Political figures, including Philippine presidents, often employ mitigation to manage the impact of their words, protect their public image, and maintain social harmony. This study, therefore, positions Fraser's theory of mitigation as an ideal framework to examine how Philippine presidents navigate linguistic and rhetorical complexity to balance authority and accessibility, convey controversial messages diplomatically, and maintain rapport with a diverse audience.

1.3. Cultural Nuances in the Philippine Context

While Fraser's (1990) theory offers a robust framework for understanding mitigation as a universal linguistic strategy, it is also adaptable to the socio-cultural particularities of Philippine political discourse. Philippine culture is characterized by high-context

communication, wherein indirect language and social harmony, or *pakikisama*, play significant roles in public discourse (Enriquez, 1994). Consequently, mitigation strategies in the Philippine setting may manifest in ways that diverge from Western norms, as cultural expectations influence both the form and function of these devices. For example, presidential speeches in the Philippines may reflect the value of *hija* (a sense of shame) or *utang na loob* (a debt of gratitude), which could lead to distinctive mitigation strategies that emphasize humility, respect, and indirectness (Cleofas, 2019; Chandler, 1988). These cultural factors enhance the relevance of Fraser's theory while requiring an adaptation to interpret the mitigation devices that Philippine presidents specifically employ.

Fraser's (1990) theory of mitigation offers a comprehensive framework through which to explore the linguistic and strategic dimensions of political discourse in the Philippine context. By examining the mitigation devices present in Philippine presidential speeches, this study aims to elucidate how these leaders employ language as a means of managing authority, maintaining public rapport, and addressing sensitive issues in a culturally resonant manner. This theoretical approach thus positions mitigation not only as a linguistic phenomenon but as a critical rhetorical device that underscores the nuanced relationship between language, power, and culture in political speech.

2. Materials and Methods

2.1. Research Design

This study adopts a qualitative research design, specifically leveraging Discourse Analysis to explore the deployment of mitigation devices in Philippine presidential speeches. Qualitative research, according to Denzin and Lincoln (2011), is concerned with understanding phenomena in natural settings, allowing for in-depth examination of complex social phenomena through language. Shank (2006) underscores that qualitative research is a systematic and empirical inquiry into meaning, enabling researchers to unpack the layers of meaning embedded in communicative acts.

Discourse Analysis, as framed by Wodak and Krzyżanowski (2008), offers a robust analytical framework to investigate how language constructs social realities and addresses sensitive or challenging societal issues. In political contexts, the language used by public figures reflects broader socio-political dynamics and serves as a mechanism to shape public perception, manage crises, and maintain authority (Fairclough, 2003; Van Dijk, 2006). This study thus employs Discourse Analysis to critically examine how Philippine presidents use linguistic mitigation strategies – such as indirect language, hedges, and euphemisms – to tactfully address sensitive subjects, particularly in the context of natural disasters, such as earthquakes.

2.2. Research Corpus

The research corpus comprised six carefully selected speeches delivered by Philippine presidents in response to major earthquakes. These speeches were chosen according to specific criteria to ensure their relevance to the study's objectives, which focus on public addresses that balance empathy with authoritative reassurance. First, each speech was required to have been delivered in response to a significant earthquake impacting one of the three main island groups: Luzon, Visayas, or Mindanao. Additionally, to maintain contextual relevance, each speech had to be delivered by the sitting president at the time of the earthquake event. The content of each speech was another crucial criterion, as it needed to provide ample linguistic material to facilitate a detailed discourse analysis. Finally, the selected speeches were required to address earthquake events of considerable public impact, resonating with a national audience and demonstrating the use of mitigation devices in crisis communication. These criteria ensured that each speech included in the corpus was pertinent to the study's exploration of mitigation strategies in presidential discourse during national crises.

2.3. Data Collection and Data Analysis

The data collection process involved gathering speech transcripts and video footage from reliable public sources. Publicly accessible speeches were sourced from official platforms, including Radio Television Malacañang (RTVM), ABS-CBN News, INQUIRER, and Manila Bulletin's YouTube channels. Transcripts for certain speeches were obtained from the RTVM and Office of the Press Secretary GOVPH websites. When online transcripts were unavailable, the researchers undertook careful manual transcription, followed by translation

from Filipino and Bisaya to English to ensure consistent analytical clarity. These translations adhered to standard translation practices, as outlined by Temple and Young (2004), to maintain linguistic and cultural accuracy in interpretation.

