

THE SEARCH FOR MEANING IN
**POSTMODERN
POETRY**

A Logotherapeutic Reading of
Derek Walcott, Carol Ann Duffy, and Paul Muldoon

Dr. Tuba AYDAN



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Editor: Prof. Dr. Abdul Serdar ÖZTÜRK

This book is based on the PhD thesis entitled “Search for Meaning in the Selected Poems of Derek Walcott, Carol Ann Duffy, and Paul Muldoon in Light of Logotherapy”, authored by Tuba AYDAN within the Department of English Language and Literature, Institute of Graduate Programs, Karabük University.

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FOREWORD

In a postmodern era with no universal truths or guiding values, lack of faith, scepticism, and relativism among individuals all lead to profound disorientation and fragmentation of worlds and identities in severe forms. As a result, individuals in the twenty-first century are compelled to take personal responsibility and exercise their freedom to create meaning in an otherwise absurd world through intentional choices and interactions. This dissertation explores the search for meaning in the poetry of Derek Walcott, Carol Ann Duffy, and Paul Muldoon through the ideas of Viktor Frankl's Logotherapy. The emphasis lies on how their efforts delve into the triad of pathways that lead to the exploration of meaning – creative, experiential and attitudinal pathways. Each poet draws upon their unique cultural and historical background, using poetry to confront life's challenges and search for purpose. Walcott's poetry reflects postcolonial struggles and cultural identity; Duffy's pieces emphasize the transformative power of love and personal experience, while Muldoon's postmodern style embraces creative expression to attain meaning. The study demonstrates how these poets employ their craft to explore individual and collective suffering, offering deep insights into the human quest for a meaningful life. By analysing their work through the lens of Logotherapy's pathways, this book underscores the enduring relevance of poetry in confronting existential questions in a postmodern society.

The postmodern landscape of the twenty-first century is often characterised by a profound existential unease. In the wake of postmodern thought, which interrogates grand narratives and universal truths, individuals are frequently left navigating a world that can appear fragmented, disoriented, and devoid of inherent guidance. This condition of scepticism and relativism, while liberating in its assertion of freedom, simultaneously imposes a weighty burden: the imperative to construct meaning personally in a universe that may seem intrinsically absurd. It is against this backdrop of cultural and philosophical pressure that the present study gains its urgency and relevance.

This book, born from a doctoral dissertation in English Language and Literature, posits that literature—and poetry in particular—remains a

vital arena for this fundamental human project. It argues that the poetic act is not merely an aesthetic endeavour but a form of existential testimony and meaning-creation. To illuminate this process, the work turns to the profound psychological framework of Viktor Emil Frankl's Logotherapy. Frankl's conviction that the primary motivational force in life is the "will to meaning," and his articulation of three primary pathways to discover it—through creative deeds, experiential encounters, and the adoption of a purposeful attitude toward unavoidable suffering—provide a remarkably fertile lens for literary analysis.

The exploration focuses on three distinct and major poetic voices: Derek Walcott, Carol Ann Duffy, and Paul Muldoon. Each poet, shaped by unique cultural, historical, and stylistic currents—postcolonial Caribbean, contemporary British, and postmodern Irish-American—confronts the abyss of meaninglessness from a different vantage point. Walcott grapples with the fragmentation and synthesis of postcolonial identity; Duffy delves into the transformative potential of love, memory, and personal narrative; and Muldoon embraces linguistic play, ambiguity, and creative performativity as bulwarks against chaos. Together, they offer a rich, comparative tapestry of how the poetic imagination responds to existential challenge.

By applying Frankl's triadic model to their selected works, this study achieves a significant interdisciplinary synthesis. It moves beyond traditional literary criticism to demonstrate how Logotherapy's principles are enacted *within* artistic expression. The analysis reveals that these poets are not just describing the search for meaning; they are actively performing it through the very structures of their verse. In doing so, this book makes a dual contribution: it enriches our understanding of Walcott, Duffy, and Muldoon by framing their oeuvres within a coherent existential framework, and it boldly expands the application of Logotherapy beyond the clinical setting into the realm of aesthetic philosophy.

Ultimately, this book underscores the enduring power of poetry to serve as a crucial companion in the human struggle for orientation and significance. It affirms that in the act of reading and interpreting these charged linguistic creations, we too participate in the perpetual, necessary, and hopeful quest for meaning.

NOTE TO THE READER

This book is structured as a detailed scholarly investigation that bridges literary studies, existential philosophy, and psychological theory. Its core is a sustained analysis of poetry through the conceptual framework of Viktor E. Frankl's Logotherapy. To best engage with its arguments, the reader may find the following points of orientation useful:

Interdisciplinary Approach: The study consciously operates at the intersection of disciplines. While its primary texts are poems, its key analytical tool is derived from existential psychology. Chapters will therefore interweave close textual reading with explanations and applications of Frankl's concepts. No prior deep knowledge of Logotherapy is assumed; relevant principles are introduced and contextualised as needed.

Methodology and Organisation: The research employs a qualitative, comparative methodology. After establishing the theoretical and cultural context, the analysis proceeds poet-by-poet. Each major chapter is dedicated to one author (Walcott, Duffy, Muldoon) and examines how their work exemplifies, interrogates, or complicates Frankl's three pathways to meaning: the Creative (through making or accomplishing), the Experiential (through encountering people, beauty, or ideas), and the Attitudinal (through the stance taken toward unavoidable suffering).

The examination relies on close reading—a careful, line-by-line attention to thematic content, figurative language, structure, and tone. This is complemented by a dialogical application of ideas, where the poems are placed in conversation with Frankl's model, not to force a rigid fit, but to uncover a dynamic interplay between psychological theory and artistic expression.

Scope and Selection: The poets selected represent diverse but central strands in late-twentieth and early-twenty-first-century poetry in English. Their differing backgrounds are crucial to the argument, demonstrating that the search for meaning is a universal concern manifested in culturally specific forms. The poems analysed within were chosen for their direct engagement with existential themes—life, death, love, identity, suffering, and artistic creation—making them particularly resonant for a Logotherapeutic reading.

Aims for the Reader: It is hoped that this study will serve two primary audiences. For scholars of contemporary poetry, it offers a new critical lens through which to view the works of Walcott, Duffy, and Muldoon, connecting their aesthetic projects to a broader humanistic pursuit. For readers interested in existential questions more generally, it demonstrates how literature provides a unique, nuanced, and emotionally potent domain for exploring what it means to live a meaningful life.

The journey through these pages is, in essence, an extended reflection on the capacity of art to help us see, feel, and articulate the meanings we courageously create in an uncertain world.

Dr. Tuba AYDAN

CHAPTER ONE – LOGOTHERAPY AND LITERARY MEANING

All passions and strivings of man are
attempts to find an answer to his existence.

--Eric Fromm, *The Sane Society*

The human search for meaning is a universal experience that shapes how individuals interpret their lives and the world around them. At its essence, literature captures this pursuit, as writers strive for deeper insight through creative expression. Poetry, fiction, and drama have long served as mirrors of the philosophical concerns of their time, revealing life's meaning as perceived by the artists. Historical events—such as world wars, genocides, economic depressions, and rapid technological advancements—have intensified this quest, leading to shifts in attitudes marked by estrangement, self-doubt, and identity crises. One can notice dramatically changed attitudes and moods during this period, which is full of estrangement, self-doubt, and identity problems. With an increasing reliance on reason and a strong emphasis on individual autonomy, many have experienced a gradual decline in the importance of religious beliefs and practices. As Weisskopf-Joelson (1972) contends, the absence of meaning compels people to question life's purpose more than when meaning is clearly present. In this context, the pursuit of meaning has never been more critical.

In response to the disillusionment brought on by modern and postmodern experiences, existentialist philosophy emerged as a framework for examining the quest for meaning. At its core, existential thought posits that the individual is not merely an abstract idea but a living, dynamic being constantly in search of purpose—both from within and in relation to the external world. From this viewpoint, personal identity emerges from the freedom to make choices; every decision becomes an act of self-creation, carrying the weight of responsibility in shaping identity. In contemporary society, the quest for meaning can often feel elusive. Many existential

philosophers maintain that embracing both freedom and the inherent responsibilities that accompany it is essential to creating a life imbued with purpose. Addressing this fundamental challenge, Viktor Emil Frankl (1905–1997) developed Logotherapy—a modern adaptation of existential thought—that confronts the erosion of human dignity and the rising tide of nihilism in today’s world. Frankl’s method rests on three fundamental elements—meaning, freedom, and responsibility—and he proposes three distinct pathways—creative, experiential, and attitudinal—that guide individuals toward discovering their ultimate purpose (Frankl, 2000, p. 115). This research explores how the poetry of Derek Walcott, Carol Ann Duffy, and Paul Muldoon reflects a search for meaning. As a major contribution to psychotherapy, Logotherapy—developed after Freud’s psychoanalysis and Adler’s Individual Psychology—offers a distinctive perspective for examining literary expressions of purpose and identity. In addition, the research reconsiders the contributions of Frankl’s intellectual predecessors and reexamines central aspects of psychoanalytic theory, highlighting their enduring role in deepening the understanding of human existence.

1.1. A Concise Historical Overview of Viennese Schools of Psychotherapy

Psychoanalysis is an intensive form of individual psychotherapy that explores connections between the conscious and the unconscious aspects of the mind and helps develop a deep understanding of some of the inner processes that govern one’s thoughts and feelings. In the early 20th century, this definition became more specific in that ‘psychoanalysis’ came to refer mainly to the psychoanalytic theory founded by the well-known Austrian neurologist Sigmund Freud. It is based on the understanding that every human has a conscious mind, which contains thoughts and feelings that they are aware of, and an unconscious mind, which stores and records all pain and hurt they have experienced (Freud, 1977). Freud’s ideas have impacted many other disciplines, from psychology and film studies to literary theory. In this respect, psychoanalytic criticism is a literary criticism that builds on Freudian psychology theories. In short, early applications of psychoanalytic theory to literature began with Freud himself, who worked on psychoanalytic treatments for psychological disorders.

Although psychoanalytic theory and psychoanalytic literary criticism began with the groundbreaking and influential work of Sigmund Freud, the theory has expanded and been revised by other key figures in the field, such as Carl Gustav Jung, Alfred Adler, and Jacques Lacan. It is important to note that the examination of the founders of this field cannot be done

simplistically or straightforwardly, as each of them has made significant contributions that have shaped the discourse on this captivating topic. In brief, all psychologists firmly believe that every individual has a driving force that inevitably impacts and decides actions. At the same time, they differ greatly in terms of the factors that prompt this driving force and the methods to interpret and regulate it. This section aims to thoroughly present psychoanalytic theory's brief history and significance within literary studies, focusing on the three Viennese Schools of Psychotherapy. It allows readers to develop a precise and enlightening viewpoint of the background and evolution of the core concepts revealed in Viktor Frankl's Logotherapy.

Despite the numerous individuals throughout history who have possessed immense intellectual capabilities in the fields of literature, philosophy, art, and religion, it was the distinguished Austrian neurologist Sigmund Freud (1856-1939) - the founder of the First Viennese School of Psychotherapy—who first embarked on a methodical exploration of the human psyche through a scientific lens. Freud's extensive investigations into psychoanalysis provided a thorough understanding of the human mind and its mental disorders. Additionally, he discovered a successful psychological approach to address and alleviate spiritual anguish, marking the first instance of objective psychological measures being used for such purposes (Freud, 1899). Freud initially focused on medical cases involving middle-class women who exhibited symptoms of hysteria. As he progressed in his research on the function of the human mind, he delved into the concept of the dynamic unconscious, proposing that the unconscious mind operates autonomously and has the potential to influence conscious thoughts. He discovered that the dynamic unconscious serves as a reservoir for socially unacceptable ideas, repressed desires, distressing memories, and painful emotions (Freud, 1938). Freud concluded that these repressed ideas within the unconscious always strive for expression. An ongoing exchange of information and impact exists between the conscious and unconscious realms. Freud (1915) even likened this relationship to an iceberg, with the larger, submerged portion representing the unconscious and the smaller, visible portion representing the conscious mind. The conscious mind operates based on the Reality Principle, which aims to satisfy the id's desires practically and socially appropriately. Unlike the Pleasure Principle, which governs the unconscious mind, the Reality Principle recognises that impulses cannot always be satisfied due to the necessity of conforming to societal norms. In summary, while the unconscious mind is the driving force behind human actions and thoughts, conscious thinking also plays a significant role in an individual's behaviour, learning processes, judgment, and decision-making.

In addition, Freud claimed that the three basic forces which govern human behaviour are the id, which includes the basic and unconscious drives; the ego, which is the conscious and consequential drive; and the superego, which is the unconscious control imposed by society—this is the conscience (Freud, 2017). For instance, the newborn baby's psyche is the id, responsible for unconscious urges. It is the mind's most basic and primal aspect, operating based on the Pleasure Principle and seeking immediate satisfaction, specifically based on sexuality. It is not bound by concepts such as time, space, or logical reasoning; instead, it is guided by a 'primary process' (Freud, 1923). On the other hand, the ego is a spiritual part that develops from the id, transforming its impulses within the constraints of the Reality Principle. The ego's main role is to assess reality through rational judgment and balance it with the impulses originating from the id, aiming for continual satisfaction. The ego operates through the power of judgment and employs a 'secondary process' of thinking, which revolves around evaluating reality and circumstances. The ego employs defence mechanisms that prevent incompatible impulses and desires from entering conscious awareness to protect itself (Freud, 1977). These defence mechanisms operate unconsciously, so it is important to note that consciousness and ego should not be considered synonymous. However, functions such as evaluating reality and reasoning are conscious aspects of the ego. Lastly, the superego is a primarily unconscious spiritual component that emerges as cultural factors are internalised by a segment of the ego. To conclude, in Freudian theory, human instincts, and sexual impulses in the early years are the primary movers in human development; thus, interacting with psychic and emotional factors, they account for every neurotic illness. At this very junction, his friend and follower, Alfred Adler, departed from the Freudian theory with his different point of view.

