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Alternative avenues in the name of peace

**A rhetorical analysis of Nobel Lectures of Wangari Maathai, Rigoberta Menchu and
Aung San Suu Kyi**

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Abstract

As the media continually assails the public with images of war, misery and debt, one turns them into a fiction, far removed from routine concerns. One becomes immune to the reality of human conflicts, to the enduring North-South divide and prefers to pride on new-fangled ideals of globalisation. The truth, as felt by the other side, is however of a different nature. As Kofi Annan put it, 'The great losers in today's very unequal world are not those, who are influenced too heavily by globalisation but those, who are excluded from globalisation'¹.

In the face of exclusion though, it does happen occasionally that some individuals from the grassroots, step out of the common crowd. They come forth to acknowledge the problem, to leave behind all misapprehension and become drivers of change.

This study is directed precisely at three exceptional persons: Wangari Maathai, Rigoberta Menchu and Aung San Suu Kyi. These Third World women happen to be recipients of the prestigious Nobel Peace Prize for their outstanding contribution to peace in their homeland and across the globe. What is of interest is how they address the question of peace, from their seemingly subservient position as firstly as women from the Third World from patriarchal set-ups and secondly as post-colonial subalterns.

We direct our attention to the Acceptance speeches delivered by each of the women on the auspicious occasion of the Nobel Peace Prize ceremony. Our focus is on the rhetorical devices employed by the women to achieve the internal and external aims of the speech. The internal or intrinsic end of any speech is to construct a sound argument; the external or extrinsic end is to persuade the audience². Do the three speakers achieve both aims? This is the first task of our inquiry.

The second task is to highlight the salient similarities or dissimilarities present across the speeches to identify those elements that differentiate their arguments from conventional arguments in the name of peace. As James Scott points out in 'Battlefields of knowledge', one can see comparisons as 'a way of clarifying contextual features that define a concrete problematic'³. What he is suggesting is that the onus of responsibility lies on the rhetor, to extract common features in the speeches without making sweeping remarks about their content and form. This, I believe to be the preliminary to a proper hermeneutic research, based on ongoing learning and discovery.¹

¹ <http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2000/20000214.tad1903.doc.html>

² Lawson-Tancred (Ed):1991. *Aristotle. The Art of Rhetoric*, p17

³ Scott, J. 'Battlefields of knowledge' in REL4050Z. *Course Reader 2007*, p66

For the purpose of this study, the speeches and related information have been collected from the Nobel Foundation Website <http://nobelprize.org/>. To underpin the rhetorical analysis, extensive use has been made of Aristotle's The Art of Rhetoric. The theories have been contextualized with research into present day rhetoric and general debates on peace and grassroots communications. Particular attention has also been paid to different feminist schools of thought, with a penchant ultimately for eco-feminist theories. The trends in the Nobel laureates' speeches actually attest strong links to this non-mainstream branch of feminist thought. This serves as background to better grasp some of the rhetorical choices made by them.

It emerges from the rhetorical analysis of the speeches, that the Nobel laureates address not only the issue of peace but that of empowering the grassroots, Nature and Women with(in) Nature. It is argued that these issues do not fall outside of the concern for peace. In fact, by re-conceptualising the notion of peace in a discursive manner, with emphasis on values, not arms, these afore-mentioned issues become part and parcel of peace. As the title suggests, the alternative avenues are not opened in opposition to but rather in the name of peace.

The analysis hence points to a new trend in grassroots activism. The fact that all three women, despite their different geographical and cultural backgrounds, attempt similarly to re-formulate the peace debate, suggests an incipient, though noteworthy move towards a subversion of the hegemonic militaristic logic governing peace talks today. It may offer fresh ground for rhetorical debates on the developments of this new discourse.

Introduction

The bedrock of our theoretical analysis is Aristotle's The Art of Rhetoric which outlines the persuasive elements that underlie speeches and statements uttered in public.

According to Aristotle, each speech has an *intrinsic* aim which is to construct a sound argument and an *extrinsic* aim which is to persuade the audience. The arguments can take three forms, *deliberative*, *forensic* or *epideictic*. The *deliberative* argument consists in 'exhorting' or 'dissuading' the audience to act. It is focused on the future and its aim is to guide the audience towards what is advantageous or deter them from what is harmful. The *forensic* argument consists in the prosecution or defense of what just happened. It is therefore anchored in the past and aims at justice. The *epideictic* argument consists in the praise or blame of the individual or action and is based commonly held values. It is anchored in the present moment and its aim is to bring out the nobility or baseness of the person or thing concerned.⁴

The arguments are constructed by appealing to either or all of the following: *logos*, *ethos* and *pathos*. *Logos* refers to logical proof provided through the internal coherence of the argument, *ethos* refers to ethical proof based on the intelligence, character and goodwill of the speaker, and *pathos* refers to sentiments elicited in the audience in the course of the speech, with a view to influencing the audience's opinion and emotional inclination towards the argument. An apt interplay of these different proofs enables the speaker to successfully persuade the audience to act in their best advantage⁵.

Although we may be unaware of these rhetorical moves, they are present and tacitly influence the thrust of political declarations, media coverage and advertising among others. We only need to recall Bill Clinton's rehearsed speeches in front of focus groups to grasp the importance of persuasive elements in the speeches. As George Stephanopoulos describes it,

⁴ Lawson-Tancred (Ed). Aristotle. The Art of Rhetoric, p 80

⁵ Lawson-Tancred (Ed). Aristotle. The Art of Rhetoric, p 74

‘When he was “on” before a live audience, Clinton was like a jazz genius jamming with his pals. He poured his whole body into the text, swaying to the rhythm (...) soaring from the texts with riffs synthesized from *a lifetime of hard study* and *sympathetic listening*’⁶.

The way in which the audience’s attention is still captivated by punchy lines, clenched fists, lyrical flights, makes it impossible to ignore how mastery of age-old rhetorical principles, continues to be the forte of fruitful persuasion and deliberation.

The choice of fitting words in fitting contexts has a preponderant role to play, especially in the realm of socio-political activism. The term ‘activism’ has been defined by Brian Martin as ‘action that goes beyond conventional politics, typically being more energetic, passionate, innovative, and committed’⁷. Taking its own stand alongside or in defiance of conventional politics, social activism generally becomes the province of the disenfranchised segments of the population, those who believe their voice, their rights are being muzzled by the authorities.

Their struggle is entrenched in the *deliberative* and it is undertaken to change policies or social relations. In the case of the women speakers Maathai, Menchu and San Suu Kyi, activist movements are developed in the name of peace. It is worth noting that their activism a nonviolent one with three distinct forms. The first form of activism according to Gene Sharp, is that of ‘protest and persuasion involving speeches, slogans, banners, picketing, protest disrobings, vigils, singing, marches, and teach-ins’. The second is that of ‘noncooperation, (involving) excommunication, disobeying social customs, International trade embargo’. The third is that of ‘intervention, including sit-ins, nonviolent occupations, guerrilla theater, fasting, and setting up alternative economic and political institutions’⁸. In either case, emphasis is laid as much on the means as on the ends for the desired resolution.

⁶ Wayne:1999. ‘Clinton’s Legacy: The Clinton Persona’, p 559 *my emphasis*

⁷ <http://www.uow.edu.au/arts/sts/bmartin/pubs/07Anderson.html>

⁸ *ibid*

In practice, it may be hard to extricate the three manifestations of activism, but the women speakers' social involvement would strongly suggest certain salient trends. Maathai's sensitization programmes on tree planting shows her penchant for the first type, more precisely 'persuasion'. Menchu's involvement in strikes and protest movements shows her inclination for 'intervention' and Aung San Suu Kyi's public addresses and civil disobedience show her inclination for 'noncooperation'. These preferences are in most cases dictated by their socio-political context.

At this point it would be pertinent to ask oneself to what extent the speeches they delivered during the Nobel Peace Prize ceremony can be considered a form of social activism. What motives do they serve, how and for whom? Arguably, war and peace issues have for long been addressed by men in power, as they struggle in their choice between militarism and diplomacy. Even today, in mainstream politics, the militaristic discourse in support of fighting a just war in the name of peace, of the Manichean victory of good over evil continue to impinge on the public psyche. As Mral states, 'Where men's general rhetorical attitude has had elements of fighting and competition, women's rhetorical attitude comprises negotiation, equality, and sympathy'⁹. These traits illustrate women greater 'democratic/deliberative sensitivity'¹⁰.

Even if few women activists have attempted either to embrace the militaristic discourse, by enrolling for war, many more have been exploring alternative modes for achieving peace. Not all trends in peace activism endured the test of time. Some simply waned away while others became institutionalised. In the process, figures like Arundhati Roy, Mother Theresa, Susan Sontag have come to capture our imagination as revolutionaries who helped reformulate peace discussions without necessarily being in the frontline. Mother Theresa's statement in her Nobel Lecture in 1979, 'I think that we in our family don't need bombs and guns, to destroy to bring peace - just get together, love one another'¹¹ is one of them.

⁹ Mral, 'Gender Aspects Concerning the Concept of 'Strategic Manoeuvring', p 227

¹⁰ *ibid.* p228

¹¹http://nobelprize.org/nobel_prizes/peace/laureates/1979/teresa-lecture.html.

Following closely, the other voices are those of Maathai, Menchu and San Suu Kyi. These diverge from the mainstream militaristic discourse not only because of the women's nonviolent socio-political activism, but because of their refusal to underpin the *logos* of peace on classical concerns of national security, economic output, pro-war concerns. Still, the ways in which the women fall in the vanguard of the sidelined revolutionaries cannot be oversimplified.

In this rhetorical analysis, it matters only little that the Nobel laureates should act differently. What counts more is to what an extent their *logos* impacts on other social concerns, which remain poorly addressed or quasi-absent in the militaristic discourses to this day. Rhetorically speaking, it is worthwhile to focus on the various *extrinsic* ends pursued in the name of world peace, which demarcate the women's discourses from current popularly militaristic ones.

To achieve this end, the study is divided into three main sections. The first section offers a background to the analysis, with reference to biographical details of the peace agents, and the requirements and rhetorical implications of the Nobel Awards ceremony. The second section assesses the speeches individually, with special attention to elocution, composition and style. The last section entitled 'Echoing Voices' situates the speeches within a broader canvas of rhetorical issues. These are further broken into four sub-categories, namely the rhetoric of peace, the rhetoric of the grassroots, the rhetoric of Nature and the rhetoric of Women with(in) Nature.

The aim of the study is to better grasp of the rhetorical strategies employed by the three women, to integrate their micro-struggles as presumably disenfranchised women from the Third World, within their macro-struggle as post-modern subalterns struggling for world peace. The purpose, in other words, is investigate whether and how other pursuits are integrated within a quest for peace.

Chapter 1

1.1 A Background: The peace agents

Wangari Maathai

Wangari Maathai is known best for her active involvement in the Green Belt Movement in her home country, Kenya. By advocating the growing of trees, the aim of the movement was manifold. It called for an embracing of common values of ‘love for environment conservation, self and community empowerment, volunteerism, strong sense of belonging to a community of Greens, accountability, transparency and honesty’¹². Of course, the fervor of environment protection was contagious and soon captured the imagination of other countries in the African continent heralding continental changes in approaches to the environment, social reform and sustainable development. The projects launched were the tree-planting campaign, food security and water harvesting at household level, civic education, advocacy, Green Belt Safari, and Pan-African training workshops. The success of the projects was astonishing with a visible indicator, about twenty million trees planted up until 1999¹³. The 1994 Nobel Peace Prize she was awarded, attests her efforts not only towards conserving the environment, but also rooting out the social evils which she believes sprang from an unequal distribution of natural resources.

Rigoberta Menchú Tum

Born to a poor Indian peasant family in Guatemala, Rigoberta Menchu was brought up following the Quiche beliefs of the Mayan culture. As a teenager, Menchu became involved in the Women’s Rights Movement and later joined the Committee of the Peasant Union (CUC). She participated actively in the 1980 strike for improved working conditions for farm workers on the Pacific Coast be improved. Likewise, she taught the Indian Peasants means and ways to resist military oppression by involving herself in the 31st of January Popular Front. In 1981 however, Menchu had to escape to Mexico because of threats on her life. In the years of her social activism, Menchu also had the misfortune of losing her family members, who as social reformers, were tortured and

¹² Maathai:2004. The Green Belt Movement, p 33

¹³ Maathai. The Green Belt Movement, p 64

killed by the army. This only made her resolve stronger and while in exile, she continued her efforts as organizer of resistance movement and a fighter for peasant rights. In 1982 participated in the creation of the joint opposition body, The United Representation of the Guatemalan Opposition (RUOG) and became known as ‘a leading advocate of Indian rights and ethno-cultural reconciliation, not only in Guatemala but in the Western Hemisphere generally’¹⁴. She received the Nobel Peace Prize in 1992 for her relentless efforts to secure peace.

Aung San Suu Kyi

Aung San Suu Kyi’s political activism only gained momentum in 1988 following mass uprisings throughout the country and massacres by the military. Her first move was an open letter to the government appealing for the creation of an independent consultative committee to organize multi-party elections. This was followed by a public speech in front of thousands of people in favour of the establishment of a democratic government. Unfortunately, the situation was aggravated with the promulgation of a State Law and Order Restoration Council (SLORC) on September 18. The SLORC meant ruthless tyranny on the masses, by preventing political gatherings consisting of more than four people and allowing imprisonment without trial. During that time, San Suu Kyi was appointed general secretary of newly formed National League for Democracy and during her office, she flouted the ban on gatherings by addressing audiences country-wide. She endorsed the policy of non-violence and civil disobedience. In February of the following year, she was not permitted to stand for election and in July, got arrested without charge. In 1991, while still in custody, she was nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize for her dedication to peace and democracy in Burma¹⁵. The Nobel Lecture she was expected to deliver was actually given by her son, Alexander Aris, who acted as her surrogate for the event.

²http://nobelprize.org/nobel_prizes/peace/laureates/1992/tum-bio.html

³ http://nobelprize.org/nobel_prizes/peace/laureates/1991/kyi-bio.html

1.2 The podium

'Each of us has participated in a ritual, a rite of passage, a public drama which has been commensurate with the inner experience of winning a Nobel Prize'.

(Seamus Heaney)¹⁶

To begin with, it is necessary to establish the cadre in which the speeches are delivered. The Nobel Foundation was created on November 27, 1895 in line with one of the clauses of Dr Alfred Bernhard Nobel's will.

"The whole of my remaining realizable estate shall be dealt with in the following way: the capital, invested in safe securities by my executors, shall constitute a fund, the interest on which shall be annually distributed in the form of prizes to those who, during the preceding year, shall have conferred the greatest benefit to mankind... (O)ne part to the person who shall have done the most or the best work for fraternity between nations, for the abolition or reduction of standing armies and for the holding and promotion of peace congresses."¹⁷

Annually, the Nobel Peace Prize is awarded in the spherical Oslo City Hall, to the most deserving, by the Chairman of the Norwegian Nobel Committee in the presence of Their Majesties the King and Queen of Norway, the Government, Storting representatives and an invited audience¹⁸.

Aimed at acknowledging the laureate's achievements in the domain of peace, and making the hero known to the world, the Nobel Peace Prize ceremony is a public act of celebration. It is followed by a banquet that only adds to the festive ambiance that prevails. The entire ceremony has a grandeur which reminds one of Aristotelian times, when Greek gods were hailed, mighty kings coronated.

Back in Greek Antiquity, this historical moment of Nobel Prize Awards would be classified as an *epideictic* event. Derived from the Greek *epideixis*, it once stood for "lecture" and 'denoted discourse appropriate within pedagogical or ritual contexts'¹⁹. Its distinctive forms included the 'encomia', the 'eulogies', and other formal, public addresses, not necessarily civic or political. Soon however, it began to lose its

⁴ http://nobelprize.org/nobel_prizes/literature/laureates/1995/heaney-speech.html

¹⁷ [http://nobelprize.org/nobelfoundation/statutes.html](http://nobelprize.org/nobelprize.org/nobelfoundation/statutes.html)

¹⁸ http://nobelprize.org/award_ceremonies/prize.html

¹⁹ Sheard:1996. 'The Public Value of Epideictic Rhetoric'. p 768

popularity, for it overly indulged in stylistic embellishment to the detriment of purpose or *telos*. As Sheard points out, 'it evolved into a highly figurative, even fictive mode of discourse that seemed primarily to advertise its speaker's skill'.

For Aristotle though, the *epideictic* has always held a special function. In The Art of Rhetoric, he describes its function as being the praise or censure of a particular person or thing²⁰. Unlike *deliberative* or *forensic* rhetoric where *enthymemes* or syllogisms are profusely employed as proof, in the *epideictic* rhetoric, amplification is more frequent. This is because the *telos* or function of the speech is verily the amplification or elevation of values. This point is stressed in Vickers's 'In Defense of Rhetoric'. Vickers states that the role of the *epideictic* is far from being merely florid and ornate, it actually extends to 'affecting internal decisions- opinions and attitudes'²¹.

Sheard is of the view that if we really wish to grasp the *telos* of the *epideictic*, its 'richness and complexity', we need to 'broaden our sense of epideictic's style, function, time, and place- in short, its *kairos*'. She adds that *kairos* or "exigency" does not restrict itself to the 'occasion' of the address, but like a complex matrix involves 'the critical convergence of time, place, and circumstance, including audience needs, desires, expectations, attitudes, resources'²². On this last point, Aristotle states that the audience is not composed of passive listeners, but rather of scrupulous judges who hold the key to the final success or failure of the speech event²³.

As an authentic *epideictic* moment, the Nobel Peace Prize ceremony celebrates abstract values embodied by the laureates. It conforms to the rigid, ritualistic codes of behaviour, established from precedents. The mood is elevated, the décor sober and it is likely that acts of disrespect, whether through inappropriate vestmental choice or language use, would be frowned upon as robbing the moment of its surreal splendour and reducing it to bathos or worse blasphemy.

²⁰ Lawson-Tancred (Ed). Aristotle. The Art of Rhetoric, p 105

²¹ Sheard. 'The Public Value of Epideictic Rhetoric'. p 768

²² *ibid.* p 771

²³ Lawson-Tancred (Ed). Aristotle. The Art of Rhetoric, p 105

The presence of the media cannot be under-estimated here. As an interface between the spatially confined setting of the ceremony and the world out there, the media confers to the event a larger-than-life dimension. In fact, the media rallies together people of various nationalities and cultures to participate in this world celebration. The audience then, consists not only of the Nobel prize organisers, the members of the jury, the other laureates and their kins, but also of a larger mix of individuals, with no necessary direct connection to the event. Hence, it is a vastly heterogeneous crowd that Wangari Maathai, Rigoberta Menchu and Aung San Suu Kyi's surrogate come to address.

Chapter 2 The Speeches

This chapter analyses the speeches of Wangari Maathai, Rigoberta Menchu and Aung San Suu Kyi individually. It aims to identify the speeches' intrinsic ends, by looking closely at elocution, composition and style. This will serve as groundwork for the extraction of common features.

2.1 The Nobel Lecture of Wangari Maathai

On the 10th of December 2004, a landmark in the history of mankind, the first African woman, Wangari Maathai is awarded the prestigious Nobel Peace Prize for unrelenting efforts in the field of national peace and sustainable development in Kenya.