Data analysis focused on identifying and categorizing instances of mitigation devices within the speeches. Building on Fraser's (1980) framework, the study examined a range of linguistic strategies used to mitigate statements, such as indirect speech acts, hedges, disclaimers, and euphemisms (Lakoff, 1973; Holmes, 1995). This analysis was guided by a close reading of each transcript, with particular attention paid to the social and political contexts of each speech. The categorization followed Fraser's classifications, with adaptations made to accommodate context-specific language use reflective of Philippine political discourse (Brown & Levinson, 1987).

Mitigation devices were analyzed based on their function within the speeches, including their role in minimizing face-threatening acts, reducing perceived authority, and fostering public empathy (Goffman, 1967). Such devices are often strategically employed in political communication to balance assertiveness with approachability, aligning public perception with the speaker's intended stance (Chilton, 2004). Following established discourse analysis protocols (Gee, 2014), each speech was dissected line by line, with instances of mitigation annotated and interpreted within the socio-political context in which they were delivered.

2.4. *Ethical Considerations*

Throughout the study, the researchers maintained strict adherence to ethical guidelines. As Hammersley and Atkinson (2007) suggest, the analysis of public speeches – especially those delivered by high-profile figures like presidents – requires careful attention to prevent unintended harm or misrepresentation. The analysis was conducted with objectivity, aiming to provide insights into linguistic strategies rather than political critique, thereby respecting the public figures involved and the governmental institutions they represent. Data security and privacy were maintained through password-protected files, and findings were presented in a manner that contributes constructively to an understanding of political discourse in crisis communication.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1. *Role of Hedges in Discourse*

In spoken and written discourse, hedges play a vital role in softening statements, indicating uncertainty, and strategically managing speaker responsibility. Hedges are linguistic devices that allow speakers or writers to express ambiguity, doubt, or reduce the impact of their assertions, making statements appear less direct and thereby minimizing potential criticism or offense (Ali & Salih, 2020; Pastukhova, 2018; Ko, 2014). According to Fraser (2009), hedges are often employed as mitigation strategies, which can help speakers navigate the nuances of conveying potentially sensitive information in a manner that is both cautious and adaptable.

Two primary types of hedges, attribution shields and plausibility shields, serve distinct functions in discourse. Attribution shields, such as phrases like “they said” or “we heard,” redirect responsibility to an external source, thus distancing the speaker from the statement's full implications. This allows speakers, particularly in political contexts, to maintain flexibility in their stance without committing entirely to a proposition (Gribanova & Gaidukova, 2019). Plausibility shields, on the other hand, involve terms like “it seems” or “I believe,” which suggest the speaker's subjective belief or tentative stance, creating room for doubt while conveying a sense of cautious assertion. These shields are particularly useful in contexts where the speaker needs to project confidence while simultaneously allowing for alternative interpretations.

Additionally, approximators such as “about” or “approximately” provide a further layer of flexibility, helping speakers convey information that may lack precise accuracy without undermining the message's credibility. As highlighted in Jovic, Kurtishi, and AlAfnan (2023), hedges can also enhance the rhetorical appeals of ethos, pathos, and logos, lending speakers an adaptable toolset for managing the perception and reception of their statements in public communication contexts.

3.1.1. Functions of Hedges in Mitigating Statements



3.1.1.1. Attribution Shields in Presidential Speeches

As shown in Table 1, in the excerpt, President Aquino III employs an attribution shield by prefacing his statement with “we heard,” which redirects responsibility to external sources, thereby minimizing potential criticism directed at him. This mitigation technique aligns with Fraser’s (2009) concept of self-serving mitigation, where the speaker distances themselves from potential repercussions of their words by attributing responsibility to others. This rhetorical strategy is also discussed in Gribanova and Gaidukova’s (2019) study, which highlights that vague attribution can reduce the credibility of a statement and the speaker’s certainty.

Similarly, President Duterte uses an attribution shield in the statement “they said he was already a little deaf,” relying on “they said” as a shield to deflect personal accountability for the claim. Gribanova and Gaidukova (2019) categorize such language as a truth-modifying hedge that serves to dilute the speaker’s ownership of the statement, allowing them to transfer some of the possible negative consequences to an ambiguous source.

