THE DANGERS OF INTERNATIONAL AWARDS: A LESSON FROM AUNG SAN SUU KYI'S NOBEL PEACE PRIZE

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The Supervisory Committee certifies that this ***disquisition*** complies with North Dakota State University's regulations and meets the accepted standards for the degree of

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ABSTRACT

Having spent over 20 years under house arrest fighting for democracy in Myanmar, Aung San Suu Kyi has been a bastion for peace for decades. She has received many international awards, including the Nobel Peace Prize in 1991, which she accepted in person in 2012. The plight of the Rohingya, a Muslim minority in Myanmar, has marred Suu Kyi's reputation as a bastion of peace, leading to calls for her to lose her Peace Prize. Why is it that Suu Kyi's image as the future of peace so different from reality? That question is what this research attempts to answer. Through a rhetorical analysis of Suu Kyi's Nobel lecture and the media coverage that followed it, the impact of the use of tropes becomes evident. Metonymy, synecdoche, and narrative emerge in both the lecture and media coverage. Suu Kyi's use of tropes heavily influences public perception of her.

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CHAPTER 1. CRITICISMS OF AUNG SAN SUU KYI

Aung San Suu Kyi—the daughter of an assassinated revolutionary, a non-violent leader who follows the works of Martin Luther King Jr. and Gandhi, and a key figure in media coverage of Asia and of democratic change (Gorsevski, 2006)—she should have been the perfect icon for democracy in Myanmar, yet in recent years she has been the center of controversy and human rights concerns. So what went wrong? Suu Kyi is the State Counselor in Myanmar, a position akin to Prime Minister. She and her party share power in government with the military, who held her under house arrest for over a decade through the 1990's and 2000's. When Suu Kyi and her party finally gained official political power following the 2015 elections (taking office in 2016), many hoped that the 1991 Nobel Peace Prize recipient would be able to bring peace to the nation, yet violence continues.

The largest critiques of Suu Kyi and her policies revolve around the persecution of the Rohingya, a minority Muslim ethnic group from the Rakhine region (Brooten et al., 2015; Brooten, 2015; Lee, 2014). The Rohingya and other Muslims in Myanmar have been the focus of several outbreaks of violence in 1978, 1991, 1997, and 2001 (Brooten, 2015). There are approximately 1 million Rohingya living in Myanmar, a minority in comparison to the 90% of the population that is Buddhist (Brooten et al., 2015). Around 65% of the population are ethnic Burmans (Lee, 2014). The Rohingya are largely disliked by the Buddhist majority, who view them as outsiders (Lee, 2014). According to Brooten et al. (2015) "Myanmar's government refers to the Rohingya as 'Bengalis' or 'illegal Bengalis'" (p. 719). While the Rohingya received the full rights of citizenship in the period after the 1948 revolution, they have since been revoked (Lee, 2014). This has left the Rohingya essentially stateless, and even more at risk.

All of these factors, along with ethnic tensions that have existed in the country for decades, boiled over once again in June of 2012 (Brooten, 2015; Brooten et al., 2015; Lee, 2014). The Rohingya have faced violence from the military, the government, and regular citizens. The United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (n.d.) estimates that the violence in Myanmar has caused over 727,000 Rohingya to flee into Bangladesh alone. The United Nations (n.d.) further reports "Refugees arriving in Bangladesh—mostly women and children—are traumatized, and some have arrived with injuries caused by gunshots, shrapnel, fire and landmines. Entire villages were burned to the ground, families were separated and killed, and women and girls were gang raped." Reports surrounding the Rohingya crisis have been clear—there is severe violence happening in Myanmar.

Throughout the Rohingya crisis Suu Kyi has disappointed international audiences time and again. Suu Kyi has been "notably silent" on matters regarding the Rohingya (Lee, 2014). International news outlets have criticized Suu Kyi's refusal to speak on the matter, and her lack of transparency for said news outlets to cover the crisis, specifically in regard to Wa Lone and Kyaw Soe Oo, two Reuters journalists who have been imprisoned since 2017 (Reuters, 2018). Myanmar's government claims the two broke the Official Secrets Act and sentenced the journalists to 7 years in jail (BBC, 2019). The journalists claim evidence was planted on them by the government, who wanted to prevent them from investigating the Rohingya crisis (BBC, 2019). The international community has been critical of Suu Kyi's responses to both the crisis and the jailing of journalists, with former U.N. assistant secretary general Charles Petrie authoring an article for the Washington Post titled "The verdict is in: Aung San Suu Kyi is an authoritarian" (Washington Post, 2019). Petrie has been involved in the peace process in Myanmar since 2012, and he argues that Suu Kyi is not the bastion for democratic change as she

was once lauded, but instead is leading the nation towards an authoritarian future where the nationalist Buddhist elite rule (2019).

Lessons From Aung San Suu Kyi

How is it that Aung San Suu Kyi has gone from a democratic icon, the future of democracy in Asia, to just another flawed politician in the eyes of the global community, especially those in the West? Suu Kyi herself did not want to be an icon, reportedly telling Hillary Clinton in 2011 that she would prefer to be seen as a politician (Lee, 2014). This differentiation between being an icon and being a politician became a reality when Suu Kyi's party began truly gaining political power in 2015.

When analyzing Suu Kyi's silence on the Rohingya crisis Lee (2014) suggests that Buddhist-Muslim political relations are central to her decision making. Simply put, she needs to make decisions that make sense for her party's political goals (Coclanis, 2018). The Rohingya are a fraction of the population of Myanmar, and prejudice towards Muslims pervades the majority. Lee suggests that it is political pragmatism that leads the decisions of the current Suu Kyi, as the pressures of reality have hindered her idealist roots. She is leading a party with aging leadership that is struggling to stay united (Lee).

These pressures have led Suu Kyi to make political decisions surrounding the Rohingya crisis that resulted in losing a string of humanitarian awards, including one from Amnesty International (TIME, 2018). The Secretary General of Amnesty International wrote "As an Amnesty International Ambassador of Conscience, our expectation was that you would continue to use your moral authority to speak out against injustice wherever you saw it, not least within Myanmar itself. Today, we are profoundly dismayed that you no longer represent a symbol of

hope, courage, and the undying defense of human rights" (TIME). Many awards have been revoked, but the Nobel Peace Prize committee continues to refuse to rescind her award, with the committee arguing that it is not their responsibility to censor what laureates do after they have won. While she still has her Nobel Peace Prize, her decidedly political decisions continue to contradict her mission of peace.

Highlighting her political responsibilities is not meant to excuse Suu Kyi's silence—the plight of the Rohingya is a serious humanitarian concern. An understanding of how creating icons out of political figures and how relying on hope can become roadblocks to political stability and peace can be found through studying the political rise and fall of Suu Kyi, specifically through her Nobel Peace Prize. The purpose of this paper is not to criticize Suu Kyi, because, while important, this literature already exists. Instead this paper will focus on understanding how the language used by Suu Kyi and the Western community about Suu Kyi may have resulted in a political figure that is ultimately hard to topple or sway. Her image has become so synonymous with the state of Myanmar that it is difficult to imagine the politics of the country without her. The actions of the government of Myanmar and the actions and opinions of Suu Kyi become conflated. When Suu Kyi denies the existence of problems in Myanmar, it could impact global responses. By understanding how language created this icon that ultimately failed to provide the peace for all she promised, perhaps it will be possible to apply this type of understanding to other figures as well. Suu Kyi was placed on a pedestal of her own making, built on promises for peace and democracy for all of Myanmar. These promises were the core of her image, one that was repeated on a global stage. Yet this icon has seemingly forgotten her roots, ignoring the plight of the Rohingya. With concerns surrounding nationalism and cults of

personality a global concern, it is imperative that a deeper understanding of this aspect of political power is found.

Suu Kyi provides a unique lens for analysis as both her rise and fall in Western media have been heavily documented. Additionally she has served as a representative for democracy for decades in Western eyes, allowing her fall from grace to be all the more dramatic. While Suu Kyi's experience is unique in many ways, it also represents many themes and shifts that are global in nature. While Suu Kyi is a Burmese politician, she is also a Western figure for democracy. Educated in Britain, married to an Englishman, her views on democracy and human rights aligns well with predominant Western views. She has also been adopted by the West as hero for democracy and peace (Coclanis, 2018). She struggles to balance and navigate this role as a Western and global figure and uses tropes to attempt to control this image. Her actions to control her image and the narratives around her have political consequences both within Myanmar and outside of it. These consequences expand beyond Suu Kyi. These three moves, Suu Kyi as a Western figure, her attempts to control her image, and the consequences of those actions are all analyzed throughout this paper.

Suu Kyi is not the only political figure to have their Nobel Peace Prize criticized. In 2009 then President Barack Obama received the Nobel Peace Prize, which was a shock for many, including the president himself (Terrill, 2011). Nominations for the prize were due just 12 days after he took office, and his lack of accomplishments leading up to the prize was a cause of stress for the Obama administration (Terrill, 2011). The committee cited hope for the future as the reason for this arguably premature award, yet that hope just seemed to apply more pressure for results. In 1994 the committee gave the prize to Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat, Israel's Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin and Israel's Foreign Minister Shimon Peres because of the work they did

on the Oslo Peace Accords, which many consider a failure (Graham, 2016). Other controversial recipients include Henry Kissinger, the European Union, and Mother Teresa. The Nobel Peace Prize in these cases, and in the case of Aung San Suu Kyi, were given based on hope for change in the future. This type of humanitarian award and the assumptions that accompany it may be more problematic than helpful. Politicians and political systems are distinct from one another (one representing a part of the greater whole), but these types of awards can blur or even remove that distinction (so that the political part is seen as a functional equivalent of the political whole).

The Rohingya refugee crisis is a tragedy that has had an immeasurable impact on the lives of those in the Rakhine region. Examining this tragedy, along with Suu Kyi's image in tandem with the Nobel Peace Prize, provides an opportunity to examine the impact of such awards. While Suu Kyi is central in this paper, the knowledge gained through this examination can be applied elsewhere. The Nobel Peace Prize has faced controversy before Suu Kyi and after, and will likely continue to face criticism for its recipients. The language surrounding Suu Kyi's struggles and the struggles of Myanmar in the Nobel acceptance speeches she and her son made may help provide insight into how to avoid the pitfalls of iconic political figures. When tragedies such as the Rohingya refugee crisis occur, we cannot rely on images of individuals that were entrenched by awards received almost 25 years prior.

To better understand how the Nobel Peace prize, and the conversations around it, can ultimately create roadblocks to humanitarian work, rather than just celebrate humanitarian successes, it is necessary to delve into the realm of theory. How do people talk about political figures, why, and what impact do those words have? These types of questions are suited for rhetorical analysis, particular an attention to narrative structures and tropes. As Lakoff and

Johnson (1980) argue, what we talk about and how we talk about it is important. When political leaders are discussed, or when they speak publicly, the words that they choose and use matter.

Theories/Concepts

Walter Fisher crafted the narrative paradigm as a way to explain how human beings are influenced by narrative, not necessarily rationality, in persuasive messages (1984). Narrative paradigm posits that human beings are storytellers and are better at convincing others through stories rather than arguments (Fisher, 1984). Humans accept those stories that match the values of their culture. Fisher argues that all meaningful communication is through storytelling (1984). In order for a narrative to be effective it must contain both narrative fidelity and narrative coherence. Narrative coherence (also referred to as narrative probability) is the internal consistency of the story. Stories must make sense—the actions of actors must match that of their character. Even if a story is coherent, it must also be credible—this is where narrative fidelity comes into play. Narrative fidelity is when a story matches with the values or life experiences of the listeners (Fisher, 1984). Even if a story has an internally consistent storyline (narrative coherence) it also must align with the audience's experiences and culture in order to be persuasive. The combination of narrative fidelity and narrative coherence are what create effective and persuasive stories.

The narrative paradigm can find use in the political sphere. Both individuals and organizations use narrative to unify their base, influence constituents, and persuade voters. Hinck, et al. (2018) posit "political actors—both state and non-state agents—propagate strategic narratives formed through communication media to structure expectations and behavior in international systems" (p. 99). The narrative paradigm has long been used in understanding

persuasive messages in the political realm (Smith, 1989). Smith (1989) examined party platforms through the narrative paradigm, and found that while messages may differ, the appeal to party values through narrative fidelity, along with narrative coherence, created a sense of unity. Coker (2017) furthers, “The presence of an overarching narrative in a campaign or debate can color the audience’s interpretation of events and facts, and even compel individuals to act” (p. 328). Stories that contain both narrative fidelity and coherence can spur political action through their persuasive messaging and can also create a sense of unity around shared values. The rhetorical value of narrative should not be underestimated, nor should the power of words.

When analyzing a given narrative, it is useful to offer an account of the figurative language utilized as different tropes carries with them different political consequences (White, 1973). Figurative language in narrative can be analyzed through what Burke (1945) argues are the four master tropes: metaphor, metonymy, synecdoche, and irony (see also White, 1973). Metonymy is based in the power of words to characterize the part as the whole. Holmgren Caicedo (2014) explains that metonymy is when one word takes the place of another. In the example, “the kettle is boiling”, the listener knows that it is the water in the kettle that is boiling, yet the words are used as interchangeable (Holmgren Caicedo, 2014). Additional definitions of metonymy include “using one entity to refer to another that is related to it” (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980 pg. 35). Burke (1945) furthers "The basic ‘strategy’ in metonymy is this: to convey some incorporeal or intangible state in terms of the corporeal or tangible" (p. 506). The consequence of this strategy according to Burke (1945), however, is that the complexity of the incorporeal or intangible state is reduced to the simplified properties of the thing used to represent it. As such metonymy can be both helpful and harmful. It can make difficult concepts easier to understand, but it can also oversimplify complex concepts.