Alfred Adler (1870–1937) was born in Vienna and studied medicine at the University of Vienna, where he obtained his medical degree in 1895. He met Freud and soon became a member of the Vienna Psychoanalytic Society. A year later, Adler founded the Society for Free Psychoanalysis, whose members later became the core of the future Society for Individual Psychology—The Second Viennese School of Psychotherapy. In 1911, he was elected president of the Vienna Psychoanalytic Society and International Psychoanalytic Association (IPA) following his break from Freud (Brett, 1997). He held that libidinal drive is just one segment of an overall psychosexual development running parallel to other phases in the life of the child and adult. For the child who is only growing, the genital organs have no functions, and psychosexual development is inseparable from general development. According to Adler (1930), if humans are not seen as a whole, the field of psychology and the attempt to understand people

would be meaningless. He introduced new perspectives that emphasised the importance of overcoming inferiority complexes, whether they are real or imagined, to achieve personal growth. Adler (1927) believed that individuals are born with a vulnerable body and soul and, therefore, seek superiority throughout their lives to compensate for this weakness. People strive to improve their social status and create a positive self-image, but excessive efforts can develop an inferiority complex, causing distress. Ultimately, Adler claimed that personality structure is unique, and that individuals' motives can be understood through their values and expectations, which provides a more holistic perspective than Freud's.

Widely recognised as a significant contributor to the Viennese School of Psychotherapy, following his predecessors as the third pioneer in this field, Viktor Emil Frankl (1905-1997) was a prominent figure in neurology and psychiatry. He began his intellectual development influenced by classical psychoanalysis. However, he soon discovered that the Freudian viewpoint regarding the human mind and the causes of neuroses was overly simplistic and limited. Later, Frankl became a part of Adler's Individual Psychology community and disapproved of Freud's concepts. In 1926, he provided an explanation expressing his reservations about the conventional method of psychotherapy. He proposed a supplementary treatment approach inspired by Adler's Individual Psychology, specifically about understanding neuroses. Subsequently, his attention shifted towards the functionality of the cognitive process, leading him to undertake a critical analysis of Adlerian perspectives as well. During that period, there were predominantly two critiques regarding Adler's Individual Psychology: Firstly, it was a reductionist technique that focused solely on one aspect of human nature. It hypothesised that neuroses arose from conflicting emotions related to feelings of belonging, strength, and the aspiration for achievements. Secondly, Adler's psychological and social utilitarian standpoint did not effectively differentiate between rules and values. (Frankl et al., 2010) Therefore, a divergence arose between Adler and the anthropological party within the Union of Individual Psychology. After his mentors, Oswald Schwarz and Rudolf Allers, expressed different views, Frankl was also expelled from the union because of his 'unconventional' perspectives. As a result, he decided to embrace Max Ferdinand Scheler's "Formalism in Ethics" as a crucial source of objectivity and values. He defended this work as having saved him from falling into psychologism—the tendency to explain every phenomenon solely through psychology. As a final consequence, Frankl's professional journey in psychotherapy can be seen as a continuous exploration of the essential needs of the human mind, both in the twentieth century and beyond.

Frankl established the Third Viennese School of Psychotherapy, proposing that individuals who grasp the meaning of life and take initiative are not controlled by their instincts or repressed emotions, nor do they strive for power and superiority. That is because once people discover life's meaning, including their responsibilities and commitments, that unique meaning becomes a guiding force (Weisskopf-Joelson, 1975). Freud and Adler's ideas regarding the needs of the human mind merely delay the search for meaning, in which individuals seek their reason for existence (Wong, 2014). Frankl takes a more humanistic approach compared to his predecessors. He respects Freud and Adler, considering their early contributions as the foundation of Logotherapy. Still, Frankl believes he has a better understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the field. Thus, he states, "(...) there are cases in which ordinary psychotherapy must be applied, but only Logotherapy can achieve a complete cure" (Frankl, 1986, p. 12). Frankl's school is open to various supplementary techniques and treatments, making it highly eclectic (Pytell, 2015). As a result, Logotherapy aims to complement current psychotherapy rather than replace it, providing a holistic perspective on the human condition with a focus on spirituality.

When discussing the three Viennese schools of psychotherapy, Frankl (2011) highlights objectivity, courage, and a sense of responsibility as the three virtues of humanity. He assigns these virtues to each school as follows: The Freudian school represents objectivity, as Freud introduced a groundbreaking therapy incorporating libidinal factors into academic psychology, a previously neglected area. The essence of Adlerian Individual Psychotherapy is courage, manifested in the defiance of human inferiorities through the pursuit of superiority. Lastly, the third school of psychotherapy emphasises responsible action, which forms the foundation of Logotherapy. Unlike other schools, Logotherapy places great importance on the idea that life necessitates action from individuals and that embracing one's duties promotes happiness. Consequently, Frankl (2014) regards Freud's "will to pleasure" and Adler's "will to power" as by-products of the "will to meaning," wherein the fulfilment of meaning naturally brings pleasure, and the pursuit of any form of power becomes essential for a meaningful journey (p. 35).

Following Frankl's death in 1997, his legacy continued through the dedicated work of his students, colleagues, and organizations devoted to promoting Logotherapy. His successors maintained his concepts and further developed and modified them to tackle current issues, ensuring their significance in today's psychological field. A key figure in the post-Frankl period is Austrian Dr. Elisabeth Lukas (1942-), a clinical psychologist and a dedicated disciple of Frankl. She has played a key role in advocating for and applying Logotherapy to address psychological problems like depression, anxiety, and existential crises. Besides her literary achievements, Lukas created

training programs to certify practitioners in Logotherapy, guaranteeing that Frankl's techniques will stay available and relevant to upcoming generations of therapists. Another notable figure in the Logotherapy movement is Alexander Batthyány (1971-), a philosopher and psychologist from Hungary. Batthyány has connected Logotherapy with modern scientific studies and existential philosophy. As the Director of the Viktor Frankl Institute in Vienna and a professor of Viktor Frankl's Logotherapy and Existential Analysis at several universities, Batthyány has dedicated significant effort to validate Frankl's theories through empirical research. His research incorporates Logotherapy within larger existential and psychological contexts, examining its connections with neuroscience and cognitive psychology. By offering scientific proof to support Frankl's concepts, Batthyány has contributed to recognizing Logotherapy as a valid and effective method in today's psychological field. His efforts have broadened the scope of Logotherapy, extending its application to fields like trauma recovery, palliative care, and leadership training. Edith Weisskopf-Joelson (1910-1983) was also an early advocate of Logotherapy in the United States who significantly contributed to introducing Frankl's concepts to the Western psychological community. Her research highlighted the significance of self-transcendence and the human ability to discover meaning as vital elements of psychological resilience. While her contributions may be less visible in recent decades, Weisskopf-Joelson's work was crucial in establishing the groundwork for incorporating Logotherapy into American psychotherapy. Paul T. P. Wong (1937-2024), a Canadian psychologist, also built upon Frankl's concepts by integrating them into the framework of existential positive psychology, which is referred to as the "second wave positive psychology" (2019, p. 276). Wong highlighted the significance of meaning as a route to psychological health and resilience, especially when encountering challenges. His research concentrated on creating therapeutic methods that integrate meaning-centred interventions to address existential anxiety and promote well-being. The followers of Viktor Frankl have been essential in maintaining, broadening, and modifying Logotherapy for the modern era. Figures like Elisabeth Lukas, Alexander Batthyány, and Paul Wong have furthered Frankl's legacy by expanding its use, confirming its efficacy through empirical studies, and merging it with other psychological methods. Their endeavours have guaranteed that Frankl's vision of a psychology focused on the pursuit of meaning continues to be a strong and pertinent influence in tackling human suffering and promoting well-being. As the world encounters ongoing existential challenges, the principles of Logotherapy—self-transcendence, responsibility, and the search for meaning—provide a lasting and transformative framework for comprehending and tackling the human experience. In the following part of the chapter, the main tenets of Viktor Frankl's Logotherapy are to be explored.

1.2. Theoretical Framework, Key Definitions and Principles of Logotherapy

Logotherapy is derived from the Latin word *logos*, which denotes meaning. It is the Third Viennese School of Psychotherapy, founded by Viktor Emil Frankl, who defines it as “meaning-centred psychotherapy” (Frankl, 2000, p. 104), “therapy through meaning” or “healing through meaning” (Frankl, 1985, p. 19). Similarly, Klingberg describes Logotherapy as a means of “becoming whole through meaning” (p. 16). Costello explains that Logotherapy is a contemporary adaptation of Plato’s concept of One over Many, awakening individuals instinctually and spiritually. Frankl (2000) provides an exemplary dialogue in which one of the clients requests a concise explanation of Logotherapy. Frankl asks for the same definition regarding psychoanalysis. The client responds that psychoanalysis involves lying down and discussing unpleasant things. In response, Frankl explains that the patient may be lying down or standing in Logotherapy yet still encounter uncomfortable truths. Psychoanalysis is retrospective and introspective, whereas Logotherapy is a prospective therapy approach. It aims to break the cycle of neurotic and egocentric thinking, dwelling instead on the unique contribution an individual can make to the world. By embracing their meaning, individuals can increase their resilience despite life’s challenges. As a therapeutic approach rooted in Existentialism, Logotherapy primarily focuses on the meaning of existence and human experiences. It serves as a response against the dehumanising aspects of predominant psychoanalytic and behaviouristic perspectives of the modern and postmodern eras. In addition, it offers a more humanistic and less materialistic approach to therapy by empowering patients to be more autonomous (Klingberg, 2001). Indeed, Logotherapy rests on five main triads: the triad of meaning, the tragic triad, the pathological triad, the triad of treatment, and the triad of pathways.

Frankl (2000) develops the concept of Logotherapy based on his triad of meaning: 1) the freedom of will, 2) the will to meaning, and 3) the meaning of life. Firstly, the freedom of will challenges the belief that humans are bound to live without free will. Frankl refers to this counterargument as pan-determinism, asserting that human existence has no inherent lack of freedom. He further specifies that freedom can be understood through instinctual drives, hereditary influences, and external circumstances. Regarding instinctual drives, individuals can either yield or resist to their natural impulses. Likewise, the ultimate decision lies within each individual, regardless of their hereditary influences. For example, twins with similar cunning abilities may choose different paths in life, becoming a criminologist or a criminal. Similarly, individuals can make choices

independent of external circumstances. A person could adopt a personal viewpoint in response to any situation without being influenced by the surroundings (Batthyány, 2016). In this context, Frankl (1985) recounts an insightful quote by Magda B. Arnold, which states that although all choices have underlying causes, the individual ultimately makes the choice. In alternative terms, the conditions are not dependent on an individual; rather, the individual's decisions depend on the conditions (Lukas, 2020). This concept presents both a freedom to be exercised and an obligation to fulfil while not implying freedom from the conditions. Having a responsible attitude towards something or someone is an action that is chosen willingly. This leads to inner peace, a clear conscience, and a sense of fulfilment. These outcomes are not achieved by focusing solely on them but result from a responsible attitude (Klingberg, 2001). The concept of freedom discussed by Frankl revolves around self-transcendence, the fundamental aspect of spirituality, which Längle and Sykes (2006) define as “our ability to direct ourselves towards another individual or a greater cause” (p. 43). Essentially, it can be described as finding purpose in one's existence by dedicating oneself to someone or something, thus allowing personal growth and surpassing difficult circumstances. Individuals are not exempt from challenging situations; they possess the freedom to transcend and distance themselves from these hardships. In this context, Frankl's work, *Yes to Life In Spite of Everything* (2020), includes a quote from Kierkegaard stating that when it comes to happiness, the door always opens outward. For instance, especially regarding the hierarchy of needs, Frankl (1985) acknowledges his admiration for Maslow but argues that food and health cannot serve as the foundations of this hierarchy, as that would disregard the individuals in concentration camps who managed to maintain their humanity and hope in the most extreme conditions. Moreover, he asserts that the pinnacle of this hierarchy—self-actualisation—can only be achieved through self-transcendence, moving beyond egocentrism, and engaging in virtuous actions without any expectations of personal gain. In other words, it is an unintentional result rather than the primary goal (Lukas, 2020). In conclusion, only when individuals shift their focus away from themselves, take the lead with their freedom of will and move towards the meaningful contributions they can make will they experience the transformation and actualisation they envision (Wong, 2014).

Secondly, Frankl argues that a person's fulfilment relies on their unique contribution to the world, which he refers to as the will to meaning. Namely, once someone discovers their life's purpose, they become willing to sacrifice their life for it. According to Frankl, the primary focus of a person's life is the pursuit of meaning, and this desire is fulfilled by actively seeking it in life and having someone or something to live for (Klingberg, 2001). Individuals

can find the motivation to persevere through difficult circumstances by identifying their priorities. Despite the challenges in this search, the will to meaning instils hope and guides individuals, allowing them to transition from self-centred concerns to a greater sense of purpose (Sun et al., 2021). This pursuit continues until the last breath, pushing individuals to their limits and broadening their experiences and understanding of life (Wong, 2019). The core aim of Logotherapy is to elevate individuals to their highest potential by cultivating a sense of responsibility combined with freedom of will. Frankl (1985) refers to this elevated state as “the height psychology” (p. 31). Without striving for supreme goals, individuals are more likely to sink into a state of underachievement. With inherent qualities of both responsibility and freedom, individuals must constantly strive towards higher goals to avoid falling short of their true potential. Frankl (2000) advises individuals to behave as if they have been given a second chance at life and seize every opportunity. A strong sense of responsibility in facing life challenges is central to the will to meaning. This responsibility primarily lies within an individual’s conscience. Frankl cautions against interpreting freedom solely from a self-centred perspective, as it can lead to arbitrary choices. To sum up, Frankl (2017) views responsibility and independence “as two sides of the same coin” induced by the will to meaning (p. 95).