Table 1. Analysis of hedges in political discourse.

Device Type (Subtype)	Example	Function	Speaker	Theoretical Basis
Attribution Shields	“we heard”	Redirects responsibility to external sources, distancing the speaker from the statement’s implications.	Aquino III	Fraser (2009); Gribanova & Gaidukova (2019)
	“they said he was already a little deaf”	Deflects accountability by transferring ownership of the claim to an ambiguous source.	Duterte	Fraser (2009); Gribanova & Gaidukova (2019)
Plausibility Shields	“I believe in the studies of our experts”	Frames the statement as subjective belief, projecting confidence while softening accountability.	Aquino III	Fraser (2009); Gribanova & Gaidukova (2019)
	“It seems that this is a strong earthquake”	Suggests tentative reasoning, creating interpretive flexibility and reducing finality.	Marcos Jr.	Fraser (2009); Gribanova & Gaidukova (2019)

3.1.1.2. Plausibility Shields in Presidential Speeches

President Aquino III’s expression, “I believe in the studies of our experts,” illustrates a plausibility shield by embedding his statement within a belief frame. This shield not only projects confidence in expert findings but also deflects direct accountability by framing his stance as subjective belief rather than factual assertion. Fraser (2009) defines this as altruistic mitigation, intended to soften the impact on the speaker’s audience and reduce potential alarm.

A similar usage appears in President Marcos Jr.’s statement, “It seems that this is a strong earthquake,” where “seems” serves as a plausibility hedge. This hedge signals that the speaker is basing his statement on plausible reasoning rather than firm evidence, thereby creating space for doubt and reducing the statement’s perceived finality. Such hedges are commonly used in political rhetoric to maintain flexibility in interpretation and minimize backlash (Gribanova & Gaidukova, 2019).

3.1.2. Approximators in Philippine Presidential Speeches

3.1.2.1. Rounding

As illustrated in Table 2, President Aquino III uses “about” in “those with damage are about 40,000 homes,” an approximator that communicates an estimated figure while avoiding a concrete commitment. Gribanova and Gaidukova (2019) explain that approximators like “about” introduce a degree of vagueness, which aligns with Fraser’s (2009) description of hedges that create ambiguity in truth value, allowing the speaker to distance themselves from precise factual claims.

President Marcos Jr. also uses an approximator in the statement, “at approximately 8:40,” which serves a similar function. By approximating the timing, he suggests the factual basis without asserting precision, creating leeway in his accountability regarding the statement’s accuracy. Fraser (2009) emphasizes this function of approximators in political discourse, where the ambiguity acts as a rhetorical tool to soften potential criticism.

Table 2. Analysis of linguistic devices in political discourse.



Device Type (Subtype)	Example	Function	Speaker	Theoretical Basis
Approximators (Rounding)	“about 40,000 homes”	Introduces vagueness, avoids exact figures, mitigating potential inaccuracies.	Aquino III	Fraser (2009); Gribanova & Gaidukova (2019)
	“at approximately 8:40”	Suggests a factual basis while maintaining flexibility to reduce accountability.	Marcos Jr.	Fraser (2009); Gribanova & Gaidukova (2019)
Adaptors (Emotional Emphasis)	“really very sorry”	Enhances sincerity and projects emotional engagement, reducing potential criticism.	Duterte	Fraser (2009); Gribanova & Gaidukova (2019)
Adaptors (Habitual Qualifier)	“usually in the disaster reports”	Signals habitual norms rather than absolutes, moderating the speaker’s stance.	Marcos Jr.	Fraser (2009); Jovic et al. (2023)

3.1.2.2. Adaptors

President Duterte’s statement, “I’m really very sorry,” utilizes “really” as an adaptor to enhance the perceived sincerity of his apology. Gribanova and Gaidukova (2019) identify adaptors as hedges that emphasize emotional engagement, often to project authenticity or empathy. Fraser (2009) further elaborates that adaptors serve as self-serving mitigations by accentuating the speaker’s intended emotional state, thus diminishing potential criticism through the expression of relatability and empathy.

In another example, Marcos Jr. employs the term “usually” in “usually in the disaster reports,” which functions as an adaptor hedge, signaling habitual rather than absolute norms. Jovic, Kurtishi, and AlAfnan (2023) discuss how such adaptors are employed to convey routine without full commitment, effectively moderating the speaker’s stance.