The speech is neatly structured with four main identifiable components. At the onset, there is the *epideictic*, followed by the *forensic*, the *deliberative*. The last component of the speech is a childhood anecdote. The transition from one form of argument to the next is made by reiterating and acknowledging the presence of an audience: 'Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen'.

Defined in the context of celebrations, Maathai's speech is predominantly an *epideictic* one, a speech of gratitude, where Maathai accepts the honour bestowed upon her and thanks other stakeholders who are party in the recognition she receives. Observing the decorum in place, Maathai begins with the standard greeting: 'Your Majesties, Your Royal Highnesses...' ²⁴, as a way to ingratiate herself with the audience and humble herself vis-à-vis the dignitaries. This is evidenced in the following line, 'I stand before you and the world humbled by this recognition and uplifted by the honour' ²⁵. 'Humility' and 'honour' are not be viewed as *oxymorons* here, as 'honour' and 'shame' would. According to Aristotle, 'Noble too are all tasks done to others as they are less self-interested' ²⁶. Humility is one's own, since as one acts for others, one abnegates one's

²⁴ See Appendix lines 1-5

²⁵ Ibid. line 6

²⁶ Lawson-Tancred (Ed). Aristotle. The Art of Rhetoric, p 106

personal desires. Honour, on the other hand, is derived from others, as they realise how noble and laudable one's achievement is²⁷.

After briefly signaling her alignment with the audience(s), Maathai goes on to establish her *ethos* or credibility. She begins with 'As the first African woman'²⁸, and later positions herself 'As a mother'. Her *ethos* as a woman is significant. In The Art of Rhetoric, Aristotle opines that 'The virtues and works of those who are naturally more serious are nobler, such as those of a man, than those of a woman'²⁹. This is not mentioned to launch in a diatribe against Aristotle, but simply to remind ourselves that Aristotle lived in a different historical and social context and that in many developing parts of the world, women are still traditionally expected to occupy the private sphere.

One may think that as Maathai, an African woman, and a pioneer too, steps into the public domain, she comes to defy her double subordination, as woman and as citizen of a post-colonial state. She does but tacitly, for, in the four lines to follow, she conveniently conjures the image of the 'mother', to mitigate the impression that she is transgressing traditional patriarchal norms. It is only once she has prepared the ground in this way, that she reinforces her *ethos* as one brushing shoulders with the titans 'my fellow African Peace laureates, Presidents Nelson Mandela...'³⁰. According to Aristotle, the subject 'must be compared to well-known people; for that is amplificatory and noble'. He judges amplification necessary for it 'lies in excess, and excess is among the noble things'³¹. The use of the pronoun 'my' helps establish a sense of identification with the laureates, who had once spoken from the same pulpit. It allows Maathai to inherit the *ethos* of those preceding her, and to construct her own from that fount.

Besides gaining credence for her speech through *ethos*, Maathai's employs the first quarter of her speech to transfer onto others, the honour she has been given. The

²⁸ See Appendix line 8

²⁹ Lawson-Tancred (Ed). Aristotle. The Art of Rhetoric, p 107

³⁰ *ibid.* line 27

³¹ Lawson-Tancred (Ed). Aristotle. The Art of Rhetoric, p 110

recipients are ‘the people of Kenya and Africa and indeed the world’³², then ‘our men, both old and young’³³, the faceless ‘countless individuals and groups... work(ing) without recognition’, ‘family, friends, partners, supporters’³⁴, and of course, the Norwegian Nobel committee itself for giving due attention to sustainable development and peace. By listing the names of numerous deserving individuals and organisations, Maathai reaffirms the humility she projected at the onset.

Then, in the true *epideictic* tradition, she extols abstract values such as democratic governance, protection of human rights and protection of our environment. Here, her audience is a select one, comprising of ‘my fellow Africans’. She bonds with them in the epideictic moment, by using the first pronoun in the plural in ‘let us’³⁵. She also makes use of the *encomium*, where speakers mention their good birth and education as an argument, to increase chances of being liked and trusted by the audience³⁶. Since Maathai places great premium on people at the grassroots, the *encomium* involves aligning herself with the less privileged. Thus, Maathai makes a short narration of her childhood in rural Kenya so as to entrench her concerns for that segment of society, even when she addresses the world.

The next quarter of the speech puts forward a *forensic* argument. She begins the argument with an account of the formation of the Green Belt Movement. She outlines its initial objective, which has been to satisfy basic needs in firewood, clean drinking water, balanced diets, shelter and income³⁷. She paints the picture of women in Africa as ‘primary caretakers’, setting it against the scene of disenfranchisement and degradation of the environment triggered firstly by commercial farming and later by international trade.

³² See Appendix line 9

³³ *ibid.* line 12

³⁴ *ibid.* line 20

³⁵ *ibid.* line 30

³⁶ Lawson-Tancred (Ed). Aristotle. *The Art of Rhetoric*, p 108

³⁷ See Appendix line 48

This play on contrasting images, the one traditional, the other modern, allows her to garner greater support for the solution she intends to present. Her solution is that of ‘tree planting’³⁸, illustrated through its countless strengths: ‘simple, attainable, successful results within a reasonable amount of time’. She elaborates on the work she has engaged in, presenting herself as one of many cogs in the wheel: ‘so together, we have planted...’³⁹. This is reminiscent of the communal activities people engaged in prior to the advent industrial activity and the alienation of the work force. Hence, the picture she brushes, besides being one of the return to nature, is a return to an idealised, utopic moment of the past. It is simultaneously, a critique of the present wave of mechanisation, and a nostalgic desire to go back to traditional values that have long disappeared.

To concretise this vision, she insists that the challenge is to first debunk the myth that solutions lie ‘outside’⁴⁰. Hence, in the course of her Green Belt project, she embarks on a deliberative move to empower the powerless and exhort them to act for themselves. The *logos* of her argument is that, if the environment is affected, inhabitants will compete among themselves for meagre resources it produces. Consequently, some will gain and others will be deprived, setting in motion a vicious chain of desire, disappointment and in many cases, violence⁴¹. Therefore, in order to effectively address the question of peace, one needs to tackle the crux of the problem which is the inequitable distribution of resources, and implicitly, the very scarcity of these resources. Maathai explains that she spreads awareness about her scheme through ‘*a citizen education programme*’⁴² and the brainstorming of solutions. Maathai thus not only shows her engagement with the least privileged, but also projects herself as an educator who instills values, in the real epideictic sense of the term.

She goes on to emphasise the need for democracy, since she firmly believes that ‘the governance of the environment was impossible without democratic space’⁴³. Exploiting

³⁸ See Appendix line 62

³⁹ *ibid.* line 66

⁴⁰ *ibid.* line 74

⁴¹ *ibid.* line 77

⁴² *ibid.* line 79

⁴³ See Appendix line 103

the potency of certainties and possibilities through this *enthymeme*, as the equivalent of her former syllogism, she strengthens her argument to deal with three issues at the same time: protection of the environment, peace and democracy. In the process, she projects the image of the tree as a ‘symbol for peace’ as has been prevalent in the African tradition, with the staff made from the ‘thigi tree’, to bring resolution to brawls. As a *metaphor* for peace, the tree is invested with historical connotations. As Maathai comes to hold the traditional staff of peace, the impact is momentous. She not only takes upon herself the role of the elders, but also becomes the matriarch, that regulates public life in many of the African tribes while subverting male supremacy. It is not surprising then that Maathai should demonstrate her humility once more to laud the courage, resilience of the members of the Green Belt Movement. This move of distancing also gives closure to her forensic argument, and allows Maathai to launch in her deliberative argument.

The *deliberative* argument announces a return to the present and clears the ground for action. ‘*It is 30 years since we started this work*’⁴⁴. Throughout the argument, she explores the scope of the verb to call, as an order that marks the impossibility to refrain from action. ‘We are called to assist the Earth to heal her wounds and in the process heal our own’. Her argument borrows from the deterministic language of ecology, where every action has prior causes and results in a chain of reactions. Nothing is isolated and healing the one would heal the other. The ‘call’ also takes on a spiritual significance, and reminds us of divine calls to save humanity. This ethereal meaning is strengthened through the word ‘healing’. In the process, Maathai assumes the stature of a quasi-messianic figure, leading the blind and ignorant to the realm of light and knowledge .

She does so by making apt use of the time dimension ‘*That time is now*’⁴⁵. The distal deictic ‘that’ is not meant to postpone action, but as it is incisively cut by the ‘now’, is meant to shake the audience from their sense of torpor and amplify the urgency of the matter. With the whole edifice of proofs already at the disposal of the audience, there is no reason to indulge in discussion or debate. The short monosyllabic lines demonstrate

⁴⁴ *ibid.* line 137

⁴⁵ See Appendix line 147

the pressing need to translate words of wisdom into action. This tactic is often employed by speakers for effect and it relies on pace and momentum. Short monosyllabic lines quicken the pace so as to shock the audience⁴⁶ and urge for action. Long winding phrases on the other hand, are more prone to baffle the audience, make them lose touch of meaning, coherence, not to mention the beginning of the statement.

Maathai's argument thus begins with the imperative to act, and turns into a plea: 'I would also like to appeal for...'⁴⁷. The temporal discussion brings in its wake, a consideration about culture and 'cultural heritage'. As Maathai states 'Culture is dynamic, and evolves over time, discarding retrogressive traditions, like female genital mutilation...'⁴⁸. She stresses nonetheless that one should cherish the positive facets of African culture and reinforce the a sense of belonging, of being 'rooted'. Her discussion of culture is rhetorically apt, for while making the case about retrogressive traditions, she indirectly voices out the malpractices still prevalent vis-à-vis women.

This is what Mral makes explicit in her paper⁴⁹. She contends that when women speakers have to address the public, knowing that this would not be seen positively by the home crowd, they undertake various detours. Firstly, they 'play down gender'. Secondly they address topics of humility, as if they desire to be silent but are being forced to speak. Thirdly, they speak for others, and lastly they evade any overt sign for authority. In the case of Maathai, we can infer that she speaks of empowerment in rural communities to indirectly address pertinent issues facing women more particularly. Such a tactic allows her to speak of the unspeakable, of the taboo, without violating social decorum.

From then on, Maathai steps into the future to address the problems that still encumber her progress as social activist, and certain shortcomings, by making general statements 'There is also a need to galvanise civil society' or 'the extreme global inequities

⁴⁶ Lawson-Tancred (Ed). *Aristotle. The Art of Rhetoric* p 230-232

⁴⁷ *ibid.* line 156

⁴⁸ *ibid.* line 163

⁴⁹ Mral, 'Gender Aspects Concerning the Concept of 'Strategic Manoeuvring'', p226

...continue at the expense of the environment and peaceful coexistence'⁵⁰. It is interesting how she evades responsibility by using the dummy subject 'there' instead of 'I' or 'We need'. She invites the audience to act only in the latter half of her statement '*the choice is ours*'. Here, she makes the audience party in her own strife with the Green Belt project. It is noteworthy that implicit in the delineation of choice, is the implication of cost. If the cost is that of modernisation, it is one tactfully avoided by Maathai. Instead she speaks of her vision for the youth and projects her ideal, though attainable dreams, onto the next generation. 'They have the energy and creativity to shape a sustainable future'. Paralleling the deference Maathai bestows upon the elders at the onset to win their acceptance, the turn to the youth serves to bring new blood and spirit to the traditional way of living. In a sense, the youth become Maathai's staff to tacitly confront the old retrograde beliefs.

In regards to youth and culture, one could come to view the epilogue of the speech itself as a quibble on time, bringing together in a seamless way, the past, present and future. It draws on another childhood image of Maathai, where she is seen playing with tadpoles⁵¹. This is an endearing scene which not only closes off the distance between Maathai and her audience but also kindles hope in the minds of those who wish to follow her path, for despite being the hero, she becomes one of them, one with human attributes they can easily identify with.

Composition

Structurally, in the rhetorical tradition, a speech requires four elements, namely an introduction, narration, proof and epilogue⁵². In the context of an *epideictic* oratory, the introduction, like a musical prelude needs to connect the opening performance with the 'tonic key' of the rest of the speech. Also as Aristotle states 'one must make the listener think that he is joined in the praise'⁵³. Maathai aptly does this by making an epideictic opening in praise, not of herself but of those who assisted her in her project.

⁵⁰ See Appendix line 172

⁵¹ *ibid.* line 190

⁵² Lawson-Tancred (Ed). *Aristotle. The Art of Rhetoric* p 108

⁴⁸ *ibid.* p 246

The narration for Aristotle, in display speeches is ‘not continuous but segmental’⁵⁴. It is his belief that one must move from a set of facts displaying one particular strength to another set of facts displaying another value. That way we do not lose the audience and keep their interest sustained. Maathai indeed varies her narrative strings, speaking on one hand of the Green Belt movement and how it brings about employment and sustains the lives of Kenyans at the grassroots. On the other she speaks of protecting the environment as part of safeguarding one’s cultural heritage. The narrative in each instance, must have character, a component that produces moral purpose, in other words, it must have a motive. The purpose is defined with great clarity in Maathai's narration: we need to feel empowered before expecting the state to do something for us.

As regards proofs used in the epideictic portion of the speech, there is a reliance not on facts, but on the nobility and praiseworthiness of the act. Maathai excels in this by lauding those who have supported her in her project. In the *forensic* segment of the speech, there is ample use of *enthymemes*. Since these can be argued both ways, they offer greater scope and possibility. As a deductive proof, the *enthymeme* reaches its conclusion after scrutinising the facts at hand. It differs from the *example* which is inductive and is evidenced through a set of facts⁵⁵. One of the enthymemes in Maathai’s speech is where she links the preservation of the environment to peace and democracy. These do not necessarily follow in all possible situations. In her deliberative argument though, as she unveils the harm perpetrated by the global economy on small agro-industries, she makes satisfactory use of *examples*. Varying the types of proofs employed, Maathai is better able to captivate the audience.

These proofs so far illustrated belong to the category of *logos*. It would be of use to assess Maathai’s use of other forms of proof namely *ethos* and *pathos*. The construction of *ethos* in this instance, involves among other things, to dispel prejudice and ‘arouse sympathy’. Maathai, as we are aware has received accolades for her achievements even

⁵⁴ *ibid.* p 252

⁵⁵ Lawson-Tancred (Ed). *Aristotle. The Art of Rhetoric*, p 77

prior to her speech delivery. The question is whether she succeeds in doing justice to it in her speech. We should be aware that Maathai did not receive unanimous support from her country in the course of her project, which she outlines when she enumerates the shortcomings of civil society and the retrogressive beliefs still prevalent in Kenya. With this awareness, we understand why she persistently reverts to the role of mother and caregiver, and why she assumes that ‘the honour also gives a deep sense of pride to our men’. This is undoubtedly a means of arousing sympathy from the different members of the audience. Establishing her *ethos* in the initial portion of the speech, Maathai successfully becomes the epideictic herself. She becomes the embodiment of values such as nobility, courage which others should seek to emulate. It is noteworthy though that Maathai is a hero precisely because these values are in actual fact, inimitable.

Having laboured so devoutly to reinforce her *ethos*, Maathai does not require much appeal to proof by *pathos*, or emotions. It is only in her anecdotes of an idealised past that Maathai evokes sentiments of nostalgia and exhorts members of the audience to pick up the staff and act. In fact, if we had to place the different proofs on the scale, we would find that *ethos* takes unrivalled precedence over *logos* and *pathos*. This in rhetorical terms is not alarming, seeing that the speech is by large an epideictic one, and that the forensic and deliberative elements included by Maathai are not compulsory to the requirements of this celebratory occasion.

As for the epilogue, it stands on the fringe between light and momentous. According to Aristotle, the epilogue should comprise of four elements namely ‘the disposing of the listener well, amplification, bringing the listener to emotion and recapitulation’⁵⁶. Maathai disposes of the audience in a candid and friendly manner by invoking moments of her childhood. She projects herself as being in communion with nature. She pits this moment of her childhood with the scene of dried up streams of her present. In a sense, she here amplifies the urgency to act by simultaneously eliciting sentiments of pity, nostalgia and loss. She then revives hope by stating ‘the challenge is to restore the home of the tadpoles’. In a metaphorical fashion here, she recapitulates the motif running

⁵⁶ Lawson-Tancred (Ed). Aristotle. The Art of Rhetoric, p 260

through the entirety of the speech that is, safeguarding the environment, the cultural heritage.

Style

Style operates like proofs to generate a desired effect in the audience. The effect however pertains more to *pathos* than to *logos*. In the realm of poetry, romantic poets such as Wordsworth held that ‘the poet thinks and feels in the spirit of human passions’ and that ‘the end of poetry is to produce excitement in co-existence with an over-balance of pleasure’⁵⁷. For Aristotle though, the aim of the speech is to make an argument, and though passions can operate in its favour, the chief components of style are those of clarity and propriety. One should avoid ‘exotic’ and ‘artificial’ terms.

Even in the case of the metaphor, it should be ‘drawn not from remote things’ but those that belong to its own category, to qualify something that is still nameless. It is true that the metaphor is cryptic, but the intention is not to further baffle the audience but to place the desired image before their eyes. Maathai’s tree metaphor for peace and democracy is actually not an utterly far-fetched one for she makes the link between the tree and the thigi staff used by the elders. Nevertheless, the metaphor remains a partial one for she explicitly states that the tree is ‘a symbol for peace’. One would suppose from this that Maathai has a predilection for clarity of statement rather than imaginative flights of fancy that could well accompany metaphors.

On *propriety*, Aristotle holds that the style is proper if it is ‘emotive and characterful and proportional to the subject-matter’⁵⁸. This equilibrium seems hard to achieve, for slippages are not infrequent. In Maathai’s speech though, we find the ‘timely’ use of the various components. Emotion is used at the onset and the conclusion, and character or moral purpose is displayed in the narration. Yet even the emotion evoked in her childhood story is well-framed, meant to inform the audience about what has inspired her to take the course she has taken, and later to propel them to act. This is where the power

⁵⁷ Abrams & Greenblatt: 1962. ‘William Wordsworth’. in The Norton Anthology of English Literature.p250

⁵⁸ Lawson-Tancred (Ed). Aristotle.The Art of Rhetoric, p 228

of voice and expression takes over the power of facts. He is of the opinion that ‘if soft thoughts are said in a hard manner and hard thoughts in a softly, persuasiveness is produced’⁵⁹. Clearly, Maathai’s anecdote starts off being purely innocent and emotive until it strikes us that she intends to use it as a springboard for action. As they are rendered in this hard manner, those soft thoughts gain a poignancy beyond compare.

2.2 The Nobel Lecture of Rigoberta Menchu

The Nobel Lecture of Rigoberta Menchu is delivered in 1992 in front of many dignitaries, award winners and the international audience tuned to their television screens on that day.

As an *epideictic* speech, it celebrates not only the values endorsed by Menchu and the Indians but also celebrates this momentous occasion in the human history. Celebrations in Mayan tradition have a larger social dimension than could be imagined. As Paula Gunn Allen puts it, in the Mayan culture, ‘the purpose of a ceremony is to integrate: to fuse the individual with his or her fellows, the community of people with that of the other kingdoms, and this larger communal group with the worlds beyond this one’⁶⁰.