Thirdly, the meaning of life is akin to the various pieces of a puzzle that come together to form the whole rather than a single overarching purpose or meaning (Frankl, 2017). Therefore, it depends on the individual, the time, and even the moment as a unique opportunity to be seized. Regardless of location or profession, life constantly questions and tests the person (Frankl, 2020). The significance lies not in the number of experiences one encounters but in how the individuals fill their unique circle. In the article “Viktor Frankl’s Meaning-Seeking Model and Positive Psychology,” the concept of the meaning of life is broken into three categories: “1) ultimate meaning, 2) personal calling, and 3) responsible situational meaning shaped by the ultimate meaning” (Wong, 2014, p. 170). To illustrate this, Frankl (2000) likens life to a movie:

Isn’t it the same with life? Doesn’t the final meaning of life, too, reveal itself, if at all, only at its end, on the verge of death? And doesn’t this final meaning, too, depend on whether or not the potential meaning of each single situation has been actualized to the best of the respective individual’s knowledge and belief? (p. 145).

Frankl (1985) characterises each situation in one’s life as a personal call, emphasising the importance of first listening and then responding. Life comprises various situations, and individuals who find their ultimate meaning are likely to attribute meaning to each piece of their life puzzle.

Regardless of what happens, a person's reactions will align with their overarching purpose (Wong, 2019). In short, similar to the dynamic between a teacher and a student, the meaning of life implies that life presents questions until one's final breath, and it is up to the individual to answer these questions in order to fulfil or miss out on the opportunities for meaning that life presents (Weiskopf-Joelson, 1972). Logotherapy is often associated with leading a pious life or dedicating one's life to God, as many people derive their meaning of life from their beliefs or religion. However, Frankl does not directly link Logotherapy to any specific belief system. He finds it outdated to view religion as a projection of a father figure, as Freud believed, or to reduce it to the collective unconscious or archetypes, as Jung believed. In today's world, morality holds more sway over nihilism (Frankl, 1986). While theology, as God's source, is considered the ultimate science encompassing biology, psychology, and noölogy, it does not guarantee freedom from all neuroses. Likewise, a successful treatment of neuroses does not guarantee a pious way of life (Frankl, 1985). Logotherapy is neither religious nor spiritual in the traditional sense, which is its unique strength. It neither teaches nor preaches, nor is it based solely on logic or moral exhortation (Lukas, 2020). To conclude, regardless of their religion or belief, location, or profession, anyone can benefit from the techniques and approaches of Logotherapy to build their meaning of life piece by piece (Frankl, 2000).

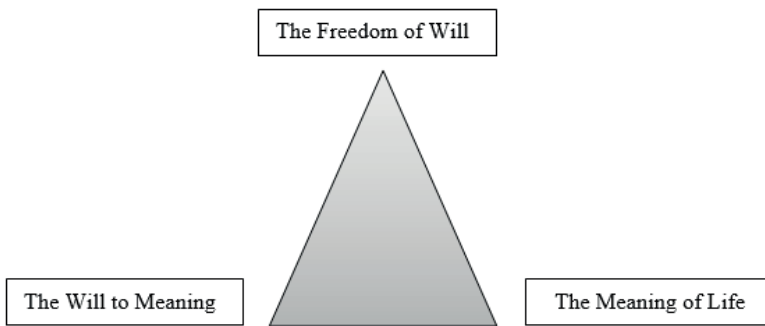


Figure 1: *The Triad of Meaning*

Regardless of an individual's bravery in confronting various life circumstances, certain unavoidable encounters test their limits. According to Frankl (2000), these experiences, known as "the tragic triad," consist of 1) pain, 2) guilt, and 3) death (p. 139). He describes the current century as the 'Age of Anxiety,' attributing this to the prolonged exposure to the tragic triad following the world wars. He states that this exposure resulted in collective neuroses within society, manifested through symptoms such as anticipation of atomic warfare, "a fatalistic attitude towards life, collective

thinking, and fanaticism” (Frankl, 1986, pp. 16-17). Frankl suggests that these symptoms can be traced back to humanity’s fear of responsibility and desire to escape freedom.

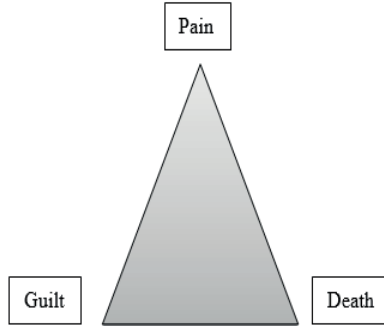


Figure 2: *The Tragic Triad*

If these symptoms are left untreated, they can eventually lead to the pathological triad, which is 1) depression, 2) aggression, and 3) addiction. Frankl also defines the pathological triad as the “mass neurotic triad” (Frankl, 1985, p. 28). For example, a study conducted at an American university found that 85 percent of the 60 students who attempted suicide expressed a sense of meaninglessness in their lives. Interestingly, 93 percent of this 85 percent reported having satisfying social, academic, and family lives. Frankl adds that this cry for meaning among young people extends beyond just one university (Frankl, 1985). Furthermore, he provides numerous studies highlighting the connection between addiction and the search for meaning in life. These studies reveal that individuals who lack meaning are more susceptible to depression, aggression, and, particularly, addiction. Evidence shows that heavy users of alcohol, marijuana, and hallucinogens have weak motivations to continue living compared to non-users. Frankl suggests that, for these individuals, drug use becomes a substitute for therapy (Frankl, 1985).

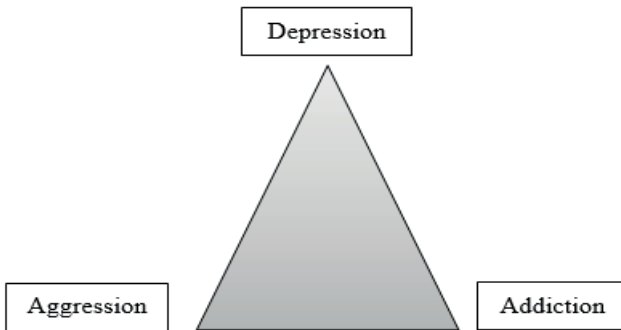


Figure 3: *The Pathological Triad (The Neurotic Triad)*

The tragic triad represents an individual's most psychologically challenging experiences. It is approached with a perspective known as tragic optimism, aiming to find the possibility of healing in every encountered event. According to Frankl (1985), nothing from the past is completely lost or unrecoverable; everything is stored permanently. Regardless of the challenges one may confront, each experience holds great importance and yields positive results for individuals. Accordingly, it is observed that when an individual experiences deep emotional distress and sadness, their heart will beat with greater strength. The heightened emotional state can catalyse transforming that pain into eventual success. Similarly, while carrying a burden of guilt, people can undergo personal growth and positive transformation. This newfound awareness of their flaws creates the potential for self-improvement. Furthermore, when confronted with the inevitability of death, individuals become more cognisant of the transient nature of life. This awareness guides them toward virtuous goals and encourages them to live meaningfully. (Lukas, 2020). When someone fully acknowledges and embraces a special moment and reacts positively, the lasting memories they create counteract the fleeting nature of life. The focal point of Logotherapy is the positive mindset of individuals entangled in a cycle of challenges rather than the array of problems encircling them. In this respect, Frankl (2017) emphasises the importance of tension in the context of the relationship between humans and their meaning. He refers to this as *noö-dynamics*, which stems from the Greek word *noös* – meaning mind. This concept contrasts with the homeostasis advocated by classical psychotherapy. According to Frankl, there are three dimensions of human beings: the somatic, the mental, and the spiritual or noetic. He refers to this categorization as “dimensional ontology” and distinguishes the noölogical dimension from the mental dimension in five ways: 1) This dimension is based on human autonomy. 2) Consciousness operates at this level. 3) This is the dimension that sets humans apart from animals. 4) People cannot become ill at this dimension; illnesses manifest at the mental or somatic dimensions. 5) This level has a direct relationship with the somatic and mental levels, such as anxiety or depression stemming from a lack of meaning in life (Dubois, 2004, p. xiv). For example, Frankl (2014) illustrates that homeostasis, characterised by tension and striving for survival, is considered a sign of disorder in brain pathology. On the other hand, although the tragic triad prompts the pathological triad if someone is deprived of a meaningful life, a balanced level of tension is essential for the human mind in Logotherapy and other scientific disciplines.

Frankl classifies neurosis into four categories: psychogenic, sociogenic, somatogenic, and noögenic neurosis, and asserts that Logotherapy is particularly effective in treating noögenic neuroses by providing a

comprehensive understanding of existential frustration in the face of traditional psychogenic neuroses. According to research conducted in Vienna, approximately 20 percent of neuroses fall into the category of noögenic neuroses (Frankl, 1986). For example, a diplomat who sought multiple traditional psychotherapy sessions began to feel dissatisfaction with his job. However, after a few sessions of Logotherapy focusing on the meaning of his work, he was able to recover from his existential neuroses. Furthermore, Frankl explains that Logotherapy can help uncover the underlying issue, often referred to as the existential vacuum, that manifests as psychotic symptoms (Dubois, 2004). It is important to note that individuals who lead a meaningful life experience various physical and mental benefits, including adaptability, resilience, and improved overall health. Therefore, exploring the meaning of life can provide psychological fulfilment and stability in the face of life's pressures, ultimately enhancing the effectiveness of any psychological treatment for all types of neurosis (Frankl, 1985). In this respect, he offers three fundamental techniques for addressing psychological issues: the triad of treatment: 1) Dereflection, 2) Paradoxical Intention, and 3) Socratic Dialogue.

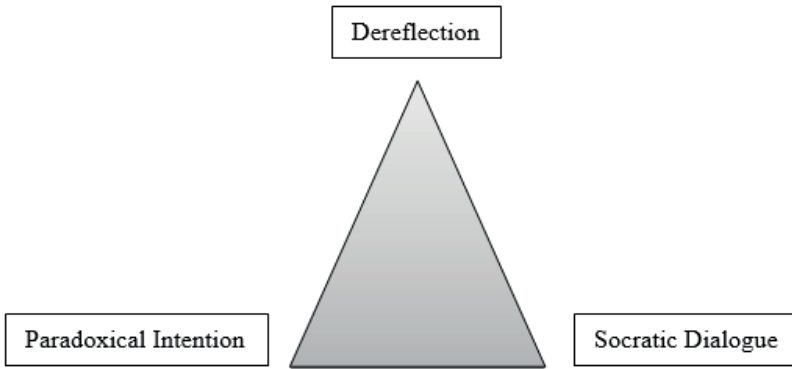


Figure 4: *The Triad of Treatment*

Firstly, Dereflection involves temporarily distancing oneself from symptoms of disorders to interpret mental ailments more healthily and comprehensively (Bulut & Sari, 2020). By shifting focus towards the meaning of life instead of somatic signals, individuals are encouraged to adopt a broader perspective. The excessive monitoring or introspection of psychotherapy is avoided in Logotherapy, and this inclination, which leads to anticipatory anxiety, is referred to as hyper-reflection or hyper-intention, resulting in “neurotic behavioural patterns” (Frankl, 2014, p. 34). Therefore, the client is guided toward the dereflection technique to break free from this harmful cycle (Frankl, 2011). This approach is utilized by employing self-detachment or self-distance, which may prompt individuals to focus on a supreme goal (Pfeifer, 2021) by acknowledging their thoughts, emotions,

and behaviours (Längle & Sykes, 2006). For instance, fully engaged in writing poetry fosters a sense of distance from oneself and prompts one to harmonise with the creative process. In conclusion, dereflection is a method used in Logotherapy that has demonstrated efficacy in treating mental disorders.

Secondly, Paradoxical Intention is a method that gradually addresses phobias and obsessive-compulsive neuroses by ironically confronting fears and normalising these circumstances (Bulut & Sarı, 2020; Frankl, 1985; Pfeifer, 2021). Frankl (1985) emphasises the significance of humour and laughter as essential tools for self-awareness, enabling individuals to identify their traits, avoidances, and conflicts while fostering self-detachment. He employs exaggeration, ridicule, and consultation techniques to undermine deep-rooted fears (Lukas, 2020). For instance, when individuals with a stutter are encouraged to intentionally do it in anxiety-inducing situations, even if they initially doubt the effectiveness of the technique, they may experience relief (Frankl, 1985). This method empowers the patient to gain control and helps break the cycle of their inability to cope. By empowering individuals to change their attitudes towards situations through their free will, they can detach themselves and approach life roles and events with courage and humour (Frankl, 2014). Consequently, paradoxical intention fosters a sense of responsibility for one's life and encourages a bold, humorous outlook when faced with challenges (Dukes et al., 2022).

Thirdly, Socratic Dialogue is a form of guided and argumentative dialogue between the counsellor and the client, and both sides must establish a positive and genuine connection. The initial meeting holds great significance as it sets the foundation for the client's trust in future sessions. Once this trust is built, the clients can unlock their full potential and discover a purposeful existence (Shantall, 2020). As Costello (2015) mentioned, Eric Voegelin emphasises how Viktor Frankl revives Plato's intellectual legacy through Socratic Dialogue. Costello (2015) explains that this approach acts as a compass, guiding individuals toward truth, dignity, and virtue in a complex journey of encompassing art, nature, and culture. To sum up, Viktor Frankl presents three essential strategies for noögenic neuroses: Dereflection, Paradoxical Intention, and Socratic Dialogue to emphasise the importance of trust and meaningful relationships in the healing process while also shedding light on the human capacity for self-discovery.

To find purpose in life, Frankl (2000) proposes his triad of pathways: 1) the creative pathway, 2) the experiential pathway, and 3) the attitudinal pathway. Primarily, the creative pathway involves leaving a lasting impact beyond people's lives (Frankl, 2020). When work is performed to benefit others, the world, or for the greater good, it gives life a deeper sense of

meaning and fulfilment. (Shantall, 2020). Frankl cites Rabindranath Tagore in his work *Yes to Life In Spite of Everything* (2020), who famously stated: “I slept and dreamt /that life was joy. /I awoke and saw/ that life was duty. /I worked—and behold, /duty was joy” (p. 27). Frankl himself epitomises this first pathway. Contrary to popular belief influenced by media misconceptions, Frankl developed his theory and fundamental principles of Logotherapy long before his time in the Nazi concentration camps. Even when faced with the imminent threat of death in the inhumane conditions of the camps, he wholeheartedly nurtured his brainchild—Logotherapy—in his mind and through his notes, which made the challenges he faced somewhat more bearable. He describes how one of his harrowing experiences in the camp transformed into a vision of the future, where he saw himself “giving a lecture (...) on the psychology of the concentration camp, (...) rising above the situation, above the sufferings of the moment (...)” (Frankl, 2000, p. 84). Similarly, Frankl’s determination to rewrite his lost manuscript served as the anchor for Logotherapy. Despite suffering from typhus, he focused on his work rather than his life-threatening illness, and this resilience saved him from a vascular collapse (Frankl, 1986). In that regard, Wong (2014) defends that it can be suggested that utilising the talents and opportunities given by a higher power to benefit humanity is essential for a purposeful existence. Frankl’s desire to create meaningful work enabled him to survive despite the brutal conditions of the concentration camps. To sum up, the creative pathway holds the idea that one could find meaning in life by making a unique contribution to the world.