Metonymy is broken into several subtypes by Lakoff and Johnson (1980), two of which warrant attention here: the part for the whole and the controller for the controlled. The first subgroup, the part for the whole, has been called synecdoche by rhetoricians in the past (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980). With this trope one thing stands in for another, and what part is picked to represent the whole matters. Burke furthers the explanations of synecdoche in relation to metonymy (1945). To Burke metonymy can be understood as reduction and synecdoche as representation. When using metonymy and synecdoche individuals simplify what they are referencing, and allow that simplification to become a representation of the whole (Burke, 1945). With synecdoche, while one thing stands in for the other, they are still distinct. This means that synecdochal relationships still recognize their representational status—they are primarily used as matters of communicative efficiency. Metonymy, on the other hand, allows the representation to fully stand in for the subject, blurring the line between the original and the stand in. Furthering the discussion on synecdoche in relation to political systems Burke (1945) states:

> A similar synecdochic form is present in all theories of political representation, where some part of the social body (either traditionally established, or elected, or coming into authority by revolution) is held to be "representative" of the society as a whole. ... And though there are many disagreements within a society as to what part should represent the whole and how this representation should be accomplished, in a complex civilization any act of representation automatically implies a synecdochic relationship (insofar as the act is, or is held to be, "truly representative"). (p. 508)

What Burke is saying here is that any individual who acts as a representative in politics is existing in a synecdochic relationship with the government itself. Representative government systems lend themselves to this trope.

In another subgroup of metonymy, the controller for the controlled, responsibility becomes the main focus. Lakoff and Johnson use the example “Nixon bombed Hanoi”, (pg. 39). Here Nixon is the individual that represents the government that ordered its military to bomb Hanoi. This major conflation is a form of replacement rather than representation. It places all responsibility on the individual. This oversimplification allows for responsibility to be placed on individuals in complex situations.

Overall the symbolism in metonymy matters. The words that people choose to use have meaning. Lakoff and Johnson explain, “Symbolic metonymies are critical links between everyday experience and the coherent metaphorical systems that characterize religions and cultures. Symbolic metonymies that are grounded in our physical experience may provide an essential means of comprehending religious and cultural concepts” (pg. 40). What this means is that the parts that cultures choose to replace the whole reflect what that culture thinks about the whole. For instance, if a cross represents Christianity, then the cross reflects something about how Christians view Christianity as a whole. By analyzing how tropes are used it is possible to gain a deeper understanding of how groups view the larger concept.

When exploring metonymy it has been shown that figurative language impacts how people think about the world (Martin & Papadelos, 2017). The use of metaphors, metonymy, irony, and synecdoche, otherwise known as tropes, reflects something about how people view the larger picture through their figurative language. As White (1973) argues, the four tropes connect with different narrative structures and ideologies: metaphor links to romantic, anarchist figures; metonymy connects with tragic, radical figures; synecdoche aligns with comedic, conservative ideologies; and irony is paired with satire and a liberal ideology. Tropes, however, can apply to multiple ideologies. For example, White (1973) states, “Irony would appear to be transideological.

Irony can be used *tactically* for defense of either Liberal or Conservative ideological positions, depending on whether the Ironist is speaking against established social forms or against 'utopian' reformers seeking to change the status quo" (p. 38). Conservative and liberal ideologies see political structures as fundamentally sound, with the latter interested in fine tuning the system. White furthers that this radically self-critical trope can be used by anarchists and radicals as well. Anarchists and radicals are more critical of the system itself, with radicals looking to implement alternative systems and anarchists looking to abandon systems altogether. Nonetheless, though tropes can be deployed to promote the interests of various ideologies, the unique rhetorical structures of each trope lends themselves more readily to the interests of specific ideologies over others.

Hence, this analysis combines the four master tropes with the narrative paradigm to analyze the speeches surrounding Aung San Suu Kyi's Nobel Peace Prize. When speaking about Aung San Suu Kyi interchangeably with Myanmar's government, a singular person has been conflated with an entire nation and as a symbol for democratic ideals themselves (Gorevski, 2013). The narrative surrounding Suu Kyi and her experiences in Myanmar and abroad through the story of her family and her life are conflated with that of the nation and those persecuted under the Tatmadaw, Myanmar's military.

To analyze the use of these tropes and understand the narratives provided, two types of analysis will be done. First will be an analysis of Suu Kyi's 2012 Nobel lecture. While Suu Kyi was officially awarded the Peace Prize in 1991, she was still under house arrest in Myanmar. As such her sons accepted the award for her. Since the focus here is to understand the impact of Suu Kyi's words themselves, it made more sense to analyze the 2012 lecture. Next the analysis will shift to media coverage of Suu Kyi's lecture. Five different sources, all in English, will be

analyzed. They come from a variety of sources, both European and American. Additionally they vary in levels of editorialization. For both Suu Kyi's lecture and the media coverage of it the analysis will focus on identifying narratives and trope use. To do so narratives will be defined as all of each individual story Suu Kyi or media articles include. Since Suu Kyi's lecture was meant to be heard, and not read, breaking up the narrative by line or paragraph is not ideal. As such each narrative will be addressed separately. These will then be broken down into categories. In regards to the tropes, particularly synecdoche and metonymy, these are defined by the use of representative or reductionary language. This can be as simple as the use of single words, such as my/our/us, or more complex through the use of several sentences. For instance, in her lecture Suu Kyi states:

> And what was more important, the Nobel Prize had drawn the attention of the world to the struggle for democracy and human rights in Burma. We were not going to be forgotten.
>
> When the Nobel Committee awarded the Peace Prize to me they were recognizing that the oppressed and the isolated in Burma were also a part of the world, they were recognizing the oneness of humanity.

While she does use representative language through the use of 'we', the additional context provided in the second paragraph illustrates the beginning of a metonymic shift from "we" to "me." As such, the analysis of tropes will take context into consideration so as to better document and understand the political implications of the tension between representational and reductionary language.

In order to better understand how metonymy and narrative intertwine and complicate the situation around Aung San Suu Kyi it is necessary to learn more about Myanmar itself, and how

its history influences its values. As such in Chapter 2 we will review a brief history of Myanmar, focusing on colonial times to the present. This approach will lay out several key moves and actors throughout the history of Myanmar, largely limiting the conversation to developments since colonial times. Through a discussion of the military, Aung San, post-colonial shifts, and more, Suu Kyi's position and the complexity of Myanmar are laid out.

In Chapter 3 we will move on to an analysis of Suu Kyi's Nobel lecture given in 2012. While Suu Kyi was originally awarded the Nobel Peace prize in 1991 it was her sons who spoke on her behalf. To best understand how Suu Kyi wishes to characterize herself, Chapter 3 will look at her own words. This analysis examines three key areas that Suu Kyi's lecture covered. Suu Kyi's narratives of peace and genealogy are explained, while also showing how they play into her use of synecdoche and metonymy. This rhetorical move results in an interesting discussion of both metonymy and synecdoche, as well as touching on the other tropes of irony and metaphor. This is the building of Suu Kyi's image by Suu Kyi herself.

Chapter 4 will shift to media coverage of said lecture. Much like Chapter 3, the themes of peace, genealogy, and use of synecdochal and metonymic language arise. The main differences arise through the contextual information these sources provide. By analyzing how the media reports on Suu Kyi's lecture, the intermediary effects of these news sources can be examined. The media that will be analyzed will be from English speaking, Western sources with a variety of political viewpoints and editorialization. The sources will be in English in part due to the limitations of the author, and in part because the speech was given in English. The span in coverage between these American and European sources should allow for a glimpse into how the West characterized Suu Kyi in this moment on the international stage.

Finally, Chapter 5 will conclude this research on Suu Kyi, the Nobel Peace Prize, and propose possibilities for the future. Suu Kyi's Nobel lecture and the news coverage that followed it provided interesting areas for analysis. The rhetorical themes that emerged from the analysis in Chapters 3 and 4 will be synthesized, and its global impacts and applications discussed. The narrative and metonymy that surround Suu Kyi's Nobel lecture, both by her and by the media, impact her political image and could further the understanding of how international awards influence the position of other political figures.

CHAPTER 2. CONTEXTUALIZING MYANMAR: A BRIEF POLITICAL AND GEOGRAPHIC HISTORY

When attempting to understand Suu Kyi's position in Myanmar, the history of the nation, especially its post-colonial history, must be understood. The complex situations surrounding the Rohingya, the military, and Suu Kyi contribute to the reaction surrounding her lack of action. Simply discussing Suu Kyi's Nobel Peace Prize does little without knowing what led up to and followed her receiving it. Essentially, a historical contextualization must precede a discussion of Suu Kyi's rhetorical choices to tease out the themes that impact her image. The role of major figures also aids in comprehending the current situation of the Rohingya.

The country of Myanmar is on the Bay of Bengal in Southeast Asia, sharing borders with China, India, and Thailand, among others. This tropical country can largely be divided into three regions: the coastal and river delta region, the central Irrawaddy valley (Lower Burma), and the hill and mountain regions (FAS, 1983). These regions each played a different role in the development of Myanmar – the coastal regions provide trade access, the river deltas served as a seat of power, and the mountainous regions allowed for the states various ethnic groups to maintain independence (FAS, 1983). Currently Myanmar is divided into seven states and seven regions, fourteen total administrative groupings. The states are largely home to ethnic groups, such as the Rakhine state, and the regions are largely home to the Burmese majority.

The earliest history of Myanmar is unclear, but from 1044 to 1828 the country was largely ruled by dynasties. Myanmar fell under British rule in 1824, and would not gain independence until 1948 (Brooten, 2013; Gorsevski, 2013). The independence movement was spearheaded by Suu Kyi's father, Aung San, also known as Bogyoke Aung San or the Fourth Great Warrior King. Aung San, is known as the father of Myanmar, and his image remains

powerful in Myanmar today (Davis & Selvidge, 2006; Gorevski, 2013; Lee, 2014; Palmer-Mehta, 2009 & 2012).

While Myanmar gained independence in 1948, its experiment with democracy would not last two decades. In 1962 there was a coup, where General Ne Win and the military seized control of the government and closed Myanmar off from the rest of the world (Silverstein, 1998). Over the next five decades Myanmar would be ruled under the tight control of the military junta (Brooten et al., 2015; Brooten, 2015; Davis & Selvidge, 2006; Gorsevski, 2013; Lee, 2014). In the late 1980's the government would create the State Law and Order Restoration Council, or SLORC, which would remain an influential organization for years to come.

While they were contentious, Myanmar held elections in 2010 (Brooten, 2015; Brooten, 2013; Lee, 2014). In 2012 the opposition party was able to win nearly all of the parliamentary seats that were up during the by-elections (Brooten, 2013). Since the "8888 Uprising" in 1988 the National League for Democracy, the party that has largely opposed the military, has been influenced by Aung San Suu Kyi.

Suu Kyi became involved in politics after returning to Myanmar to care for her mother shortly before the 1988 protests (Davis & Selvidge, 2006; Gorsevski, 2013; Palmer-Mehta, 2009). As the daughter of the revolutionary Aung San, Suu Kyi proved a serious opponent for the military, who placed her under house arrest on and off over the next two decades (Davis & Selvidge, 2006; Gorsevski, 2013; Palmer-Mehta, 2009; Rotberg, 1998). Currently Suu Kyi is the State Chancellor of Myanmar, a role akin to Prime Minister which she assumed in 2015 (BBC, 2015).

Suu Kyi, the legacy of her father Aung San, the military, and the many ethnic groups in Myanmar are all major actors who play a role in the development of Myanmar as it exists today.

The system that has developed is unique, complex, and must be understood through the varying lenses of different actors. To better understand each of their roles these major shifts and actors will be broken down into several sections: the Rohingya, post-colonial history, the military, the contemporary government, and Aung San Suu Kyi. These will aid in providing a setting to the current situation in Myanmar, and will provide the cultural context necessary to at least begin to understand the complexities that exist in Myanmar.

The Rohingya

The Rakhine State, formerly known as Arakan, is home to a Muslim minority ethnic group in Myanmar. This group, known in modern times as the Rohingya, became part of a larger global discussion on refugees after they began facing renewed violence in 2012. While 2012 reports of the violence that the Rohingya faced were shocking, this is unfortunately not the first time the group has faced ethnic persecution in Myanmar (Al-Mahmood, 2016; FAS, 1983; Leider, 2018). The history of the group is difficult to follow, in large part because of a lack of records (Leider, 2018). That being said, a general history of the Rohingya, with a focus on their persecution, will be laid out here.

The date at which the first Rohingya began living in the Rakhine region is unsure, but it is believed to be sometime around the 8th century (Al-Mahmood, 2016). In 1784 the Rakhine State/Arakan, when some say many of the Muslims in the region fled to what was then known as Bengal (Al-Mahmood). While many returned shortly after, this may have begun some of the regional fears about ‘illegal Bengalis’ entering the region. Additionally, the Buddhists in the Rakhine region saw themselves as under threat from the Burman conquerors, increasing tensions further.

As the British fled Myanmar in 1942 there was anarchy throughout the country, and Buddhist nationalists killed Muslims that were fleeing from the North (Al-Mahmood, 2016; Leider, 2018). However, Leider argues that the story is not that simple – and that Muslims also killed Buddhists fleeing from the South. He explains that both of these groups have very strong memories surrounding these events, with claims of genocide from both. This once again highlights the complexity of histories.

When the British and Aung San were retaking Myanmar in 1945, Rohingya fighters provided help and joined the battle (Al-Mahmood, 2016). After freedom was gained the Rohingya were upset that the British did not provide the independence for Arakan that they were promised (Al-Mahmood, 2016). This began a Rohingya push to have the Rakhine region join the Muslim majority Eastern Pakistan (Al-Mahmood, 2016). As a result the government of Myanmar ostracized the Rohingya even more, increasing tensions further. In 1950 there was a Rohingya insurgency, complicating the situation even more.

By the 1970's victimhood had become a key part of the rhetoric of militant Rohingya organizations (Leider, 2018). Rohingya leaders acknowledged that illegal immigration existed in the 1970's, however when the junta began Operation Nagamin to screen for foreigners, claims of violence from the military caused even legal citizens to flee (Al-Mahmood, 2016; Leider, 2018). Over the next year many returned to their homes. This wasn't the end to citizenship woes for the Rohingya, in many ways it was only the beginning. In 1982 a new citizenship law went into effect, which seriously limited access to citizenship for Rohingyas (FAS, 1983; Leider, 2018). This law was meant to deal with the issue of who was or was not a legal citizen of Myanmar, leaving many Rohingya essentially stateless. While they have been allowed to reside in Myanmar, they are treated as foreign residents.