The structure of the speech follows the same rationale, with widening concentric circles of focus. The speech can be divided into four parts. The first is purely *epideictic*, intent on thanking the Nobel foundation for the honour and valorizing the values of her people. The second part goes beyond the ambit of Oslo hall and is based on her vision that Guatemala be ruled by the even hand of justice and democracy. The last part takes the form of a *deliberative* argument, teasing out the reasons for continuing inefficiency in reform programmes. It expands its locus of reference to peace efforts made in other parts of the world. All throughout, *forensic* arguments, in the shape of narratives serve as

⁵⁹ *ibid.*, p 229

⁶⁰ Allen, P. ‘The Sacred Hoop’ in The Ecocriticism Reader, Glotfelty, C. & Fromm, H. (Ed): 1995.

proof for the arguments offered. The last part ends on an *epideictic* note reinforcing the dream for a better future, the ‘gift to humanity’⁶¹.

As per tradition, Menchu expresses a deep sense emotion and pride, at once in the light of the Nobel Peace Prize, and directed at her country, its ancient culture, the values of her community, her country and Mother Nature⁶². This feeling of pride shifts from the individual to the set of values s/he embodies and assumes the stature of an epic which includes macrocosmic elements in its celebration. Even Nature, personified as the mother and nurturer partakes in the grandiose event. When Menchu increases the number of stakeholders in the celebration, not only does she transform it into an event larger than life, but also in all modesty, attempts to diffuse all the attention that has been cast upon her.

She also anchors her task into a larger scheme by showing that it is aimed at serving the interests of her people, culture. Through the device of *amplification*⁶³, she heightens the sobriety of the moment and the value of the award. For her, the love for one’s country, its people and culture is tantamount to respecting life itself. She adds more *signifiers* to the concept of life, so that it enfolds not only one’s actions encompasses others and ultimately impacts on the entire macrocosm. This is in line with, what she would state later, as being the intrinsic ‘cosmovision’ of the Mayan people⁶⁴.

In the same manner, she explores the significance of the Nobel Peace Prize. The reward is not only a token of honour and gratitude; it becomes a *metaphor* carved in concrete form. It stands not for a personal victory, but of a victory of a people, of Human Rights and rights of the indigenous people. Menchu describes the award as ‘one of the greatest conquests in the struggle for peace, for Human Rights’. The use of *oxymorons* ‘conquest’ and ‘peace’⁶⁵ in the same statement is fitting for it displays the irony

⁶¹ See Appendix line 623

⁶² *ibid* lines 206-209

⁶³ Lawson-Tancred. Aristotle: The Art of Rhetoric, p 213

⁶⁴ See Appendix line 306

⁶⁵ *ibid*. line 212

embedded generally in discussions of war and peace. It reminds the audience that in popular mindset, peace has to be won, snatched from the grips of the adversary and that violence, whether tacit or placid, is often at the core of peace struggles.

Violence hence becomes a double-edged sword that, on the one hand victimizes and on the other liberates ‘victims of genocides, repression and discrimination’ when turned upon itself, in a reflexive gesture⁶⁶. It would be plausible to imagine that violence actually holds the seed to its own implosion, making way for a new world order. However, in Menchu’s speech, violence is not the solution to the problem. She shows a penchant for symbolic means to resolve the issue. By considering the Nobel Peace Prize as a conquest, she confirms her conviction that peace can only be ‘conquered’ by peaceful means. By doing so, she joins the camp of the pacifists.

Truly then, the Nobel speech event is a potent occasion to form alignments and alliances with the heterogeneous audience. In this instance, Menchu attempts through her address, to raise awareness about the Guatemalan’s cause, so that it becomes part of the collective consciousness. The Nobel lecture thus becomes a tool for deliberation and a medium through which the speaker can call upon the audience to act⁶⁷. Menchu is aware of this and includes other peoples ‘in America and in the World’⁶⁸ in the struggle by stressing that injustices have also been perpetrated upon them.

Having rallied the audience’s support, Menchu lays down the *logos* of her argument for peace. All throughout, she uses the leitmotif of the Nobel Peace Prize to legitimise her strife for peace. The *logos* takes this form. Peace can be achieved through ‘real democracy’. ‘Real democracy’ will promote social justice⁶⁹. Social justice will enable civil sectors to be bonded together in the spirit of ‘solid national unity’. This unity will facilitate negotiation towards the resolution of internecine conflict. Hence peace will be promoted. In the whole equation, the Nobel Peace Prize, as a ‘symbol of peace’ acts as a

⁶⁶ *ibid.* line 214

⁶⁷ See Appendix line 218

⁶⁸ *ibid.* line 225

⁶⁹ *ibid.* line 227

catalyst to build the edifice of democracy and peace. On the other hand, the confession that the situation in Guatemala is still not conducive to engaging in such negotiations, on the premise that the voice of the majority is still muzzled by the reign of terror, tones down high flights of optimism⁷⁰.

The use of mitigation helps forestall, what would be referred to in the jargon of advocacy, as the argument of *inherency*, that is the perception that the proposal for action is not workable on the basis of flaws at the core of the system⁷¹. It also projects Menchu as a realist, but not a pessimist. Having laid down the difficulties, she states that through democracy, ‘political and legal grounds’ will operate to promote the will of the people. In rhetorical terms, her argument begins with a vision and values that champion ideals of democracy. It is interrupted by an honest glance at the present status quo with *forensic* elements of what has thus far inhibited democratic manifestations and it ends with the *deliberative* once more, projecting a ‘sign of hope’ for the entire Continent.

The narrative thread is broken once more with an exploration of the different senses of the Nobel Peace Prize. Here, Menchu turns it into a tribute to the Central-American people who live in dire conditions and are yearning for civil democracy and ‘mutual respect’. This may be regarded as a *forensic* argument to validate the need for struggle. She shows that this award is not a sign of fulfillment per se but the ‘starting point for a hard struggle’⁷². In all humility, Menchu hence effaces herself, downplays her achievement and pushes the frontier of success further. She hence constructs her *ethos* as a determined and not easily satisfied social activist. In the true spirit of activism, she not only displays relentless perseverance but also hope for a better future still.

Still on *ethos*, Menchu’s strong will is reaffirmed in the following lines where she outlines the various hurdles on her path. She states that the ‘strongest objections, reserve and indifference’ sprang from her own people⁷³. Yet, she is perceptive enough not to

⁷⁰ *ibid.* line 230

⁷¹ Salazar, Lecture notes-South African Rhetoric.

⁷² See Appendix line 242

⁷³ *ibid.* line 246

condemn the inhabitants, but the socio-political set-up that condones discrimination towards the indigenous people and women in general, injustices and violence. The Nobel Peace Prize sums the narration, becoming an acknowledgement of the values of courage and strength that have driven the struggle for peace. These values are juxtaposed to the bleak image of a 'disordered and complex world' and the future hope for 'peace, reconciliation and justice' is given precedence, in the statement over the present state of 'racism, cultural discrimination',⁷⁴. In the event, Menchu projects herself as an adept at juggling with antitheses of words and syntax, to establish in the audience's mind, the dialectic of good versus bad, hope versus despair.

She then assumes the *ethos* of the spokesperson for all those who have in various ways been marginalized, subordinated. She becomes the voice of the voiceless. She brushes the tableau of the distant past, the heyday, the golden age of the Mayan civilization and extols the inhabitants' skills and knowledge in all imaginable fields, such as, science, politics, economics, agriculture, astronomy, artists, to name just a few. By listing a plethora of skills, she creates in the audience's minds the impression that the skills are in abundance if not inexhaustible⁷⁵. The narration goes on to outline the Mayans's discoveries which are said to be at par with those of other nations.

This appraisal enhances the Mayans' *ethos* and debunks the commonplace illusion that they were uncivilized and barbaric. In the whole story, the conquistadors are portrayed as the antagonists who destroyed the documentation attesting the rich Mayan heritage. It is worth noting how, Menchu makes the smooth transition from the values represented by the Nobel Peace Prize and the values held staunchly by the Guatemalans and vice versa⁷⁶. Through this juxtaposition, Menchu indirectly elicits her audience to bind the two sets of values *propter hoc*, so that they not only seem to follow one another but share fundamental similarities.

⁷⁴ See Appendix line 251

⁷⁵ *ibid.* lines 276-290

⁷⁶ *ibid.* line 288

In the following argument, one notices a movement from the practices to the abstract values. Menchu extols the Mayan civilization for its great appreciation of life and nature. Menchu sees the Nobel Peace Prize as one giving due recognition to the Mayans who were wiped out by the conquistadors⁷⁷. Menchu's use of irony is incisive when she states that those who pledged peace and fraternity were actually those who were eventually wiped out. This operates as an argument mounted on *pathos*, for it generates the feeling that injustice has been done⁷⁸. She dedicates the Prize to those who have passed away hoping for change, the poor and ostracized in Guatemala and America broadly speaking.

Menchu then intensifies the argument of the wrongs that are in process of or still need to be righted. She notes the rising awareness about the Indians' deplorable situation, being constantly persecuted for over five hundred years⁷⁹. She appreciates as well the international concern for the rights of the Indians, their future and their plea for justice and their 'outcry'. She hence uses the podium to express her gratitude to world actors who have devoted themselves to the Guatemalan cause. By turning them into heroes, she encourages others to emulate the same interest for the Indians.

On the other hand, she admires the inhabitants' resilience and their 'cosmovision'⁸⁰ which has allowed them to hold on to life and history in trying times of adversity. She attributes an organic dimension to their survival, stating that the roots that were meant to be eradicated, still grow and imprint their presence in the land, their link to the past and a brighter future. This analogy forms the fount of her deliberative argument hinged on the need for change. Her point is that the struggle is not pointless. The Indians have not been eradicated. They have courage and optimism and therefore, one should not give up on the struggle to improve their lot. Her use of traditional values in the narration, not only entrenches her *ethos* as one linked to the grassroots but also to the traditional worldview that draws its essence from nature. All throughout, we witness a celebration

⁷⁷ See Appendix line 292

⁷⁸ *ibid.* line 298

⁷⁹ *ibid.* line 304

⁸⁰ *ibid.* line 306

of the plurisignation of the Nobel Peace Prize. It is used to add more gravity to her narration.

Having delved into the past the Mayan civilization, Menchu then veers to her own vision of the future of her country. She launches in a prayer in earnest so that Indians in every corner of the world be free, for that will kindle hope in the hearts of man and make the afore-mentioned 'true concept of life' triumph⁸¹. The jubilation of Indian Organisations at the announcement of the Nobel Prize stresses the significance of this decision but also of the *epideictic* moment brings Menchu and the Indians across the globe on the same platform for recognition. For Menchu, as this award acknowledges the sufferings of the Indians, it simultaneously acknowledges the 'European debt to the American indigenous people'⁸². Again, she exploits the dialectical relationship of good versus bad, so that this becomes a moment of judgment for the atrocities perpetrated upon the Indians. It is a moment to face the truth and salvage those that are victimized by raising the 'conscience of humanity' to their cause⁸³.

Menchu's sense of justice is linked to a pre-colonial state of affairs governed by traditional values. This is displayed in her presentation of the 'peculiar' worldview⁸⁴ of the Indians. In terms of values, the Indians not only fervently adhere to fraternity and peace, but also believe in the interconnectedness of humans and nature. Humans, she states are linked to each other through communication, and they are linked to the earth because she is the life giver. Humans are moreover linked to the nature because they abide in it, they are not its claimants. This picture not only evokes a scene of the golden ages of the Mayan civilization but also the Mother-child motif that prevails in their culture between Nature and Humans⁸⁵. There is no violation or abrogation of territory, rather values of sharing and caring are commonplace.

⁸¹ See Appendix line 316

⁸² *ibid.* line 322

⁸³ *ibid.* line 323

⁸⁴ *ibid.* line 326

⁸⁵ *ibid.* line 330

Indeed in the true Indian psyche, the Earth is viewed as a mother. For Menchu, it is not only a means of economic sustenance but also repertoire of culture and memory. To quote her words, ‘The Earth is the root and source of our culture’⁸⁶. The Earth is here given feminine attributes and is worthy of respect for she not only nurtures but sustains life of future generations. ‘If the world does not learn now to show respect to nature, what kind of future will the new generations have?’⁸⁷ This analogy *replicates* itself at various levels like mirrors placed in parallel. The sense of respect has to be reproduced in the province of men. This is because mutual respect and sharing of knowledge among humans is vital for survival. This *epideictic* argument forms the backdrop of the canvas, the ideal, against which Menchu will tactfully insert the actual violence involved in the invasion of the conquistadors.

Looking in retrospect, she believes that the conquest could have been a peaceable one and that the exchange of knowledge and culture could have been effected in a ‘harmonious’ manner. She belies the *terra nullius* myth that has often accompanied conquests, that involved demonstrating that the land was previously uninhabited and had been ‘discovered’⁸⁸. Cast in opposition with the values of the Mayans, these forceful inroads into Mayan lands, by the conquistadors almost evoke the image of a rape, as often insinuated in the colonial literatures. It is reinforced by Menchu’s own use of organic and visceral images in relation to Mother Earth. Menchu sharply states that ‘America and its native civilizations had discovered themselves long before the fall of the Roman Empire and Medieval Europe’⁸⁹. She states that the Mayans’ indigenous knowledges had and still have ‘enormous potential’, the ability to astound and contribute to the global technological pool of ideas⁹⁰.

This is in essence her judgment. Having displayed in a *forensic* manner, the unfair circumstances of the conquest, she judges that the European debt be settled by an acknowledgement of the Mayans’ potential and a sharing of knowledges. However,

⁸⁶ *ibid.* line 333

⁸⁷ See Appendix line 337

⁸⁸ *ibid.* line 348

⁸⁹ *ibid.* line 354

⁹⁰ *ibid.* line 360

Menchu promptly adds a caveat. She insists that the Indians would only engage in such an exercise if it were founded on common grounds of consensus, if it led to the validation of their national and cultural identity, if it did not snatch from them the power of decision making and if their future were not put in jeopardy in the process⁹¹. This series of conditions follow a contractual style and may be regarded as a prudential measure, to preempt the possibility of future violence. She outlines the values that would allow them to sustain themselves, namely ‘struggle and endurance’, courage, a desire to preserve traditions and solidarity and expects Europeans to abide by them. Her quasi-judicial argument here actually prepares the ground for *deliberative* arguments in the lines to follow.

She reiterates her dream that all countries join their capabilities together and reduce the gap between nations in a way to restore peace and order⁹². The proclamation of 1993 as the ‘International Year of the World’s indigenous People’ is a good augury that the Indian condition is soon to change and be uplifted through mutual international agreements⁹³.

From then onwards, her *deliberative* argument takes off. She uses the Nobel Peace Prize award as her first premise describing it as an initial step towards the upliftment of the ‘condemned of the earth’. In the same fashion, she comments that the ‘International Year of the World’s Indigenous People’ will hopefully serve as a launch pad for various action plans in that respect⁹⁴. She concludes that if the action plans are successful, a sense of peace and human solidarity will emerge to create avenues for ‘relationships of respect and equality’ that will be governed by ‘fraternity’ and not by conflict⁹⁵. She privileges the feeling of brotherhood over the wars that have been waged in the name of peace. She believes that the movement started by political and intellectual ‘Amerindians’ will prove

⁹¹ See Appendix line 364

⁹² *ibid.* line 380

⁹³ *ibid.* line 386

⁹⁴ *ibid.* line 408

⁹⁵ *ibid.* line 411

to the world that peace can be won by peaceful means and that the Indians are a component of the ‘historical alternatives’ that are currently being explored⁹⁶.

In support for her argument, she narrates some figments of the Guatemalan history, stating how the period of democracy and national sovereignty of 1944 was short-lived and soon to be succeeded in 1954 by the same ‘old system of oppression, as a result of a conspiracy by previous rulers and an armed invasion. During the Cold war, in order to thwart uprisings, dictators massacred ‘thousands of peasants’, ‘hundred trade union workers and students’. In the name of ‘safety’, Menchu states that many were stripped of their lands and property and a new practice of “‘disappeared” politicians’ became humdrum⁹⁷.

She inserts a personal touch to her speech stating that she herself is a victim of a ‘massacred family’⁹⁸. The switch from ‘we’ to ‘I’ enables her to establish closeness with the persecuted and downtrodden. Even if, under mounting international pressure, the military forces provided a ‘political opening’ so that a new Constitution could be enforced, repression and infringement of human rights persisted during that time of economic crisis. As a consequence, three agreements were signed between the President Serrano and the guerrillas⁹⁹. Conceding that dialogues are effective to some extent to resolve political issues, Menchu uses the historical facts outlined above to insist that the solution can come from the grassroots, as various social sectors search for ‘bases of unity’ and show respect for ‘natural differences’¹⁰⁰.

With this inclination to act rather than forge contracts, which are at a remove from action itself, Menchu makes explicit the urgency to resolve the problem. She holds in her *deliberative* argument that discussions must not drag on and that a ‘verifiable agreement’

⁹⁶ *ibid.* line 424

⁹⁷ See Appendix line 451

⁹⁸ *ibid.* line 453

⁹⁹ *ibid.* line 474

¹⁰⁰ *ibid.* line 489

must be made as soon as possible¹⁰¹. Besides persecution, one of the problems that Menchu deems demanding urgent remedial action is the compulsory recruitment of young people, constituted mostly of Indians, into the Patrols of the Civil Self Defense.

This ties in with her definition of democracy, which branches out to encompass the ‘demilitari(sation)’ of the country, an ‘end to racism’, equal opportunities for a ‘multi-ethnic civil society’, and the end to ‘forced exodus’ which seems to her to be one of the ‘most bitter dramas’¹⁰². As the inhabitants are uprooted from their lands, the loss is of greater consequence than initially imagined. It is a divorce from Mother Earth, the abode of the ancestors, the environment, and nurturing nature. It is a divorce from all that once guaranteed ‘a coherent system of social organisation’ and ‘functional democracy’¹⁰³. Hence it takes the magnitude of a cultural, social and political uprooting. Her use of *pathos* functions admirably to consolidate her point and garner support for what she describes as the ‘heartbreaking’ case of the displaced.

She lays out, in the form of a policy, her suggestions for revamping the socio-political situation. The first step in the course of action, in Menchu’s view, is the redistribution of land to ‘legitimate owners’. This ought to be done with due respect to nature, allowing it to regenerate so that it can nurture again¹⁰⁴. The second step is to make society more equitable through ‘social justice’¹⁰⁵. The fight seems to be a tough one in light of shocking figures pointing to critical levels of malnutrition, analphabetism and so on. Realistically, Menchu points out the subjugation of women in her society. She uses superlatives thrice for example, ‘the most discriminated of the discriminated’ to demonstrate women’s inferior position and their tremendous contribution nevertheless to society¹⁰⁶. The *logos* of her argument flows thus: until a solution is brought to these social ills, democracy, development and modernization cannot be achieved, for these are

¹⁰¹ *ibid.* line 496

¹⁰² See Appendix line 513

¹⁰³ *ibid.* line 519

¹⁰⁴ *ibid.* line 530

¹⁰⁵ *ibid.* line 533

¹⁰⁶ *ibid.* line 545

at the core of social health. It is noteworthy that when addressing the problem of women, she points fingers at no one in specific but rather at the malfunctioning system.