Secondly, the experiential pathway indicates that meaning can be attained by encountering divinity, goodness, nature, beauty, or love. In simpler terms, it can be described as the connection one has with others or the appreciation of the wonders of nature and the real world, such as understanding and valuing the concepts of “Good, True, and Beautiful” or truly knowing someone as an individual (Frankl, 1986, p. 13). Touching and serving other lives or things can provide a sense of purpose and significance to one’s own life. Moreover, as stated by Frankl (2017), love allows individuals to understand their loved ones deeply, enables them to identify their hidden talents, and motivates them to achieve their goals. The expression of gratitude and the dedication of efforts contribute to personal growth and commitment towards loved ones. The actual endeavour is solely directed towards recognising the worth of the human being. The meaning of interpersonal relationships mentioned here does not support exploiting individuals for personal gains and instead emphasises a mutually satisfactory life (Wong, 2014). Benevolence is a characteristic that significantly enhances an individual’s psychological well-being and shields them from different mental disorders. In closing, it is crucial to understand that fulfilling

the soul and addressing the need for unconditional love are imperative components for genuine happiness and personal growth. To demonstrate this, Frankl illustrates how one can find meaning in life through family devotion. Following the Ten Commandments, which emphasise respecting parents, he chooses to remain in Austria instead of taking advantage of his American visa. As a result, he spends three years in concentration camps, desperately clinging to the hope of being reunited with his family (Frankl, 2017). Thanks to his strong bond with his family and deep respect for his ancestors, desertion is not an option for him under any circumstances. It is an exceptional example of how meaning can originate from and contribute to family ties. According to Frankl, love is the goal for humans to achieve fulfilment, as even in the most extreme conditions, one can view their loved ones as their greatest achievement (Frankl, 2000; Batthyány, 2016). Another example from Frankl's life is the love between him and his second wife, Elly Frankl. Their journey toward self-transcendence is built on their unwavering commitment to each other and their shared dedication to Logotherapy (Klingberg, 2001). In summary, people can find meaning in life through Logotherapy's experiential pathway and, therefore, cultivate a sense of hope in the face of hardship, attain self-awareness and growth, and align themselves with their inherited values.

Ultimately, the attitudinal pathway can be defined as the positive response against unavoidable suffering. It entails displaying resilience and determination to heal and move forward in life rather than succumbing to anguish that could potentially lead to depression. Even when choices may be limited, every challenge presents an accompanying opportunity (Bulut & Sari, 2020). Consequently, individuals could seek meaning through attitudinal approaches, when they have no access to the creative or experiential pathways (Sun et al., 2021). Frankl (1986), in this context, asserts:

(...) even a man who finds himself in the greatest distress, in which neither activity nor creativity can bring values to life, nor experience give meaning to it—even such a man can still give his life a meaning by the way he faces his fate, his distress. By taking his unavoidable suffering upon himself, he may yet realize values (p. 13).

According to Costello (2015), suffering holds greater importance than work or love. Frankl also introduces the concept of 'homo patiens' in contrast to 'homo sapiens' to explain this pathway (Lukas, 2020). He suggests that homo patiens experience both failure and success in the pursuit of happiness. In contrast, homo sapiens fluctuates between despair and fulfilment, symbolising a lack of meaning and meaningfulness, respectively. From this viewpoint, it becomes evident that someone can find

contentment and fulfilment in challenging circumstances. At the same time, another individual can feel unhappy and dissatisfied despite their wealth and privilege if they lack a sense of purpose. Thus, homo patiens represents a higher aspect of human nature compared to homo sapiens (Frankl, 1985; Lukas, 2020). Consequently, when confronted with unavoidable pain or suffering, the ultimate road to self-transcendence is to turn tragedy into personal triumph. As Frankl (2017) defends, suffering ceases to be just suffering when it acquires significance, such as the importance of a sacrifice. It is emphasised that the bitterness or sweetness of life does not derive solely from the events encountered by individuals but rather from their reactions to those events. Frankl claims that through misfortune, individuals can only experience inner growth, stating, “How else would our existence have taken shape and form than under its hammer blows and in the white heat of our suffering at its hands?” (Frankl, 2020, p. 32). Wong (2014) suggests five ways in which inevitable pain can be transformed into an advantage:

1. Facing suffering as a challenge rather than enduring it passively
2. Recognising the potential for ease within every difficulty
3. Reflecting on one’s goals and past choices
4. Fully seizing opportunities
5. Advancing in spirituality

For instance, Sun and colleagues (2021) discovered through their research that breast cancer patients were able to find new meaning in their suffering and adopt different perspectives on life using Logotherapy. This approach fuelled their determination to endure pain and make the most of each moment. Various studies examining the relationship between cancer and Logotherapy have revealed that, prior to falling ill, some patients prioritised their careers (the creative pathway), while others came to appreciate the crucial role of family during their illness (the experiential pathway) or developed realistic attitudes towards their circumstances and discovered meaning in their final stages (the attitudinal pathway) (Sun et al., 2021). Recognising and accepting the initial discomfort is important, as it involves actively taking steps instead of complaining and choosing courage over fear to embrace the positive outcomes. The meaning of life lies not in the avoidance of discomfort or fear but in embracing them as opportunities for growth and self-discovery. In another study conducted by Sun and his colleagues (2021), Logotherapy was employed in individuals with various medical conditions such as coronary artery bypass grafting, breast cancer, advanced cervical cancer, advanced cancer, and early adolescents with cancer. The applications were centred on meaning and quality of life besides

depression. Participants who were given Logotherapy experienced notable enhancements in their depressive symptoms and overall scores on the low mood scale. Furthermore, the research results indicated that the benefits of Logotherapy encompassed a reduction in distress, a sustained impact lasting for six months, a decrease in depressive symptoms, a decreased tendency for mood swings, and an enhanced sense of purpose and significance in life. To put it simply, people who are recovering from a major surgery, dealing with life-threatening diseases like cancer, or have successfully overcome a major tragedy can improve their recovery by finding meaning and importance in their lives (Wong, 2014). In summary, self-actualisation can only be achieved when individuals shift their focus away from themselves by carrying out a purposeful mission, connecting with a cherished companion, or effectively dealing with hardship, namely, the triad of pathways.

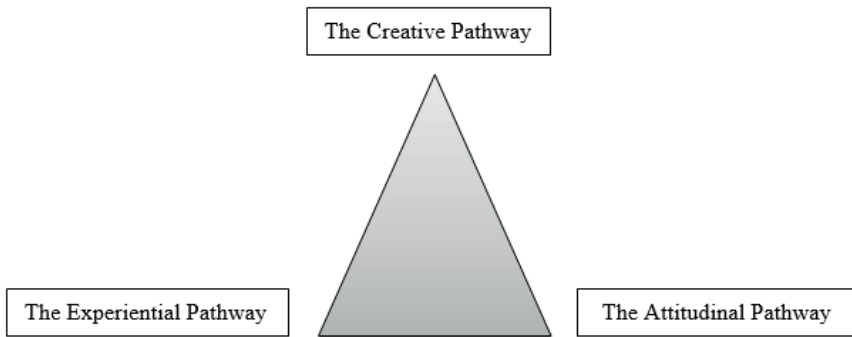


Figure 5: *The Triad of Pathways*

In conclusion, according to Frankl (2000), the existential vacuum was a prevalent phenomenon of the 20th century, in which many poets experience a sense of meaninglessness and reject religious beliefs. They went beyond limits and perceived every situation as threatening human existence. This existential vacuum was rapidly spreading among the younger generation as they broke away from traditions and reacted against religion (Frankl, 1985). Logotherapy is seen as a promising solution for the challenges of the postmodern era. Its potential can be traced in poetry, offering guidance for future generations. However, previous research only covers a limited number of literary works that apply Logotherapy. Therefore, this study aims to comprehensively examine poetry from new angles, providing fresh perspectives and insights. This dissertation focuses on the link between the postmodern search for meaning and Viktor E. Frankl's Logotherapy, analysing selected poems by Derek Walcott, Carol Ann Duffy, and Paul Muldoon. Chapter One presents the theoretical foundation of Viennese Schools of psychotherapy, including the works of Freud, Adler, and Frankl. Chapter Two delves into Derek Walcott's life and poetry, Chapter Three

explores the life of and pieces of Carol Ann Duffy, and Chapter Four scrutinises Paul Muldoon's life and poems through the lens of Logotherapy, focusing specifically on the illustrative examples of the triad of pathways which are the creative, the experiential and the attitudinal pathways.

CHAPTER TWO — DEREK WALCOTT

In the second chapter, after a concise historical, cultural, and political background of Derek Walcott's poetry, a thorough examination of his selected poems is conducted using Viktor Frankl's Logotherapy. With particular attention to Logotherapy's triad of pathways, this chapter centres on how Walcott exemplifies these pathways through the speakers/personae of his pieces and his attitude toward his challenging life.

2.1 Historical, Cultural, and Political Background of Walcott's Poetry

Derek Alton Walcott (1930-2017) was born in Castries, the capital of the island of St Lucia, one of the Windward groups in the Caribbean, with its population primarily of the descendants of enslaved Africans, a small European elite, and only some 10% of mixed-origin people and its economy mainly dependant on fishing and flowers (Onwuka & Eyisi, 2022). Throughout his writing career, Walcott was principally preoccupied with the themes of language and history, territory and identity, occidental and oriental encounters, and interracial relationships. As a postcolonial poet, he was deeply involved with the problems of social and political development in his native land. He was also concerned with his people's appreciation of his works while narrating the inequitable history of his land (Josephs, 2010). His search for meaning could be delineated as the deconstruction of the Caribbean entity in the face of constant indifference and neglect. Walcott often described his background as both a metaphor and the outcome of his work, the interweaving of 'origins.' While sailing with a group to Guyana, he observed the life conditions and poverty of small rural areas of his region, which afterward served him as an inspiration. Walcott started to write poetry in the 1940s with the influence of distinguished poets, such as Robert Frost, William Butler Yeats, and Wallace Stevens. After secondary school in St Lucia, he went to Jamaica, where he published his first poems at 14. He returned from Jamaica in 1953 and founded a small local theatre group to protest the poor drama in the St Lucian village. At the time of

growing artistic feeling about his African and French origins came the invitation for contact with Puerto Rican writers, which changed his life opinions and offered him a sudden spiritual outburst. His first plays are a kind of abbreviated presentation of his national cosmos. The influence of European (Irish) literature and Caribbean tradition intertwining with individual talent, which worked on uncovering the noble features of his surrounding space, was the principal base of Walcott's lyricism and drama, which were awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature only a few decades later—in 1992. Walcott also received several awards and honours, including the Trinity College Poetry Prize (1950), Observer short-story competition (1951), the British Broadcasting Corporation's annual Poetry Competition (1952), Longmans Literary Fellowship (1958), Rockefeller Playwright-in-Residence (1957, 1982), Officer of the Order of the British Empire (1971) and Guggenheim Fellowship (1979). Additionally, *Omeros* (1990), the postmodern version of Homer's *The Iliad* and *The Odyssey*, was awarded the W. H. Smith Literary Award in 1991. Walcott was a Poet Laureate for life, and by the time of his passing, he had satisfied most of the poetic dreams of his youth.

Walcott's cultural roots were African, signifying a continuous historical presence and complexity, a dialectic of occupation, revolt, assimilation, and exploitation. This cultural background influenced the course of his existence and his poetry to an extraordinary degree. In the Creole society he belonged to, Walcott carried the crossroads of all races and, through them, the crossroads of contemporary history. As a West Indian poet, he had to confront major problems of national and personal identity in a society riven by historical divisions. Central among Walcott's concerns was the search for a language that truly represents the Caribbean reality, reflects the many levels of the region's social and cultural experience, and does not constitute an apartheid form of expression separated from the living language. His plays functioned as the voice of his community while his poems were "for and about the folk," manifesting his art to depict life in the Caribbeans through a "quietly accurate" way, which could be deemed as the attribute of the postcolonial atmosphere (Baugh, 2006, p. 3). For instance, in *Ti-Jean and His Brothers* (1970), a major part of the play is taken up with the lamentation of Ti-Jean's brothers about their separation from Africa through slavery. Like Yoruba poet John Pepper Clark, Walcott connected the memory of Mother Africa and the current plight of the descendants to emphasise the restoration of the cultural roots and to call for the dissemination of belief in the basic strength of black heritage (Okpewho, 2009). His poetry has developed a sense of history deeply rooted in the Caribbean experience, where the past feeds the present with life and vision. Likewise, a comprehensive concern with the history and future of the Caribbean is seen in a major early poem

titled “North and South.” In conclusion, Walcott’s works of art show his faith in black people’s inherent strength and harmony in their culture, with a subtext regarding the problem of individuals being cut off from their roots.