In 1991 250,000 Rohingya fled persecution again. The army claimed to be bringing order to the region, but Rohingya in Rakhine faced forced labor, rape, and religious persecution. Once again the Rohingya returned over the next several years. In 2012 riots resulted in more than 100 killed, and over 150,000 in camps in Rakhine (Al-Mahmood, 2016). Another wave of violence followed in 2016 and 2017. Human Rights Watch estimates that since 2017 more than 617,000 Rohingya have fled Myanmar to escape ethnic cleansing (2019). The Rohingya have faced violence and persecution increasingly in recent history.

Throughout the history of Myanmar leadership has attempted to approach ethnic conflicts in different ways. Prime Minister U Nu, who was in power for most of Myanmar's democratic period post colonialism, attempted to unite the nation through Buddhist teachings, liberalism, and socialist values, while acknowledging the diversity and religious pluralism of Myanmar (Silverstein, 1998). Throughout the 1990's the SLORC worked to unify Myanmar through offering cease-fires to ethnic groups who were still in revolt (Silverstein, 1998). While the group allowed ethnic groups to have more autonomy, including more "freedom to live according to their own traditions and cultures" (Silverstein, p. 26), the military still struggled to find support amongst the people. Additionally, the military continued to abuse minorities, demand free labor, and refuse to settle any political disputes – only providing temporary solutions (Silverstein, 1998). Even in modern times ethnic conflict is a central issue in Myanmar, with the plight of one ethnic group, the Rohingya, recently garnering international attention.

Post-Colonial Myanmar

While one would be remiss to claim that colonization did not impact Myanmar, it is the revolution and post-colonial era that warrants our immediate attention for its impact on Myanmar

in modern times. Two key foci can be drawn from this era – Aung San and the debate around capitalism. These two are heavily linked, as the debate surrounding capitalism vs. socialism saw both sides calling back to the ideals of Aung San. First Aung San's role in Myanmar's development will be examined, then the debate around capitalism can be more clearly explained.

Aung San, sometimes known as Bogyoke Aung San or The Fourth Great Warrior King was a key figure in Burman Independence. The independence movement was led by Aung San, a national hero who had engaged in student uprisings throughout the 1930's and 40's. He brokered a deal to train with the Japanese and with their help forced out the British in 1942 (Al-Mahmood, 2016). When it became clear the Japanese would be yet another colonizer, he rejoined with the British to oust the Japanese in 1945 (Al-Mahmood, 2016). On July 19th, 1947 members of the Anti-Fascist People's Freedom League (AFPFL), including General Aung San, met as part of their efforts to craft the future government of Myanmar, and were gunned down by paramilitaries following General Ne Win, with most members including Aung San killed (Davis & Selvidge, 2006; Palmer-Mehta, 2009 & 2012). While official freedom was gained just months later on January 4th, 1948, a vacuum in leadership remained.

The capitalism debate

The government of Myanmar survived the tumultuous years following independence and saw three national elections from 1950 to 1960 (Silverstein, 1998). The economy grew, even with the existence of rebel forces, due to the protections provided by the military (Silverstein, 1998). From 1948 to 1962 Myanmar experimented with democracy and participatory government. Formed on the 1947 constitution Myanmar was controlled by a bicameral legislature with guaranteed representation for ethnic minorities (Callahan, 1998). This is not to

say that there was political agreement within Myanmar on what the government system should look like – on the contrary there was disagreement from before the start (Silverstein, 1998). While popular rule was generally agreed upon, there were different factions pushing for different ideals. Some wanted a religiously plural nation, others wanted a Buddhist state. Some looked towards China and Eastern European states for socialist and communist forms of government systems instead of the more liberal democratic system that was put in place (Silverstein, 1998). Dissatisfaction with the 1947 constitution led to uprisings from Communists and several minority groups. These groups formed political parties, such as the National United Front, also known as the Red Socialists (Callahan, 1998). To some the growth of this and other parties indicated that Myanmar was on the path towards a successful parliamentary system.

General Ne Win disagreed with the direction Prime Minister U Nu was taking Myanmar (Silverstein, 1998). Aung San himself was a socialist, and Gen. Ne Win believed that Myanmar was straying from the ideals of those had won independence (Callahan, 1998; Silverstein, 1998). Aung San and other revolutionaries saw democracy as the government of their colonizers, they did not want to emulate their systems (Callahan, 1998). Hence, evoking the spirit of these revolutionaries, in 1962 the military took power in a coup in order to replace democracy with what came to be known as "the Burmese Way to Socialism."

Myanmar's Military

From 1962 to 2011 Myanmar was controlled by the Tatmadaw, the military, who led the country into poverty (Rotberg, 1998). The military rule has changed throughout the years, and

can be best understood by looking at the formation of the military, before moving through the shifts caused by the State Law and Order Restoration Council, also known as the SLORC.

Formation

The vacuum in leadership caused by Aung San's assassination played a role in the eventual military coup 'd'état that occurred on March 2, 1962 (Davis & Selvidge, 2006). General Ne Win and the military seized control of the government and closed Myanmar off from the rest of the world (Silverstein, 1998). According to Rotberg (1998), "Army Gen. Ne Win took power in a coup in 1962, ruled despotically, and plunged Burma into isolation from the world until 1986" (p. 3). Thus began a regime of tight military control that would last for five decades (Brooten et al., 2015; Brooten, 2015; Davis & Selvidge, 2006; Gorsevski, 2013; Lee, 2014).

Military leaders instituted a system called "The Burmese Way to Socialism" that resulted in economic and political turmoil for Myanmar, leading some to say it had become a "beggar nation" (Brooten, 2004; Palmer-Mehta, 2012). The country "languished in isolation for decades" (Brooten, 2013 pp. 687). Much of the justification for the rapid centralization of power and shift to authoritarianism relied on two sources: pre-colonial Myanmar and the pre-WWII AFPFL, which was the party started by Aung San (Silverstein, 1998). Before colonization Myanmar was ruled by kings who held centralized power, and Aung San and his colleagues preferred socialism. While both of these systems also relied on centralization of certain powers, the system Ne Win put in place was more similar to Eastern European governments at the time than pre-colonial Myanmar (Silverstein, 1998). The 1974 constitution legalized the authoritarian government through a one-party system. Silverstein (1998) furthers, "Socialism, not Buddhism, was the basis of the military's ideology of the state. The rulers thought of themselves as modern men in tune with the ideology embraced by Europeans, Asians, Africans and Latin Americans who were in

the process of throwing off the intellectual and neocolonial shackles of Western capitalism and building new states on the basis of socialist ideas and values" (p. 24).

8888 uprising

While there had been protests and demands for governmental change at various points throughout the junta's military rule, international focus began in 1988. Worsening economic conditions throughout the 1970's and 80's boiled over after the death of a university student (Brooten et al., 2015; Brooten, 2015; Davis & Selvidge, 2006; Gorsevski, 2013; Lee, 2014; Palmer-Mehta, 2012). The 8888 Uprising, as it came to be known, established the plight of Myanmar in the international media. Silverstein (1998) explains:

> On Sept. 18, 1988 when the military violently suppressed the peaceful revolution and displaced the 1974 constitution and the party leaders to whom it had transferred power, it restored outright despotism. The military justified its actions by declaring that the nation was faced with political disunity, threats to national sovereignty, and the dismemberment of the state. It ruled by decree and martial law, enacting new rules and laws as well as restoring old ones from the colonial and constitutional periods. (p. 25)

For decades after the uprising Myanmar was ruled by the military.

In 1989 the nation's name changed, and the next year democratic elections were held. Military rulers decided to hold national elections due to internal and external pressures. Internally it was still dealing with an angry population in the wake of the 1988 revolution, externally it was facing global criticism (Silverstein, 1998). While the junta allowed for elections in 1990 in which the opposing party, the National League for Democracy (NLD) saw large victories, the State Law and Restoration Council (SLORC) refused to accept defeat (Davis and

Selvidge, 2006). The wins the NLD saw were huge in comparison to the military's National Unity Party (NUP), with the NLD winning 392 seats in parliament, and the NUP winning only 10. The National League for Democracy (NLD) received 82 percent of the vote in the 1990 elections (Rotberg, 1998).

The State Law and Order Restoration Council - SLORC

It was the protests in 1988 that led to the formation of the body that would rule Myanmar until the democratic elections in 2010. During the 8888 uprising the military reclaimed control of the government through the State Law and Order Restoration Council (SLORC). This was a step backwards from the 1974 constitution that had placed power in the hands of one party. While the people had little power before the SLORC, they had lost what little they had back to the military again. The military crushed the uprising and killed thousands of protesters.

While the junta allowed for elections in 1990 in which the opposing party, the National League for Democracy (NLD) saw large victories, the State Law and Restoration Council (SLORC) refused to accept defeat (Davis and Selvidge, 2006). Writing in 1998, Rotberg stated, "Since being defeated overwhelmingly in the 1990 elections, the State Law and Order Restoration Council (SLORC), a steely military junta, has repressed dissent detained Nobel laureate Aung San Suu Kyi and violated the human rights and civil liberties of countless Burmese" (p.1). To justify the actions of the SLORC military leaders announced that the group was not bound by the constitution, and would act as it saw fit (Silverstein, 1998).

The State Law and Order Restoration Council (SLORC) was made up of twenty individuals, with key members of the army leading the group. The SLORC was run on consensus, which Rotberg suggests may have resulted in some of the inconsistencies in the

group's actions over the years (1998). While the SLORC attempted to unify Myanmar through offering cease-fires to ethnic groups the military still struggled to find support amongst the people (Silverstein, 1998). The military only gave temporary solutions as they continued the forced labor of ethnic minorities (Silverstein, 1998).

In 1997 then President Bill Clinton declared Myanmar a pariah state, calling the SLORC 'drug trafficking thugs' (Rotberg, 1998). This was due to the growth of the drug trade in Myanmar after 1989 (Gelbard, 1998). In is no surprise that the United States was willing to crack down on Myanmar, as it was the main source of heroin imported into the U.S. (Gelbard, 1989). In the year after the SLORC took power, following the 8888 Uprising, opium production in Myanmar doubled (Gelbard, 1989). At the time the SLORC was willing to sacrifice restrictions on the drug trade in order to appease drug trafficking groups.

Contemporary Myanmar

Colonization, revolution, military rule, protests, ethnic groups, and key leaders have all played a role in the formation of Myanmar as it is today. Contemporary Myanmar still sees military influence and ethnic conflict but has also experienced large changes. The interactions of the previous actors will be examined before delving into Myanmar's current political system.

It is only within the last decade that Myanmar has finally escaped military rule, hosting elections in 2010 (Brooten, 2015; Lee, 2014). The elections in 2010 were highly criticized, and in 2012 the NLD was able to win nearly all of the parliamentary seats that were up during the by-elections (Brooten, 2013). In 2011 the junta dissolved. The NLD was able to see success because it was no longer barred from elections in 2011 after refusing to register for 2010, increasing their involvement and influence in politics in Myanmar.

In 2015 Myanmar's landmark elections were watched and praised by the international community (BBC, 2015). While not all seats in the Hluttaw (parliament) were available – the Tatmadaw reserves 25% of the seats – the NLD did win 80% of available seats (BBC). Under Myanmar's constitution this large victory meant that the NLD would be able to choose two of the three candidates for president and would be able to ensure that their top choice gained that position (BBC).

Aung San Suu Kyi

Aung San Suu Kyi was born into politics. Her father and namesake, Aung San, is known as the father of Myanmar, and helped lead the country to independence (Davis & Selvidge, 2006; Gorevski, 2013; Lee, 2014; Palmer-Mehta, 2009 & 2012). When she was two years old her father was assassinated, and in 1960 at the age of 15 she went with her mother to India (Davis and Selvidge). Her mother served as the ambassador to India. Two years after leaving Myanmar the government her father helped create was overthrown.

Suu studied the works of Ghandi while in India and studied at universities there. She eventually began studying Philosophy, Economics, and Politics at Oxford University in England, where she would meet her husband. Suu continued to care for her home nation, even while living abroad (Davis & Selvidge, 2006). In 1988 she would return to care for her ailing mother and would get involved with the burgeoning student protests (Davis & Selvidge, 2006; Gorsevski, 2013; Palmer-Mehta, 2009). Suu Kyi began giving public speeches, relying on her father's legacy combined with her own charisma, drive, and education (Davis & Selvidge, 2006; Gorsevski, 2013; Lee, 2014; Palmer-Mehta, 2009 & 2012). The junta cracked down on the

protesters, in often violent ways, which led Suu Kyi to "devote her life to the cause of human rights and democracy" (Gorsevski, 2013 pp. 173).

Suu Kyi was placed under house arrest in 1989, and would remain so until 1995. She would continue to be in and out of house arrest for almost 25 years. When not under house arrest the SLORC would limit her freedom in other ways (Rotberg, 1998). Suu Kyi was prevented from meeting with NLD party leadership or her followers, had her phone line cut, and was harassed by mobs and government officials (Rotberg, 1998).

While Suu Kyi's party saw electoral success in 1990, they would not be granted any actual political power for decades, and she would spend the majority of the next 25 years under house arrest (Gorsevski, 2013). Even when not under house arrest Suu Kyi stayed within the country out of the fear that she would not be able to return.

In 1991 Aung San Suu Kyi was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize while under house arrest—she heard the news over the radio she kept in her home. When Suu Kyi was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1991, she was unable to be in attendance in Oslo to receive the award (Davis & Selvidge, 2006). The Tatmadaw continued to place pressure on her, canceling her sons' (Alexander and Kim) visas, and restricting her access to outside information and her people. When her husband Michael died of prostate cancer in 1995 Suu Kyi remained in Myanmar—much like her mother she and her husband never had their final goodbyes, a key part of Suu Kyi's narrative (Davis & Selvidge, 2006).