Faithful to her cosmovisionary approach, she then projects the solution at the national level. She states that the highest imperative of free Guatemala resides in the acknowledgment of the Rights of the Indigenous Peoples. Her reasoning is that when the individual rights of the Guatemalan people is recognized then the country itself will revert to its true essence, its 'indigenous identity'. Again as a leitmotif, the image of the Nobel Peace Prize comes to the fore, attesting its significance as more than a piece of paper. It stands for her role as 'promoter of peace, of national unity, for the protection of the rights of the indigenous people'. The opposition between the script and the act is once more exploited to strengthen Menchu's persona as a social activist¹⁰⁷.

With its salient deliberative elements, this argument for change at the organic, social and national level, goes on to exhort social and ethnic sectors to act towards bringing an end to armed conflict and enable the unification of 'ladinos', blacks and Indians to form a true 'Guatemality' or Guatemalan identity¹⁰⁸. Still Menchu's dreams are more ambitious. She aims at the international community to join in so that firstly, the different stakeholders come to a consensus rather than 'keep negotiations in a wait-and-see state', and so that they finally sign the Human Rights agreement¹⁰⁹. This of course would be the preliminary to signing and ratifying the Peace Agreement. She insists that the UN too should step out of its role as passive observer and partake in this deliberative moment. She takes care to mention that her concern for her country does not preclude her interests in the cause of other peoples. She applauds the efforts of the various prize winners in the audience to defend peace and the right to life. She hence joins hands with other heroes and derives legitimacy for her action plans, by positively exploiting their common *ethos*.

After her journey at various geographical spaces, Menchu teases out the different temporal spaces to buttress her deliberative argument. Her gaze turns the present world

¹⁰⁷ See Appendix line 567

¹⁰⁸ *ibid.* line 570

¹⁰⁹ *ibid.* line 574

context, outlining the end of the Cold War and the gaps left in the trail of changes. It is in this period of *interregnum* that Menchu states, people are known to come forth and struggle for betterment. Her vision of a better world is one ‘without poverty, without racism, with peace’, and she lists the different countries such as the Balkans, pre-1994 apartheid South Africa and so on who have undergone the same strife¹¹⁰. Others have to follow so that world peace can prevail. For her, world peace is one that would allow for ‘consistency’, ‘interrelations and concordance’ as regards economic, social and cultural frameworks in place. It would in fact occasion a forum for the co-existence among nations and even between humans and nature, making the case for the ‘preservation of the environment’. In her view, the whole struggle reads as one purifying and shaping the future dispensation.

In her *peroration*, she defines human history as a ‘living history’¹¹¹. She anthropomorphizes history, comparing it to the heart of humanity that ‘throbs’ and pulsates with a life of its own. This analogy gives free sway to the audience’s imagination to conceive of the whole world as a human body, with organs that are each vital for sustenance, and the blood that flows as being that of time, linking all creatures together as products of time and the residents of the same universal body. Having survived ‘centuries of sacrifice’, this history is far from breathing its last. Menchu admits that the struggle may be long and complicated, but she states that the Indians have renewed confidence that it will be fruitful. In this manner, she reiterates the presence and importance of the audience to the struggle for change.

She accepts the difficulty strewn in their path, with equanimity, for ‘it is no Utopia’¹¹². Using the simple future, she states with hope and certainty that the Guatemalans will join hands to build up a ‘worthy future’. She then switches to the present continuous, demonstrating that the strife has already begun and that the Guatemalans are already ‘preparing themselves to sow the future’.

¹¹⁰ *ibid.* line 603

¹¹¹ See Appendix line 609

¹¹² *ibid.* line 613

In this way, she blends in *epideictic* and *deliberative* moves. The plant image comes to reinforce the view that Guatemalans are one with the organic, with Mother Nature. It is juxtaposed in a harmonious way to the social picture, with its rich mosaic of colours and cultures that could be celebrated, when peace finally dawns on the Guatemalan people. She ends with a final *metaphor* depicting diversity as ‘a gift to Humanity’¹¹³. This not only acts as amplification, but also encapsulates the very essence of her argument- unity in diversity.

Composition

The speech pays close attention to the four elements of introduction, narration, proof and epilogue. In the introduction, Menchu expresses her gratitude for the award, her pride for the Mayan civilization and her humility vis-à-vis the honour bestowed on her. Her narration, is as pointed out by Aristotle, ‘not continuous but segmental’. It relates the eventful history of the Mayan civilization and its values, and is interspersed across and within paragraphs devoted to an exploration of the various meanings of the Nobel Peace Prize. For instance, when Menchu depicts the Nobel Prize as ‘a symbol for peace’, she carries on by narrating the past and present socio-political unrest in Guatemala. The narration hence serves as proof to demonstrate, not merely the antithetical relationship between the significance of the award and the Guatemalan status quo, but more so what the positive impact the award could have on the situation in future.

By *enthematically* drawing the link between the award and the Mayan civilization, the award becomes a *metaphor* for the deliverance of the people. This is because the award, by nature of its world prestige, has the potential of raising global awareness and support for the Mayan cause. At the level of values, the narration demonstrates the need for justice and the repayment of the European debt. However, by virtue of its core values of fraternity and peace, it asks for a nonviolent reconciliation process between metropolis and periphery, that would involve the exchange of knowledges and technology, not arms. This need to achieve peace through peaceful means is emphasised and backed by accounts of failed military interventions operating to achieve the same aim. On the other

¹¹³ *ibid.* line 623

hand, the Nobel Peace Prize is validated as one of the instruments of achieving peace peacefully. In other words, the narration is constructed around the senses of the Nobel Peace Prize and used to shore up the ends of reaching a peaceful resolution in Guatemala.

Being principally *enthymetical* in nature, and relying on deductive reasoning, the whole quest for a solution is a heuristic one, with of sparks of wisdom on the way to discovery. As regards *logos*, *pathos*, and *ethos*, it is apparent in this speech, that elements of *logos* and *pathos* outweigh that of *ethos*. In fact, in her narration, Menchu employs *forensic* arguments delving into the causes of social unease, and *deliberative* arguments pushing action forward. In each case, she focuses on internal components of the syllogism to persuade, hence the pre-eminence of *logos*. *Pathos* also has a significant role to play in these narrations, for many of the accounts are emotionally charged to elicit pity or hope in the audience.

Menchu's *ethos*, on the other hand, rarely comes forth to shore up her major arguments. One of the few times it surfaces, it projects Menchu as a 'survivor of a massacred family'. She uses her *ethos* as victim to bond with the most oppressed of Guatemalans. In the eyes of the world audience, an intimate link with the victim adds more credibility to her narration about the Guatemalan status quo for it suggests an insider's view into the situation. On the basis of her personal experience, the audience can grant truth to her narration.

Style

At the beginning of the speech, in the gesture of gratitude, we witness ample use of the *paramoiosis* device with the repetition of words such as 'For the honour', 'for the values', 'for the love'. According to Allen, 'devices such as repetition and lengthy passages of "meaningless" syllables take on significance within the context of the dance. Repetition has an entrancing effect, it is "oceanic"'¹¹⁴.

¹¹⁴ Glotfelty & Fromm. The Ecocriticism Reader, p 250

We also witness a host of *metaphorical* senses attributed to the Nobel Peace prize in the speech. It becomes at once ‘instrument with which to fight for peace’, and ‘symbol of peace’, ‘standard bearer’, ‘sign of hope’, ‘tribute to the Central-American people’, ‘reward and recognition... revendication of that which is yet to be fulfilled’. The role of the *metaphor* is to connect the familiar with the unfamiliar. In this instance then, by adding new *signifiers* to the *signified* ‘Nobel Peace Prize’, the *metaphors* not only semantically enrich the latter but also augment the actual prestige and value of the award. Such an elevation is in line with the requirements of the *epideictic* occasion.

Stylistic *amplitude*¹¹⁵ is also realised through the manipulation of syntactic components. Seeing that the speech reads as a collation of various narrations serving to demonstrate past and present status quos, the contribution of form on content is noteworthy. Indeed, the syntax mimics the interplay of different experiences through *parataxis*, the juxtaposition of antithetic clauses for example, ‘with deep pain on one side, satisfaction on the other’. At other times, through the use of the subjunctive, beginning with ‘it demands that’, ‘it is imperative that’, the significance and urgency of the issue is amplified. It is crowned by the statement ‘This urgency of this vital need... at this moment’. The use of the ‘demonstrative ‘this’ also adds immediacy, actuality and *vividness*¹¹⁶ to the matter. Vividness, for Aristotle, is the ability to conjure up the image of the thing spoken, through apt use of images, maxims and metaphors.

This explains the penchant for descriptions over single nouns in the narration. These serve to elevate the magnitude of the speech, as well as its propriety, for it displays emotion, character and proportionality to subject matter. Taken to extremes though, high frequency of descriptions and long paratactic sentences may undermine the tour de force of the arguments and audience receptivity. In Menchu’s speech, these slow down the pace of the statements. Only four times does Menchu break the lulling rhythm of her speech with punchy lines ‘Let us not forget that’, ‘My statement is neither incidental nor unjustified’, ‘To build a country with a genuine national identity’, and ‘To start a new

¹¹⁵ Lawson-Tancred (Ed). *Aristotle. The Art of Rhetoric*, p 227

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p 238

life'. As incisive departures from the long and seemingly monotonous rhythm, they do not fail to surprise and captivate the audience's attention.

2.3 The Nobel Lecture of Aung San Suu Kyi

This speech is a surrogate one delivered in 1991 by Aung San Suu Kyi's son Alexander Aris in her absence. According to Meir Sternberg, in surrogate speeches 'each act of quotation serves two masters'. The one is the original speech, the other is the frame that 'encloses and regulates it'.¹¹⁷ It is worthy of analysis how the two voices negotiate among themselves for space within the enclosure of the speech act.

In the *exordium*, Alexander states that, had his mother delivered the speech she would certainly have accepted the Nobel Prize for Peace 'in the name of all the people of Burma', those who put their wellbeing, their freedom and their lives at stake so that democratic Burma can see the day¹¹⁸. She would dedicate the prize to them and would hope that they emerge victorious in their efforts towards peace, freedom and democracy. This for Aristotle, is a trait of nobility for it involves bestowing honour and credit upon others before oneself.

Alexander then assumes his own persona and speaks in praise of San Suu Kyi. He sees her dedication and 'personal sacrifice' as a 'symbol' of the precarious situation of the Burmese people¹¹⁹. It could be said that her personal sacrifice is a deliberative act not only affecting her, but compounding itself to affect the nation as a whole. It is a *synecdoche* embodied in action, where the part, that is her contribution, impacts on the whole of which it is a member. In the same logic, San Suu Kyi forfeits of her freedom for the freedom of her people.

¹¹⁷ Sternberg, 'Proteus in Quotation Land', p 152

¹¹⁸ *ibid* line 631

¹¹⁹ *ibid* line 637

Alexander goes on by narrating on the predicament of the Burmese people. He offers a whole plethora of images describing those living in poverty, those battered in prisons, those dying of malaria in the jungles, Buddhist monks beaten and dishonoured¹²⁰. This list serves to amplify the deplorable Burmese situation and the pathos it elicits from the audience. Amplification is frequently utilized in epideictic oratory, for it captures the very essence of display speeches, which lies in excess. Excess, of course, does not relate to the superfluous, but rather underscores the sobriety of the moment by elevating it.

Aung San Suu Kyi is placed on the pedestal not only through the recount of her feats, but through her very character. Her *ethos* is affirmed in a singular way by associating her personhood with the four walls of the prison. The difference here, is that, with her presence and that of other 'respectable leaders' in prison, the locale, per se, redefines itself¹²¹. It becomes a site for revolutionaries rather than a for notorious law-breakers. Conventionally, one would expect the aim of the system of incarceration to right the wrong, reform the non-conformists. In this case, oddly, it is the very frame that is being re-engineered to accommodate the heroes. In rhetorical terms, the container, that is the prison, turns from *signifier* to *signified*, since it is re-defined by the reputation of the contained. To put it plainly, it ceases to be the warrant of their ill-repute but that of their revolutionary *ethos*.

Despite their imprisonment, the heroes gain global attention in the event of the Nobel Peace Prize. Alexander regards the recognition of San Suu Kyi's social activism by the Nobel Foundation as a historical moment when the attention of the world is drawn to imprisoned San Suu Kyi and the deplorable situation of the Burmese. The Nobel Peace Prize succeeds not only in publicising the dark and remote reality of those who have been removed from public life, but also metaphorically liberates the voices of the oppressed by providing them with a podium to speak¹²². It becomes the *kairos*, their cherished occasion to be re-recognised and re-remembered in public as public figures.

¹²⁰ *ibid* line 640

¹²¹ See Appendix line 642

¹²² *ibid* line 650

This recognition prepares the ground, or rather acts as premise to more extensive argument proposed in the struggle towards world peace. Alexander uses the device of analogy to draw affinities between the remote struggle in Rangoon and the worldwide struggle for liberation.

‘... the lonely struggle taking place in a heavily guarded compound in Rangoon is part of the much larger struggle, worldwide, for the emancipation of the human spirit from political tyranny and psychological subjection’.

He believes that the Nobel Prize acknowledges the contribution of social activists across the globe and that it is only fitting that this epideictic moment coincides with the Human Rights Day, celebrated by all nations. However, the analogy does not stop at broadening the concerns of the speaker to the world situation¹²³. The analogy psychologically works both ways. It serves to amplify the far-reaching significance of the endeavours for freedom and peace in Burma. It also brings the world audience home to Burma so that they can join in the struggle of the Burmese people. In other words, it multiplies the number of agents involved in the Burmese strife. On the whole, it magnifies the probabilities of resolution as it unites the world to unite Burma. This analogy brings to mind the popular propaganda posters for the recruitment of soldiers. *Your country needs you*. In this scenario, the analogy operates in the psyche of the heterogeneous audience in the form of *The world needs you, Burma needs you*.

Astutely, Alexander makes a leap back to Burma, confirming that the analogy functions in the other direction too. It is then followed by a leap into the past, recalling the time when Secretary Javier Perez de Cuellar had made repeated appeals so that Aung San Suu Kyi could be released¹²⁴. However his voice alone could not carry the weight necessary to bring the release to effect. The *forensic* move is founded on cause and effect, using lack of support as premise to failed attempt at liberation. Having identified the cause of San Suu Kyi’s continued incarceration as a result of public apathy or fear to act, the argument calls for greater mobilisation, this time from the world audience, to herald San Suu Kyi’s final liberation.

¹²³ See Appendix line 652

¹²⁴ *ibid* line 655

He then delves back into the history of Burma once the ‘Golden Land’, and juxtaposes it with its current state as one of the ‘world's most economically destitute nations’¹²⁵. He prophesizes that the fate of Burma will be similar to that of all totalitarian regimes and that the end to oppression is not far. Besides its pathetic strand, this leap back and forth along the time line allows the speaker to link the part to the whole and hence participate in the amplification of the moment. By pointing out moments of disjuncture and ruptures, it also invites the audience to pass its judgment on the course of action to take to impress positively on the Burmese history. In other words, this historical expose is an empowering tool enabling not only the detection of patterns in the sociopolitical phases but providing sufficient ground and warrants to deliberate on the right course of action for the long run. In his argument, Alexander seems to play on the impression of time as cyclical, signaling that liberation is bound to supersede current tyranny, and replicate the prototype and ideals of the ‘Golden Land’.

His rhetoric mirrors the pitch and toss of fate which he describes previously, through references to dates of historical rupture, continuity and discontinuity for example 1988, 1991, ‘today’¹²⁶. The *deictic* superimposition of multiple periods within the same premise emphasises the rapport between time and change and the finality of that change. The point he is making hence, is that in the Burmese context, change cannot be avoided. From precedents, one can be hopeful that change will be imminent. His use of the simple future, conflates this expression of hope with that of certainty. It adds a note of certitude to the belief that natural justice will triumph over the corrupt system of Burmese human justice.

His attack is not only directed to the system, but its adherents, the cogs in the system so to speak. He calls out to those in power to face the truth by looking in ‘their heart of hearts’¹²⁷. This appeal to the heart is an appeal to officials to step out of the political mechanism at play and as humans, bear witness to atrocities they have perpetrated. It is an appeal to *pathos*, to one’s conscience, but more so, an appeal to redirect one’s focus to

¹²⁵ *ibid* line 662

¹²⁶ See Appendix line 666

¹²⁷ *ibid* line 663

the essence of one's being, which lies presumably in one's heart, and the hearts of all. Tacitly he seems to refer to inherent values of human love, peace and wisdom or the like, guiding human behaviour and actions. The question of values will become pertinent in the arguments to follow.

From the *epideictic*, he shifts once more to the forensic, detailing the liberation efforts on the part of different nations. He traces the beginnings of the struggle for democracy in 1988, in the midst of similar struggles by other nations¹²⁸. At present, unlike other nations, Burma still lives in misery and repression under the rule of the State Law and Order Restoration Council. However those very nations, by example, kindle hope in heart of the Burmese, as they indicate that inefficient totalitarian governments cannot last eternally. Hence the positive outcome in Burma's case is not inexistent but only deferred. He provides proof to demonstrate that the trends towards the downfall of the present system are already visible. 'And today in the face of rising inflation, a mismanaged economy and near worthless Kyat, the Burmese government is undoubtedly reaping as it has sown'¹²⁹.

He hopes that the ruling junta will not fall into 'complete economic collapse' but that it will at least pay attention to 'appeals to basic humanity' as the Nobel Committee has done¹³⁰. He states that even within the military government, there are those who find policies of fear and repression inadmissible. He believes that this is a positive sign that 'elements of moderation and reconciliation' can give a new spin to the Burmese predicament. He takes the example of his mother who, having won the election, headed a party made up mostly of military personnel and family. The *logos* of his argument runs thus: as those within the system realise its flaws, change will be initiated from the inside.

This is where he steps back into the persona of his mother and states that had she been present, she would launch a prayer that oppressors and oppressed cease the war, unite to

¹²⁸ See Appendix line 667

¹²⁹ *ibid* line 674

¹³⁰ *ibid* line 677

build the nation on the principles of humanity and peace¹³¹. It is noteworthy that the hero in Aristotelian times was often praised in the light of unique embodied values. It only makes sense that Aung San Suu Kyi should cast as upholding the values of humanity and peace and praying for their reinstatement. Alexander reformulates San Suu Kyi's *ethos*, by stating that she is not only a 'political dissident who strives by peaceful means' for democracy, but that her struggle is a 'spiritual' one. He goes on to quote her directly, which also serves to validate his depiction of her. She is quoted stating, "The quintessential revolution is that of the spirit"¹³².

In the space allotted in the speech for her voice, Aung San Suu Kyi, through the medium of her son, states that for this revolution to begin, human responsibility, founded on "the concept of perfection, the urge to achieve it, the intelligence to find a path towards it, and the will to follow that path if not to the end..." is crucial. She equates 'liv(ing) the full life' to caring for others, having courage to bear responsibility for others and the wish to do so¹³³. Her argument makes linkages between surface causes to the underlying causes of change, to devise a chain of motives. What she identifies as the core motive of motives for the revolution, is the 'concept of perfection'. Human perfectibility, in essence, is a value that has always propelled man to surpass expectations at every milestone, whether in Renaissance Europe or Greece of the Classical Age. Once more, in keeping with the requirements of the *epideictic* moment, the narration is value-driven with emphasis on worthwhile behaviour, but also the very heroes who choose to embody them.