3.1.3. Forms

Hedges are linguistic tools that allow speakers and writers to express statements with a degree of uncertainty, politeness, or approximation, reducing the assertiveness of their claims. These devices are particularly useful in sensitive or formal communication contexts, where softening statements can mitigate potential criticism or maintain flexibility. Among the most common forms of hedges are adverbials and modal auxiliary verbs, each serving distinct but complementary functions in discourse.

Adverbials, such as “probably,” “likely,” and “somewhat,” function by subtly altering the intensity or certainty of a statement. These adverbial hedges allow the speaker to convey an impression of caution or tentativeness, which can make assertions appear less confrontational or more open to interpretation. In political and diplomatic language, adverbials serve as a means of indicating a respectful stance towards uncertain or controversial topics (Fraser, 2009).

Modal auxiliary verbs like “may,” “might,” and “could” also play a critical role in hedging. These verbs allow speakers to propose possibilities rather than certainties, which is essential in contexts where absolute statements might be seen as overconfident or risky. Modal verbs create a space for alternative interpretations, softening the impact of claims and allowing for a more nuanced expression of intent (Gribanova & Gaidukova, 2019).

By employing these forms of hedges, speakers can communicate ideas with flexibility and caution, aligning their language with the rhetorical goals of managing audience perception and maintaining credibility in uncertain contexts. These strategies are particularly effective in political and diplomatic speech, where maintaining a balance between assertiveness and openness is crucial.

3.1.3.1. Adverbials

Hedges in the form of adverbs are a common linguistic device used to signal uncertainty or suggestiveness, enabling speakers to soften their statements and avoid absolute commitment. The adverb “maybe” frequently appears in political discourse to introduce a degree of uncertainty, allowing leaders to convey their thoughts without asserting complete confidence.

As shown in Table 3, for example, in President Aquino III’s statement, “And maybe for the – we heard some news in Manila, there is a newspaper that says the entire province of Bohol will sink into a sinkhole” (Excerpt 24, p. 57, par. 1), the use of “maybe” acts as an adverbial hedge. This not only conveys uncertainty about the claim but also deflects



responsibility by attributing the information to a source in Manila. This dual-layered hedge combines an adverbial form with an attribution shield, exemplifying what Fraser (2009) refers to as a “complex hedge,” where multiple hedging strategies are layered to further mitigate responsibility.

In another instance, President Duterte uses “maybe” in the statement, “It’s heavy because there’s really money in it, maybe in 100-peso bills” (Excerpt 25, p. 67, par. 5). Here, “maybe” introduces a suggestion rather than a firm assertion about the currency denomination. According to Fraser (2009), adverbial hedges like “maybe” can function as rhetorical strategies that signal reduced commitment, thus allowing speakers to manage their credibility while acknowledging uncertainty.

Similarly, President Marcos Jr. employs “maybe” in the statement, “And maybe I can schedule a trip perhaps tomorrow as soon as possible” (Excerpt 26, p. 82, par. 4). This usage signals both uncertainty and flexibility, indicating the president’s tentative stance without committing fully to the timing of his visit. Gribanova and Gaidukova (2019) suggest that adverbial hedges like “maybe” often help political figures appear cautious and adaptable, while simultaneously reducing the risk of audience disappointment if plans change.

Table 3. Analysis of hedges in political discourse.

Device Type (Subtype)	Example	Function	Speaker	Theoretical Basis
Adverbials	“And maybe for the—we heard some news in Manila, there is a newspaper that says the entire province of Bohol will sink into a sinkhole” “maybe in 100-peso bills”	Conveys uncertainty, deflects responsibility by attributing information to a source.	Aquino III	Fraser (2009); Gribanova & Gaidukova (2019)
	“And maybe I can schedule a trip perhaps tomorrow as soon as possible”	Introduces a suggestion rather than a firm assertion, signaling reduced commitment.	Duterte	Fraser (2009)
	“But you can expect, whether I’m here or not, we’re constantly talking with your good Governor and other local government officials...”	Indicates uncertainty and flexibility in scheduling intentions.	Marcos Jr.	Fraser (2009); Gribanova & Gaidukova (2019)
Modal Auxiliary Verbs	“When he says something, he will do it, you can depend on him to fulfill his promise of 1600”	Reassures audience while subtly limiting commitment to specific outcomes.	Aquino III	Fraser (2009)
	“And maybe I can schedule a trip perhaps tomorrow as soon as possible”	Presents a less assertive commitment, allowing room for variability.	Duterte	Kadhim & Mewad (2024); Fraser (2009)
	“And maybe I can schedule a trip perhaps tomorrow as soon as possible”	Reduces assertiveness, signaling consideration for audience expectations.	Marcos Jr.	Fraser (2009)