At first glance, Walcott’s poetry explores a definitive identity of himself and his society facing difficulty between being English (Saint Lucia, like many other Caribbean Islands, was under British colonial rule from 1814 to 1979) and Caribbean from a young age. His multilingual and multicultural background allows him to write in and incorporate not only English as his primary language but also Creole, French, Latin, and various African language dialects. As a result, this cultural and linguistic mixing forces him to find a proper historical, cultural, and political identity. Thus, identity and belonging seem to be the main themes in Walcott’s works as a dilemma between his Anglo-African descent and his American-European education. In this respect, Callahan (2003) argues that Walcott purposely utilizes “the vacuum at the core of West Indian sensibility” to reflect the Caribbean cultural forms and habits and frame a successful image of the West Indian self. (Preface 1). One could argue that he eludes a specific definition of identity by resorting to double consciousness after his declaration that “it takes a West Indian a long time to say who he is” (qtd. in Breslin, 2001, pp. 1-2). Indeed, the motivation for his writing comes from his dual respect for European and African traditions, which serves as the ‘pole’ supporting his poetry while reconciling the contradictions of the two cultures. His realisation of the dynamics of selfhood liberates him and humanity from total control of self, which creates new meanings of one’s experiences to push it into the greater future by being true to and respectful of all others one meets in life. Therefore, in this context, Du Boisian’s theory of double consciousness gives depth to Derek Walcott’s poetry (Mocombe, 2008).

2.2. Analysis of Walcott’s Poetry in Light of Logotherapy

From his early books of poems until his last pieces, the Caribbean was always the centre of Derek Walcott’s work. The unique and extraordinary cultural mixture of the Caribbean, where different civilisation systems of Western European, African, Indian, and Chinese roots interacted with Amerindian identity and the social structure made up of many ethnic groups, generate a collective heritage of visual, musical, literary, and behavioural manifestations which differ Walcott’s ‘Creole’ civilisation from any other (Etherington, 2020). This small, bounded, thematically consistent universe corresponds to a real sense of place, a clear sense of specific tone and thematic limits, which is part of the strength of his works of art. In his poetry, Walcott’s speakers are the tools to reflect his fellow citizens’ age-old and hitherto unsolved problems. These universal voices transform

into examples and messengers of the goodness and creativity of his people. They stand between place and time, equipped with timeless wisdom. In the following parts of this chapter, selected poems of Derek Walcott are to be analysed and interpreted in the context of the triad of pathways in Frankl's Logotherapy. The creative, experiential, and attitudinal pathways adopted by Walcott and the speakers in his selected poems will be scrutinised.

2.2.1. The Creative Pathway in Walcott's Poetry

Life presents each person with the task of finding meaning and fostering it through unique individual expression. Inherent in everyone is a personal will to meaning that drives one to find a purpose greater than personal self alone (Weisskopf-Joelson, 1958). In this sense, writing poetry is to immerse in an ancient task of giving voice to the deepest longings, the most profound thoughts, and the hidden meaning in the depths of the heart. Through creating poetry, meaning is found, and both the poet and the reader can experience this journey. In this way, poetry and creative expression can serve as important vehicles for fostering the sense of meaning that Logotherapy works to uncover (Frankl, 2004). The individuals who perform the improvement of poetic language first-hand or by using secondary methods are the speakers/personae of the poems. In this sense, Walcott brings into light the existence of the creative nature of human beings and their unique freedom to make choices and take visions to shape their destiny through poetry pieces and his speakers' creativity. The following part of the chapter focuses on the creative aspects of Walcott's poetry in two ways: Walcott's creative skills in his poetic expressions and his creative personae/speakers in his pieces. It intends to conduct a textual interpretation of Walcott's poetry to offer a profound insight into the creative, aesthetic features of his poetry, the masterful use of poetic forms besides discovering the multifaceted composition of his personae's creative characteristics through their actions and expressions.

First, the aesthetic impact of Walcott's creative poetic expression is remarkable thanks to the varied techniques he used, both traditional and modern, such as vivid imagery and the presentation of a unique language identity, which aligns with Frankl's creative pathway of Logotherapy (Lukas, 2020). Primarily, imagery is one of the notable aspects of Walcott's creative poetry by which he finds his true self. Due to his engagement with visual art as a supporting occupation to his main career, Walcott possesses a remarkable faculty for describing and communicating visual objects and scenes in his poems. Moreover, this descriptive art enables him to make his poems intensely appear in the mind's eye. By portraying the beauty and anguish of his Caribbean homeland, Walcott's poetry embodies Frankl's

concept that individuals can rise above suffering and find meaning through artistic expression. In *Omeros*, for example, Walcott plunges the reader into the tangible magnificence of the islands:

Now, over the pastures
of bananas, the island lifted its horns. Sunrise
trickled down its valleys, blood splashed on the cedars,
and the grove flooded with the light of sacrifice.
A gommier was cracking. Its leaves an enormous
tarpaulin with the ridgepole gone. The creaking sound
made the fishermen leap back as the angling mast
leant slowly towards the troughs of ferns; then the ground
shuddered under the feet in waves, then the waves passed
(Walcott, 1990, p. 5).

In Walcott's works are inscribed the spirit and emblems of his native land, Saint Lucia; not only the heavenliness of its scenery and seas, lagoons, caverns, woods, and fruits but also the ugliness of its towns and their citizens, the poverty, the years of human servitude (Herbertson, 2024). For instance, "The Spoiler's Return" portrays the underprivileged and excluded areas of Saint Lucia because of economic struggles and social inequalities:

(...) all Frederick Street stinking like a closed drain,
Hell is a city much like Port of Spain,
what the rain rots, the sun ripens some more,
all in due process and within the law (Walcott, 1992, pp. 435-436).

Walcott's poems also reflect the many places he visited or stayed in at different times besides the sights and scenes of the land where he was born. Furthermore, they reach beyond an objective recording of the visual facts of light, colour, shape, and movement and become life pictures for those who have never seen the Caribbean. Images are not superficial, additional, or accidental decoration. They allow him to express a non-Western consciousness and sensibility, which is difficult to put into words. This non-Western sensibility is a political consciousness, a sense of oppression and exploitation shared by traumatised postcolonial people living in isolated communities on small islands. Imagery, in this sense, has a political dimension. For instance, in "Ruins of a Great House," the vivid imagery reflects a decaying colonial mansion to symbolise the crumbling legacy of British imperialism. As Ismond (2001) points out, after a visit to the ruins

of one of the great houses in Jamaica during his undergraduate years, it was the first time that Walcott witnessed the atrocities and injustices resulting from slavery; hence, he was deeply outraged and condemned the evils that still exist. His first exposure to tangible reminders of the abuses of the slave past would have been during his trip to these ruins in Jamaica, where slavery and its effects were considerably more pronounced when compared to the ruins in St Lucia. Moreover, although the literature that shaped his early years kept that reality somewhat at low levels, his university process pushed him closer to it. The poem presents the impression that the persona is rudely awakening to the horrifying truths that the location has brought to memory:

A green lawn, broken by low walls of stone
 Dipped to the rivulet, and pacing, I thought next
 Of men like Hawkins, Walter Raleigh, Drake,
 Ancestral murderers and poets, more perplexed
 In memory now by every ulcerous crime.
 The world's green age then was a rotting lime
 Whose stench became the charnel galleon's text.
 The rot remains with us, the men are gone.
 But, as dead ash is lifted in a wind,
 That fans the blackening ember of the mind,
 My eyes burned from the ashen prose of Donne (Walcott, 1992,
 p. 20).

Through the image, the poet transforms into a political power to fight insult using occasional images of protest. The central emotional theme is the sense of outrage and disgust at the depth of imperial misconduct and corruption. The disgust stems from an abnormality that particularly affects Walcott: the idea that the works of literature and atrocities of the Empire sprang from the same source. Whether political or dramatic, each line of Walcott's poems is replete with rich imagery, standing out as one of his most creative aesthetic features. His poetry illustrates the creative pathway of Viktor Frankl's Logotherapy, where the creation process serves to discover and convey meaning.

Second, Walcott's poetry has all the balance and the evenness achieved by the creative descriptions of the Caribbean's physical geography, benefiting from the subtle usage of similes, metaphors, and symbolic references. Primarily, he used them to reinforce feelings, thoughts, and ideals or to intensify the impressions of the subject. Subsequently, his good command of the subject has the further effect of urging upon his readers his interpretative

view of the world. Walcott was part of a generation of writers who sought to create a collective message and provoke change. For example, in the poem “The Sea is History,” the persona uses the cultural items lost after the colonial past to awaken and guide the Caribbean people. Apparently, in the poem, the sea becomes a metaphorical space that contains collective memories besides personal and historical moments. Walcott’s creative use of the sea stresses the lack of conventional historical markers and converts this void into an area of exploration and meaning. By encouraging the reader to see the sea as a symbolic repository and a cohesive foundation of Caribbean identity, Walcott illustrates how art can fill the voids created by historical neglect, providing a feeling of connection and permanence. In a Walcott poem, the point where both metaphor versus simile and subjective versus objective move from definition into action, most application manifests itself when considering references to water:

Where are your monuments, your battles, martyrs?

Where is your tribal memory? Sirs,

in that gray vault. The sea. The sea

has locked them up. The sea is History

(...)

I’ll guide you there myself. (Walcott, 1992, pp. 364-365).

Despite the Caribbean people not having a particular history, the sea is the thing that binds societies and establishes them as part of them. The same sea that always isolates the nation becomes the cradle where various peoples were born. It is part of the Caribbean dream of freedom and unity. Finally, Walcott utilizes symbolic references to emphasise the multidimensional aspects and the complex interrelations between the self and the world. In literature, the symbol is seen as an effort by the writer to communicate with the reader in a poetic context, where it has a double motion of dissimulation and revelation. Indeed, the capability of a good poet to create vivid and impressive symbolic references is a sign of the poet’s creativity, expertise, cognisance, and skill in handling words and craftsmanship in a way that differs greatly from ordinary people. Walcott creatively uses symbolism to represent his themes and thoughts by integrating them through particular images that encapsulate so much, mostly about his Caribbean identity. By employing rich symbolism, vivid imagery, and historical reflection, Walcott’s “The Sea is History” exemplifies how the creative pathway of Logotherapy enables individuals to transcend the limitations of their circumstances, transform their experiences into enduring expressions of meaning, and leave a legacy that inspires others (Wong, 2019). In this context, the poem itself is, in fact, a symbolic autobiography of Walcott. Not only is the landscape

his, but he is also the landscape. The conclusion is natural. He becomes the map of himself—identification of the person with his country—such as in his poem “Prodigal Chapter 11”:

The doors are open, the house breathes and I feel
 a balm so heavy and a benediction
 so weightless that the past is just blue air
 and cobalt motion lanced with emerald
 and sail-flecks and the dove’s continuous complaint
 about repletion, its swollen note of gratitude-
 all incantation is the monody of thanks
 to the sky’s motionless or moving altars,
 even to the faint drone of that silver insect
 that is the morning plane over Martinique,
 while, take this for what you will, the frangipani
 that, for dry months, contorted, crucified
 in impotence or barrenness, endured, has come
 with pale pink petals and blades of olive leaves,
 parable of my loin-longing, my silver age (Walcott, 2014, pp.
 579-580).

These creative architectural designs and delicate similes, metaphors, and symbols present coherence and wholeness to otherwise a world broken into random bits, in line with the creative pathway of Logotherapy (Lukas, 2020). For this reason, each poem by Derek Walcott can be easily transformed into an emblem, a mosaic, or a canvas where colours replace words, and each of them is encoded culturally.

Third, Walcott creates a unique language identity by integrating archaisms and colloquialisms, dialect, wordplay, and invented words, namely his rich Creole-influenced English, into his works of art. As a natural consequence of many cultures and beliefs keeping their value systems and living together, Creolisation has pervaded into every dimension of the Caribbean region, such as its contemporary music, dance folklore, language, religion, cuisine, and clothing. Thus, new metaphors and forms of speech have emerged in the language. Through the Creole language, Walcott escalates the recognition of his ancestors from different cultures, which melt in the Caribbean pot. It not only shapes Walcott and his poetry but has also made profound remarks for readers living in the process of

globalisation. His poem “Origins” (Chapter III) is one of the representations of Creolisation, replete with spoken language examples, written in italics to show “homages to island patois, the linguistical result of assimilation” (Dove in Bloom, 2003, p. 56).

O clear, brown tongue of the sun-warmed, sun-wooded
 Traumassee
 of laundresses and old leaves, and winds that buried their old
 songs in archives of bamboo and wild plantain, their white
 sails
 bleached and beaten on dry stone, the handkerchiefs of adieux
 and ba-bye! O sea, leaving your villages of cracked mud and
 tin, your
 chorus of bearded corn in tragic fields, your children
 like black rocks of petrified beginnings in whose potbellied
 drought the hookworm boils, cherubim of glaucoma and
 gonorrhoea! (Walcott, 1992, p 13)

The common perception is that the Creole language is linked to lower social status. Moreover, in prestigious institutions in major European cities such as London or Paris, it is unlikely that a written Creole text would be deemed acceptable for publication (Breiner, 2005). However, Walcott always sees the widening rift between spoken and written English as a source of creative potential rather than a reason for concern and challenges that perception for a more meaningful self for him and for his people, which is in accordance with Frankl’s creative pathway (Frankl, 1986). For him, the use of Creole creates intensity, grace, and humour in the tone of the speech and changes it from official to private. The given scenes can be closely merged, forming almost a photograph of the local situation, i.e., a piece of time the poet records with his particular sense of tropes and joy. This dialectic also guides the interpretation of the sociolinguistic issues raised by Walcott’s verses since he utilizes native speech patterns and elevates his African heritage, while passages utilising more formal speech patterns and references acknowledge his European ancestry (Callahan, 2003). His creative pathway not only honours the value of his background but also offers a transformative perspective through which his audience can examine their own cultural and existential inquiries.