Suu Kyi's current role

In 2012 Aung San Suu Kyi delivered her Nobel Peace prize speech, 21 years after being awarded the prize. This was also the year her party finally became involved in Myanmar's

political system. The 2015 elections saw a large victory for the NLD, which meant that they had the guaranteed power to choose the president and one of the vice presidents (BBC, 2015). Suu Kyi did not take on this role. Unfortunately for the NLD their party leader, Aung San Suu Kyi, has been blocked from the presidency by the Tatmadaw, as her children were born abroad to a British father (Lee, 2014). When creating the constitution, the Tatmadaw made it illegal for any individual who has children born outside of the country to be president. Suu Kyi's sons hold British passports. This was considered a targeted action towards Suu Kyi. Suu Kyi has continued to exert political power from the position of State Counselor, which is similar to the role of Prime Minister.

Suu Kyi continued her fight for democracy even through decades of pressure and threats from the junta and has finally won a formal role in her nation's government. Yet, recently the international community has become critical of Suu Kyi's actions within Myanmar. It has been clear that the Rohingya are being persecuted, yet she still refuses to acknowledge the crisis as it is (Deutsche Welle, 2018). Beyond that she claims that the Rohingya are spreading misinformation about the crisis, and has expressed concerns about Muslim extremists in the nation (Deutsche Welle, 2018). She has gone from a democratic darling, The Lady, to a politician critiqued worldwide.

Conclusion

Myanmar's history is vast, with many actors whose paths intermingle and clash. The shifts from precolonial to colonial, to postcolonial Myanmar have had long lasting impacts. A historical precedence for centralization of power and a legacy of tension between minority ethnic

groups and the majority Buddhist Burmans show how the Rohingya crisis may not have been much of a surprise to those familiar with the region.

Aung San's actions and death heavily shaped the history of Myanmar. His death left a vacuum in a fledgling government that still has not recovered. He has become an iconic figure, almost mythical in nature. Suu Kyi has tapped into that image to fuel her own political career. Her presence in Myanmar during key moments of change, including the 8888 Uprising, helped to place her in a position of power at a time where the citizens of Myanmar were demanding change. Her education, pedigree, and timing helped her to become a political figure with name recognition across the globe.

CHAPTER 3. AUNG SAN SUU KYI'S NOBEL LECTURE

The connection between Suu Kyi and Myanmar has been decades in the making. Since 1988 Suu Kyi has been a character in international coverage of Myanmar's politics. Media coverage focused on Suu Kyi as an individual even further in 1991 when she was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize (Brooten, 2004). As previously mentioned Brooten argues:

> Media around the world, but especially Western media, have played heavily on Burma's storybook tale of good versus evil […] The consistent framing of Burma's story in individualistic terms, focusing on Aung San Suu Kyi and emphasizing civil and political rights, reinforces the flattering notion that the Burmese are struggling to emulate Western forms of democracy and our own notions of human rights. (p. 183)

In Western eyes Suu Kyi is a democratic hero who espouses the values of the West. Suu Kyi has been treated as a heroine who stands for the democratic ideals her country hungers for—but what happens when her actions do not reflect those ideals?

Narrative plays an important role in image building and Aung San Suu Kyi herself has blended the line between her image, that of her father, and that of the nation through narrative (Palmer-Mehta, 2009, 2012). In order to win elections parties need voters, and the first step to gaining voters is to get their attention (Vasquez Sande, 2017). Vasquez Sande explains that the personalization of politics through storytelling is effective at gaining the attention of voters. They further that individualization shifts voter focus from the party to the candidate, and that the representatives become "cognitive shortcuts" (p. 276). Personal stories make a leader more accessible, believable, and trustworthy through their humanization (Vazquez Sande).

Aung San Suu Kyi's life story has been a large part of her political rise. She recognized the power of her father's name and story early on and relied on his story to secure a place in the

political realm (Palmer-Mehta, 2009 & 2012). She quoted her father during her first political speech and referenced her father's accomplishments and wishes (Davis & Selvidge, 2006). During the 8888 Uprising she wore customary clothing, including the *kamauk,* a traditional hat that was the symbol of her party. Through her story, the story of her father, and the stories of the people of Myanmar, Aung San Suu Kyi blurred the lines between herself and the country of Myanmar.

While Suu Kyi relied on the past for building her political image, as time moved forward Myanmar continued to develop. Indeed, 2012 was a particularly eventful year of change in Myanmar. The junta had dissolved, the National League for Democracy was taking part in elections, and Suu Kyi had finally accepted her Nobel Peace Prize in person. Each of these events had been desired for decades, with actual democratic change finally being institutionalized within the country. Suu Kyi's trip abroad signaled not only that she was no longer under house arrest, but that her movement had become much freer—she could trust that she would be able to return to Myanmar. Suu Kyi's Nobel Peace Prize acceptance speech occurred in an environment that was heavily focused on the democratic change happening in Myanmar. Suu Kyi still was not in any official government position, but was clearly a leader in the NLD, a major party in Myanmar. It is also important to note that tensions had boiled over in the Rakhine region at this point, and early June 2012 is seen as the starting point for the modern communal violence against the Rohingya (Brooten, 2015). Suu Kyi gave her speech on June 12, 2012 (Nobel Foundation, 2012).

The Nobel Peace Prize is awarded almost every year to one or more individuals, with few exceptions. These individuals are placed on a pedestal and are given a prestigious platform to share their message. What that message contains can influence the image of that individual for a

long time and can change the way the public sees them. Examining the narrative structure and rhetorical tropes that were used in each speech and subsequent news coverage may help in understanding the influences that these language choices have on political image and power.[1] This analysis reveals three rhetorical moves by Suu Kyi, which will serve as the organizational framework for this chapter: narrative of peace, narrative of genealogy, and synecdochal or metonymic positioning.

Narrative of Peace

It is unsurprising that while accepting the Nobel Peace Prize, Suu Kyi spoke a lot about peace. She states:

> In 1989, when my late husband Michael Aris came to see me during my first term of house arrest, he told me that a friend, John Finnis, had nominated me for the Nobel Peace Prize. […] So how did I feel when I was actually awarded the Nobel Prize for Peace? The question has been put to me many times and this is surely the most appropriate occasion on which to examine what the Nobel Prize means to me and what peace means to me.

This question, of what peace means to her, is framed as stemming from a conversation with her husband, yet broadens into what peace should mean for the world. This allows for an internal coherence within the lecture. She uses narrative to explain what she believes peace means. In doing so, she utilizes narrative coherence and fidelity to position herself both as a part of something larger and as a vehicle for peace. Each of her stories is linked to her definition of peace, and her focus on democracy and human rights. She reinforces her own character image by

[1] All direct quotations of this speech come from the official transcript of the lecture provided by The Nobel Foundation on their website (2015).

maintaining this consistence in each story she tells. She uses narrative fidelity in linking to global touchstones of peace, while also maintaining coherence through discussions of her own experiences.

Suu Kyi uses her own story as a starting point for her discussion of peace, saying, "As I have said repeatedly in many an interview, I heard the news that I had been awarded the Nobel Peace Prize on the radio one evening." This itself is clear narrative coherence, a reference to a story often told. This is a key part of Suu Kyi's mythos. She was the Lady, the woman who was so determined to get Myanmar independence that she was placed under house arrest for her activities. She fought for freedom but had her freedom so restricted that she found out that she won the peace prize for her actions through the radio. This story is one that highlights so many aspects of Suu Kyi's experience, and is so ingrained in her image that she is able to gloss over it in a few sentences, and its message can still get across. Who better to explain what peace means than someone who has fought for it so fiercely for so long?

She also appeals to audiences through narratives that have global fidelity. These narratives fit within the global experience and global values. Specifically, she refers to "hunger, disease, displacement, joblessness, poverty, injustice, discrimination, prejudice, bigotry" throughout the globe as things that hinder peace. She calls back to World War I in her lecture:

> The First World War represented a terrifying waste of youth and potential, a cruel squandering of the positive forces of our planet. […] A young American fighting with the French Foreign Legion wrote before he was killed in action in 1916 that he would meet his death: "at some disputed barricade;" "on some scarred slope of battered hill;" "at midnight in some flaming town." Youth and love and life perishing forever in senseless

> attempts to capture nameless, unremembered places. And for what? Nearly a century on, we have yet to find a satisfactory answer.
>
> Are we not still guilty, if to a less violent degree, of recklessness, of improvidence with regard to our future and our humanity? War is not the only arena where peace is done to death. Wherever suffering is ignored, there will be the seeds of conflict, for suffering degrades and embitters and enrages.

Here is an appeal to global problems, but also a call for global peace. World War I is recognizable to global audiences, and the struggling of young soldiers fits in with western understanding of the war. Suu Kyi then appeals to universal values of humanity in order to grant coherence to the story she is wishing to tell. She appeals to another aspect of peace here, peace found as an absence of war and suffering. She refers to shared problems, which is also reflected in the shared values her lecture uses in creating effective narrative coherence. The choice to use the narrative of an American in World War I allowed her to appeal to both the values of peace sought in that war, and the values held by the largely Western audience she addressed. Once again this aids in framing her as a Western figure, or at least as influenced by the West.

Narrative fidelity is how well narratives fit within the listener's existing understanding and values. Suu Kyi's focus on the concept of peace throughout her lecture allowed for ample opportunities to discuss values. She does this through explaining the impact that the Nobel Prize had on her:

> What the Nobel Peace Prize did was to draw me once again into the world of other human beings outside the isolated area in which I lived, to restore a sense of reality to me. This did not happen instantly, of course, but as the days and months went by and news of reactions to the award came over the airwaves, I began to understand the

> significance of the Nobel Prize. It had made me real once again; it had drawn me back into the wider human community.
>
> So for me receiving the Nobel Peace Prize means personally extending my concerns for democracy and human rights beyond national borders. The Nobel Peace Prize opened up a door in my heart.

Like her reference to World War I, Suu Kyi is leveraging the global narrative fidelity of the Nobel Peace Prize in order to grant narrative legitimacy and coherence to her specific message of democracy and human rights.

While Suu Kyi leverages global narrative fidelity to link to her values to a global audience, she also emphasizes her Burmese heritage to grant legitimacy and coherence to her specific understanding of peace:

> The Burmese concept of peace can be explained as the happiness arising from the cessation of factors that militate against the harmonious and the wholesome. The word nyein-chan translates literally as the beneficial coolness that comes when a fire is extinguished. Fires of suffering and strife are raging around the world. In my own country, hostilities have not ceased in the far north; to the west, communal violence resulting in arson and murder were taking place just several days before I started out on the journey that has brought me here today. News of atrocities in other reaches of the earth abound. Reports of hunger, disease, displacement, joblessness, poverty, injustice, discrimination, prejudice, bigotry; these are our daily fare. Everywhere there are negative forces eating away at the foundations of peace. Everywhere can be found thoughtless dissipation of material and human resources that are necessary for the conservation of harmony and happiness in our world.

By embedding the narrative fidelity of her Burmese heritage into the global fidelity of desires for "harmony and happiness in our world", Suu Kyi is able to continue to craft a coherent narrative that she is uniquely situated to bring democracy and human rights not just to Burma but beyond its national borders.

Suu Kyi also examines the idea of 'dukha'. She explains how this word represents the Buddhist concept of suffering. Suffering is seen as something unavoidable, but something Suu Kyi explains she wishes to alleviate. She speaks of the six great sufferings, and muses on the final two: "to be parted from those one loves and to be forced to live in propinquity with those one does not love." Relying too heavily on uniquely Burmese values could have posed some issues for her global narrative fidelity. While the concept of dukha would be familiar with Buddhist audiences, the concept not only may have been difficult to understand, but could have conflicted with Western values if misunderstood. Suu Kyi resolves this concern by positioning duhka as a starting point and not an end point; this is done by transitioning to her time under house arrest by saying:

> We are fortunate to be living in an age when social welfare and humanitarian assistance are recognized not only as desirable but necessary. I am fortunate to be living in an age when the fate of prisoners of conscience anywhere has become the concern of peoples everywhere, an age when democracy and human rights are widely, even if not universally, accepted as the birthright of all. How often during my years under house arrest have I drawn strength from my favourite passages in the preamble to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Here Suu Kyi shifts into more globally understood and accepted values as seen through social welfare and humanitarian assistance. Democracy has been a key part of her platform and her

image. This section helps her to transfer out of possibly unrelatable values and back into the core values of those Westerners in her audience who had supported her fight for democracy.

Aung San Suu Kyi has framed herself as a bastion for democracy throughout her time in politics. She has often referred back to her fight for democracy in Burma as a representation of her belief in democracy overall. Through her continued support for democracy as a show of narrative fidelity, and as a touchstone for the values of the Nobel Committee, Suu Kyi is able to show narrative coherence. She uses events like her fight for democracy, or World War I, to show narrative fidelity throughout this lecture. The repetition of this touchstone of peace has resulted in a narrative coherence throughout the speech. Suu Kyi concluded her discussion on peace by saying:

> If I am asked why I am fighting for democracy in Burma, it is because I believe that democratic institutions and practices are necessary for the guarantee of human rights. Ultimately our aim should be to create a world free from the displaced, the homeless and the hopeless, a world of which each and every corner is a true sanctuary where the inhabitants will have the freedom and the capacity to live in peace. Every thought, every word, and every action that adds to the positive and the wholesome is a contribution to peace. Each and every one of us is capable of making such a contribution. Let us join hands to try to create a peaceful world where we can sleep in security and wake in happiness.

Suu Kyi uses her fight for democracy in Myanmar/Burma to provide a representation for what she believes the global fight for peace can look like. This is a synecdochal positioning on Suu Kyi's part to show her perspective on peace as emblematic of global ideals. In doing so, Suu Kyi positions herself as both a representative of global peace in Myanmar and representative of

"universal" democracy and peace to global audiences. She is appealing to the ideals of broad international audiences through her discussions on Myanmar; and in doing so, building her image in the West as an icon for democracy and peace.