3.1.3.2. Modal Auxiliary Verbs

Modal auxiliary verbs, such as “can,” “might,” and “may,” are another prevalent form of hedging, often used in political and diplomatic discourse to indicate possibilities rather than certainties. By using modal verbs, speakers can reduce the forcefulness of their statements, allowing room for alternative outcomes.

In President Aquino III’s statement, “But you can expect, whether I’m here or not, we’re constantly talking with your good Governor and other local government officials, and we’re constantly following up with the entire Cabinet to make sure that what you need is acted upon...” (Excerpt 27, p. 59, par. 11), the modal verb “can” serves as a hedge. This choice of language reassures the audience about government support while subtly limiting his commitment. Fraser (2009) describes such modal usage as an “altruistic mitigation device,” aiming to soften the impact of the statement on listeners by suggesting potential rather than guaranteed outcomes.

President Duterte also employs a similar hedging strategy in his statement, “When he says something, he will do it, you can depend on him to fulfill his promise of 1600” (Excerpt 28, p. 68, par. 8). Here, “can” acts as a hedge that presents Señor Escalada’s commitment in a less assertive manner, allowing room for potential variability. Kadhim and Mewad (2024) note that hedging through modal verbs in political discourse can reflect politeness and humility, as it enables the speaker to maintain credibility by not committing absolutely to

outcomes.

Finally, in President Marcos Jr.'s statement, "And maybe I can schedule a trip perhaps tomorrow as soon as possible" (Excerpt 29, p. 82, par. 4), the use of "can" mitigates the certainty of his scheduling intentions. Fraser (2009) categorizes this as an "ethical mitigation technique," which reduces the assertiveness of the speaker's statement and signals a consideration for the audience's expectations.

3.2. *Euphemisms*

Euphemisms are linguistic strategies that allow speakers to address potentially sensitive or controversial topics in a more palatable, indirect manner. Functioning as mitigation devices, euphemisms soften the impact of statements, thereby reducing the likelihood of offense and managing the speaker's social image. This form of language is especially valuable in political and formal discourse, where it helps leaders address complex or uncomfortable issues without provoking strong emotional responses from their audience.

One prevalent form of euphemism in political language is abbreviation, which condenses lengthy terms into concise, widely recognized forms. These abbreviations not only streamline communication but also reduce the perceived formality and rigidity associated with bureaucratic titles, making the speaker appear more accessible. Ali and Salih (2020) describe abbreviations as effective mitigation strategies that help maintain social harmony by minimizing social distance between speaker and audience, facilitating smoother communication in politically sensitive contexts.

Another significant form is apocopation, where longer titles or phrases are shortened to signal familiarity and immediacy. Such euphemistic strategies, according to Fraser (2009), can diminish the intensity of the speaker's message, presenting information in a way that lessens the likelihood of negative reactions or alienation. Apocopation therefore serves as a powerful tool for political figures, enabling them to maintain a relatable tone while discussing official matters that might otherwise appear detached or overly formal (Fraser, 2009).

Beyond their role in reducing formality, euphemisms also help veil harsh realities and mitigate potential conflicts between speakers and listeners. By softening statements and avoiding direct language, euphemisms support constructive dialogue and allow political figures to address contentious issues without alienating their audience. Pastukhova (2018) emphasizes that euphemisms, by subtly altering the presentation of information, can effectively shield both the speaker and the audience from uncomfortable truths, thus fostering a more receptive communicative environment.

Through the strategic use of abbreviations, apocopations, and other euphemistic forms, speakers in political and formal settings can control the tone and perceived intensity of their messages, facilitating constructive interactions and reducing the risk of backlash. As integral components of mitigation strategies, euphemisms remain essential in navigating complex social dynamics and maintaining positive speaker-audience relations (Ali & Salih, 2020).