In the same vein, Buddhist values which are not only the fount of traditional Burmese culture but which place premium on man as the sole being capable of attaining the highest state of 'Buddhahood' are extolled¹³⁴. The spiritual dimension here is not without interest to the *epideictic* context. In fact, Buddha himself, as a personification of the values leading to perfection, becomes a hero to emulate. As the equation between the

¹³¹ *ibid* line 688

¹³² See Appendix line 694

¹³³ *ibid* line 699

¹³⁴ *ibid* line 704

hero and the values reaches its totality, the hero and the values become interchangeable. As Aung San Suu Kyi, lauds the Buddhist values, she also aligns herself to them, such that she begins to share some similarity, even if partial, to the hero. The values she professes become the founding stone upon which she constructs her argument for deliberation.

Her claim is that not only does man have the potential to realise the truth of perfection but he also can help others realise it. She makes the parallel between the quest for spiritual truth and the very ‘quest for democracy’ which she describes as the effort to ‘live whole, meaningful lives’ by living for oneself and for others¹³⁵. Tacitly, she appeals to the common humanity that unites all men to prop her argument for the right to democracy. This shift to and from spiritual quest to the quest for democracy is not a fallacy of reasoning based on the adjacency of things of different orders. Both quests have the same goal of perfection and at their crux lies on a set of commonly held values. Hence, in this case, the linkage between the spiritual and the mundane is a valid one to motivate deliberation.

The quote ends on this syllogism and Alexander steps back onto the podium as speaker. This time though, he describes his role as the son of Aung San Suu Kyi, having received with his brother, awards on behalf of his mother. He hopes that his mother will soon be able to ‘speak directly for herself instead of through me’¹³⁶. As such, he reminds the audience that he is merely an instrument through which Aung San Suu Kyi’s voice can be heard; or rather an extension of herself in the public realm. He further removes himself, by directing attention to the awards ceremony itself, which he thinks opens a forum for the meeting of ‘two peoples from opposite ends of the world’ so that they can act together constructively towards a brighter tomorrow¹³⁷.

In the *peroration*, he reiterates his gratitude towards the Nobel Foundation and the audience, hoping that this event will be seen as a ‘historic step towards the achievement

¹³⁵ See Appendix line 706

¹³⁶ *ibid* line 714

¹³⁷ *ibid* line 716

of true peace in Burma'. He turns the celebrations in this epideictic mood into one for the better future, while bearing in mind the lessons of the past¹³⁸. The entangling of future and past is what, in finale, elevates the awards ceremony to timeless epic dimensions.

Composition

The speech has a well constructed introduction, narration, proof and epilogue in place. Unlike other speeches analysed so far, this one demands a formal introduction on the part of the speaker for he is not the true recipient of the award and of the honour. He needs to unambiguously explain his relation to the winner and why he is making the surrogate speech. Alexander Aris does so in a plain but effective manner explaining that he is the winner's son and that Aung San Suu Kyi could not attend the ceremony. In this manner, he increases his credibility as surrogate speaker. He also commits himself to the task of doing 'my best to convey the sentiments I believe she would express'¹³⁹. Hence, this introduction informs the audience that he is going to impersonate his mother's views in the most dispassionate manner, without being a bit of a dissembler.

According to Meir Sternberg in 'Mimesis and the Forms of Reported Discourse', the surrogate speech brings together 'at least two-discourse-events: that in which things were originally expressed (said, thought, experienced) by one subject (speaker, writer, reflector) and that in which they are cited by another.'¹⁴⁰ The two events are separated 'temporally' and 'teleologically', for the construction of the speech involves uprooting one statement uttered at a particular time, for a particular purpose, and making it generalisable. It is only from this generality that it can be instantiated to fit the present context. Irrespective of its initial significance, once inset within the surrogate speech, the quoted statement becomes dependent on the whole.

Also, despite the quoter's care to be truthful to the sources, Sternberg is of the view that, 'tearing a piece of discourse from its original habitat and recontextualing it within a new

¹³⁸ *ibid* line 721

¹³⁹ See Appendix line 628

¹⁴⁰ Sternberg. 'Proteus in Quotation Land'. p 107

network of relations cannot but interfere with its effect'.¹⁴¹ This is because, at all times the quoted statement carries with it its own 'expressive features: verbal, moral, sociological, thematic, aesthetic, informational, persuasive'.¹⁴² Hence, there is a certain unease about quoted insets within the frame of surrogate speeches both at the semantic and contextual level. It is suggested there is ambiguity inherent in the composition of a surrogate speech and that it can only be minimised contingently, that is by embedding it within specific *deictic* frames of time and place of address.

This is precisely what Alexander Aris attempts to do in his narration. He brushes a tableau of the local context in the light of which Aung San Suu Kyi might have made her statement. This narration then brings to view the historical moments in Burma's social and political life, its shift from the Golden Land to one in dire need for help and succour. The narration is not continuous and broken by references to the world struggle paralleling the Burmese struggle and to the failed efforts towards his mother release. The first reference serves to amplify the significance of the struggle and the second part serves to give it a human face.

The second part of the narration is directed to the hopes and prayers for a better future. It is in this segment of the speech that San Suu Kyi's voice is truly given a platform. Surrounded by copious local references, her statement is not in disjunction with the rest of the speech. In fact, it flows smoothly from the forensic arguments preceding it and takes the form of a deliberative claim. In it, she prays that the oppressed and oppressors will join hands. Her hope for the future is backed by her faith in timeless spiritual values. This inset of her verbatim statements, is intermingled with indirect speech, 'she said' to remind the audience that even as Alexander quotes his mother, the words are not his. The motive of the narration on the whole, is to occasion increased awareness about the Burmese predicament and spur acts of deliberation.

¹⁴¹ *ibid.* p 108

¹⁴² *ibid.* p 109

The proofs used towards this end are mainly those of *logos* and *pathos*. *Logos* is used in the forensic arguments outlining the cause of the Burmese situation and *pathos* is used in the repetition of words such as ‘plight’ and ‘abhorrent’. *Ethos* is only used when Alexander Aris speaks directly of his mother’s deeds and character and when what is at stake is his own legitimacy as speaker.

In the epilogue, Alexander Aris does the following. He ‘disposes of the audience’ well by thanking them and amplifies the significance of the moment by turning the Nobel Peace Prize into a ‘historical step towards the achievement of true peace in Burma’.

Style

It is to be noted that surrogate speeches have a style of their own. To begin with, as regards formal features, the inset can be connected to the frame in a *paratactic* fashion or a *hypotactic* fashion. In the former, the inset is placed in juxtaposition with the other parts of the speech. In the latter, the direct speech or inset is embedded within the indirect part of the speech.¹⁴³ In the case of Alexander Aris’s speech, the connection is more *hypotactic* than *paratactic*; however at times the indirect speech does interfere with the direct speech. This serves to remind the audience that the speech is multi-voiced.

As regards the representational features of this type of speech, we need to assess how the inset operates to produce *mimesis* of reality within the frame. According to Plato, *mimesis* occurs when “the poet speaks in the person of another”. As such, he endorses the reality projected by the other and his speech bears the following elements, ‘empathy’, ‘specificity’, ‘reproductive’ ability.¹⁴⁴ No wonder then, direct speech falls under the category of *mimesis*. The speaker using direct speech for another’s statement, does not report what had been stated previously, but states it once more without editions. He hence empathetically impersonates the other.

¹⁴³ Sternberg. ‘Proteus in Quotation Land’. p 109

¹⁴⁴ *ibid* p 109

On the other hand, the speaker who never attempts “to assume another person”, and reformulates the statement in a ‘nonempathetic’ and ‘nonspecific’ manner, produces a *diegenic* discourse¹⁴⁵. In the process, he effaces himself, and moves from the position of a somewhat transvestite agent to a mere reporter of events. Of course we are not attaching moral value to any of the options. Still, having drawn the distinction between *mimetic* and *diegenic* discourse in this essentialist manner, it is noteworthy that in practice, these two discourses are harder to extricate.

In Alexander’s speech actually, despite the fact that *diegenis* has the upperhand over *mimesis*, one could argue that even when he imagines what his mother would have said in the Nobel Lecture, he is making a *mimetic* gesture, not a *diegenic* one. Still, we also need to acknowledge that irrespective of the outcome of his discursive choices, his attempt at *diegenis* at least works towards making his speech more ‘nonempathetic’ and ‘nonspecific’ than not, so that the audience does have ground to grant him legitimacy as a surrogate speaker.

Moving on to assess stylistic components of speeches in general, one could say that this speech follows both aims of *clarity* and *propriety*. The nouns used are not exotic or unfamiliar and the sentences can be parsed by a first time listener with no difficulty. The clauses may well be long, but there are pauses to increase receptivity. Also the use of *paramoeosis*, that is, the repetition of words such as ‘their’ or ‘plight’ at the beginning of the clauses serves to remind the listener of the thread of thought running through the lines. It also has a rhythmic quality, which without being over metrical enhances the persuasiveness of the argument. In fact it amplifies the thrust of the statement that the Burmese are living in deplorable conditions.

This *amplification* is different to stylistic *amplitude* which concerns the ‘expansiveness in expression’¹⁴⁶. Expansiveness really has to do with the length of the stated concept. If a concept is explained in a single noun, it has lower *amplitude* than one explained through a

¹⁴⁵ *ibid.* p 111

¹⁴⁶ Lawson-Tancred (Ed). *Aristotle. The Art of Rhetoric*, p 227

description. When Alexander speaks of the downtrodden, he uses a series of descriptions, which only add amplitude to his statements. The stylistic effect of this is an enrichment of information for it surrounds the concept with a series of attributes.

On *propriety* per se, Aristotle states that 'style has *propriety* if it is emotive and characterful and proportionate to the subject matter'.¹⁴⁷ Seeing that the subject of the Burmese situation is of such magnitude, the use of stylistic *amplitude* in the depiction of the Burmese is far from *hyperbolic*. It is justified for it does follow the requirements of *propriety*.

As regards the syntax of the arguments, we notice a frequent juxtaposition of *antithetical* statements. For Aristotle, *antitheses* may be regarded as akin to syllogisms for 'the refutational syllogism is conclusion from contraries'.¹⁴⁸ When Alexander places the image of the Golden land side by side with that of impoverished Burma in two statements, he raises the stakes of the argument, and increases *pathos* in the audience. Without dwelling into the external aim of persuasion mentioned above, it is likely that at the stylistic level, such *antitheses* add *vividness* to the argument, that is, they help 'conjure up' the image of the thing stated. The way in which *antitheses* achieve this is by making the current situation stated more actual than the previous one. As such, the latter becomes more vivid than its former statement.

With this careful and timely interplay of *paramoeosis*, *amplitude*, *antitheses* and the degree of *vividness*, the speech is likely to retain the attention of the audience and be conducive to the persuasiveness of the arguments themselves.

¹⁴⁷ Lawson-Tancred (Ed). Aristotle. The Art of Rhetoric, p 228

¹⁴⁸ Lawson-Tancred (Ed). Aristotle. The Art of Rhetoric, p 207

Chapter 3

Echoing voices: On Peace and the other Commonplaces

After the analysis of the speeches, it becomes worthwhile to evaluate the ways in which the speeches echo one another. For Protagoras, the *epideictic* draws on *doxa*, commonplaces more than on *episteme*, knowledge or *alethera*, truth¹⁴⁹. These commonplaces ought to be entrenched in reality, so that they appear feasible and believable by the standards of the world audience. In the following discussion, we will explore the *doxa* salient in the three speeches, namely, peace, the grassroots, Nature and womanhood, paying particular attention to the rhetoric involved in formulating them.

The aim is to gain insight into the question enunciated at the onset, namely, whether and how the women speakers address other pertinent issues within their *logos* for peace.

3.1 *The rhetoric of Peace*

Cecil Blake defines peace communication as a ‘process aimed at achieving peace with a distinct suatory characteristic feature, operating within a context composed of cultural warrants that form the bases for justification of actions’.¹⁵⁰

If we scrutinise the *logos* of the women speakers’ peace arguments, it becomes evident that in the case of Wangari Maathai, peace can be achieved if natural resources are distributed equally. She appeals in her argument to ancestral beliefs that have always granted a divine standing to Nature. This is no different to Rigoberta Menchu’s line of thought which posits that peace can be secured if traditional Mayan values of respect for nature and man are re-affirmed and endorsed. For Aung San Suu Kyi, the struggle for peace is a struggle towards perfection in the spiritual sense, and can be realized by firstly endorsing Buddhist values and then helping others see the truth and be enlightened too.

In the three cases, despite different contextual specificities, the underlying premise remains the same, namely that peace be achieved if peaceful means are deployed. This is in line with Cecil Blake’s views in ‘The Role of Peace Communication in Conflict

¹⁴⁹ Sheard. ‘The Public Value of Epideictic Rhetoric’. p 770

¹⁵⁰ Blake. ‘The Role of Peace Communication in Conflict Resolution in Africa’, p 309

Resolution in Africa’, that ‘Soldiers are not peacemakers- otherwise, they would not rely on weapons of mass destruction to claim victory in missions they undertake.’¹⁵¹ He identifies violence as a ‘nondiscursive means of persuasion’ that with hindsight, most often, never came to fruition. He holds that only discursive means of persuasion through a mastery of rhetoric could undo the harm and bring peace. This truly is a paradigm shift from the commonplace belief that nations need to fight for peace.

Indeed, faithful to the Gandhian path of ‘non-violence’, the three women throw the machete and cast a backward-looking glance in national history, to re-empower themselves with the instruments for peace. Consequently, they all fall back on the traditional values which they believe flourished in the Golden Ages of their civilization. Their move is not a nostalgic wishful one directed to the past, but one that seeks to link different temporal experiences together, for continuity despite change. Their solution is also one that seeks spatial congruity, by being rooted in the locale, rather than being defined by the Eurocentric imperatives for peace.

Therefore, we could qualify the women’s *logos* for peace as one truly indigenous to their way of life. It is also one that shows a penchant for core *epideictic* elements and that emphasizes on the means rather than the ends. In other words, it is not the consequentialist argument used frequently in militaristic discourses, where the ends justify the means. Rather, it is a utilitarian one based, in simple terms, on ‘the greatest happiness of the greatest number’, eschewing options that could imperil the lives of civilians for instance, on the altar of peace.

3.2 The rhetoric of the grassroots

Alongside the emphasis of peaceable talks over the use of weapons, the women construct their *ethos* as members of the grassroots. Even as they come to address the world, they turn their gaze to the country’s plight. Maathai, Menchu and San Suu Kyi present themselves as victims of oppression, assault and imprisonment.

¹⁵¹ *ibid*, p 312

It is Gayatri Spivak's view that the 'subaltern cannot speak'¹⁵². The subaltern is not only dispossessed of a voice but relies on second-level consciousness to be narrated into being. As such, it is devoid of agency. Spivak quotes Marx's word 'patronymic' to suggest that the defining voice is primarily a doctrinaire male one¹⁵³. She holds that if women intellectuals were to gain this rare opportunity to address the public, that they should speak not only on behalf of the voiceless, but also to the voiceless so as to empower them in the public realm¹⁵⁴.

This echoes Perelman's view that persuasion does not suffice, 'we must also address our common humanity' and Kenneth Burke's that one ought to "'speak in the voice of the other" whom we wish to persuade, bridging our "divisions" through "identification"'.¹⁵⁵ Empathy in other words, is suggested as a way to close the gap between the speaker and the audience. Aware of this, the Nobel Laureates use accounts of their personal trials as subalterns to prop their deliberative arguments and appeal directly to the youth and women to become agents of change.

The speakers' sex however, Spivak says, does circumscribe their authority to speak, or rather their *ethos* as orators, even as they feel they have the legitimacy and academic discipline to leap onto the podium. In fact, the speaking selves are split between imposed deference to patriarchy and their desire to subvert it, while themselves stepping onto a male defined stage. It may be true that the Nobel Awards podium values merit over and above gender and ethnicity. Yet it is also true that, considering the expectations of the home audience, many a things remain theoretically unspoken.

In Maathai's case, the constant references to traditional norms, power structures and the pre-defined role of women within them as caregivers, is a way to forestall criticism by Kenyan men back home. In Menchu's case, the reference to Nature as the mother, plays a dual role. Firstly, it demonstrates her allegiance to traditional values, and secondly as a

¹⁵² Spivak. Can the Subaltern Speak? p73 in REL4050Z course reader p 66-111

¹⁵³ *ibid.* p 73

¹⁵⁴ *ibid.* p 91

¹⁵⁵ Sheard. 'The Public Value of Epideictic Rhetoric'. p 766

refutation move and an analogy, places the woman on a pedestal, reminding Guatemalans of her life-giving, even divine attributes. San Suu Kyi's situation is slightly different, seeing that she never manages to step onto the podium and actually delivers her speech through a surrogate. Whether or not, this move could be itself regarded as a subversion of her confinement, the fact remains that despite this aesthetic and geographical distancing with the audience, it does not license her to condemn the tyrannical rule in the directly quoted inset of the speech. In fact, she uses indirection, by emphasizing rather on Buddhist values, which she believes permeate the hearts of the oppressed as well as the oppressors. The bolder claims about the injustices of the Burmese system are addressed by her son. This interplay between direct and indirect speech acts as a buffer, protecting San Suu Kyi from incisive attacks.

In the three scenarios then, it becomes apparent that speaking from the grassroots, the women have to construct their *ethos* in a rather convoluted manner. On the one hand, they have to emerge as the oppressed, so as to bond with and touch the hearts of other oppressed ones, then as upholders of tradition, so as not to be frowned upon by their countrymen and yet, in a balancing act, as drivers of change, kindling a flicker of hope and admiration in the hearts of the world audience. Hence, taking as premise the fact that in many cases, 'the subaltern cannot speak', the Third World woman who does succeed in becoming audible, is suddenly weighed down by invisible burdens of a male-driven culture, mitigating her power in public. This increases her likelihood to resort to detours to state the obvious and presents a challenge for the rhetor to listen for the unspoken.

3.3 *The rhetoric of Nature*

Still on muted voices and silences, Christopher Manes explores the rapport between Nature and silence,

'Nature is silent in our culture (and in literate societies generally) in the sense that the status of being a speaking subject is jealously guarded as an exclusively human prerogative.' 'It is as if we had compressed the entire

buzzing, howling, gurgling biosphere into the narrow vocabulary of epistemology...'¹⁵⁶

Manes challenges the erroneous, perhaps even chauvinistic view, that man is the only sapient and sentient being on Earth and the resulting tendency to regard other creatures in his surrounds as inanimate and voiceless. By denying them agency and strengthening his own, in the process, man creates a wedge between the natural environment and the human environment. Manes opines that those non-human voices need to be heeded, for they would help expand man's epistemological experience and the way they apprehend world phenomena.