Narrative of Genealogy

Throughout her political career Aung San Suu Kyi has relied on the story of her father and his role in the revolution to help her legitimize her place. She herself has acknowledged that her father's story, and how that added to her own, helped her gain her place in politics in Myanmar. Narrative plays an important role in image building and Aung San Suu Kyi herself has blended the line between her image, that of her father, and that of the nation through narrative (Palmer-Mehta, 2009 & 2012).

The use of narrative to personalize stories, to control interpretations, to dramatize and make lessons memorable, and to appeal to broad audiences are prevalent throughout the political realm (Oldenburg, 2015). This is where her choice to focus on Burman culture plays a role beyond discussions of Burman peace. As laid out in previous chapters, Aung San was a major player in Myanmar's independence. Suu Kyi's links to Burman culture is a link to both narrative fidelity in the eyes of the citizens of Myanmar, and narrative coherence in her repetition of these narratives.

Suu Kyi opened her lecture with a short story about a conversation she and her son Alexander had regarding a radio program they listened to together, where she introduces the idea of a Nobel Prize:

> Long years ago, sometimes it seems many lives ago, I was at Oxford listening to the radio programme Desert Island Discs with my young son Alexander. […] At the end of the

> programme, which we had both enjoyed, Alexander asked me if I thought I might ever be invited to speak on Desert Island Discs. "Why not?" I responded lightly. Since he knew that in general only celebrities took part in the programme he proceeded to ask, with genuine interest, for what reason I thought I might be invited. I considered this for a moment and then answered: "Perhaps because I'd have won the Nobel Prize for literature," and we both laughed. The prospect seemed pleasant but hardly probable.

Suu Kyi references two parts of her life in this story that highlight both internal consistency within the lecture, and internal consistency within the public story of her life. She references both her time in Oxford and her son Alexander. Both of her sons have been a key part of her public story – her time with them, time separated from them, and how their existence currently blocks her from the presidency. Her familial relations are a key aspect of her image (her sons accepted the award for her initially and her husband's death while she was under house arrest garnered international attention and sympathy). Her separation from her sons while they were growing up has helped to paint the image of Suu Kyi as a mother, rather than a just a distant figure. She mourned her distance from her sons and was continually blocked from seeing them. Suu Kyi presented a pitiable character who was human in this weakness. She becomes easier to empathize, as she become easier to relate to.

In addition, her time in Oxford, and her Western education are often referenced in regard to her position and views. Oxford is where she met her husband Michael Aris (The Guardian, 2017). Suu Kyi's legacy at Oxford was incredibly important to her—she was awarded an honorary doctorate in 2012, and held her 67th birthday party at her alma mater, St. Hugh's. However, as critiques of Suu Kyi continued to persist surrounding her response to the Rohingya

crisis, St. Hugh's administrators began distancing the university from her. In 2017 they took down a painting her late husband bequeathed to the college.

Suu Kyi's familial relations and her genealogical positioning in relation to Myanmar's history aid her in showing herself as a representation of Myanmar as a whole. Her narrative use regarding her family, from her husband and sons to her mother and father, allows her connections to Burman history, the West, European ideals, resulting in coherence, and fidelity. This is also illustrative of her oscillating use of synecdoche and metonymy positioning: on the one hand, she presents herself as a representative of both the National League for Democracy and the government of Myanmar as a whole; on the other, she conflates herself and her ideals with the institutions that she is part of, and with the will of Myanmar as a whole. Both tropes work to advance her appeal to her audience by aligning her familial struggles and genealogical lineage with a broad ideal of peace.

Metonymic and Synecdochal Positioning

Narrative often relies on anecdotes, and those of particular interest are found through synecdoche and metonymy. Within metonymy exists synecdoche, rhetorical tools which could explain how Suu Kyi was able to build an image that was so intimately tied to the NLD and Myanmar's government. The baffled reactions to Suu Kyi's failures regarding the Rohingya are a result of how she has become a representative of both the successes and the failures in Myanmar, as an icon conflated with the status of the nation as a whole.

The synecdoche that exists within Aung San Suu Kyi's lecture can largely be seen through her portraying her views, actions, and opinions as representative of the country of Myanmar and of the National League for Democracy. Additionally, it is using herself as a

representation of the actions, plans, and values of each of these groups. Conflating Suu Kyi with each of these, treating the part as the whole, can be seen in several areas of her speech. This is done through Suu Kyi's story standing in for the story of other's suffering, and in Suu Kyi standing in for Myanmar's government. Here she is both representative, in the form of synecdoche, and reductive in the form of metonymy. Suu Kyi relies on metonymy and synecdoche to establish narrative fidelity and to position herself as an agent of change. These exist in tension with one another, and result in an osculation between metonymy and synecdoche. Suu Kyi shifts between acting simply as a representative, and behaving as a voice of the government as a whole.

First, there are several examples in which Suu Kyi references her Nobel Peace Prize and her receiving it as representative of larger suffering. She begins by referencing the fight for democracy in Myanmar. She shifts from herself, to the people of Burma, to humanity as a whole. She is not saying that she is humanity, but that her struggling is representative of humanity. This use of the acknowledgment of herself as a representation of an acknowledgment of the people of Burma is synecdoche:

> And what was more important, the Nobel Prize had drawn the attention of the world to the struggle for democracy and human rights in Burma. We were not going to be forgotten.
>
> When the Nobel Committee awarded the Peace Prize to me they were recognizing that the oppressed and the isolated in Burma were also a part of the world, they were recognizing the oneness of humanity.

Suu Kyi continues her synecdochal positioning through her past as a prisoner:

> Before continuing to speak of my country, may I speak out for our prisoners of conscience. There still remain such prisoners in Burma. It is to be feared that because the best known detainees have been released, the remainder, the unknown ones, will be forgotten. I am standing here because I was once a prisoner of conscience. As you look at me and listen to me, please remember the often repeated truth that one prisoner of conscience is one too many. Those who have not yet been freed, those who have not yet been given access to the benefits of justice in my country number much more than one. Please remember them and do whatever is possible to effect their earliest, unconditional release.

Here, she uses her experience to call attention to the plight of other prisoners both in Myanmar and throughout the rest of the world. She uses herself to stand in for and request justice for prisoners of conscience.

Suu Kyi's only explicit reference to the 1991 award ceremony is a direct quotation that uses synecdoche. Suu Kyi was honored in order to show support for all others in her position. She was the figurehead for all democratic change in the early 1990's according to the Nobel Committee, and it is this part of their statement that she chose to repeat.

> The Nobel Committee concluded its statement of 14 October 1991 with the words: "In awarding the Nobel Peace Prize … to Aung San Suu Kyi, the Norwegian Nobel Committee wishes to honour this woman for her unflagging efforts and to show its support for the many people throughout the world who are striving to attain democracy, human rights and ethnic conciliation by peaceful means."

Suu Kyi often relied on blurring the lines between her values and the values of other larger organizations or systems in Myanmar. Her use of words such as 'we', 'us', 'our', and 'my'

throughout her lecture our illustrative of use of synecdoche as a means of creating political fidelity. Take, for example, the following section of her lecture:

> Without faith in the future, without the conviction that democratic values and fundamental human rights are not only necessary but possible for *our* society, *our* movement could not have been sustained throughout the destroying years. Some of *our* warriors fell at their post, some deserted *us*, but a dedicated core remained strong and committed. At times when I think of the years that have passed, I am amazed that so many remained staunch under the most trying circumstances. Their faith in *our* cause is not blind; it is based on a clear-eyed assessment of their own powers of endurance and a profound respect for the aspirations of *our* people. (emphasis added)

Throughout her lecture Suu Kyi is focused heavily on what peace is. What do the prize and peace mean to her specifically, that question is the thesis of her lecture. She does not set up the values of the NLD, or Myanmar, separate of her own values, instead they are the same. What this means is that she links herself to something larger in a representative way through synecdoche, connecting her values with the values of the larger subject. Suu Kyi's alignment of her values with democracy and Western conceptions of peace are both metonymic and synecdochal in nature. While doing this she is also presenting some aspects of herself as being humanity's hope for peace.

Suu Kyi and her personal values and understanding of peace stand in for that of an entire country and political party. Suu Kyi's choice to talk about the actions of the government, then shifting into 'we' language conflates the goals of the government of Myanmar and her own actions. She further uses metonymy, contextualizing the National League for Democracy not through their role in government, but through how they relate to her ("my party"). Here she

shifts between being a representative of her party (synecdoche) and as the party itself (metonymy):

> In recent months, negotiations between the government and ethnic nationality forces have been making progress. We hope that ceasefire agreements will lead to political settlements founded on the aspirations of the peoples, and the spirit of union. My party, the National League for Democracy, and I stand ready and willing to play any role in the process of national reconciliation. The reform measures that were put into motion by President U Thein Sein's government can be sustained only with the intelligent cooperation of all internal forces: the military, our ethnic nationalities, political parties, the media, civil society organizations, the business community and, most important of all, the general public.

Suu Kyi treats the actions of the NLD as her own, yet also acknowledges the party as something outside herself. This oscillation in her lecture between synecdoche and metonymy, representation and reduction, work to conflate Suu Kyi with the whole of Myanmar: she is both Myanmar's hope and future.

Conclusion: Rhetorical Tensions

Suu Kyi has used narrative, both focusing on peace and genealogy, to appeal to global and local audiences. Throughout her acceptance speech Aung San Suu Kyi deploys several narratives to address some of her key values and ideals, including democracy, human rights, and the Burmese concepts of nyein-chan and dukha. Stories both of her family and of her confinement pepper her speech, as she reflects on what the award has meant to her in the twenty-

one years since she officially was awarded it in 1991. She also includes stories of visiting a refugee camp and her experiences there.

This narrative has aided in both her metonymic and synecdochal positioning. Through the use of synecdoche, Suu Kyi attempts to situate her narrative of peace as representative of a larger global community with uniquely Burman elements. Nonetheless, her oscillation between synecdoche and metonymy—when she conflates her views as synonymous with Myanmar—may result in the perception of Suu Kyi in purely metonymic terms by international audiences. So though Suu Kyi's may oscillate between these two positions, the intermediaries that often stand between Suu Kyi and her audiences, news media, may obscure this nuance in favor of a pure metonymic collapse. Suu Kyi provides the initial metonymic language, and the media repeats it. Instead of synecdoche and representation, the oversimplification that may occur is metonymic in nature. This metonymic shift could prove to be the most problematic aspect of all. Indeed, while she frames herself as a vehicle for peace, and for creating a fairer world (metonymy), she also states that she believes that it is impossible to get rid of all suffering in the world as she sometimes claims to be merely one part of a larger political whole (synecdoche). This and other problems will be further analyzed in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 4. MEDIA ANALYSIS

Aung San Suu Kyi's Nobel lecture has an impact beyond the audience that Suu Kyi was physically presenting to. Suu Kyi's Nobel lecture received coverage by multiple Western media sources. Her speech is available in full online (both in video and manuscript forms), as are many articles reporting on and analyzing the lecture. This coverage allows for people across the globe to experience her lecture, either in full or in part, and expose them to different perspectives on the speech as well. Nonetheless, McCombs, Shaw, and Weaver (2014) argued that media outlets serve as powerful mediators of raw events by not only impacting the public salience of events or objects (such as political figures) it also impacts "the salience of the attributes of these objects (the second level of agenda setting)" (p. 782). Therefore the media coverage of Aung San Suu Kyi's Nobel lecture not only may impact the salience of her existence, and her receiving the award, but also impacts the salience of her attributes/values, and the attributes of the award itself. Essentially, the media coverage of this lecture highlights specific attributes of Suu Kyi, and their coverage of those attributes can impact their prominence in the public agenda. Hence, the focus of this chapter is to analyze five media articles on Suu Kyi's Nobel lecture. Specifically, what aspects of the speech they chose to cover, what contextual information they provided, and how the conclusions they drew have the potential to impact the perspectives of global audiences.

When searching for coverage of Suu Kyi's Nobel lecture several factors were necessary for an article to be taken into consideration. First, the article needed to be available in English. Additionally, the main focus of the article must have been Aung San Suu Kyi's Nobel lecture. Finally, the articles needed to be from internationally trusted sources. This led to the analysis of five articles from the BBC, New York Times (Erlanger, 2012), CNN (Smith-Spark, 2012), NPR

(Kuhn, 2012), and the Guardian (Beaumont, 2012), all of which were published on June 16th 2012.

An important caveat: all of the articles that will be analyzed in this chapter are Western media. One of the main reasons for this is to attempt to limit the analysis to a Western lens. While perspectives on Suu Kyi outside of the West are important as well, in order to limit the number of perspectives to a reasonable amount this restriction was put in place. This is also a result of the need for the articles to be available in English. While Burmese coverage of Suu Kyi's lecture could provide a completely different view of Suu Kyi, it will not be analyzed here.

As previously mentioned, 2012 was a year of change for Myanmar, with the nation experiencing a major political shift. In 2012 news surrounding Suu Kyi covered a range of topics, from the release of *The Lady*, to the plight of the Rohingya, to government policies in Myanmar. When looking for articles to analyze, this meant that, while there was quite a bit of news coverage surrounding Suu Kyi, it was not all pertinent to this research. As such, only articles in which the lecture was the main focus of the piece were taking into consideration.

Analyses of these articles will be broken down into several themes. First, the news articles will be analyzed for the three themes from the previous chapter: narrative of peace, narrative of genealogy, and synecdochal positioning. After that the focus will shift into additional themes that emerged, specifically the metonymic shift. Through this it will become evident that Suu Kyi's rhetoric resulted in both a reinforcement of her narrative coherence and a metonymic shift in the media.

Narrative of Peace

As these news articles are focusing on Aung San Suu Kyi's Nobel lecture, it is no surprise that they use a multitude of direct quotations from her speech. Which portions they chose to focus on reflect which aspects of Suu Kyi's narrative resonate with a Western audience. Several sections are repeatedly reported upon in regards to her narrative of peace. These articles focus on two main narratives regarding peace: the Buddhist concept of suffering and democracy in Myanmar. An additional theme of peace that was included in the media coverage that did not arise in Suu Kyi's lecture was the lack of peace for the Rohingya. Each of these themes will be examined in turn.