3.2.1. Shortening

Euphemisms, particularly abbreviations, are frequently used in political discourse to streamline communication and manage the speaker's social perception. Shortening long, formal titles or names through abbreviations allows speakers to maintain conversational flow and avoid cumbersome terminology, which can otherwise detract from the message's clarity and accessibility.

In the statement in Table 4, "Because we consulted both PHIVOLCS and the Mines and Geosciences Bureau to find out if there is an immediate danger for you here" (President Aquino III, Excerpt 30, p. 57, par. 1), the term "PHIVOLCS" (Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology) serves as an abbreviation that enhances communication efficiency. Ali and Salih (2021) defines euphemisms as alternative expressions that mitigate the impact of statements, particularly when full terminology might be unwieldy or potentially face-threatening. By using "PHIVOLCS," President Aquino III avoids the need for lengthy explanations, which aids in quick information delivery.

Similarly, President Duterte employs the abbreviation "PSG" in the phrase, "Later, the PSGs were running around" (Excerpt 31, p. 68, par. 10). "PSG," short for Presidential Security Group, streamlines the statement by condensing the name of the security agency. According to Fraser (2009), abbreviations like "PSG" function as mitigation devices, helping speakers present information concisely and reducing the potential for criticism by sidestepping verbose expressions that may detract from the speaker's authority.

President Marcos Jr. also utilizes abbreviations effectively, as seen in the statement, "The



Secretary of DSWD, Secretary Erwin Tulfo, is not here with us because he is already there” (Excerpt 32, p. 82, par. 3). “DSWD” (Department of Social Welfare and Development) replaces a lengthy organizational title, making the statement more concise. Ali and Salih (2021) highlights that such euphemistic abbreviations not only facilitate clearer communication but also prevent possible criticism by avoiding repetitious full titles that may distract or frustrate listeners

Another form of shortening known as apocoptation is employed by President Marcos Jr. in, “Perhaps because of the terrain structure as explained to us by Usec. Solidum, it might have different land in the towns in La Union” (Excerpt 33, p. 87, par. 10). Here, “Usec” is a shortened form of “Undersecretary,” which Fraser (2009) identifies as a mitigation tool that signals familiarity or closeness, often used to streamline titles within official communications. This abbreviation conveys a sense of immediacy, reinforcing a sense of informal rapport with the audience while minimizing formality.

Table 4. Analysis of euphemisms in political discourse.

Device Type (Subtype)	Example	Function	Speaker	Theoretical Basis
Euphemisms (Abbreviation)	“PHIVOLCS” (Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology)	Streamlines communication by condensing lengthy terms; reduces formality.	Aquino III	Fraser (2009); Ali & Salih (2021)
	“PSG” (Presidential Security Group)	Reduces verbosity, presents information concisely, and avoids distractions.	Duterte	Fraser (2009); Ali & Salih (2021)
	“DSWD” (Department of Social Welfare and Development)	Simplifies communication, preventing criticism by avoiding repetitious titles.	Marcos Jr.	Fraser (2009); Ali & Salih (2021)
	“Usec” (Undersecretary)	Signals familiarity and immediacy; reduces formality while maintaining accessibility.	Marcos Jr.	Fraser (2009)

3.3. Parenthetical Verbs

Parenthetical verbs, such as “I think,” “I believe,” and “it seems,” serve as essential mitigation devices in political discourse, introducing a layer of uncertainty or subjectivity that softens the impact of statements. These expressions enable speakers to present assertions as personal perspectives rather than unequivocal facts, thus reducing the strength of their claims and managing potential criticism (Ali & Salih, 2020; Flores-Ferrán & Lovejoy, 2015). The use of parenthetical verbs is particularly strategic in political settings, where statements are subject to intense scrutiny. Embedding phrases like “I think,” speakers communicate their views while creating space for alternative interpretations, mitigating the risk of backlash or rigid interpretation (Fraser, 2009).

As key elements within broader mitigation strategies, parenthetical verbs are used to temper the illocutionary force of speech acts. Fraser (2009) categorizes these verbs as instrumental in signaling a tentative stance, helping speakers retain credibility by conveying caution or ambiguity. By framing statements with expressions like “I think,” the speaker subtly shifts responsibility for the claim, thereby allowing it to be perceived as a subjective observation rather than a definitive conclusion. This indirect approach is a valuable rhetorical tool, enabling leaders to communicate flexibility and openness, particularly in politically sensitive or uncertain contexts (Fraser, 2009).