His claim urges the reader to re-assess the very definition of Nature. Its great relevance to this rhetorical enquiry cannot be overlooked for it figures prominently in the women's *logos*. Etymologically speaking, the origins of Nature, or more precisely ecology, derive from the Greek word *oikos* which means "our wildest home"¹⁵⁷. This conflation of wilderness and the home, suggests that initially, there was no disjuncture between the realm of nature and that of man. This pre-logical reasoning is conspicuous in the women's speeches. Maathai, Menchu and San Suu Kyi call for a harmonious relationship between man and his immediate surroundings and treat the sedentary lifestyle and the wilderness out there, not as *oxymorons* but rather as complementary parts of the whole.

The women's ecological concerns hence impinge on the *logos* of their arguments. It is worthwhile investigating at present whether and how this concern percolates through the style and structure of the speeches. Quoting Barry Commoner's first law of ecology, "Everything is connected to everything else", Glotfelty notes in The Ecocriticism Reader, that 'literature does not float above the material world in some aesthetic ether, but, rather, plays a part in an immense complex global system, in which energy, matter, *and ideas* interact'.¹⁵⁸

¹⁵⁶Manes, C. 'Nature and Silence' in The Ecocriticism Reader, Glotfelty & Fromm (Ed):1995. p 15

¹⁵⁷ Howarth, W. 'Some Principles of Ecocriticism' in The Ecocriticism Reader, Glotfelty & Fromm (Ed):1995. p 69

¹⁵⁸ Glotfelty & Fromm (Ed) 'Introduction' in The Ecocriticism Reader, p xix

In the speeches, the organic does blend in through symbols and metaphors. In Maathai's speech, the 'thigi' branch stands for power and authority. In Menchu's speech, the roots image is predominant and stands for the resilient Mayan culture anchored deep in the land. In San Suu Kyi's surrogate speech, the 'Golden land' forms a motif against which Alexander constantly deplores the current state of moral and economic deprivation. The spiritual quest which San Suu Kyi refers to, also draws on the root image as it digs for the core meaning of a 'full life'. As Neil Everden puts it, 'metaphoric language is an indicator of "place"'. He agrees to Frye's claim that the metaphor reflects a 'desire to associate, and finally to identify, the human mind with what goes on outside it'¹⁵⁹. Hence the metaphors that abound in the speeches, not only show the tie between language and nature but that between the self, its history and environment.

Structurally, Maathai's speech begins with a rootedness in traditional thought, recounting women's traditional roles especially in the rural set-up and winds up in same manner, with an anecdote outlining the communion of man with nature. Menchu's speech could be assessed as replicating the 'cosmovision' model which she elaborates on in her speech. It begins with a historical purview of the Mayan civilization, its strengths and its tragedy, then speaks of the present status quo and finally sets off to position it in the world-scape, calling for global collaboration for a better world. This widening perspective is what makes the speech 'cosmovisionary' in nature. In San Suu Kyi's speech, the very embedding of a quoted inset within the frame of the main surrogate speech, brings to mind the natural image of sowing. As such, it becomes evident that the commonplace of Nature and Nature rhetoric form the backdrop the women's *logos* on peace.

3.4 The rhetoric of Women with(in) Nature

Having analysed the link between internal rhetorical elements of the speeches and Nature, it will be valuable to add a third variable to the equation, that of the speakers' gender. The question then is the following: is there a rapport between women's rhetoric

¹⁵⁹ Everden, N. 'Beyond Ecology' in The Ecocriticism Reader, Glotfelty & Fromm (Ed):1995.

and the rhetoric of nature? If yes, how does this link influence the strength of their arguments on peace?

In Maathai's speech, constant reference is made to the traditional role of women as 'caregivers' and nurturers, a role that does not differ greatly from the role of Nature itself. Women are said to be closer to nature, since they are the ones who work in the fields, till the land and sow the seeds. In Menchu's speech, Nature itself is feminized as recast as the mother who can regenerate and sustain life. In San Suu Kyi's speech, the link between women and nature is an indirect one. It relates to the *logos* of her argument, namely that man should be *rooted* to traditional spiritual convictions for peace to prevail amongst all. Structurally, the link becomes more conspicuous. As pointed out earlier, the form of the surrogate speech mimics the action of sowing for it involves placing a quoted inset in the frame of the main speech. In the process, it brings to mind the organic image of sowing, and by derivation the two symbols of fertility, women and Nature.

It would be plausible to propose that as women address nature-related issues, they simultaneously speak of themselves. As they call for the preservation of nature, it involves a move towards self-preservation. Therefore, it is valuable to explore the nature of this link. Granted that the speakers address the issue of nature and womanhood collectively, and that they exploit the assumption that there is a *necessary* rather than *sufficient* link between them, is it really the case? If the link is a *necessary* one, then women's concerns are one *with* that of Nature, if it is a *sufficient* one, then women's concern is similar to that of Nature only in so far as they are contingently defined *within* the frame of Nature. In other contexts, the concern would differ.

According to Ariel Salleh in Ecofeminism as Politics, 'Women are not 'closer to nature' than men in any ontological sense'.¹⁶⁰ She points out that if there is really an intrinsic link, then it ought to apply both to the men and women. The assumption that women are 'closer to nature' is actually a premise manufactured over the ages, by socio-political institutions to further external rhetorical and social or patriarchal aims. Salleh agrees to

¹⁶⁰ Salleh. Ecofeminism, p 13

some extent with Luke Martell's view that 'Women' and 'nature' are both victims of men's abuse, both are ideological products of the Enlightenment culture of control; both are constituted of identities by similar discursive processes and exploitations'.¹⁶¹ For our purpose, this evidences that the 'woman equals nature' premise has ideological rather than organic roots. We wonder then what the internal and external aims are being sought as nature debates are inserted in the women speakers' rhetoric. Having established previously that the link between women and nature is not an inherent one, what underlying motives or *logos* could well compel women speakers to employ the nature argument?

In fact, Western equality feminists are wary of drawing this link because it serves to justify men's continuing subjugation of women as 'inferior'.¹⁶² The syllogism justifying women's oppression follows this course. The first premise is that nature has to be conquered and domesticated so that civilization can take place. The second premise is that women are close to nature. The conclusion is therefore that women need to be controlled so that civilization can flourish. For Western equality feminists, this conclusion offers ground to reject the woman-nature linkage.

Their reasoning however, strikes an odd key. Ecofeminists suggest that premise two of the argument be revised instead of giving up on the link between nature and women. They call for a paradigm shift that would redefine women and nature and demonstrate the extrinsic link that binds them. As Salleh states, one must 'recontextualise the problem, think it through dialectically'. She calls for a discursive redefinition of the woman-nature link rather than an essentialist one. Often the redefinition would be contingent upon its cultural and historical context.

This is relevant to the assessment of the Nobel speeches as well. Care should be taken not to fall under the influence of Western feminist canons of reasoning. Perusing the speeches, it is evident that the women's traditional views and those of nature in Third

¹⁶¹ *ibid*, p 11

¹⁶² *ibid*, p 13

World countries differ in kind to those imposed with Western colonial conquests. For Salleh '(w)hat is impressive about many indigenous ways of seeing is the fact that man is assumed to be the last and lowest form of life to be created. There is a genuine humility about our human dwelling in nature'.¹⁶³ The statement calls for a revision of premise one of the above constructed syllogism. In the *logos* of their arguments, the women undertake this task. They fall back on traditional values to remind the audience that nature has to be respected and protected.

They then exploit premise two of the argument to reach the sub-conclusion that women are also worthy of respect and protection. This is followed by a third premise outlining the link between Nature, traditions and peace. The warrant for premise three is posited from a backward looking glance. It is held that in traditional times, harmony prevailed among humans and between humans and other creatures and that there was minimal occasion for conflict. This sustains their conclusion that one needs to respect Nature, traditions to achieve peace. Evidently, implicit in the conclusion is also a revalorization of women.

From the above, it is observed that women succeed in their internal aim to construct a good argument in the name of peace. Do they achieve the same success in their external aim which is to persuade their audience? As pointed out earlier, the audience they address is a heterogeneous one. So, the degree of persuasiveness depends on relative closeness established between the women speakers and the different segments represented in the audience. At first glance, the speakers' peace argument rallies them to the cause of the least privileged, the oppressed, who are the most affected from war. Secondly it rallies the speakers with upholders of tradition. One should note that in Third World countries, appeal to traditions is concomitant with an assertion of women's deference to norms and customs. Hence, it uplifts rather than undermines the women speakers' *ethos*, since the argument is likely to be well received back home amongst the conservative sections of the population.

¹⁶³ *ibid*, p 36

The women will be remembered as speaking on behalf of their ancient civilization rather than being revolutionaries. This delimits women's freedom to deliberate for they still have to make conscious choices over the use of traditional or modern tropes. Atkins suggests that the epideictic is "at once revolutionary and conservative" because it extols values as much as it calls for renewal¹⁶⁴. Still the point remains that the renewal of values cannot be addressed directly by the women for it implies putting at stake their credibility as virtuous women and the failure to impress their views upon the audience. They cannot propose a renewal of values unless they temporarily step into the same frame within which virtue is still being defined. This move may not be without contradictions, however it is opted by the three women to gain consensus.

Indeed, the women's argument succeeds in part because it takes care not speak overtly about women's oppression. Had the issue been conveyed in the *logos* directly, the argument would fail to persuade for it would point to the speakers' double standards or their use of peace as an excuse to address the issue of women oppression. Their argument would also collapse because it would cast the women as transgressors of traditional norms.

Actually, if the common syllogism drawing on the link between nature, peace and womanhood succeeds in its persuasive aims, it is because it remains rooted in the indigenous customs of the homeland and casts the women themselves as peace agents ready to uphold their traditional ways and more so, their deference to Nature.

3.5 Evaluation

As enunciated at the onset, the object of this inquiry has been to search for other quests lodged in the pursuit of peace. In the process, several *commonplaces* have been identified in addition to peace.

Employing the rhetoric of the grassroots, of Nature and of Women with(in) Nature, the women's voices extend beyond peace per se, to tackle other pertinent issues like the

¹⁶⁴ Sheard, 'The Public Value of Epideictic Rhetoric', p 766

upliftment of the disempowered. It is noteworthy though that these concerns remain in the vanguard of peace. In fact, they fall under a wider conception of peace itself.

As the different commonplaces tinge the women's *logos*, they emerge as preponderant to sustainable peace efforts and contribute to an elaborate, sophisticated definition of peace. Contrary to the male-defined linear, positivist notion of peace as a popular justification for war, the *logos* of the women speakers project peace as a matter of values of mutual respect, of rootedness, of humility than the use of force.

Their different national and cultural milieus and yet their concerted use the language and *logos* of peace, cannot be a mere coincidence. It testifies for the conception of a new trend that could potentially challenge the mainstream male *logos* of peace. It may take long before women's rhetoric of peace gains acclaim worldwide seeing that their activism is seldom in the frontline for afore-mentioned reasons. However, the recognition of their innovative efforts in the name of peace and their Nobel Award may be seen as good augury in that direction. It is the recognition that as the locus of peace efforts is broadened, it gives free rein to other quests for human betterment.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this study rhetorically assesses Nobel Peace Prize Acceptance Lectures of three women from the Third World, Wangari Maathai, Rigoberta Menchu and Aung San Suu Kyi. It then explores the common issues that make the women speak in unison.

In the course of this heuristic exploration, the following is gleaned from the analysis. First, the three women preach the use of peaceful means to achieve peace and can be cast as the didactic element or *logos* of their arguments. What they achieve is a deconstruction of the militaristic logic of attaining peace.

Secondly, they speak from the grassroots, on behalf of and to the voiceless subaltern. Their bottom-up approach to seek a solution for social unrest, constructs their *ethos* not as power-thirsty leaders, but as empowered and empowering subalterns themselves. Of course, in moments of re-cognition with the oppressed as these, they explore the potency of aesthetic elements of *pathos* to stress on emotional affinities with the grassroots.

Thirdly, they urge for the conservation of the environment. They not only refer copiously to Nature, as *metaphor*, or *enthymeme* in the *logos* of their arguments, but employ it structurally, to “root” their premises in traditional beliefs of the land of the ancestors.

Fourthly, they address the question of women’s empowerment with(in) the framework of Nature discussions. Their claim is formulated despite awareness that for long, the woman-Nature connection has been avoided in Western equality feminist thought. What the three speeches demonstrate through their use of the Nature premise is that Western canons cannot adequately synthesise and govern the experiences at the grassroots. In Third World indigenous cultures where Nature is traditionally venerated, a reference to Nature can be highly commendable and enhancing to the speakers’ *ethos*.

Viewed collectively, the three speeches, now juxtaposed, have had to be uprooted from the times and context in which they were addressed. This move may well seem for some,

to be a perversion of the original significance of the speeches. However, they prove a point. Despite temporal and contextual differences, the juxtaposed speeches do not “war” among themselves. Their concerted views and *logos* demonstrate in a metaphorical manner, that the way forward, is through consensus, not division.

Besides their unified line of reasoning, the insistence to cling to traditional modes of thought in the speeches, rather than mainstream Western reasoning, calls for a revalorization of indigenous knowledges themselves. What is impressive is that the three women have a similar overarching *logos* for peace even if they belong to different geographical and cultural spaces. It takes this shape:

*Wars have plagued the world. Wars in the name of peace are a myth serving ends other than peace. Our traditions speak the language of peace, fraternity and solidarity. Therefore let us win peace through peace*¹⁶⁵.

The rationale here can be summed up by Carter’s understanding of the *epideictic* as that of a ‘ritual’ generating ‘prelogical’ knowledge to help build communities and guide man’s actions.¹⁶⁶ It appears then that at the core of the *epideictic* genre itself is the value of peace over war, construction over destruction.

Nevertheless, it also becomes evident that the offshoot of this pursuit of peace is a multi-branched quest for empowerment. It is argued that as the premises of traditional values, respect for nature and women are integrated within the *logos* of peace, these premises themselves gain momentous significance. However, these alternative avenues remain part and parcel of the core concern of peace. They are enabled in peace discussions, through a discursive re-formulation of peace itself. It is likely that as the foundation of peace is broadened, its pursuit will not only initiate within its ambit other struggles for wholesome human sustenance, but that these will become indispensable for durable peace solutions.

¹⁶⁵ My own formulation

¹⁶⁶ Sheard, ‘The Public Value of Epideictic Rhetoric’, p 775

Rhetorically speaking, what makes the women's speeches remarkable and perhaps the object of future research, is the way, the *extrinsic* end of achieving peace soon becomes a means to other ends such as that of socio-political empowerment of those at the grassroots, preservation of the natural environment. These concerns still remain unaddressed in male militaristic discourses.

It may be of interest, to investigate in future, the course taken by this burgeoning non-mainstream discourse of peace, the niche it generates within the rhetorical tradition as it blazes other trails. One could also explore the development of political statements around sustainable development issues, as these turn into critical twenty-first century priorities, and delve into whether these continue to operate within the *logos* of peace or rather take a course of their own.

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Appendix

Nobel Lecture of Wangari Maathai

http://nobelprize.org/nobel_prizes/peace/laureates/2004/maathai-lecture.html

Wangari Maathai – Nobel Lecture

Nobel Lecture, Oslo, December 10, 2004

Your Majesties

Your Royal Highnesses

Honourable Members of the Norwegian Nobel Committee

Excellencies

5 Ladies and Gentlemen

I stand before you and the world humbled by this recognition and uplifted by the honour of being the 2004 Nobel Peace Laureate.

As the first African woman to receive this prize, I accept it on behalf of the people of Kenya and Africa, and indeed the world. I am especially mindful of
10 women and the girl child. I hope it will encourage them to raise their voices and take more space for leadership. I know the honour also gives a deep sense of pride to our men, both old and young. As a mother, I appreciate the inspiration this brings to the youth and urge them to use it to pursue their dreams.

Although this prize comes to me, it acknowledges the work of countless
15 individuals and groups across the globe. They work quietly and often without

recognition to protect the environment, promote democracy, defend human rights and ensure equality between women and men. By so doing, they plant seeds of peace. I know they, too, are proud today. To all who feel represented by this prize I say use it to advance your mission and meet the high expectations the world will place on us.

This honour is also for my family, friends, partners and supporters throughout the world. All of them helped shape the vision and sustain our work, which was often accomplished under hostile conditions. I am also grateful to the people of Kenya - who remained stubbornly hopeful that democracy could be realized and their environment managed sustainably. Because of this support, I am here today to accept this great honour.

I am immensely privileged to join my fellow African Peace laureates, Presidents Nelson Mandela and F.W. de Klerk, Archbishop Desmond Tutu, the late Chief Albert Luthuli, the late Anwar el-Sadat and the UN Secretary General, Kofi Annan.

I know that African people everywhere are encouraged by this news. My fellow Africans, as we embrace this recognition, let us use it to intensify our commitment to our people, to reduce conflicts and poverty and thereby improve their quality of life. Let us embrace democratic governance, protect human rights and protect our environment. I am confident that we shall rise to the occasion. I have always believed that solutions to most of our problems must come from us.

In this year's prize, the Norwegian Nobel Committee has placed the critical issue of environment and its linkage to democracy and peace before the world. For their visionary action, I am profoundly grateful. Recognizing that sustainable development, democracy and peace are indivisible is an idea whose time has

come. Our work over the past 30 years has always appreciated and engaged these linkages.

My inspiration partly comes from my childhood experiences and observations of Nature in rural Kenya. It has been influenced and nurtured by the formal
45 education I was privileged to receive in Kenya, the United States and Germany. As I was growing up, I witnessed forests being cleared and replaced by commercial plantations, which destroyed local biodiversity and the capacity of the forests to conserve water.

Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen,

50 In 1977, when we started the Green Belt Movement, I was partly responding to needs identified by rural women, namely lack of firewood, clean drinking water, balanced diets, shelter and income.

Throughout Africa, women are the primary caretakers, holding significant responsibility for tilling the land and feeding their families. As a result, they are
55 often the first to become aware of environmental damage as resources become scarce and incapable of sustaining their families.

The women we worked with recounted that unlike in the past, they were unable to meet their basic needs. This was due to the degradation of their immediate environment as well as the introduction of commercial farming, which replaced
60 the growing of household food crops. But international trade controlled the price of the exports from these small-scale farmers and a reasonable and just income could not be guaranteed. I came to understand that when the environment is destroyed, plundered or mismanaged, we undermine our quality of life and that of future generations.

65 Tree planting became a natural choice to address some of the initial basic needs identified by women. Also, tree planting is simple, attainable and guarantees quick, successful results within a reasonable amount time. This sustains interest and commitment.

70 So, together, we have planted over 30 million trees that provide fuel, food, shelter, and income to support their children's education and household needs. The activity also creates employment and improves soils and watersheds. Through their involvement, women gain some degree of power over their lives, especially their social and economic position and relevance in the family. This work continues.

75 Initially, the work was difficult because historically our people have been persuaded to believe that because they are poor, they lack not only capital, but also knowledge and skills to address their challenges. Instead they are conditioned to believe that solutions to their problems must come from 'outside'. Further, women did not realize that meeting their needs depended on their
80 environment being healthy and well managed. They were also unaware that a degraded environment leads to a scramble for scarce resources and may culminate in poverty and even conflict. They were also unaware of the injustices of international economic arrangements.