Another creative aspect of Walcott’s poetry is the integration of mythology into modern narratives, specifically regarding his ancestral roots. Throughout his oeuvre, Derek Walcott seems impressed by the everlasting strength of belief in the old stories of his black mother and white

father and their black and white ancestors who continue to infuse everyday Caribbean life. Besides his devotion to Caribbean history, he is also interested in recreating the creation myths of the Caribbean Indian tribes who survived when Columbus gave in. His forefathers did not imprint their dreams or wisdom upon paper but rather upon the unwritten legacies of human consciousness through spoken stories, ceremonies, and rituals that encapsulated their spiritual beliefs. The most profound of those stories were so vast in their application that the details continually reinvented themselves in the hands and minds of narrators and actors from day to day and place to place. This literary practice was an exercise for producing original story writers. Walcott considers himself a fortunate descendant, the product of a deliberate and inspired social process that became the focal point of his vision as a poet. One of the examples of this ‘tragic optimism’ is his poem “Origins” (Chapter I), which Balakian (2003) interprets as a prelude to Walcott’s later work, capturing “a language that can contain one of his major concerns—the creation myth of his native place” (in Bloom, p. 44). The title signifies a search for meaning and origin, specifically exploring personal and cultural identity, and thus, serves as a key element in Logotherapy. The poem implies an ancient beginning, with the emergence of the narrator’s “I” as a “foetus of plankton” (Walcott, 1992, p. 11).

The flowering breaker detonates its surf.

White bees hiss in the coral skull.

Nameless I came among olives of algae,

Foetus of plankton, I remember nothing

Clouds, log of Colon,

I learnt your annals of ocean,

Of Hector, bridler of horses,

Achilles, Aenéas, Ulysses (Walcott, 1992, p. 11).

The concept of identity has been paramount for Caribbean writers due to their historical and sociopolitical position. Their search for an identity leads not only to an exploration of themselves as individual beings but also to the expedition of their Caribbean societies. Though the society in which the Caribbean people live is largely shaped by European culture and the Western values that it brings, this diverse origin reflects a complex culture that defines the identity of the Caribbean. Like many Caribbean writers and poets, Derek Walcott finds himself in a society with varied origins that have attracted his critical mind. He allows the very spirits stuck in myth to come alive and sing. In this sense, the hissing white bees inside

the coral skull might represent the whispering voices of the past—possibly ancestors or cultural background—including the mysteries and complexity of the human mind. A sense of meaninglessness is presented after forgetting everything. The speaker may be experiencing an ‘existential vacuum’, as evidenced by his sense of anonymity and alienation from his surroundings. It might be construed as a metaphor for struggling to fit in and lacking a personal history. “On this ground, then, one can plant. Nothingness, for Walcott, does not imply negation but rather a *tabula rasa* from which one can start afresh” (Dove in Bloom, 2003, p. 56):

Blank pages turn in the wind.
 They possessed, by Bulbrook,
 “No knowledge whatever of metals, not even of gold,
 They recognized the seasons, the first risings of the Pleiades
 By which signs they cultivate, assisted by magic ...
 Primitive minds cannot grasp infinity” (Walcott, 1992, p. 11).

According to Frankl (2006), an attitude of total dedication to a cause, a purpose, or a value that is greater than oneself is achievable by “the self-transcendence of human existence” (p. 11). In this respect, Walcott discovers personal and communal meaning via this poem and transcends himself by allowing others to connect with and understand his feelings. His technique involves reflecting society’s ideas in his consciousness, which may explain why his style appears superficial, clever, or playful. Like all his poems, Walcott’s poem tells a long story briefly. It does not dwell on details, stretch out events, or use long, elaborate sentences. Nevertheless, each quatrain in the poem is a complete, succinct unit, coming together to form a smoothly flowing, aesthetically pleasing narrative. Even though the speaker appears to have absorbed the myths (referring to the dubious information) transmitted through colonial education, the blank pages turning in the wind whisper a sense of emptiness or loss in the face of uncertainty and historical gaps. Alternatively, blank pages could be seen as belittlement targeted at the colonised, as the filled pages demonstrate all the details of the “fine race” achievements (Walcott, 1992, p. 11). The history of the Amerindians who inhabited the Caribbean at the time of Columbus’s arrival has been largely omitted from colonial records, leaving behind the dubious belief that their “primitive minds cannot grasp infinity” being the only remaining information (Walcott, 1992, p. 11). In the poem’s final line, “A gap in history closes, like a cloud,” the past and present come together to create a renewed sense of identity for the future (Walcott, 1992, p. 11). Through “Origins” (Chapter I), Walcott not only explores his personal, cultural, and national meaning while addressing the postcolonial amnesia experienced by himself

and his community but also attracts the world's attention to restore the ruined image of his land.

The creative character-building process of Walcott in poetry also deserves special attention. A 'character' is a declaiming embodied verse that comes to life on paper, acquires unique human characteristics, and affects the relationship between people or creatures or simply the world around it. If prose descriptions have the means of creating the world and bringing the observer's eye into focus, the verse description is born with the world in a flash, and then it quickens, giving concise, direct, and often vivid images. Poetry has far fewer conventional means to build a character, to invest them with humanity, individuality, worldview, and life. However, poetry verses are still endowed with the ability to expose the life of characters, illustrate the details of their appearance, show the spiritual inner world and the environment, and describe their actions, thereby giving them human traits and creating a diverse world of poetry. The foundation of Derek Walcott's poetry is the exploration of the tragic contradictions of Caribbean contemporary historical existence. The essence of history and the historical process are seen in the expression of Caribbean poetry through the characters reflecting dominant ideas, milestone events, qualities, and practices, with the predominant elements such as politics, a sense of resistance, and struggle. For instance, in the poem "The Schooner Flight," the main character, Shabine—the persona of Walcott, here—is a seafarer and a poet who contemplates his life and the historical background of the Caribbean. Through Shabine's intellectual reflections, Walcott illustrates how acts of creativity – such as writing, storytelling, or reflection—can function as a means of confronting and deriving significance from historical and personal anguish, thereby resonating with Frankl's creative pathway (Lukas, 2020). Through these creative aspects of Shabine, Walcott discusses topics like colonialism, racial identity, and political disillusionment. The speaker's analysis is highly intellectual, examining the socio-political environment of the Caribbean:

I'm just a red nigger who love the sea,
I had a sound colonial education,
I have Dutch, nigger, and English in me,
and either I'm nobody, or I'm a nation (Walcott, 1992, p. 346).

There are also a lot of other characters that reveal creative components of Caribbean life, not only its inner essence but also a critical relationship with the society of the West. Walcott's vision of Caribbean life through the creative activities of its characters is aimed at defining the distinct existential entity of the Caribbean—a people with a historical experience

that is an essential part of world history. The list of characters in Walcott's poetry is very rich and diverse. New speakers/personae keep appearing on the scene of his poetic activities as storytellers, poets, musicians, explorers, teachers, healers, intellectuals, social or political commentators, sailors, fishermen, gardeners, artisans, holy men, travellers, patriots, mapmakers, historians and artists. These individuals or groups often realise an authentic dramatization of contemporary Caribbean history in Walcott's verses. For example, in "Tiepolo's Hound," the persona (Walcott) describes a talented Caribbean painter from the previous century named Camille Pissarro while retelling both of their experiences to challenge and deconstruct the postcolonial concepts in their times. As mentioned before, painting is the first art form into which Walcott is acculturated. By this poem, he creates an important reconsideration of visual art in poetry:

All was paint
 and the light in paint, in the dusty olive
 of Cézanne's trees, from Impressionist prints
 the clumps of mangoes, from brush and palette knife,
 Canaries framed in the cubes of Aix en-Provence.
 Fond St. Jacques, D'elles Soeurs, La Fargue, Moule à Chique
 trees from Courbet and Corot, Bal en Bouche,
 our landscapes emerging in French though we speak
 English as we work. My pen replaced a brush (Walcott, 2014,
 p. 513).

Walcott integrates techniques from visual arts, utilising light, colour, perspective, and composition to create visually stunning poems filled with complex meanings. This intentional blend of poetic and visual methods highlights the creative pathway to connect the divides between history and contemporary times, personal experience and shared identity, as well as art and everyday existence. Through reinterpreting Pissarro's story, Walcott underscores the powerful ability of creativity to shed light on neglected histories and maintain cultural identity, reflecting Frankl's belief that the act of creation serves as a deep wellspring of meaning (Batthyány, 2016). His choice of Camille Pissarro is also deliberate and careful:

(...) I'll be born
 a hundred years later, but we're both bent
 over this paper; I am being drawn,
 anonymous as my own ancestor

my Africa erased, if not his France,
 the cobbled sunlit street with a dirt floor
 and a quick sketch my one inheritance (Walcott, 2014, p. 536).

Walcott is committed to shedding light on overlooked or undervalued elements in lesser-known narratives. Pissarro is commonly acknowledged as a French artist within the European community. However, he is originally from the Caribbean Island of St. Thomas. This poem represents Walcott's unique style of gathering the scattered puzzle pieces of Caribbean history into a frame. By "Tiepolo's Hound," Walcott alludes to the possibility of him and Pissarro being forgotten due to colonialism while recognising that their works will persist as evidence of their existence and contribute to their enduring influence.

Besides his creativity and the various methods and techniques in his poems, Walcott's dedication to his art is the most notable. Passionate involvement in the practical vocation of writing poems is the cornerstone of Walcott's creativity as a poet. As Wong (2014) states, human beings are inclined to the creation process and the formation of values. In this vein, Walcott adopts writing to form his forgotten values, as one of the religious tasks, a mode of living, fulfilling one's sacred vocation as a creative artist. He began composing poems at a young age and bravely took on the challenge of independently publishing his first collection of poems when he was fourteen. Throughout his long and extremely prolific career, he maintained his initial intensity of poetic output, publishing twelve volumes of poetry in his last four decades alone. In addition, he was a remarkably productive writer whose work included dramas, a collection of essays, and many other examples of creative work in various fields. One could contend that creating literary pieces was the meaning of Walcott's life. Furthermore, as part of his efforts to promote art and literature, he took positions at such institutions as the University of the West Indies, Boston University, and Emory University. For creating artistic, poetic, or dramatic work, Walcott employed a typically prophetic function, lecturing, writing, and speaking out against waning cultural and human qualities (McConnell, 2023). In all respects, he sought to educate and foster a quality of change that assertively defended life and respect for the inner worth of diverse human beings. This feeling of 'responsibleness', as Frankl advocates to reach the true meaning of life, is obvious in the initial poem of Walcott's renowned compilation, *Collected Poems* (1992), titled "Prelude," in which the speaker's choice "to suffer in accurate iambs" highlights his strong devotion to creating poetry and his determination to express his internal reflections and feelings through words:

And my life, too early of course for the profound cigarette,
 The turned doorhandle, the knife turning
 In the bowels of the hours, must not be made public
 Until I have learnt to suffer
 In accurate iambics (Walcott, 1992, p. 3).

In simpler terms, Walcott transforms his personal experiences and feelings into a functional and intentional art expression. This attitude validates Frankl's belief that people could discover meaning through artistic pursuits and by attributing purpose to ordinary aspects of life. Frankl (1986) asserts that creative work typically signifies the space where an individual's distinctiveness intersects with the larger societal framework, giving it significance and worth. Namely, the significance and worth are associated with an individual's efforts as a contribution to the community rather than the specific job itself. Walcott always takes creative stance in opposition to what he sees as a generally debased culture, focusing especially on efforts to respect, revive, and preserve the essential cultural values of the Caribbean people. For this reason, what is expressed by Derek Walcott's poetic voice is the spontaneous part of the breathing of daily life and, therefore, genuine life. In summary, Walcott uses his artistic creations to lead his community in transforming tragedy into triumph, following the impact of colonisation on his homeland and confronting numerous acts of brutality, akin to the resilience shown by Frankl in his journey of recovery from the horrors of the Nazi concentration camps by clinging to his eagerness to enlighten the world with his insights into new ways of psychotherapy which leads him to create Logotherapy.

When viewed from Viktor Frankl's Logotherapy perspective, Derek Walcott's poetry highlights the important relationship between creativity, personal identity, and the search for meaning. His work is characterised by his colourful imagery, nuanced similes, metaphors, and symbols, all adding to a distinct visual impact that captures the predicaments of the Caribbean experience. His creative use of language, combining the coloniser's language with the Creole speech, serves as a form of resistance against the dominant culture and a way to reclaim his identity. Integrating different languages is essential to his identity analysis, providing a platform for the postcolonial struggle and confirming the diversity of Caribbean culture. The creative personae created by Walcott are essential components of his examination of dominant ideas, historical events, and the enduring impacts of colonialism. They represent the strength and determination of Caribbean history, capturing the collective awareness of a community confronting its past while creating a fresh identity. By reinterpreting and adapting his community's

myths through the lens of the coloniser's narratives, Walcott challenges the authority of colonial power and validates the importance of his cultural heritage. Most importantly, his dedication to the art of poetry is clear in his careful attention to structure and word choice, raising the creation of poetry into a deeply meaningful and satisfying experience. Walcott's poetic works transcend mere individual self-expression, engaging with broader existential issues and showcasing the capacity of art, specifically poetry, to offer meaning in the face of life's adversities. His writings stand as a testament to the potency of poetry in reflecting and influencing the human condition, especially in the context of postcolonial identity and conflict. In brief, the poems of Walcott seek to repossess and redefine cultural identity while emphasising the influential role of creativity in the quest for meaning.

2.2.2. The Experiential Pathway in Walcott's Poetry

Living an active life allows individuals to engage in creative work purposefully and realise their values. In contrast, a passive life, with no freedom of choosing or creating, such as imprisonment, illness, or other forms of confinement, could provide the opportunity to find fulfilment through experiencing beauty, art, nature, or culture (Frankl, 2006; Wong, 2019). In simpler terms, "the first is what he gives to the world in terms of his creations; the second is what he takes from the world in terms of encounters and experiences" (Frankl, 2014, p. 59). Even though these encounters do not involve active participation, they frequently result in profound self-reflection and understanding. One could find meaning in life by recognising goodness and truth or forming deep connections with others by truly loving and appreciating them as individuals (Frankl, 2004). There is no doubt that poetry represents a unique framework of the experiential pathway through which a person—whether it is the poet or the reader—can appreciate the strength of relationships with deep feelings and pave the way for inner growth. One could argue that Derek Walcott is one of the few poets in the world who was born truly knowing the integration of experience and expression, as his parents were mixed with white, black, Dutch, Portuguese, and African ancestry. In his works, social, cultural, natural, spiritual, and relational experiences of his land are deliberately absorbed into his canvases. Indeed, at certain points in his oeuvre, it is possible to perceive that Walcott is not just writing about his land and people; he is a part of it. Whether it is about the shame due to a harsh colonial power structure, the sadness of social betrayal, or the joy of identifying with the sea, the people, the language, and the land, Walcott's emotions are always intense. He has a wide experiential arena of inherited beautiful geography, folklore stories, and complex historical material. Moreover, he uses religious myth and literary myth as a vehicle and reveals the psyche of his universe. In the following

paragraphs, examples of Walcott's experiential pathway to give meaning to his being as well as his people's and humanity's existence, vision, history, and identity via his speakers/personae in his poems regarding natural beauty, spirituality, ancestral bond and self-love are explored.