To begin, four of the five articles examined the Buddhist concept of suffering, also known as dukkha. This was a central portion of Suu Kyi's lecture, and as such it is unsurprising that it was included in the media coverage of the event. The New York Times (Erlanger, 2012) touched on this idea in two separate areas of their article:

> She had thought much on the Buddhist idea of "dukkha," or suffering, in her long years of isolation and house arrest, Ms. Aung San Suu Kyi said. "If suffering were an unavoidable part of our existence, we should try to alleviate it as far as possible in practical, earthly ways."
>
> [….]
>
> She spoke of the Burmese concept of peace, which she defined as "the happiness arising from the cessation of factors that militate against the harmonious and the wholesome." The term, nyein-chan, translates literally, she said, as "the beneficial coolness that comes when a fire is extinguished."

Each of these references provided both direct quotes from Suu Kyi, as well as summaries to link the quotations together and help them make sense.

Other media sources chose to just touch on the topic. For example, when the Guardian (Beaumont, 2012) referenced this idea, the author did not use any direct quotations from Suu Kyi. Instead, he simply listed the concept as an aspect of her speech:

> She made a wide-ranging, deeply personal lecture, which touched on her feelings of isolation under house arrest, the Buddhist concept of suffering, human rights and her hopes and fears for her country's future, and the importance of the peace prize itself.

This coverage of the concept of peace and suffering was contextualized as part of Suu Kyi' overall experience. Her house arrest, a major part of the narrative surrounding Suu Kyi, leads into the concept of suffering. Her suffering under house arrest is linked to the Buddhist idea of suffering. In the NPR (Kuhn, 2012) coverage of her lecture, this is repeated, with the article explaining, "Suu Kyi recalled how her ordeal prompted her to examine notions of suffering within her Buddhist faith, and the plight of the world's refugees, migrants and victims of human trafficking."

In addition to her focus on this concept during her lecture, other media were able to expand on the concept in interviews with Suu Kyi. The CNN (Smith-Spark, 2012) article did this, quoting of Suu Kyi but not from the lecture:

> Speaking to CNN's Christiane Amanpour from Oslo ahead of the ceremony, Suu Kyi explained that she was still exploring the question of what peace means. "My attitude to peace is rather based on the Burmese definition of peace -- it really means removing all the negative factors that destroy peace in this world. So peace does not mean just putting

> an end to violence or to war, but to all other factors that threaten peace, such as discrimination, such as inequality, poverty," she said.

This coverage, along with the attention the other three media sources paid to this concept, provided a venue for this aspect of Suu Kyi's narrative to be further cemented in the public eye. The repetition of this message aids Suu Kyi's narrative coherence, in that these articles help to articulate the specific meaning of Suu Kyi's Buddhist notions of peace. Additionally, the ways in which the Buddhist concept of peace was covered in each of these articles allowed for the idea to be connected with more global ideas of peace. The CNN coverage linked nyien-chen to a larger definition of peace, examining more clearly global concepts, such as discrimination or poverty (Smith-Spark, 2012). The Guardian (Beaumont, 2012) links the concept to the peace prize itself. This media coverage solidifies Suu Kyi's narrative of peace in regards to the Buddhist idea of peace. Across this media coverage there is a consistency that aids in the narrative coherence, along with the global links which can aid in fidelity.

Democracy in Myanmar

Another aspect of peace that was given a fair amount of coverage in the reporting following Suu Kyi's lecture was the development of democracy in Myanmar. Again, this should be of little surprise. The reason that Suu Kyi was given the Peace Prize in the first place was due to her fight for democracy in Myanmar. In her lecture she stated, "The prize we were working for was a free, secure, and just society. The honor lay in our endeavor." This quotation was included in the New York Times (Erlanger, 2012), CNN (Smith-Spark, 2012), and Guardian (Beaumont, 2012) coverage of her lecture. The history of her award, and the politics of

Myanmar, are still portrayed as important to Western audiences. The focus on democracy shows narrative fidelity in connecting a major Western value (democracy) with Suu Kyi.

The coverage of democracy in Myanmar goes beyond the timeframe of the original awarding of the peace prize in 1991. For example, CNN highlights Suu Kyi's statements regarding recent developments in Myanmar:

> "Over the past year there have been signs that the endeavors of those who believe in democracy and human rights are beginning to bear fruit in Burma. There have been changes in a positive direction; steps towards democratization have been taken," she said […] Suu Kyi was recently elected to parliament as her National League for Democracy won dozens of seats in by-elections. It remains a minority in parliament, but the elections marked a turning point for the country after decades of oppression by its military rulers. (Smith-Spark, 2012)

The coverage of current events expanded beyond just the positives as well. The New York Times (Erlanger, 2012) acknowledged another aspect of her lecture in which Suu Kyi speaks on unrest within Myanmar:

> Her comments on Myanmar were careful but considered. She called for national reconciliation and cease-fire agreements between the government and "ethnic nationality forces," which she said she hoped would "lead to political settlements founded on the aspirations of the peoples, and the spirit of the nation. In my own country," she said, "hostilities have not ceased in the far north," and "to the west, communal violence" has flared in the days before she left Myanmar.

This aspect of media coverage, of the present fight for peace, helps to move Suu Kyi's narrative forward. In each of these media sources coverage of her lecture, she is portrayed as continuing to

fight for peace in Myanmar. Her pursuit of democracy is shown as ongoing, once again providing an avenue for narrative coherence.

The media coverage of current events in Suu Kyi's narrative of peace extends beyond what she chose to cover. Specifically Kuhn (2012) shifts from a discussion on the Buddhist concept of peace into the plight of the Rohingya:

> Suu Kyi recalled how her ordeal prompted her to examine notions of suffering within her Buddhist faith, and the plight of the world's refugees, migrants and victims of human trafficking. "I thought of that great mass of the uprooted of the earth who have been torn away from their homes, parted from families and friends [and] forced to live out their lives among strangers who are not always welcoming," she said. Those words could well describe Burma's Muslim Rohingya minority. Their recent clashes with Buddhists in western Rakhine State have left at least 50 dead and thousands displaced. Myanmar's government refuses to recognize Rohingyas as citizens and Suu Kyi has not taken a clear stand on the issue.

This NPR coverage highlights an aspect of this media coverage that had not been heavily focused on as of yet—the ability to move beyond what Suu Kyi said (Kuhn, 2012). While the narrative of peace has been discussed through several articles to this point, the additional information given was largely contextual. The NPR coverage moves beyond that, shifting the narrative in a way that Suu Kyi could not control. While not an explicit critique of Suu Kyi, the NPR coverage could serve to undermine some of Suu Kyi's narrative coherence and fidelity. It shows that there may be inconsistencies within her narrative and opens her up for critique.

Narrative of Genealogy

Much like the narrative of peace, Suu Kyi's narrative of genealogy carried across from her lecture into the media coverage. The media coverage touched on four different aspects of her family life through her mother, father, husband, and sons. While there was overlap between some of these, such as mentioning that it was her husband and her sons who accepted the award for her in 1991, by and large each of these narratives serves a different purpose and was covered in different ways. This coverage helps Suu Kyi's overall narrative coherence and fidelity to be maintained, much like the narrative of peace. In addition many of these news articles chose to cover aspects of her family that Suu Kyi did not cover in her speech. Each of these will be covered in turn.

Suu Kyi's father, Aung San, was a major figure in Myanmar's founding, and has continued to be an iconic character in Myanmar's mythos. Her father's influence extends even for her appearance, with the New York Times reporting (Erlanger, 2012):

> She dressed in shades of purple and lavender, her hair adorned with flowers. It is a gesture she makes in honor of her father, Gen. Aung San, an independence hero of Burma, who was assassinated in 1947, when she was 2, but whom she remembers threading flowers through her hair.

This perspective of Suu Kyi is one that is not afforded simply by listening to her lecture. Even if one were to watch this lecture, this referenced may be missed unless otherwise known. The choice to include this information provides a new perspective on Suu Kyi's relationship with her father beyond the political influence his name has had. In many ways this is a relatable story of a father and daughter that could resonate with a large audience, allowing for fidelity to once again be reinforced.

While her relationship with her father was more than just political, even Suu Kyi acknowledges that the political influence his name provides has been important to her success. The New York Times coverage of Suu Kyi's award heavily references an interview with her that occurred in Myanmar in 1989. This interview is described in context with her family – her husband by her side, her sons running around the house, just after her mother's funeral (Erlanger, 2012). The article brings up her reflection on her father's role in her political career:

> She said then that she understood how much her stature depended on her father's aura. "I don't pretend that I don't owe my position in Burmese politics to my father, at least at the beginning," she said. "It's time to look at what people do." At another moment, she said: "Really, I'm doing this for my father. I'm quite happy they see me as my father's daughter. My only concern is that I prove worthy of him." Once fate intervened, she chose the life she has lived, and there is little doubt that she has proved herself fierce, loyal and worthy, both to her father and to her people.

Here the author lays out Suu Kyi's relationship with her father through her own words, praising her along the way. While not as extensive, the BBC references her relationship with her father as well, stating "Ms Aung San Suu Kyi is the daughter of Burmese independence leader Aung San, who was assassinated in 1947." Even though this reference is briefer, it touches on three key points about Aung San: he was an independence leader, he was assassinated, and he was Suu Kyi's father. These key points are a key aspect of Suu Kyi's narrative of genealogy. It has helped to legitimize her place, and the repetition of this fact continued to solidify it.

Suu Kyi's mother played a large role in her life as well, a fact that the New York Times (Erlanger, 2012), Guardian (Beaumont, 2012), BBC, and CNN (Smith-Spark, 2012) all recognized. Suu Kyi's visit to her ill mother in 1988 is often seen as one of the main reasons she

reentered politics. This is why she was in Myanmar during the 8888 uprising, where she burst onto Myanmar's political scene. The New York Times reported, "She had returned to Myanmar from Britain in March 1988 to nurse her ill mother, Daw Khin Kyi, and became caught up in the swirling protests against years of eccentric autocracy and military rule" (Erlanger, 2012). The Guardian (Beaumont, 2012) takes a slightly different approach, once again tying in both her husband and sons:

> Aung San Suu Kyi arrived in Norway from Switzerland, her first stop on a two-week tour of Europe. The journey is her first in Europe since 1988, when she left her husband and two young sons in England to visit her ill mother in Burma and became the focal point for the nascent democracy movement (Beaumont, 2012).

Once again, this narrative appears in both the CNN (Smith-Spark, 2012) and BBC coverage of this lecture as well. This repetition emphasizes what has been seen throughout coverage of Suu Kyi, that her narrative choices are consistent, and that those narratives are repeated in the press. Her mother's illness is part of Suu Kyi's story, this makes sense with what we know about Suu Kyi already, solidifying the coherence of her narratives and the narratives shown in media coverage of her Nobel lecture.

In the discussion of Suu Kyi's past her husband, Michael Aris, is repetitively referenced. The New York Times coverage of Suu Kyi and Aris's relationship is the most extensive (Erlanger, 2012). They touch both on the previous 1989 interview with the couple, and on Aris's death. First, the coverage of the initial interview described their relationship, especially in regards to Myanmar:

> In January 1989, just after her mother's funeral, she and her husband sat for a rare interview at her mother's house in Rangoon, now Yangon, as their children ran about the

> rooms, with their faded colonial elegance. “You know, when I married Michael,” she said, “I made him promise that if there was ever a time that I had to go back to my country, he would not stand in my way. And he promised.” Mr. Aris said: “That’s true. She made me promise.”

This article also covers a much more solemn aspect of their relationship – Aris’s death:

> For her country, and for the legacy of her father, Ms. Aung San Suu Kyi could be said to have given up her family: her beloved husband, Michael Aris, a professor of Tibetan and Himalayan Studies at Oxford, and her two children, Alexander and Kim, who grew up largely without her. Myanmar’s former military government persistently refused to grant them visas to visit her, even when Mr. Aris grew ill with prostate cancer, apparently in the hope that she would leave Myanmar herself to visit them. She refused to do so, fearing with reason that the government would not allow her back into the country. After Ms. Aung San Suu Kyi’s initial house arrest in 1989, Mr. Aris was allowed to visit only five times, the last time during Christmas in 1995. He died in March 1999, on his 53rd birthday; to the end, he supported her decision to remain in Myanmar.

The New York Times’ extensive coverage of Suu Kyi and Aris’s relationship repeats his support for her to stay in Myanmar, despite their circumstances (Erlanger, 2012). CNN (Smith-Spark, 2012), the Guardian (Beaumont, 2012), and BBC all also acknowledge his death and her inability to be with him at that time. This narrative helps to humanize Suu Kyi while also highlighting her commitment to her country. Even though it separated her from her family, Suu Kyi’s dedication to peace and democracy in Myanmar cement her narrative fidelity.

This type of coverage extends to her sons as well. NPR explained the situation surrounding her original award ceremony, “When Suu Kyi was awarded the prize in 1991, she

was still under house arrest. So her husband Michael Aris and two sons, Kim and Alexander, accepted the prize for her" (Kuhn, 2012). The Guardian (Beaumont, 2012) repeats a similar narrative: "Given the prize in 1991 – but by then under house arrest by Burma's military junta – it was left to her two sons, Alexander and Kim, to travel to Norway to receive the peace prize that year." In the CNN article the reference is to then Nobel Committee Chairman Thorbjørn Jagland recalling Suu Kyi's sons accepting the award for her (Smith-Spark, 2012). Each of these media sources covers Suu Kyi's sons through them accepting the Nobel Prize for her. The New York Times takes a different approach. They reference her children by tagging on to a discussion of her husband, "and her two children, Alexander and Kim, who grew up largely without her" (Erlanger, 2012). Once again Suu Kyi's family is a point of consistency in her news coverage.

Synecdochal and Metonymic Positioning

Aung San Suu Kyi partook in synecdochal and metonymic positioning in her Nobel lecture, and some of this positioning transferred through into the media coverage of the event. Two specific phrases of were repeated throughout the media coverage: "we were not going to be forgotten", and her discussion on prisoners of conscience. The media coverage of this event, and these phrases, often reflected Suu Kyi's oscillation between synecdoche and metonymy, at times treating Suu Kyi as a representation of democratization and change in Myanmar, and other times as an avatar of those very processes itself. Regardless of trope used, the media is consistent with its use of Suu Kyi as a reference point for the larger idea of democracy and change in Myanmar.