In order to assist communities to understand these linkages, we developed a
85 citizen education program, during which people identify their problems, the causes and possible solutions. They then make connections between their own personal actions and the problems they witness in the environment and in society. They learn that our world is confronted with a litany of woes: corruption, violence against women and children, disruption and breakdown of

90 families, and disintegration of cultures and communities. They also identify the abuse of drugs and chemical substances, especially among young people. There are also devastating diseases that are defying cures or occurring in epidemic proportions. Of particular concern are HIV/AIDS, malaria and diseases associated with malnutrition.

95 On the environment front, they are exposed to many human activities that are devastating to the environment and societies. These include widespread destruction of ecosystems, especially through deforestation, climatic instability, and contamination in the soils and waters that all contribute to excruciating poverty.

100 In the process, the participants discover that they must be part of the solutions. They realize their hidden potential and are empowered to overcome inertia and take action. They come to recognize that they are the primary custodians and beneficiaries of the environment that sustains them.

Entire communities also come to understand that while it is necessary to hold
105 their governments accountable, it is equally important that in their own relationships with each other, they exemplify the leadership values they wish to see in their own leaders, namely justice, integrity and trust.

Although initially the Green Belt Movement's tree planting activities did not address issues of democracy and peace, it soon became clear that responsible
110 governance of the environment was impossible without democratic space. Therefore, the tree became a symbol for the democratic struggle in Kenya. Citizens were mobilised to challenge widespread abuses of power, corruption and environmental mismanagement. In Nairobi 's Uhuru Park, at Freedom

Corner, and in many parts of the country, trees of peace were planted to demand
115 the release of prisoners of conscience and a peaceful transition to democracy.

Through the Green Belt Movement, thousands of ordinary citizens were mobilized and empowered to take action and effect change. They learned to overcome fear and a sense of helplessness and moved to defend democratic rights.

120 In time, the tree also became a symbol for peace and conflict resolution, especially during ethnic conflicts in Kenya when the Green Belt Movement used peace trees to reconcile disputing communities. During the ongoing re-writing of the Kenyan constitution, similar trees of peace were planted in many parts of the country to promote a culture of peace. Using trees as a symbol of peace is in
125 keeping with a widespread African tradition. For example, the elders of the Kikuyu carried a staff from the thigi tree that, when placed between two disputing sides, caused them to stop fighting and seek reconciliation. Many communities in Africa have these traditions.

Such practises are part of an extensive cultural heritage, which contributes both
130 to the conservation of habitats and to cultures of peace. With the destruction of these cultures and the introduction of new values, local biodiversity is no longer valued or protected and as a result, it is quickly degraded and disappears. For this reason, The Green Belt Movement explores the concept of cultural biodiversity, especially with respect to indigenous seeds and medicinal plants.

135 As we progressively understood the causes of environmental degradation, we saw the need for good governance. Indeed, the state of any county's environment is a reflection of the kind of governance in place, and without good governance there can be no peace. Many countries, which have poor governance

140 systems, are also likely to have conflicts and poor laws protecting the environment.

In 2002, the courage, resilience, patience and commitment of members of the Green Belt Movement, other civil society organizations, and the Kenyan public culminated in the peaceful transition to a democratic government and laid the foundation for a more stable society.

145 Excellencies, friends, ladies and gentlemen,

It is 30 years since we started this work. Activities that devastate the environment and societies continue unabated. Today we are faced with a challenge that calls for a shift in our thinking, so that humanity stops threatening its life-support system. We are called to assist the Earth to heal her wounds and
150 in the process heal our own – indeed, to embrace the whole creation in all its diversity, beauty and wonder. This will happen if we see the need to revive our sense of belonging to a larger family of life, with which we have shared our evolutionary process.

In the course of history, there comes a time when humanity is called to shift to a
155 new level of consciousness, to reach a higher moral ground. A time when we have to shed our fear and give hope to each other.

That time is now.

The Norwegian Nobel Committee has challenged the world to broaden the understanding of peace: there can be no peace without equitable development;
160 and there can be no development without sustainable management of the environment in a democratic and peaceful space. This shift is an idea whose time has come.

I call on leaders, especially from Africa, to expand democratic space and build fair and just societies that allow the creativity and energy of their citizens to flourish.

Those of us who have been privileged to receive education, skills, and experiences and even power must be role models for the next generation of leadership. In this regard, I would also like to appeal for the freedom of my fellow laureate Aung San Suu Kyi so that she can continue her work for peace and democracy for the people of Burma and the world at large.

Culture plays a central role in the political, economic and social life of communities. Indeed, culture may be the missing link in the development of Africa. Culture is dynamic and evolves over time, consciously discarding retrogressive traditions, like female genital mutilation (FGM), and embracing aspects that are good and useful.

Africans, especially, should re-discover positive aspects of their culture. In accepting them, they would give themselves a sense of belonging, identity and self-confidence.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

There is also need to galvanize civil society and grassroots movements to catalyse change. I call upon governments to recognize the role of these social movements in building a critical mass of responsible citizens, who help maintain checks and balances in society. On their part, civil society should embrace not only their rights but also their responsibilities.

Further, industry and global institutions must appreciate that ensuring economic justice, equity and ecological integrity are of greater value than profits at any cost.

190 The extreme global inequities and prevailing consumption patterns continue at the expense of the environment and peaceful co-existence. The choice is ours.

I would like to call on young people to commit themselves to activities that contribute toward achieving their long-term dreams. They have the energy and creativity to shape a sustainable future. To the young people I say, you are a gift to your communities and indeed the world. You are our hope and our future.

195 The holistic approach to development, as exemplified by the Green Belt Movement, could be embraced and replicated in more parts of Africa and beyond. It is for this reason that I have established the Wangari Maathai Foundation to ensure the continuation and expansion of these activities. Although a lot has been achieved, much remains to be done.

200 Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen,

As I conclude I reflect on my childhood experience when I would visit a stream next to our home to fetch water for my mother. I would drink water straight from the stream. Playing among the arrowroot leaves I tried in vain to pick up the strands of frogs' eggs, believing they were beads. But every time I put my
205 little fingers under them they would break. Later, I saw thousands of tadpoles: black, energetic and wriggling through the clear water against the background of the brown earth. This is the world I inherited from my parents.

Today, over 50 years later, the stream has dried up, women walk long distances for water, which is not always clean, and children will never know what they

210 have lost. The challenge is to restore the home of the tadpoles and give back to our children a world of beauty and wonder.

Thank you very much.

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Nobel Lecture of Rigoberta Menchu Tum

http://nobelprize.org/nobel_prizes/peace/laureates/1992/tum-lecture.html

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Rigoberta Menchú Tum

The Nobel Peace Prize 1992

Nobel Lecture English

Acceptance and Nobel Lecture, December 10, 1992

215 Your Majesties, the King and Queen of Norway,

The Honorable Members of the Nobel Peace Committee,

Your Excellency, the Prime Minister,

Your Excellencies, Members of the Government and the Diplomatic Corps,

Dear Guatemalan countrymen and women,

220 Ladies and Gentlemen,

I feel a deep emotion and pride for the honor of having been awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for 1992. A deep personal feeling and pride for my country and its very ancient culture. For the values of the community and the people to which I belong, for the love of my country, of Mother Nature. Whoever understands this
225 respects life and encourages the struggle that aims at such objectives.

I consider this Prize, not as a reward to me personally, but rather as one of the greatest conquests in the struggle for peace, for Human Rights and for the rights of the indigenous people, who, for 500 years, have been split, fragmented, as well as the victims of genocides, repression and discrimination.

230 Please allow me to convey to you all, what this Prize means to me.

In my opinion, the Nobel Peace Prize calls upon us to act in accordance with what it represents, and the great significance it has worldwide. In addition to being a priceless treasure, it is an instrument with which to fight for peace, for justice, for the rights of those who suffer the abysmal economical, social, cultural
235 and political inequalities, typical of the order of the world in which we live, and where the transformation into a new world based on the values of the human being, is the expectation of the majority of those who live on this planet.

This Nobel Prize represents a standard bearer that encourages us to continue denouncing the violation of Human Rights, committed against the people in
240 Guatemala, in America and in the world, and to perform a positive role in respect of the pressing task in my country, which is to achieve peace with social justice.

The Nobel Prize is a symbol of peace, and of the efforts to build up a real democracy. It will stimulate the civil sectors so that through a solid national
245 unity, these may contribute to the process of negotiations that seek peace, reflecting the general feeling - although at times not possible to express because of fear - of Guatemalan society: to establish political and legal grounds that will give irreversible impulses to a solution to what initiated the internal armed conflict.

250 There is no doubt whatsoever that it constitutes a sign of hope in the struggle of the indigenous people in the entire Continent.

It is also a tribute to the Central-American people who are still searching for their stability, for the structuring of their future, and the path for their development and integration, based on civil democracy and mutual respect.

255 The importance of this Nobel Prize has been demonstrated by all the congratulations received from everywhere, from Heads of Government - practically all the American Presidents - to the organizations of the indigenous people and of Human Rights, from all over the world. In fact, what they see in this Nobel Peace Prize is not only a reward and a recognition of a single person,
260 but a starting point for the hard struggle towards the achievement of that revindication which is yet to be fulfilled.

As a contrast, and paradoxically, it was actually in my own country where I met, on the part of some people, the strongest objections, reserve and indifference, for the award of the Nobel Peace Prize to this Quiché Indian. Perhaps because in
265 Latin America, it is precisely in Guatemala where the discrimination towards the indigenous, towards women, and the repression of the longing for justice and peace, are more deeply rooted in certain social and political sectors.

Under present circumstances, in this disordered and complex world, the decision of the Norwegian Nobel Peace Prize Committee to award this honorable
270 distinction to me, reflects the awareness of the fact that, in this way, courage and strength is given to the struggle of peace, reconciliation and justice; to the struggle against racism, cultural discrimination, and hence contributes to the achievement of harmonious co-existence between our people.

With deep pain, on one side, but with satisfaction on the other, I have to inform
275 you that the Nobel Peace Prize 1992 will have to remain temporarily in Mexico City, in watchful waiting for peace in Guatemala. Because there are no political conditions in my country that would indicate or make me foresee a prompt and just solution. The satisfaction and gratitude are due to the fact that Mexico, our brother neighbor country, that has been so dedicated and interested, that has
280 made such great efforts in respect of the negotiations that are being conducted to achieve peace, that has received and admitted so many refugees and exiled Guatemalans, has given us a place in the Museo del Templo Mayor (the cradle of the ancient Aztecs) so that the Nobel Prize may remain there, until peaceful and safe conditions are established in Guatemala to place it here, in the land of the
285 Quetzal.¹

When evaluating the overall significance of the award of the Peace Prize, I would like to say some words on behalf of all those whose voice cannot be heard or who have been repressed for having spoken their opinions, of all those who have been marginalized, who have been discriminated, who live in poverty, in need,
290 of all those who are the victims of repression and violation of human rights. Those who, nevertheless, have endured through centuries, who have not lost their conscience, determination, and hope.

Please allow me, ladies and gentlemen, to say some words about my country and the civilization of the Mayas. The Maya people developed and spread
295 geographically through some 300,000 square km; they occupied parts of the South of Mexico, Belize, Guatemala, as well as Honduras and El Salvador; they developed a very rich civilization in the area of political organization, as well as in social and economic fields; they were great scientists in the fields of mathematics, astronomy, agriculture, architecture and engineering; they were
300 great artists in the fields of sculpture, painting, weaving and carving.

The Mayas discovered the zero value in mathematics, at about the same time that it was discovered in India and later passed on to the Arabs. Their astronomic forecasts based on mathematical calculations and scientific observations were amazing, and still are. They prepared a calendar more accurate than the
305 Gregorian, and in the field of medicine they performed intracranial surgical operations.

One of the Maya books, which escaped destruction by the conquistadores, known as The Codex of Dresden, contains the results of an investigation on eclipses as well a table of 69 dates, in which solar eclipse occur in a lapse of 33
310 years.

Today, it is important to emphasize the deep respect that the Maya civilization had towards life and nature in general.

Who can predict what other great scientific conquests and developments these people could have achieved, if they had not been conquered by blood and fire,
315 and subjected to an ethnocide that affected nearly 50 million people in the course of 500 years.

I would describe the meaning of this Nobel Peace prize, in the first place as a tribute to the Indian people who have been sacrificed and have disappeared because they aimed at a more dignified and just life with fraternity and
320 understanding among human beings. To those who are no longer alive to keep up the hope for a change in the situation in respect of poverty and marginalization of the Indians, of those who have been banished, of the helpless in Guatemala as well as in the entire American Continent.

This growing concern is comforting, even though it comes 500 years later, to the
325 suffering, the discrimination, the oppression and the exploitation that our peoples have been exposed to, but who, thanks to their own cosmovision - and concept of life, have managed to withstand and finally see some promising prospects. How those roots, that were to be eradicated, now begin to grow with strength, hope and visions of the future!

330 It also represents a sign of the growing international interest for, and understanding of the original Rights of the People, of the future of more than 60 million Indians that live in our Americas, and their outcry because of the 500 years of oppression that they have endured. For the genocide beyond comparison that they have had to suffer throughout this epoch, and from which
335 other countries and the elite of the Americas have profited and taken advantage.

Let there be freedom for the Indians, wherever they may be in the American Continent or elsewhere in the world, because while they are alive, a glow of hope will be alive as well as a true concept of life.

340 The expressions of great happiness by the Indian Organizations in the entire Continent and the worldwide congratulations received for the award of the Nobel Peace Prize, clearly indicate the great importance of this decision. It is the recognition of the European debt to the American indigenous people; it is an appeal to the conscience of Humanity so that those conditions of marginalization that condemned them to colonialism and exploitation may be eradicated; it is a
345 cry for life, peace, justice, equality and fraternity between human beings.

The peculiarities of the vision of the Indian people are expressed according to the way in which they are related to each other. First, between human beings, through communication. Second, with the earth, as with our mother, because she gives us our lives and is not mere merchandise. Third, with nature, because we
350 are an integral part of it, and not its owners.

To us Mother Earth is not only a source of economic riches that give us the maize, which is our life, but she also provides so many other things that the privileged ones of today strive for. The Earth is the root and the source of our culture. She keeps our memories, she receives our ancestors and she, therefore,
355 demands that we honor her and return to her, with tenderness and respect, those goods that she gives us. We have to take care of her so that our children and grandchildren may continue to benefit from her. If the world does not learn now to show respect to nature, what kind of future will the new generations have?

From these basic features derive behavior, rights and obligations in the American
360 Continent, for the indigenous people as well as for the non-indigenous, whether

they be racially mixed, blacks, whites or Asian. The whole society has an obligation to show mutual respect, to learn from each other and to share material and scientific achievements, in the most convenient way. The indigenous peoples never had, and still do not have, the place that they should have occupied in the progress and benefits of science and technology, although they represented an important basis for this development.

If the indigenous civilization and the European civilizations could have made exchanges in a peaceful and harmonious manner, without destruction, exploitation, discrimination and poverty, they could, no doubt, have achieved greater and more valuable conquests for Humanity.

Let us not forget that when the Europeans came to America, there were flourishing and strong civilization there. One cannot talk about a "discovery of America", because one discovers that which one does not know about, or that which is hidden. But America and its native civilizations had discovered themselves long before the fall of the Roman Empire and Medieval Europe. The significance of its cultures forms part of the heritage of humanity and continues to astonish the learned.

I think it is necessary that the indigenous peoples, of which I am a member, should contribute their science and knowledge to human development, because we have enormous potential and we could combine our very ancient heritage with the achievements of European civilization as well as with civilizations in other parts of the world.

But this contribution, that to our understanding is a recovery of the natural and cultural heritage, must take place based on a rational and consensual basis in

385 respect of the right to make use of knowledge and natural resources, with
guarantees for equality between Government and society.

We the indigenous are willing to combine tradition with modernism, but not at
any cost. We will not tolerate or permit that our future be planned as possible
guardians of ethno-touristic projects on a continental level.

390 At a time when the commemoration of the Fifth Centenary of the arrival of
Columbus in America has repercussions all over the world, the revival of hope
for the oppressed indigenous peoples demands that we reassert our existence to
the world and the value of our cultural identity. It demands that we endeavor to
actively participate in the decisions that concern our destiny, in the building-up
395 of our countries/nations. Should we, in spite of all, not be taken into
consideration, there are factors that guarantee our future: struggle and
endurance; courage; the decision to maintain our traditions that have been
exposed to so many perils and sufferings; solidarity towards our struggle on the
part of numerous countries, governments, organizations and citizens of the
400 world.

That is why I dream of the day when the relationship between the indigenous
peoples and other peoples is strengthened; when they can combine their
potentialities and their capabilities and contribute to make life on this planet less
unequal, a better distribution of the scientific and cultural treasures accumulated
405 by Humanity, flourishing in peace and justice.

Today, in the 47th period of sessions of the General Assembly, the United
nations (UN) will proclaim 1993 as the International Year of the World's
Indigenous People, in the presence of well-known chiefs of the organizations of
the Indian people and of the coordination of the Continental Movement of

410 Indigenous, Blacks and Popular Resistance. They will all formally participate in the opening of the working sessions in order to make 1993 a year of specific actions to truly place the indigenous peoples within their national contexts and to make them part of mutual international agreements.

The achievement of the International Year of the World's Indigenous People and
415 the progress represented by the preparation of the project for the Universal Declaration, are the result of the participation of numerous Indian brothers, nongovernmental organizations and the successful efforts of the experts in the Working group, in addition to the comprehensiveness shown by many countries in the United Nations.

420 We hope that the formulation of the project in respect of the Declaration on the Rights of the indigenous People will examine and go deeply into the existing difficulty reality that we, the Indo-Americans, experience.²

Our people will have a year dedicated to the problems that afflict them and, in this respect, are now getting ready to carry out different activities with the
425 purpose of presenting proposals and putting pressure on action plans. All this will be conducted in the most reasonable way and with the most convincing and justified arguments for the elimination of racism, oppression, discrimination and the exploitation of those who have been dragged into poverty and oblivion. Also for "the condemned of the earth", the award of the Nobel Peace Prize represents a
430 recognition, an encouragement and an objective for the future.

I wish that a conscious sense of peace and a feeling of human solidarity would develop in all peoples, which would open new relationships of respect and equality for the next millennium, to be ruled by fraternity and not by cruel conflicts.

435 Opinion is being formed everywhere today, that in spite of wars and violence,
calls upon the entire human race to protect its historical values and to form unity
in diversity. And this calls upon us all to reflect upon the incorporation of
important elements of change and transformation in all aspects of life on earth, in
the search for specific and definite solutions to the deep ethical crisis that afflicts
440 Humanity. This will, no doubt have decisive influence on the structure of the
future.

There is a possibility that some centers of political and economic power, some
statesmen and intellectuals, have not yet managed to see the advantages of the
active participation of the indigenous peoples in all the fields of human activity.
445 However, the movement initiated by different political and intellectual
"Amerindians" will finally convince them that, from an objective point of view,
we are a constituent part of the historical alternatives that are being discussed at
the international level.

Ladies and gentlemen, allow me to say some candid words about my country.

450 The attention that this Nobel Peace Prize has focused on Guatemala, should
imply that the violation of the human rights is no longer ignored internationally.
It will also honor all those who died in the struggle for social equality and justice
in my country.