One of the experiential values through which Walcott finds his meaning is natural beauty. Indeed, when exposed to natural beauty, human beings tend to become introspective, as they can face the truth within themselves and in life generally. In other words, this experience of nature, which may enable them to get in touch with their integrated, unified core and to feel the universal totality of experience, allows them to be inspired, consoled, and go back to their origins to get in touch with the cosmic centre of creation. To exemplify this, Frankl (2006) describes a particular moment when Jewish prisoners are being moved from Auschwitz to a Bavarian camp during the Nazi occupation. As they are transported, they are struck by the beauty of the Salzburg mountains illuminated by the setting sun, which they can see through the barred windows of their prison carriage. This temporary bond with the magnificence of nature provides a short break from their dire circumstances, demonstrating how aesthetic experiences can offer comfort even in the most challenging situations. Likewise, the attraction of the Caribbean's natural beauty offers a powerful impact on Walcott's mind. His superb art of employing evocative nature, acting not just as a backdrop but almost as a character in the poem, is evident when one reads and appreciates how he uses the philosophic level to ask and answer questions in his poems. In this respect, "The Season of Phantasmal Peace" effectively demonstrates how a single moment of natural beauty, albeit a vision of the mind, can provide deep meaning, tranquillity, and contentment. In the poem, the speaker believes that birds can banish darkness from the world through their harmonious interactions, creating a divine and enigmatic light that exceeds the confines of time and space:

Then all the nations of birds lifted together
 the huge net of the shadows of this earth
 in multitudinous dialects, twittering tongues,
 stitching and crossing it. They lifted up
 the shadows of long pines down trackless slopes,
 the shadows of glass-faced towers down evening streets,
 the shadow of a frail plant on a city sill—
 the net rising soundless as night, the birds' cries soundless,
 until
 there was no longer dusk, or season, decline, or weather,

only this passage of phantasmal light
 that not the narrowest shadow dared to sever (Walcott, 1992,
 p. 464).

The birds' perfectly synchronised flight creates unity beyond typical social bonds. The beauty of this unity lies in its ability to blend a multitude of natural elements – from the diverse bird species to the varied landscapes and even the interplay of light and shadow – into a seamless and harmonious integrity. For the reader, this moment of unity is visually impressive and emotionally uplifting. Walcott emphasises the fleeting nature of beauty by describing this moment of tranquillity as “one moment, like the pause between dusk and darkness” (Walcott, 1992, p. 464). The poem implies that even fleeting beauty can offer a profound feeling of satisfaction and meaning as a reminder of the possibility of peace and harmony in the world.

Spirituality is another experiential purpose that Walcott explores through his speakers. Although the primary source of his works is the physical and emotional world of the Caribbean, some of Walcott's early works surpass the limits of the actuality of the Caribbean experience and delve into the visionary or mythic plane. Via these poems, nature forms the stuff of which the physical world is made, but simultaneously, it becomes a means of expressing spiritual concepts. Man is a part of nature, through which he attains an entry into the world of the divine. In this respect, Reed (2021) asserts that poetry can heal readers or help them find pleasure, linking them with spirituality and opening spaces for transcendence. For this reason, Walcott frequently employs religious, spiritual experiences and quests in his pieces to reveal the stark disparity between the elements that make humans and their spirits beautiful and their actuality. For instance, “As John to Patmos” refers to St. John the Divine and his spiritual journey. The poem is set in Patmos, the Greek island in the Christian tradition where John heard the divine voice of the Apocalypse:

As John to Patmos, among the rocks and the blue, live air,
 hounded
 His heart to peace, as here surrounded
 By the strewn-silver on waves, the wood's crude hair, the
 rounded
 Breasts of the milky bays, palms flocks, the green and dead
 (Walcott, 1992, p. 5).

Indeed, the poem draws a parallel between Walcott's vision and the biblical vision of John on Patmos, suggesting a deep spiritual experience. Besides, the speaker's depiction of the Caribbean landscape evokes a

feeling of sacredness, much like the atmosphere on the island of Patmos. Walcott's attachment to his homeland goes beyond physical boundaries. It also represents a deep spiritual connection, reflecting a strong desire for understanding and belonging. Moreover, by elevating the lives of ordinary people to the stature of historical greats such as St. John, Walcott finds profound meaning in the dignity and resilience of his people. In addition, through scriptural references, he allows his people to perceive themselves as part of a divine plan working through time and linked to their land. This appreciation of the nobility in everyday life is a key aspect of experiential values, highlighting how meaningful encounters with others can profoundly impact one's sense of purpose (Frankl, 2000). The poet's deep engagement with his environment, people, and heritage is an act of finding and giving meaning. Line by line, John contemplates his identity—who he is, and what he has experienced so far—such as being exiled to an island because of his faith in Jesus. He expresses a sense of happiness and belonging after discovering a location where he feels accepted and no longer needs to look for meaning elsewhere. For Burnett (2001), Walcott connects St. John's vision on the island of Patmos to his choice to stay in the Caribbean islands.

Leaves, the sun's brass coin on my cheek, where
 Canoes brace the sun's strength, as John, in that bleak air,
 So am I welcomed richer by these blue scapes, Greek there,
 So I shall voyage no more from home; may I speak here
 (Walcott, 1992, p. 5).

The soul is in discomfort and wants to find its place in the world, so it goes to a place where it can find internal peace. This relates to the notion that discovering meaning could entail acknowledging and enjoying the situation as it is, such in the speaker's case, his island of heaven, where he is free to reveal his emotions bereft of doubt or constraint. The need for purpose and being anchored in a location are reflected in the desire to stay and "speak here" (Walcott, 1992, p. 5). With this early work,—written in his twenties—the poet conveys his emotional and spiritual dedication to his homeland, St. Lucia, and the entire Caribbean archipelago, besides his religious sense of mission. (Bloom, 2003).

In search of meaning, another significant experiential force that Walcott clings to is his ancestral bond. As part of his focus on the roots of the Caribbean, Walcott extensively explores his ancestors' historical, social, and cultural heritage to establish a reconnection between his people and their pre-colonial times. This exploration leads him to discover that Western traditions cannot meet the essential spiritual needs of his world or express specific collective identities. It is an act of rejection against the

imposed cultural norms in favour of a more authentic connection to the Caribbean's pre-colonial past. Accordingly, instead of acknowledging himself and his people as fragments with severed roots, he embraces his land's unwritten history from experiences such as folklore, tales, memories, religious practices, and ancestors' music. As a result, history is rewritten from a connective standpoint to the roots at the shoreline of the Caribbean. For instance, in his poem "The Star-Apple Kingdom," Walcott visualises and verbalises a realm of life narrative about the pre-colonial Caribbean existence, origins, and identity while portraying a feeling of ancestral significance and bond with heritage:

There were still shards of an ancient pastoral
 in those shires of the island where the cattle drank
 their pools of shadow from an older sky,
 surviving from when the landscape copied such subjects as
 "Herefords at Sunset in the Valley of the Wye."
 The mountain water that fell white from the mill wheel
 sprinkling like petals from the star-apple trees (Walcott, 1992,
 p. 383).

The speaker's sentimental expressions concerning the beautiful reminiscence of the Caribbean islands are strong emotions that emphasise the sense of freedom before colonisation. Walcott also uses the poem to show the beauty of the precolonial city. Its people are strong, independent, and have dignity about themselves, perfect beings like the city's beauty. The speaker is proud of the islands he grew to love and the heritage and folklore that coincide. In the poem, alongside history, the bonds with ancestry are portrayed in complex and challenging feelings in which anger and love exist together. This reflects the speaker's need for a sense of belonging and connection to his heritage, seeking meaning in the depth of lived experiences, the ties to different cultural and historical accounts, and the continual pursuit of identity and acceptance:

He lathered in anger and refreshed his love.
 He was lathered like a horse, but the instant
 the shower crowned him and he closed his eyes,
 he was a bride under lace, remarrying his country,
 a child drawn by the roars of the mill wheel's electorate,
 those vows reaffirmed; he dressed, went down to breakfast,
 and sitting again at the mahogany surface

of the breakfast table, its dark hide as polished
 as the sheen of mares, saw his father's face
 and his own face blent there, and looked out
 to the drying garden and its seeping pond.

What was the Caribbean? (Walcott, 2014, p. 393)

Walcott feels a deep bond and continuity that goes beyond the challenges of colonial history. Reinterpreting things requires more than intelligence; it demands connecting to one's experiences. Examining age-old traditions from a new perspective is crucial to this process. Similarly, Walcott's poetry acts as a channel for renewal and affirmation, offering a pathway for the poet and his community to reclaim a rejuvenated understanding of self and purpose. In conclusion, "The Star-Apple Kingdom" can be understood on two levels, one as a graph of West Indian history, the other as a description of an actual voyage. Indeed, the use of one level to describe the other, the use of imagination to link the two levels, and the transformation of West Indian history into a voyage of meaning through shared experience is the essence of Walcott's work. Similarly, in "Origins" (Chapter VII), Walcott echoes old masters and remembers ancestors with praise, thus becoming his people's voice:

We praise those whose back on hillsides buckles on the wind
 To sow the grain of Guinea in the mouths of the dead,
 Who, hurling their bone-needed nets over the cave mouth,
 Harvest ancestral voices from its surf,
 Who, lacking knowledge of metals, primarily of gold,
 Still gather the coinage of cowries, simple numismatists
 (Walcott, 1992, pp. 15-16).

For Walcott, human history is not just certain things that happened to certain categories of people in some places at some time on the globe. Nor is his poetry primarily psychological or abstract. His speakers are situated in substance, in actual specifics of time and place. Moreover, when his heroes speak, their address is grounded in the common culture. In other words, the poetic works of Derek Walcott are filled with his love and longing for his native West Indies, whether in the form of his educational setting, his family and friends, the human community steeped in history that has survived colonialism, the flora and fauna, landscapes, and others. These poems are tributes to all Caribbean people who suffered the pain of their existence. Walcott draws the Caribbean people back into their pre-

colonial history and re-establishes the bond with an indigenous landscape. His works of art illustrate his profound connection and reverence for his people and homeland. This connection is akin to the experience Frankl had during World War II. Immediately after Frankl reads a piece from the Ten Commandments saying, "Honor thy father and thy mother that thy days may be long upon the land," he decides to stay in Vienna with his parents and not renew his visa for the United States even though this decision leads him to face the brutal conditions of the concentration camps for years (Frankl, 2006, Preface XI). Praising the living, the dead and the land's natural resources demonstrates a deep engagement with Walcott's ultimate meaning and appreciation for the intrinsic value of his experiences.

Self-discovery and finding the meaning of life are universal, and literary works on these themes are timeless. Finding meaning through self-love is one of the leading experiential treasures that Walcott tackles in his poetry. One illustrative example is Derek Walcott's "Love After Love," which focuses on self-discovery and acceptance. It depicts a long and difficult journey towards personal growth, not limited to a specific time, but rather as an ongoing process influenced by emotional findings and unforeseen circumstances. It is not achieved immediately but gradually and in different phases. The word "love" in the title stands as a verb for a stronger feeling to emphasise the active change that the present moment of understanding and accepting oneself brings. Derek Walcott effectively presents a method for inner healing in "Love after Love," encouraging the acceptance of self-exploration as a means of overcoming disappointments. It is self-love in almost a physical way, loving and greeting oneself with "a bowl of red currants" and "a shower of rain" (Walcott, 1992, p. 328). The tale speaks to someone who finally looks at the mirror and loves what they see. The poem reaches out to speak to the estranged, but it does not stop there. Walcott, as the speaker, also extends the invitation to "sit," "eat," and "be empty" (Walcott, 1992, p. 328). The poem conveys Walcott's discovery of freedom. It can also be seen as an order for freedom. Humans struggle for their lives, fighting for freedom and peace. It is a poem replete with meaning that guides humans to find their self-love and inner contentment with joy.

In summary, this section explores how Walcott's poetry embodies Frankl's Logotherapy, finding meaning through beauty, nature, culture, and connections with the self by focusing on the Caribbean landscapes, heritage, history and daily life. Through vivid depictions of nature, spirituality, ancestors, and love, Walcott prompts self-reflection and consciousness while showing how meaningful experiences lead to personal growth. In line with Frankl's experiential pathway, Walcott's works suggest that life's meaning can be found by appreciating life's beauty and nurturing profound emotional connections.

2.2.3. The Attitudinal Pathway in Walcott's Poetry

Logotherapy helps discover meaning through the attitudinal values toward multivarious struggles of life (Frankl, 2000; Lukas, 2020). In other words, it guides people to find meaning by changing their debilitating attitudes into healing spiritual values in the face of inevitable suffering. It neither removes the pain or misery nor attempts to explain or interpret them. However, finding meaning in suffering helps the person bear it if it cannot be avoided, thus transforming life's inescapable trials into achievements. It is optimistic and focuses on the sources and strengths a person has. The journey of life, being, and becoming are perhaps some of the most important and intimate motifs presented in Derek Walcott's poetry in a sophisticated and literary manner. He derives a deep sense of realisation about life from the confrontation with his suffering. Walcott often combines a cyclical vision of life and artistic theories to express this acknowledging and empowering insight, and his works reflect an overall experience of a difficult life. In conclusion, this section shows how, through Logotherapy, attitudinal values can be transformed into a precise therapeutic pathway in the face of the cyclical nature of life, disasters, death, colonial brutality, emotional pain, and alienation.