Table 5. Analysis of parenthetical verbs in political discourse.

Device Type	Example	Function	Speaker	Theoretical Basis
Parenthetical Verbs	“I think in fact I already know a source where we can immediately get them”	Mitigates assertion strength, suggesting tentativeness and allowing flexibility.	Marcos Jr.	Fraser (2009); Ali & Salih (2021)
	“I believe this will be the right course of action”	Conveys subjectivity, softens definitive claims to reduce criticism risk.	Hypothetical Example	Flores-Ferrán & Lovejoy (2015); Fraser (2009)
	“It seems that the matter is under control”	Introduces uncertainty, signaling caution and managing audience expectations.	Hypothetical Example	Ali & Salih (2020); Fraser (2009)

In political communication, parenthetical verbs not only manage the speaker’s

accountability but also allow for a nuanced interaction with the audience. For instance, as illustrated in Table 5, in President Marcos Jr.'s statement, "I think in fact I already know a source where we can immediately get them" (Excerpt 34, p. 100, par. 28), the use of "I think" mitigates the strength of his assertion, suggesting a degree of tentativeness that shifts some interpretative responsibility to the audience. Ali and Salih (2021) emphasizes that this use of parenthetical verbs allows speakers to temper commitment, offering a flexible, less assertive form of expression that is particularly suited to high-stakes dialogue. By framing the statement as a subjective perspective, President Marcos Jr. manages to convey intent while retaining flexibility to adapt if the situation evolves.

Therefore, the strategic deployment of parenthetical verbs enables political figures to balance the conveyance of information with interpretive space, a critical element in managing both credibility and audience expectations. Embedding statements with tentative language, speakers can carefully navigate complex social dynamics, ensuring that their discourse remains adaptable and receptive to differing viewpoints.

4. Conclusions

This study concludes that the strategic use of mitigation devices, specifically hedges, euphemisms, and parenthetical verbs, is integral to the rhetoric of Philippine presidential speeches. These devices enable leaders to frame statements with calculated ambiguity, soften direct assertions, and convey empathy while managing audience expectations and minimizing potential backlash. Employing these devices, Philippine presidents create a flexible communication environment that allows for nuanced interpretations and supports their credibility without committing to definitive claims. Overall, the findings highlight that political language is deliberately constructed, leveraging subtle linguistic forms to cultivate rapport, manage accountability, and sustain audience trust in uncertain or sensitive situations.

Future research should compare mitigation strategies across different political and cultural contexts to better understand how cultural values shape the use and perception of linguistic devices in political discourse. Such comparative analyses could reveal patterns and variances in rhetorical strategies that are culturally contingent, enriching global political discourse studies.

Investigating how audiences perceive and interpret these mitigation devices can offer additional insights into the effectiveness of political discourse. Audience-centered research may reveal the nuances of public trust in political communication, particularly regarding how these devices shape perceived honesty, empathy, and credibility.

The study on mitigation devices in Philippine presidential speeches provides several valuable insights into political discourse, particularly regarding how political leaders manage public perception, accountability, and credibility. Demonstrating the strategic use of hedges, euphemisms, and parenthetical verbs, this study reveals that these linguistic devices are not merely stylistic choices but serve critical functions in constructing and moderating political messages. The findings imply that political rhetoric in the Philippines – like in many global contexts – employs language as a tool for balancing transparency with restraint, thus shaping public expectations and emotional responses.

Moreover, the results underscore the adaptability of these devices in reinforcing the ethos, pathos, and logos appeals necessary for public trust and credibility in political figures. For public communication experts and political analysts, these insights suggest that mitigation strategies are essential for maintaining a nuanced, responsive communication style that can effectively address the diverse concerns of a nation. This study could therefore inform training and development programs for political and public relations practitioners, equipping them with the linguistic strategies needed for impactful, sensitive communication.

While this study provides a robust analysis of mitigation devices in the speeches of Philippine presidents, it is limited by its exclusive focus on formal presidential discourse. The scope did not include other types of political communication, such as informal interviews or debates, where mitigation strategies might differ. Additionally, the study's reliance on textual analysis of prepared speeches may overlook spontaneous elements of language used in live settings, which could yield additional insights into the role of mitigation devices in real-time political discourse. Future studies may expand the dataset to include a wider variety of political speech contexts to capture a more comprehensive view of these rhetorical strategies in action.

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