It is known throughout the world that the Guatemalan people, as a result of their
455 struggle, succeeded in achieving, in October 1944, a period of democracy where
institutionality and human rights were the main philosophies. At that time,
Guatemala was an exception in the American Continent, because of its struggle
for complete national sovereignty. However, in 1954, a conspiracy that associated
the traditional national power centers, inheritors of colonialism, with powerful

460 foreign interests, overthrew the democratic regime as a result of an armed
invasion, thereby re-imposing the old system of oppression which has
characterized the history of my country.³

The economic, social and political subjection that derived from the Cold War,
was what initiated the internal armed conflict. The repression against the
465 organizations of the people, the democratic parties and the intellectuals, started
in Guatemala long before the war started. Let us not forget that.

In the attempt to crush rebellion, dictatorships have committed the greatest
atrocities. They have leveled villages, and murdered thousands of peasants
particularly Indians, hundreds of trade union workers and students, outstanding
470 intellectuals and politicians, priests and nuns. Through this systematic
persecution in the name of the safety of the nation, one million peasants were
removed by force from their lands; 100,000 had to seek refuge in the neighboring
countries. In Guatemala, there are today almost 100,000 orphans and more than
40,000 widows. The practice of "disappeared" politicians was invented in
475 Guatemala, as a government policy.

As you know, I am myself a survivor of a massacred family.

The country collapsed into a crisis never seen before and the changes in the
world forced and encouraged the military forces to permit a political opening
that consisted in the preparation of a new Constitution, in an expansion of the
480 political field, and in the transfer of the government to civil sectors. We have had
this new regime for eight years and in certain fields there have been some
openings of importance.

However, in spite of these openings, repression and violation of human rights persists in the middle of an economic crisis, that is becoming more and more
485 acute, to the extent that 84% of the population is today considered as poor, and some 60% are considered as very poor. Impunity and terror continue to prevent people from freely expressing their needs and vital demands. The internal armed conflict still exists.

The political life in my country has lately centered around the search for a
490 political solution to the global crisis and the armed conflict that has existed in Guatemala since 1962. This process was initiated by the Agreement signed in this City of Oslo, between the Comisión Nacional de Reconciliación with government mandate, and the Unidad Revolucionaria Nacional Guatemalteca (URNG) as a necessary step to introduce to Guatemala the spirit of the Agreement of
495 Esquipulas.⁴

As a result of this Agreement and conversations between the URNG and different sectors of Guatemalan society, direct negotiations were initiated under the government of President Serrano, between the government and the guerrillas, as a result of which three agreements have already been signed.
500 However, the subject of Human Rights has taken a long time, because this subject constitutes the core of the Guatemalan problems, and around this core important differences have arisen. Nevertheless, there has been considerable progress.

The process of negotiations aims at reaching agreements in order to establish the
505 basis for a real democracy in Guatemala and for an end to the war. As far as I understand, with the goodwill of the parties concerned and the active participation of the civil sectors, adapting to a great national unity, the phase of

purposes and intentions could be left behind so that Guatemala could be pulled out of the crossroads that seem to have become eternal.

510 Dialogues and political negotiations are, no doubt, adequate means to solve these problems, in order to respond in a specific way to the vital and urgent needs for life and for the implementation of democracy for the Guatemalan people. However, I am convinced that if the diverse social sectors which integrate Guatemalan society find bases of unity, respecting their natural differences, they
515 would together find a solution to those problems and therefore resolve the causes which initiated the war which prevails in Guatemala.

Other civil sectors as well as the international community must demand that the negotiations between the Government and the URNG surpass the period in
520 which they are finding themselves in discussing Human Rights and move ahead as soon as possible to a verifiable agreement with the United Nations. It is necessary to point out, here in Oslo, that the issue of Human Rights in Guatemala constitutes, at present, the most urgent problem that has to be solved. My statement is neither incidental nor unjustified.

525 As has been ascertained by international institutions, such as The United Nations Commission on Human Rights, The Interamerican Commission of Human Rights and many other humanitarian organizations, Guatemala is one of the countries in America with the largest number of violations of these rights, and the largest number of cases of impunity where security forces are generally
530 involved. It is imperative that the repression and persecution of the people and the Indians be stopped. The compulsory mobilization and integration of young

people into the Patrols of Civil Self Defense, which principally affects the Indian people, must also be stopped.

535 Democracy in Guatemala must be built-up as soon as possible. It is necessary that Human Rights agreements be fully complied with, i.e. an end to racism; guaranteed freedom to organize and to move within all sectors of the country. In short, it is imperative to open all fields to the multi-ethnic civil society with all its rights, to demilitarize the country and establish the basis for its development, so that it can be pulled out of today's underdevelopment and poverty.

540 Among the most bitter dramas that a great percentage of the population has to endure, is the forced exodus. Which means, to be forced by military units and persecution to abandon their villages, their Mother Earth, where their ancestors rest, their environment, the nature that gave them life and the growth of their communities, all of which constituted a coherent system of social organization
545 and functional democracy.

The case of the displaced and of refugees in Guatemala is heartbreaking; some of them are condemned to live in exile in other countries, but the great majority live in exile in their own country. They are forced to wander from place to place, to live in ravines and inhospitable places, some not recognized as Guatemalan
550 citizens, but all of them are condemned to poverty and hunger. There cannot be a true democracy as long as this problem is not satisfactorily solved and these people are reinstated on their lands and in their villages.

In the new Guatemalan society, there must be a fundamental reorganization in the matter of land ownership, to allow for the development of the agricultural
555 potential, as well as for the return of the land to the legitimate owners. This process of reorganization must be carried out with the greatest respect for

nature, in order to protect her and return to her, her strength and capability to generate life.

560 No less characteristic of a democracy is social justice. This demands a solution to the frightening statistics on infant mortality, of malnutrition, lack of education, analphabetism, wages insufficient to sustain life. These problems have a growing and painful impact on the Guatemalan population and imply no prospects and no hope.

565 Among the features that characterize society today, is that of the role of women, although female emancipation has not, in fact, been fully achieved so far by any country in the world.

The historical development in Guatemala reflects now the need and the irreversibility of the active contribution of women to the configuration of the new Guatemalan social order, of which, I humbly believe, the Indian women
570 already are a clear testimony. This Nobel Peace Prize is a recognition to those who have been, and still are in most parts of the world, the most exploited of the exploited; the most discriminated of the discriminated, the most marginalized of the marginalized, but still those who produce life and riches.

575 Democracy, development and modernization of a country are impossible and incongruous without the solution of these problems.

In Guatemala, it is just as important to recognize the Identity and the Rights of the Indigenous Peoples, that have been ignored and despised not only during the colonial period, but also during the Republic. It is not possible to conceive a democratic Guatemala, free and independent, without the indigenous identity
580 shaping its character into all aspects of national existence.

It will undoubtedly be something new, a completely new experience, with features that, at the moment, we cannot describe. But it will authentically respond to history and the characteristics of the real Guatemalan nationality. The true profile that has been distorted for such a long time.

585 This urgency of this vital need, are the issues that urge me, at this moment, from this rostrum, to urge national opinion and the international community, to show a more active interest in Guatemala.

Taking into consideration that in connection with my role as a Nobel Prize Winner, in the process of negotiations for peace in Guatemala many possibilities
590 have been handled, but now I think that this role is more likely to be the role of a promotor of peace, of national unity, for the protection of the rights of the indigenous peoples. In such a way, that I may take initiatives in accordance with the needs, and thereby prevent the Peace Prize from becoming a piece of paper that has been pigeonholed.

595 I call upon all the social and ethnic sectors that constitute the people of Guatemala to participate actively in the efforts to find a peaceful solution to the armed conflict, to build-up a sound unity between the "ladinos,"⁵ the blacks and the Indians, all of whom must create within their diverse groups, a "Guatemality".

600 Along these same lines, I invite the international community to contribute with specific actions so that the parties involved may overcome the differences that at this stage keep negotiations in a wait-and-see state, so that they will succeed, first of all, in signing an agreement on Human Rights. And then, to re-initiate the rounds of negotiation and identify those issues on which to compromise, to
605 allow for the Peace Agreement to be signed and immediately ratified, because I

have no doubt that this will bring about great relief in the prevailing situation in Guatemala.

My opinion is also that the UN should have a more direct participation, which would go further than playing the role of observer, and could help substantially
610 to move the process ahead.

Ladies and gentlemen, the fact that I have given preference to the American Continent, and in particular to my country, does not mean that I do not have an important place in my mind and in my heart for the concern of other peoples of the world and their constant struggle in the defense of peace, of the right to a life
615 and all its inalienable rights. The majority of us who are gathered here today, constitute an example of the above, and along these lines I would humbly extend to you my gratitude.

Many things have changed in these last years. There have been great changes of worldwide character. The East-West confrontation has ceased to exist and the
620 Cold War has come to an end. These changes, the exact forms of which cannot yet be predicted, have left gaps that the people of the world have known how to make use of in order to come forward, struggle and win national terrain and international recognition.

Today, we must fight for a better world, without poverty, without racism, with
625 peace in the Middle East and in Southeast Asia, to where I address a plea for the liberation of Mrs. Aung San Suu Kyi, winner of the Nobel Peace Prize 1991; for a just and peaceful solution, in the Balkans; for the end of the apartheid in South Africa; for the stability in Nicaragua, that the Peace Agreement in El Salvador be observed; for the re-establishment of democracy in Haiti; for the complete

630 sovereignty of Panama; because all of these constitute the highest aims for justice
in the international situation.

A world at peace that could provide consistency, interrelations and concordance
in respect of the economic, social and cultural structures of the societies would
indeed have deep roots and a robust influence.

635 We have in our mind the deepest felt demands of the entire human race, when
we strive for peaceful co-existence and the preservation of the environment. The
struggle we fight purifies and shapes the future.

Our history is a living history, that has throbbed, withstood and survived many
centuries of sacrifice. Now it comes forward again with strength. The seeds,
640 dormant for such a long time, break out today with some uncertainty, although
they germinate in a world that is at present characterized by confusion and
uncertainty.

There is no doubt that this process will be long and complex, but it is no Utopia
and we, the Indians, we have new confidence in its implementation.

645 The peoples of Guatemala will mobilize and will be aware of their strength in
building up a worthy future. They are preparing themselves to sow the future, to
free themselves from atavisms, to rediscover their heritage. To build a country
with a genuine national identity. To start a new life.

By combining all the shades and nuances of the "ladinos", the "garífunas"⁶ and
650 Indians in the Guatemalan ethnic mosaic, we must interlace a number of colors
without introducing contradictions, without becoming grotesque nor
antagonistic, but we must give them brightness and a superior quality, just the

way our weavers weave a typical huipil blouse, brilliantly composed, a gift to Humanity.

655 Thank you very much.

1. The government and the guerrillas signed a peace agreement in December 1996, but Rigoberta's Nobel medal and diploma still remain at the Museo del Templo Mayor in Mexico City.

The Quetzal is the national bird of Guatemala.

2. The reference is to the Declaration on Rights of Persons Belonging to National, Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities, which was adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations on December 18, 1992. The Working Group was the Working Group on Indigenous Populations of the Subcommittee on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities.

3. The revolution of 1944 brought to power the presidential regime of Dr. Juan José Arévalo, who instituted democratic and social reforms. His successor, Jacobo Arbenz Guzmán, was considered to be pro-communists by the government of President Dwight D. Eisenhower of the United States, which ordered the CIA to cooperate with right-wing and military forces in an armed invasion which overthrew the Arbenz government in 1954. The ensuing period of repression led to the civil war which lasted from 1962 to 1996.

4. This agreement between the governmental National Commission for Reconciliation and the guerrilla Guatemalan National Revolutionary Unity was signed at Oslo in March 1990. It was a further step in the efforts of the two Guatemalan parties to end their armed conflict, a process in which the

government of Guatemala was participating along with El Salvador, Honduras, Costa Rica and Nicaragua. The five presidents had made several attempts to agree on measures to end the civil wars in Central American countries, one of their summits having taken place in Esquipulas, Guatemala, in 1986. President Oscar Arias Sánchez of Costa Rica took a leading role in these negotiations, which were finally successful in the multilateral agreement signed in August 1987. For his contribution Arias received the Nobel Peace prize that year. See the previous volume in this series, *Nobel Lectures. Peace, 1981-1990*, pp. 181-182.

5. The ladinos are of Spanish and Indian descent.

6. The garifunas are a tiny ethnic group on the Atlantic coast, of African-Carib descent.

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Surrogate speech on behalf of Aung San Suu Kyi

http://nobelprize.org/nobel_prizes/peace/laureates/1991/kyi-acceptance.html

13:38 August 23, 2007

Aung San Suu Kyi

The Nobel Peace Prize 1991

Acceptance Speech

Acceptance Speech delivered on behalf of Aung San Suu Kyi, by her son Alexander Aris, on the occasion of the award of the Nobel Peace Prize in Oslo, December 10, 1991

Your Majesties, Your Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I stand before you here today to accept on behalf of my mother, Aung San Suu Kyi, this greatest of prizes, the Nobel Prize for Peace. Because circumstances do not permit my mother to be here in person, I will do my best to convey the
660 sentiments I believe she would express.

Firstly, I know that she would begin by saying that she accepts the Nobel Prize for Peace not in her own name but in the name of all the people of Burma. She would say that this prize belongs not to her but to all those men, women and children who, even as I speak, continue to sacrifice their wellbeing, their freedom
665 and their lives in pursuit of a democratic Burma. Theirs is the prize and theirs will be the eventual victory in Burma's long struggle for peace, freedom and democracy.

Speaking as her son, however, I would add that I personally believe that by her own dedication and personal sacrifice she has come to be a worthy symbol
670 through whom the plight of all the people of Burma may be recognised. And no one must underestimate that plight. The plight of those in the countryside and towns, living in poverty and destitution, those in prison, battered and tortured; the plight of the young people, the hope of Burma, dying of malaria in the jungles to which they have fled; that of the Buddhist monks, beaten and
675 dishonoured. Nor should we forget the many senior and highly respected leaders besides my mother who are all incarcerated. It is on their behalf that I thank you, from my heart, for this supreme honour. The Burmese people can

today hold their heads a little higher in the knowledge that in this far distant land their suffering has been heard and heeded.

680 We must also remember that the lonely struggle taking place in a heavily guarded compound in Rangoon is part of the much larger struggle, worldwide, for the emancipation of the human spirit from political tyranny and psychological subjection. The Prize, I feel sure, is also intended to honour all those engaged in this struggle wherever they may be. It is not without reason
685 that today's events in Oslo fall on the International Human Rights Day, celebrated throughout the world.¹

Mr. Chairman, the whole international community has applauded the choice of your committee. Just a few days ago, the United Nations passed a unanimous and historic resolution welcoming Secretary-General Javier Pérez de Cuéllar's
690 statement on the significance of this award and endorsing his repeated appeals for my mother's early release from detention. Universal concern at the grave human rights situation in Burma was clearly expressed. Alone and isolated among the entire nations of the world a single dissenting voice was heard, from the military junta in Rangoon, too late and too weak.

695 This regime has through almost thirty years of misrule reduced the once prosperous 'Golden Land' of Burma to one of the world's most economically destitute nations. In their heart of hearts even those in power now in Rangoon must know that their eventual fate will be that of all totalitarian regimes who seek to impose their authority through fear, repression and hatred. When the
700 present Burmese struggle for democracy erupted onto the streets in 1988, it was the first of what became an international tidal wave of such movements throughout Eastern Europe, Asia and Africa. Today, in 1991, Burma stands

conspicuous in its continued suffering at the hands of a repressive, intransigent junta, the State Law and Order Restoration Council. However, the example of
705 those nations which have successfully achieved democracy holds out an important message to the Burmese people; that, in the last resort, through the sheer economic unworkability of totalitarianism this present regime will be swept away. And today in the face of rising inflation, a mismanaged economy and near worthless Kyat, the Burmese government is undoubtedly reaping as it
710 has sown.

However, it is my deepest hope that it will not be in the face of complete economic collapse that the regime will fall, but that the ruling junta may yet heed such appeals to basic humanity as that which the Nobel Committee has expressed in its award of this year's prize. I know that within the military
715 government there are those to whom the present policies of fear and repression are abhorrent, violating as they do the most sacred principles of Burma's Buddhist heritage. This is no empty wishful thinking but a conviction my mother reached in the course of her dealings with those in positions of authority, illustrated by the election victories of her party in constituencies comprised
720 almost exclusively of military personnel and their families. It is my profoundest wish that these elements for moderation and reconciliation among those now in authority may make their sentiments felt in Burma's hour of deepest need.

I know that if she were free today my mother would, in thanking you, also ask you to pray that the oppressors and the oppressed should throw down their
725 weapons and join together to build a nation founded on humanity in the spirit of peace.

Although my mother is often described as a political dissident who strives by peaceful means for democratic change, we should remember that her quest is basically spiritual.

730 As she has said, "The quintessential revolution is that of the spirit", and she has written of the "essential spiritual aims" of the struggle. The realisation of this depends solely on human responsibility. At the root of that responsibility lies, and I quote, "the concept of perfection, the urge to achieve it, the intelligence to find a path towards it, and the will to follow that path if not to the end, at least
735 the distance needed to rise above individual limitation... ". "To live the full life," she says, "one must have the courage to bear the responsibility of the needs of others ... one must want to bear this responsibility."

And she links this firmly to her faith when she writes, "...Buddhism, the foundation of traditional Burmese culture, places the greatest value on man, who
740 alone of all beings can achieve the supreme state of Buddhahood. Each man has in him the potential to realize the truth through his own will and endeavour and to help others to realize it." Finally she says, "The quest for democracy in Burma is the struggle of a people to live whole, meaningful lives as free and equal members of the world community. It is part of the unceasing human endeavour
745 to prove that the spirit of man can transcend the flaws of his nature."²

This is the second time that my younger brother and I have accepted a great prize for my mother in Norway. Last year we travelled to Bergen to receive for her the Thorolf Rafto Prize for Human Rights, a wonderful prelude to this year's event.³ By now we have a very special feeling for the people of Norway. It is my
750 hope that soon my mother will be able to share this feeling and to speak directly for herself instead of through me. Meanwhile this tremendous support for her

and the people of Burma has served to bring together two peoples from opposite ends of the earth. I believe much will follow from the links now forged.

755 It only remains for me to thank you all from the bottom of my heart. Let us hope and pray that from today the wounds start to heal and that in the years to come the 1991 Nobel Prize for Peace will be seen as a historic step towards the achievement of true peace in Burma. The lessons of the past will not be forgotten, but it is our hope for the future that we celebrate today.

1. On December 10, 1948, the United Nations adopted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Burma was one of the states voting for its adoption.

2. These quotations are from *Freedom*, pp. 183, 185, 174.

3. Thorolf Rafto, Professor of Economic History at the Norwegian School of Economics and Business Administration, was widely known for his work for human rights, especially in Eastern Europe. After his death on 4 November 1986, his friends and admirers established in his name a Foundation for Human Rights, which every year on the anniversary of his death presents a prize to champions of human rights.

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¹ This study was initially prepared toward the Honours degree, under the guidance of Dist. Pro.f PJ Salazar. The authorship of this paper by Ms A Hunma is fully acknowledged.