Initially, the idea that the "Burmese are not going to be forgotten", is repeated in several articles. For example, part of this quotation was used in the BBC articles title. Further the New York Times (Erlanger, 2012) provides the quotation with a bit more context:

> When she was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1991, while under house arrest in Myanmar, Daw Aung San Suu Kyi said Saturday, she realized that the Burmese "were not going to be forgotten." When the Norwegian Nobel Committee awarded her the prize, she said in her Nobel lecture here on Saturday, 21 years later, it was recognition that "the oppressed and the isolated in Burma were also a part of the world, they were recognizing the oneness of humanity."

The Guardian (Beaumont, 2012) provided the quotation more in full:

> "What was more important, the prize had drawn the attention of the world to the struggle for democracy and human rights in Burma. We were not going to be forgotten. When the Nobel committee awarded the peace prize to me, they were recognising that the oppressed and the isolated in Burma were also a part of the world, they were recognising the oneness of humanity … The Nobel peace prize opened up a door in my heart."

This quotation was a signifier of synecdoche in Suu Kyi's lecture. In fact, this was a key aspect of her synecdochal positioning. Here Suu Kyi receiving the award is representative of the world, particularly the West, paying attention to the plight of Myanmar in 1991. Beyond that her receiving the Nobel Peace prize was a recognition of the "oneness of humanity". The repetition of this section by these media places this positioning further in the public eye.

Another section of Suu Kyi's speech that was repeated in the New York Times (Erlanger, 2012), the Guardian (Beaumont, 2012), CNN (Smith-Spark, 2012), NPR (Kuhn, 2012), and BBC was Suu Kyi's line on "prisoners of conscience". Smith-Spark (2012) explained:

> She appealed for help in freeing the remaining Burmese political prisoners who were not included in several recent amnesties granted by the government. "I am standing here because I was once a prisoner of conscience," Suu Kyi said. "As you look at me and

> listen to me, please remember the often repeated truth that one prisoner of conscience is one too many. "Those who have not yet been given access to the benefits of justice in my country number much more than one. Please remember them and do whatever is possible to affect their earliest, unconditional release," she said.

Where Suu Kyi's previous quotation that received attention can be seen as synecdoche focused on the past, this quotation on prisoners of conscience in one of the present and future. She uses her own story as an example to draw attention to the plight of others in the country. This call can be seen as effective, in that all of the articles that were analyzed included it. Suu Kyi is framed as a representative of those who were or are still not free in Myanmar.

While Suu Kyi herself said that she "advocates cautious optimism", three of the articles examined argued that Suu Kyi is a symbol for democratic change in Myanmar. The successes of the National League for Democracy and of Suu Kyi are treated as representative of overall change within the country. In discussing her role in democracy in Myanmar, Smith-Spark (2012) reported:

> When her party won the 1990 general election in a landslide vote, the military rulers -- in power since 1962 -- refused to let the National League for Democracy serve, nullifying the results. A year later, Suu Kyi won the European Parliament's Sakharov Prize for Freedom of Thought as well as the Nobel Peace Prize, which cited her "nonviolent struggle for democracy and human rights." But she remained in detention. Accepting the prize at the time on his mother's behalf, Alexander Aris said, "I personally believe that, by her own dedication and personal sacrifice, she has come to be a worthy symbol through whom the plight of all the people of Burma may be recognized."

The article also focused on the present situation in Myanmar, explaining:

> The military rulers have since loosened their grip on power, allowing a series of democratic reforms. Her house arrest ended in 2010, and she was able to travel around the country during her party's election campaign this year…Suu Kyi was recently elected to parliament as her National League for Democracy won dozens of seats in by-elections. It remains a minority in parliament, but the elections marked a turning point for the country after decades of oppression by its military rulers."

Considering Suu Kyi did not even leave Myanmar for her husband's death, as was established throughout media coverage of this event, her decision to travel now carries considerable weight. BBC news coverage explains, "Her decision to travel is seen as a sign of confidence in the government of President Thein Sein, who has pursued a course of reform since coming to power last year, in Burma's first elections in 20 years." This article furthers:

> Aung San Suu Kyi referred to Burma's ethnic conflicts and ended by saying that receiving the Nobel Peace Prize had strengthened her faith to work for peace. The two-week-long trip - seen as another milestone for Burma's political progress - includes visits to the UK, Switzerland, Ireland, France and Norway.

This type of coverage of Suu Kyi's travels verges on metonymic. This coverage does not, however, totally conflate Suu Kyi with the government of Myanmar, or Myanmar as a whole. She is still treated as a representative of the state of Myanmar.

Suu Kyi is also treated as a representative of democracy and human rights. An example of this is seen in the NPR coverage of her award in its opening paragraph:

> Nobel Laureate Aung San Suu Kyi, the opposition leader of Myanmar, also known as Burma, spoke in Norway Saturday, formally accepting the peace prize she was awarded

> in 1991 while under house arrest. Her supporters portrayed the moment as a belated victory for democracy and human rights. (Kuhn, 2012)

Here the discussion again edges towards metonymy. Perhaps, this may even be indication of a metonymic shift in discussions surrounding Suu Kyi. Her receiving the award is directly a victory for human rights and democracy, global concepts that are oversimplified through this portrayal.

Metonymic Shift/New Themes

Media coverage of Aung San Suu Kyi's acceptance speech committed the same rhetorical trap as that of Suu Kyi's lecture—oscillating between synecdoche and metonymy as well. As with Suu Kyi's lecture, this oscillation between synecdoche and metonymy by the media ultimately positioned Suu Kyi as a more than a representative of peace or of Myanmar, but rather conflate her with them as the future of a democratic, peaceful Myanmar itself. For example, the Guardian (Beaumont, 2012) article opened in this way:

> In an event hailed as the "most remarkable in the entire history of the Nobel prizes", Aung San Suu Kyi, the Burmese democracy campaigner, delivered her acceptance speech for her peace prize in Oslo's vast City Hall more than two decades after it was awarded.

Here Aung San Suu Kyi is framed as particularly important in regards to the Nobel Peace prize in an absolute way. While this is not explicitly metonymic, further in the article the shift becomes clearer:

> Commended in the original citation for her "non-violent struggle" as "one of the most extraordinary examples of civil courage in Asia in recent decades", the 66-year-old activist, elected to the country's national assembly during its fragile political transition,

> recalled with typical self-effacement the moment at which she heard she had been awarded the peace prize.

Here a surprising trend begins to arise—while Suu Kyi actively attempts to avoid becoming an icon, the Nobel Committee seems set on framing her as such. It is the original award that portrayed her as extremely influential in ways that it seems impossible for any individual to be.

Consistently it was not quotations from Suu Kyi that were expressly metonymic in nature, but instead quotations from the man who introduced her, Thorbjørn Jagland. The then chair of the Nobel Committee, Jagland is quoted by BBC, CNN (Smith-Spark, 2012), and NPR (Kuhn, 2012) speaking of Suu Kyi in ways that conflated her with Myanmar, and democracy in Myanmar. First, Smith-Spark (2012) covered Jagland's praising of Suu Kyi:

> Introducing Suu Kyi, Norwegian Nobel Committee chairman Thorbjørn Jagland paid tribute to her "awe-inspiring tenacity, sacrifice, and firmness of principle." … "Few have done more than you have to make the world a better place for all of us. We thank you for your fearlessness, your tenacity and your strength. "You bring hope to the oppressed people across the world. Your life is a message to all of us... You have paid a high price but you have been spreading hope, and the world needs hope."

The BBC provided another portion of his speech, where he again conflated Suu Kyi and her influence with that of the world:

> Opening the ceremony in Oslo, the chairman of the Norwegian Nobel Committee, Thorbjorn Jagland, said: "In your isolation you have become a moral voice for the whole world." Mr Jagland described her as "a precious gift to the world community".

Finally, NPR covered his additional praise of Suu Kyi in tandem with an explanation, or legitimization, of the choice to give Suu Kyi the award:

> Introducing Suu Kyi, Norwegian Nobel Committee Chairman Thorbjorn Jagland hailed her as a champion of mankind, whose words give hope to the world. He added that his committee was right to award her the prize, and that thanks to people like her, democratic states will always prevail over autocratic ones. (Kuhn, 2012)

Each of these examples of media coverage of Thorbjørn Jagland's introduction provide an important finding, that indeed it may be the Nobel Committee and its members in addition to the press that are contributing to the metonymic shift around Aung San Suu Kyi.

What does this mean for Aung San Suu Kyi? Coclanis (2018) argues that "Western liberals erred 25 years ago in believing that Aung San Suu Kyi was somehow the avatar of universal human rights. Rather, she bravely championed human rights in the specific context of the overwhelmingly Buddhist nation-state of Myanmar, and she put a lot on the line in doing so." In many ways it may have been the Nobel Prize itself that undermined all of Suu Kyi's work to avoid becoming an icon. This is not to excuse Suu Kyi in her failings, but to instead attempt to provide an explanation for why Suu Kyi's failings came as such a surprise to Western audiences. Coclanis (2018) explained that, "Western liberals projected their own hopes onto "the Lady" — and then blamed her for not living up to them." It was not the platform the award gave her that resulted in her image being conflated with that of her country and made it so unbelievable when she failed, but what the award symbolizes and how the award committee spoke about Suu Kyi and the Nobel Peace prize.

CHAPTER 5. REPRESENTATIVE VS. REPLACEMENT - IMPLICATIONS

When Aung San Suu Kyi received the Nobel Peace prize in 1991 she was under house arrest and unable to attend the award ceremony, so her sons and husband accepted the award in her place. Over 20 years later, in 2012, she was finally able to accept the award in person. This award, and her subsequent acceptance speech offered an international platform for Suu Kyi *and* the international community to craft a political image of hope, democracy, and freedom for not just Myanmar but the international community itself. Such rhetorical constructions, however, are fraught with tension and contradiction, and thus carry with them uneven political consequences.

Indeed, Aung San Suu Kyi's rhetorical choices in her Nobel lecture led to her oscillating between synecdochal and metonymic framings. This tension, however, was undermined by the Nobel committee's emphasis on metonymic framing. This matters, for as Hayden White (1973) establishes, the ways in which history is explained and framed impacts the ways in which we think about both it and the individuals who make up the narratives. Different rhetorical choices link to different types of narrative emplotment, which link to different ideologies: liberalism, conservativism, anarchist, or radical. Suu Kyi and the media coverage of her shifts between these.

While Suu Kyi claims to prefer to see herself as a politician and not an icon, her oscillation between synecdoche and metonymy paired with her narrative use results in a figure that is difficult to identify as separate from both the country of Myanmar as a whole and from international ideals of peace and democracy. The international communities' rhetoric surrounding Suu Kyi, especially in regards to the Nobel Committee, further position Suu Kyi as a metonymic figure. These findings can be understood through a brief summary, a return to the Rohingya, discussion of applications outside of Suu Kyi, and finally some recommendations for

future research. Suu Kyi has orchestrated narratives surrounding herself for decades, yet, that may all be for naught.

Suu Kyi has been criticized since 2012 for her inaction regarding the plight of the Rohingya in the Rakhine region (NPR, 2012). First it was her refusal to speak on the matter, and later her denials regarding the situation. These are some of the largest critiques of Suu Kyi since she entered the public spotlight region (Brooten et al., 2015; Brooten, 2015; Lee, 2014). While violence in this region has occurred since before Suu Kyi had any true political power (Brooten 2015), this has not stopped the public from voicing their disappointment. Many have even called for Nobel rules to be changed in order to revoke her peace prize, a step that has been taken with other awards that she received over the past two decades (Coclanis, 2018).

These criticisms of Suu Kyi piqued an interest in the rhetoric that surrounded her. This was narrowed down into tropes and narrative. Narrative in this instance consists of narrative coherence and narrative fidelity. The narrative paradigm uses these two concepts to explain how humans can be influenced by narrative (Fisher, 1984).The main tropes used where metonymy and synecdoche. As stories attempt to simplify complex situations for their listeners, they rely on representative language through the use of synecdoche (Burke, 1945; Lakoff & Johnson, 1980). In understanding the impact of Suu Kyi's use of these rhetorical tools, and the media's expansion of them, the analysis was able to further conceptualize how narrative and metaphor influence the public understanding of history (White, 1973).

In order to apply these theories to Aung San Suu Kyi it was first necessary to understand some of the complexities of the situation in Myanmar. To do this historical context was needed. This was found through examining several key actors, including the Rohingya, Aung San, the Military, and Aung San Suu Kyi. By understanding this context it becomes easier to understand

how Myanmar functions today. The Rohingya have faced violence in Myanmar off and on for decades, in part due to immigration during the colonial period (Coclanis, 2018). The Rohingya have been treated as outsiders, often referred to as 'illegal Bengalis' (Al-Mahmood, 2016; Coclanis, 2018). Much of this consistent persecution came from the majority group in Myanmar, Buddhist Burmese. The aggression towards the Burmese bubbled over again in 2012, and escalated thereafter.

Much like the Rohingya's current plight can be linked to colonial times, so too can the success of Aung San. Aung San was a revolutionary leader in Myanmar, who was assassinated when his daughter, Suu Kyi, was quite young. Aung San fought against colonization, and helped Myanmar gain its independence. Aung San's work has led many to call him Bogyoke Aung San or The Fourth Great Warrior King (Al-Mahmood, 2016). The treatment of Aung San as a sort of mythical figure contributes to his overall standing in Myanmar's mythos, and also plays into Suu Kyi's political power as well. Suu Kyi is a singular part of a complex political system, and the rhetoric surrounding her in relation to her father both gives her power and obscures the complexity of the time in-between his assassination and her rise to power. Suu Kyi relies on the use of narrative to portray herself as a romantic figure, which according to Hayden White (1973) carries with it anarchist political implications. This is because Suu Kyi uses her family and global ideas of peace to set herself above the complexities of Myanmar and of the world.

This aspect of emplotment, according to White (1973), should rely on metaphor in her framing of herself as an anarchic figure, one who is above politics. Yet, in many ways, Suu Kyi's use of metonymy and synecdoche frame operate in tension with Suu Kyi's romantic portrayal, and thus figure her ideology as more radical or conservative, depending on her approach to the topic at hand (White, 1973). At points she relies on metonymy to position herself as synonymous

with a larger idea or concept, and thus portrays herself as a tragic, radical figure. She links to stories of her past in ways that shows her as a figure of action, as an individual who created systemic change. In regard to her father, Suu Kyi uses his narrative to tap into the mythos of Myanmar, setting herself above the politics and instead calling upon a story that supersedes politics in Myanmar. Yet, she shifts into synecdoche as well, taking a more conservative approach. Suu Kyi urged caution in her lecture, and backed away from the idea that she alone can create change in the future. While her recollections of her past show a radical who is fighting the system, Suu Kyi's discussion of the future is one of someone who plans to work within the system, who is suspicious of change to the status quo—a conservative.

The result is that the complexity of the situation in Myanmar is oversimplified in Suu Kyi's lecture and the media coverage that followed it. To some extent this is understandable, in that full coverage of these complexities would be difficult in the time frame available. Aung San's assassination also explains to some extent why the democratic government in Myanmar was eventually overthrown by the military. The military has been a major power in Myanmar for decades, controlling the government and taking part in political oppression. The military, even after the country opened up in 2012, has maintained veto power and other political influence. For decades Myanmar was controlled by its military and led into poverty (Rotberg, 1998). Aung San's assassination left a vacuum in leadership that, in part, allowed the Tatmadaw to rise into power through a coup 'd'état in 1962 (Davis & Selvidge, 2006).

Suu Kyi does attempt to recognize this historical complexity and avoid over reduction within her speech by acknowledging problems that still existed within the country at the time. This can be seen as an attempt to work within the system, and reflective of her synecdochal rhetorical choices. Here she portrays herself as a conservative. The media coverage, however,

was laxer with this type of cautionary language, often shifting back into metonymy and treating Suu Kyi more like a radical than a conservative. Suu Kyi's ability to leave the country is treated as overcoming the military, and their political role is reduced in relation to discussion of her political power. This language fluctuates discussions of Suu Kyi between being an anarchist who is beyond politics, yet also touches on the idea of her ideologies being more radical in nature, as one who will upend and change the system in Myanmar. At the same time Suu Kyi is positioning herself as a conservative, one who is unwilling to quickly change the status quo.

While the military and her father played a role in Suu Kyi's image building, in many ways it seems the Rohingya and other ethnic groups were left out of the conversation. It was the military leadership that Aung San Suu Kyi stood up to in 1988 as part of the 8888 uprising. Suu Kyi's rise to power has been influenced both by her father's image and by the military that she spoke against (Davis & Selvidge, 2006; Gorsevski, 2013; Palmer-Mehta, 2009). Coclanis (2018) argues "Aung San Suu Kyi isn't a monster. She's a political realist, attempting to do the best she can with limited power in an extremely volatile young democracy where the military wields massive veto power." He furthers:

> However horrific the situation in Rakhine—and it is truly horrific—it is important to remember that today's crisis didn't begin in 2016. Buddhist-Muslim conflict goes way back in Myanmar, due in part to the large influx of Muslim laborers from South Asia into the country during the colonial period. The British colonizers encouraged such migration, and tensions between the large Buddhist majority and the small Muslim minority have flared up intermittently in various parts of the country since 1948, when Myanmar (then known as Burma) became independent.

Essentially, Coclanis (2018) is arguing that Suu Kyi is a politician. While the plight of the Rohingya is heart-breaking, there is likely little she can do to change their situation without changing the system itself, which her consistent positioning as a conservative indicates she is unlikely to do. She is a Burman Buddhist who is trying to hold together a country largely made up of Burman Buddhists. She is interested in maintaining her position of power in the existing systems, and to do so she is willing to sacrifice those she does not deem necessary. For Suu Kyi, she inherited a government that had already revoked Rohingya citizenship, and a population who had been primed to hate them. She is attempting to maintain and manage a young country. Again, this is not to excuse Suu Kyi's actions, but instead contextualize them, and explain the consequences of her choices.

Suu Kyi's actions quickly gained international attention, resulting in the nomination and eventual bestowal of the Nobel Peace Prize in 1991, just years after the 8888 uprising. When eventual democratic change did occur in Myanmar, she was able to leave the country and officially accept the award in 2012. This acceptance speech formed the content that was analyzed in Chapter 3. In the analysis of Suu Kyi's lecture three main themes arose: narrative of peace, narrative of genealogy, and metonymy and synecdoche. Each of these narratives and metaphors Suu Kyi uses influence the ways in which her history is perceived. In her lecture Suu Kyi relied on synecdoche and metonymy within her narratives to establish herself as a radical in terms of the changes that have occurred in Myanmar, but also as a conservative who must work within the current system. The tension between these fractures Suu Kyi's image between a radical global icon who will change the system, and a conservative politician who must work with what she has available.

Suu Kyi's lecture focused heavily on what peace meant to her, the recipient of the Nobel Peace Prize. She used stories of her past, cultural narratives, and World War I to explain the concept of peace. These narratives combined internal and external consistencies through the use of narrative fidelity and narrative coherence. She uses stories of her time under house arrest to build her mythos. Explaining that she heard over the radio she had received the award, this highlighted a stark reality, that the Nobel Peace Prize recipient lacked the freedom to travel as she pleased. The narrative of peace extended beyond her personal experience in Myanmar, with Suu Kyi describing her time visiting refugees, and integrating World War I into her discussion. These more global concepts allow for a connection with the global audience that she was addressing. Allowing for these external and internal connections, both through maintaining her internal values and appealing to external ones, Suu Kyi's discussion on peace fits well within the narrative paradigm.

Similar themes are found in her narrative of genealogy. She uses the story of her father, and that of her husband and sons within her lecture. As has been established, Suu Kyi's father Aung San was a major figure in Myanmar's independence, with some calling him the "George Washington of Myanmar" (Coclanis, 2018). Suu Kyi has been up front with the impact that her father has had on her political career, and she also continues to use his actions and assassination along with her experiences with her father to establish herself and her legitimacy. Suu Kyi's children also are mentioned within her lecture. Specifically she opens with a story of her son Alexander. Her position as a mother aids in humanizing her to global audiences, and also provides some narrative coherence. These familial relations and genealogical narratives allowed for Suu Kyi to set up her metonymic positioning.

While Suu Kyi does use metonymy some in her lecture, analysis in Chapter 3 found that she largely relied on synecdoche instead. Synecdoche, as an aspect of metonymy, allowed for Suu Kyi to build an image that was intimately tied with Myanmar and global democracy/peace. Within her lecture Suu Kyi often conflates her actions with those of Myanmar, Myanmar's government, the NLD, and fights for democracy across the globe. She does this through comparing her experience to that of other prisoners of conscience (and calling for their release) and use of 'us', 'we', 'our' and other inclusive language. These language choices led to both metonymic and synechdocal positioning. At points Suu Kyi acted as a representative of the people of Myanmar, and the systems within the country. At other points Suu Kyi aligned herself with global values and spoke more like a radical figure.

While Suu Kyi's lecture provided a place to analyze her presentation of self, the analysis in Chapter 4 moves to analyze how that transitions into media coverage of the event. Here the source of the anarchist image of Suu Kyi begins to be clarified. This is where her treatment as above politics is most prominent. Through examining five different media sources the way that Suu Kyi is portrayed to international audiences could be better understood. This media coverage repeated Suu Kyi's narratives of peace and genealogy, but showed more metonymic positioning than Suu Kyi's original lecture. While her synechdocal positioning was repeated in this coverage, some of the context that was included accounted for this change. It was this context that displayed the most prominent view of Suu Kyi's narrative as being romantic in nature. It is this context that positions her as being above politics, as beving an anarchist. This same context also relies on metonymy, positioning Suu Kyi as a radical revolutionary who is upending the systems that existed inn Myanmar.

The narratives of peace and genealogy found in the media coverage of Suu Kyi's lecture was very similar to the lecture itself. While the narrative of peace focused heavily on Suu Kyi's own words, context for Myanmar in 2012 was included as well. This ranged from explaining Suu Kyi's political position to critiquing her inaction regarding the Rohingya. The narrative of genealogy went further. There was more information in media coverage versus her lecture regarding her family members, especially her mother and husband. Suu Kyi's visit to her mother is part of her original involvement with the democracy movement in Myanmar, as is covered by multiple media sources. Both of Suu Kyi's parents impacted her political future. Suu Kyi's separation from her sons, as well as her husband's death, are touched on by multiple articles as well. These narratives help to humanize Suu Kyi, as well as highlight her values, including valuing family.

What was unexpected in this media coverage was how quickly it shifted from Suu Kyi's use of synecdoche, and into metonymy. While the media repeated some of Suu Kyi's synecdochal language, such as "What was more important, the prize had drawn the attention of the world to the struggle for democracy and human rights in Burma. We were not going to be forgotten." This statement, along with others like it, helped to continue Suu Kyi's positioning. However, some of the contextual coverage included more metonymy. This shifted the rhetoric into metonymy, fully replacing other objects with Suu Kyi and conflating her role and power. Much of this came from then Nobel Committee Chairman Thorbjørn Jagland. Jagland's descriptions of Suu Kyi are metonymic in nature. He positioned Suu Kyi both as a revolutionary in Myanmar, who is changing systems, but also as a global symbol, a radical beacon above it all. As a spokesperson for the Nobel Committee Jagland's comments carry particular weight. For instance, he called Suu Kyi "a moral voice for the whole world".

What this meant for Suu Kyi as an icon is that Jagland's comments resulted in metonymic positioning showing her as a Western figure. Suu Kyi used the platform of the award, and the award itself, to position herself as a radical Western influenced democratic icon. Suu Kyi has had to balance multiple problems within Myanmar, as many politicians must do within the countries they serve. Yet, there have been serious criticisms of Suu Kyi's lack of action regarding the Rohingya. Further, attempts by Suu Kyi to deny the situation worsened her public image. What this analysis sought to find, was why Suu Kyi encountered such a strong reaction. The Nobel Peace Prize, and the Norwegian Nobel committee contributed to the image of Suu Kyi as a hero for democracy, a moral voice who was infallible. She faces many of the same problems as other politicians around the world, and must choose her battles. Suu Kyi was always focused on the interests of the Burmese in particular. She has always been a Burmese Buddhist.

While this analysis of Suu Kyi proves interesting, the potential impact of the Nobel Peace Prize on rhetoric surrounding other recipients should be taken into consideration as well. Does the Nobel Peace prize result in metonymic shifts around the recipients, and does this shift position them as icons? As seen through the analysis of Suu Kyi, this may be likely. The language that surrounds the prize itself, and its recipients, could actually undermine those who receive the award. Creating icons who are treated as though they can solve incredibly complex problems on their own only sets those individuals up for failure. The Rohingya should have received far more help and protection, yet so should many marginalized groups across the globe. What this analysis demonstrates is that the Nobel Peace Prize, and awards like it, could be primed to cause more harm than good when it comes to how people discuss political figures and other recipients.

To better understand this effect more research is necessary. This could be done through both analysis of other Nobel recipients, and analysis of other awards. Suu Kyi provided a unique case study, especially considering how tumultuous Myanmar still is. Other individuals in the same position, throughout the history of this award, should be analyzed to see if this trend permeates this award. Throughout her time as a darling of democracy Suu Kyi received many awards, some of which have now been rescinded. It is possible that these other awards also contributed to the building of Suu Kyi's image, and that possibility should be taken into consideration. Each of these awards, and the coverage of them, could provide an area to identify trends like those found in this analysis. In addition, the possible roles of privilege, such as Suu Kyi's education, should be analyzed. What influence does wealth, familial influence, or even education have on the possible consequences of these awards?

As Coclanis (2018) said, Aung San Suu Kyi is no monster. Suu Kyi is simply a politician doing what she believes is right for the country she serves. Yet, she also is limited in her power, and must make difficult decisions regarding complex issues within the country. She inherited many problems in Myanmar, a country that has had a complex history. At the same time, Suu Kyi could have returned to her outsider role, and questioned the system itself instead of working within it. As a political pragmatist—and not revolutionary—Suu Kyi opted to use her power in ways that ultimately worked to conserve her political power. She has actively chosen to ignore the plight of the Rohingya, a fact that cannot be forgotten. The rhetorical choices used by Suu Kyi and the media that reported on her contributed to the metonymic shift in her image. Suu Kyi is in no way blameless, yet this analysis shows that the situation is far more complex than it seems.

Suu Kyi is being conservative in many ways, both within Myanmar and within global discussions on democracy. Despite Suu Kyi's attempts to maintain her conservative position, her use of metonymy lends itself to her radical past. However, the international community wants her to be a particular kind of radical, one who upends the system, but who also is an anarchist in that what she stands for is above the politics of it all. Yet, when Suu Kyi failed these expectations it was her place as a romantic figure that was criticized, with Wescott and Watson (2018) reporting:

> As for the responsibility of Suu Kyi and her civilian government, which hold power in cooperation with the military, the UN report said they had "contributed to the commission of atrocity crimes" through their "acts and omissions. The State Counselor, Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, has not used her de facto position as Head of Government, nor her moral authority, to stem or prevent the unfolding events in Rakhine State," the report said.

What Hayden White (1973) would argue is that the politician or figure that is needed is someone who can take an "Ironic" perspective, recognizing the limits and contradictions within a given moment. If framed this way, through irony, rather than metonymy and tragedy, Suu Kyi may have been able to better handle responses to the Rohingya. The complexities and context of her situation would be part of her story. Instead, Suu Kyi is treated either as a romantic figure who is somehow beyond politics, a tragic figure who falls to metonymic language, or a conservative, who is framed through synecdoche. Suu Kyi is a politician who has failed a portion of Myanmar by refusing to protect them. Yet, she is also still an iconic figure, with the Peace Prize to back her up.

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