The cyclical nature of life is one of the central attitudinal values Walcott explores in his poetry to find meaning in life. The natural rhythm of day and night, the shift between work and rest, in and out of every breath, all point toward the natural patterns of change that reflect the waxing and waning of each moment of life. This waxing and waning of life are reflected in moments, weeks, seasons, and years, signifying life's cyclical nature. Although in the era of positive thinking, unpleasant emotions might, either temporarily or permanently, cause discomfort or anguish, according to Logotherapy, they can facilitate deeper thinking and consideration of the self, creating a new, stronger path (Lukas, 2020). In that regard, Walcott's "The Bounty (Chapter 22)" reflects on the significance and impact of subdued experiences in life. The speaker contemplates the value of grey aspects of life and muted emotions, suggesting that they provide a steady and sound background for more intense feelings to be understood and appreciated:

(...) I am not weary of the elate,
 but gray days are useful, without reflection, like the drained
 sand just
 after twilight. I am considering the avoidance of an excitable
 vocabulary or a melodramatic pause like death, or the remorse of
 loss or not; there is no loss without love, but this too must be
 muted, like the metronome of breath close to the even heart.
 Pause. Resume. Pause. Once more (Walcott, 2014, p. 478).

Walcott contrasts the drama of loss, love, and regret with the calm, enduring presence of natural elements like the sea and the sky. This perspective reflects an attitudinal shift towards finding peace in nature's constant, unremarkable rhythms rather than in the fleeting highs and lows of human experience. In line with Walcott's verses, Logotherapy guides people to find no fault with anything and go with the flow (Frankl, 2011). Consequently, Walcott reconciles with his gray days, embraces them as they are. He accepts all emotions with their possible outcomes, whereby he paints his canvas of life with a rich palette of colourful experiences and reaches his ultimate meaning. After all, an acceptance and intake of life's inherent ebbs and flows—like breathing in and out—and struggles pave the way for experiencing life's simultaneous joy and celebration, because if there is no pain, that also means no gain. Similarly, in the poem "Dark August," Walcott's speaker acknowledges that joy and suffering hold meaning, reflecting a comprehensive understanding of the human condition:

(...) I am learning slowly

to love the dark days, the steaming hills,
the air with gossiping mosquitoes,
and to sip the medicine of bitterness,

(...) to love black days like bright ones,
the black rain, the white hills, when once

I loved only my happiness and you (Walcott, 1992, pp. 329-330).

Walcott's poems are filled with symbols representing his acceptance of himself and recognition of the vulnerability that makes him human. He lights a candle rather than cursing the darkness. Furthermore, his surroundings shape him as he shapes them, enabling his growth and development. From his lines, it can be concluded that understanding human experiences is best achieved holistically. Additionally, this shows the resilience that one must have in accepting how things are, considering the purpose of living. This perspective reminds the reader that destiny tends to bring what is best for humans, as well as change, suspend, or withhold, on occasion, what they want to happen in their lives (Batthyány, 2016). After all, this 'tragic optimism' comprises the focal point of the attitudinal pathway to attain a meaningful life.

Another attitudinal example of Walcott is toward the disasters. The core belief of Logotherapy also builds on finding meaning in life through one's attitudes toward inevitable disasters. Indeed, recognising and embracing the reality of life is not a passive or a defeatist response but an active and empowering approach to understanding and overcoming adversity (Frankl, 1985). It allows individuals to accurately assess their situation and take appropriate action to rebuild their lives and surpass the immediate pain. In that regard, "A City's Death by Fire" is a thought-provoking example representing the experience of losing and breaking down in the aftermath of the 1948 Great Fire in St. Lucia. Although it is extremely tragic, the speaker's stamina is still obvious in consciously choosing to document the disaster "by tallow" instead of giving in to despair:

After that hot gopeller has levelled all but the churched sky,
I wrote the tale by tallow of a city's death by fire;
Under a candle's eye that smoked in tears, I
Wanted to tell in more than wax of faiths that were snapped
like wire (Walcott, 1992, p. 6).

Penning a story implies an effort to uncover meaning and bring understanding to a devastating occurrence despite devastation and disorder. The speaker's grief is obvious from the candle "smoked in tears" (Walcott, 1992, p. 6). The "faiths snapped like wire" expresses the deep disappointment and loss of belief that can come with such devastation (Walcott, 1992, p. 6). Still, the speaker's wish "to tell in more than wax" indicates an attempt to move beyond mourning and find a lasting way to communicate the impact of the destruction (Walcott, 1992, p. 6). Ultimately, the poem presents a new beginning and a sense of rejuvenation:

In town leaves were paper, but the hills were a flock of faiths;
To a boy who walked all day, each leaf was a green breath
Rebuilding a love I thought was dead as nails,
Blessing the death and the baptism by fire (Walcott, 1992, p. 6).

Every new leaf and the metaphorical "baptism by fire" symbolise significant moments of change aimed at restoring a love that may have been lost (Walcott, 1992, p. 6). Finding a renewed sense of meaning and strength in the aftermath of suffering is a key element of the attitudinal pathway in Logotherapy. According to D'aguiar (2005), in this poem, "the material reality of the city while reduced to ashes by the fire gives rise to the Phoenix of spiritual awakening," and Walcott's tone "expresses a need for a deeper meaning in existence beyond the physical and material facts of life" (p. 217).

Besides disasters, Walcott also tackles death as an attitudinal value in the quest for life's meaning. Indeed, one of life's most difficult experiences is that of losing a loved one to death. While this is a tragedy, it is also a universal human encounter that will inevitably be experienced. Logotherapy recommends that people grieve and take the next, best step forward in this turning point (Weisskopf-Joelson, 1975). While seemingly cruel to many, death creates the richest soil for growing insight, wisdom, empathy, and strength. Regarding this, in the poem "Sea Canes," Derek Walcott provides a brief yet powerful analysis of the impact of death from specific to general. In this poem, after the stage of bargaining with earth for his friends, he uses the symbol of the sea canes to remind specifically himself and the whole of humanity in general of human's inherent strength in the face of sorrow and suffering. Indeed, Walcott's portrayal of grief and loss is not just an evocative portrayal of personal life but also, from a larger perspective, portrays a society's attitude in dealing with change and losses. Hence, his Caribbean way of coping with death shines in the depiction of the sea canes, underscoring his belief that humans could never be completely defeated:

The sea canes by the cliff flash green and silver;
 They were the seraph lances of my faith,
 but out of what is lost grows something stronger

that has the rational radiance of stone,
 enduring moonlight, further than despair,
 strong as the wind, that through dividing canes (Walcott,
 1992, p. 331).

Those who accept the death of a loved one with serenity are very fortunate outliers in their society, by which their society, culture, and personality change toward hoping to accept a loss in a positive and good way. In this poem, Walcott's general attitude towards loss and grief is a philosophical and ethical lesson for his people and the whole world, bringing the message of reconciliation and acceptance. One could argue that, for Walcott, the experience of death is real and profound but not threatening. Likewise, according to Logotherapy, the human capacity to find meaning in negative life events and hope for a better future is fascinating (Frankl, 2004). All in all, Walcott's "Sea Canes" reveals that experiencing a traumatic event can lead to an increased appreciation of life, a deeper connection to others, and a better-developed sense of self with a re-formed meaning in life.

Colonial brutality is another central theme Walcott highlights in his poems through his speakers' attitudinal power. Indeed, Viktor Frankl's

attitudinal pathway is especially applicable when considering the impact of colonial brutality. It offers a way to come to terms with the past and embrace the present with a refreshed outlook of hope and acceptance (Wong, 2014). The impact of colonialism in the Caribbean islands was profound and long-lasting, characterised by brutality, exploitation, and cultural disruption. The Caribbean was once a lively mix of native cultures and African influences; however, it faced the difficult challenges of European colonialism. Nevertheless, during this suffering, the strength and ability of Caribbean people to recover emerged as a strong testament to their enduring resilience. In this respect, Walcott's "The Lost Empire" (Chapter I) effectively depicts the impact of colonialism, the decline of the British Empire, and the aftermath. In Chapter II, it ultimately shows Caribbean people how to find meaning through acceptance, reconciliation, and having a positive outlook on the present situation. The first chapter commences with a vivid description of the sudden and total collapse of the British Empire:

And then there was no more Empire all of a sudden.
 Its victories were air, its dominions dirt:
 Burma, Canada, Egypt, Africa, India, the Sudan.
 The map that had seeped its stain on a schoolboy's shirt like
 red ink on a
 blotter, battles, long sieges.
 Dhows and feluccas, hill stations, outposts, flags fluttering
 down in the
 dusk, their golden aegis went out with the sun, the last gleam
 on a
 great crag, with tiger-eyed turbaned Sikhs, pennons of the
 Raj to a
 sobbing bugle (Walcott, 2014, p. 617).

These lines establish the mood for the poem, expressing a feeling of ending and the short-lived nature of authority. The Empire, once powerful and dominant over large parts of the world, has now become insignificant, reduced to mere memories of past battles, sieges, and the symbolic act of lowering flags. Walcott's use of descriptive language, like "red ink on a blotter" and "tiger-eyed turbaned Sikhs," recalls the greatness and harshness of the Empire but also its inevitable failure (Walcott, 2014, p. 617). In this chapter, the poem openly acknowledges the suffering and devastation caused by colonialism without hesitation. Instead of focusing on the pain, Walcott examines how to discover purpose and tranquillity in the current moment despite the lingering effects of past hardships. In the second chapter, Walcott

changes his focus from the Empire's downfall to the beauty and simplicity of the postcolonial world. He speaks of the natural scenery with a feeling of deep respect and satisfaction:

This small place produces nothing but beauty,
 the wind-warped trees, the breakers on the Dennerly cliffs, and the
 wild light that loosens a galloping mare on the plain of
 Vieuxfort
 make us merely receiving vessels of each day's grace,
 light simplifies us whatever our race or gifts.
 I'm content as Kavanagh with his few acres;
 for my heart to be torn to shreds like the sea's lace, to see how
 its wings
 catch color when a gull lifts (Walcott, 2014, p. 618).

The vibrant portrayals of the natural world contrast sharply with the previous depictions of imperial authority and domination, hinting at a shift back to something genuine and timeless. This shift in perspective is where the attitudinal pathway of Logotherapy becomes significant. Walcott decides to concentrate on the elegance and brightness of the current moment, finding meaning in the beauty of the scenery and the modesty of postcolonial life. He discovers that fulfilment and meaning are not discovered in extravagant shows of dominance or riches but in peaceful gratitude for the beauties of nature. Reconciliation and acceptance are critical to Logotherapy, where the meaning comes from how a person responds to life's challenges (Frankl, 2020). Viewed from this perspective, "The Lost Empire" is a fascinating exploration of how people can discover meaning and contentment, even after facing colonial brutality, by embracing a positive and open-minded attitude towards the present.

In addition to colonial brutality, emotional pain is examined through a constructive attitude in Walcott's poems. Indeed, emotional pain is an ache located inside the mind, which could lead people to negative thought patterns, creating anxiety or depression and preventing someone from experiencing any pleasure. While it is quite natural to avoid feeling the agony that results from a broken heart, the significance of acknowledging it and allowing the emotional pain to 'be' cannot be emphasised enough. Analysing "Private Journal" through Viktor Frankl's attitudinal lens offers a complex framework for comprehending how individuals can discover meaning and direction during emotional pain. The poem expresses a sense of longing and contemplation about past experiences, emphasising the unavoidable pain that accompanies growth and romantic relationships:

And love came, cracked the hearts it joined just as love ought,
 Was our tallest delight and our deepest affliction,
 Taught us more than philosophy did that we wanted
 Freedom from, not of, thought (Walcott, 2014, p. 18).

Walcott's introspection suggests that his experiences with love and pain have granted him deeper understandings than abstract philosophical concepts. By contemplating these experiences and their impact on his life, he is committed to seeking meaning and understanding beyond fleeting pleasures or struggles. Realising and acknowledging the truth takes people one step closer to healing (Lukas, 2020). Recognising pain is an act of self-compassion and results in less emotional distress. Walcott, here, deems love as a master who guides its disciples to realise deeper insights and freedom from the limiting dimension of emotional pain to the unlimited versions of a meaningful life.

Another challenge that Walcott deals with through a positive attitude in his poetry is suffering from alienation. In the wake of modern industrial society, the world has undergone profound changes, such as the urban and rural split and the degrading of human values, which naturally paved the way for alienation. An overwhelming sense of unanswered existential questions has led to the individual estrangement from identity, child, love, authority, hometown, work, society and nation. Logotherapy, in this sense, is a reaction against the self-draining characteristics of the modern and postmodern era (Frankl, 2000). It embodies the belief that while individuals are responsible for the situation in which they find themselves, they are equally capable of changing it, ensuring they have the cards in hand. Human beings are mental creatures ruled by their attitudes. A positive outlook or attitude goes a long way in alleviating the feeling of alienation. Such a person starts to concentrate on the good aspects of the real world surrounding him. For instance, this reality for Walcott is his motherland. For instance, "Parang I: Christmas Eve" depicts Walcott's speaker's transition from experiencing pain caused by feelings of disconnection to reaching a point where he embraces a sense of belonging and acceptance. At the poem's start, the speaker struggles with feeling disconnected from the island and its people. Doubt lingers within him regarding his embracement of his homeland and people—whether they can adopt him as a part of their being. The initial lines display evident tension:

Can you genuinely claim these, and do they reclaim you from
 your possible margin of disdain, of occasional escape:
 the dusk in the orange yards of the shacks, the waxen blue-

green of the breadfruit leaves, the first bulb in the kitchens—
 shape
 and shadow so familiar, so worn, like the handles of brooms
 in old women’s hands? (Walcott, 2014, p. 461).

Walcott’s employment of “disdain” and “escape” indicates a feeling of isolation and detachment from the world he depicts (Walcott, 2014, p. 461). The speaker appears somewhat on the fringes of the island’s social scene, not part of the regular crowd and atmosphere. He looks at the breadfruit leaves, the men outside the shop, and the stars in the sky, but he feels emotionally disconnected from these things. Indeed, the feeling of alienation may not be obvious, but it can greatly impact a person’s well-being which can lead to much inner distress. After the initial sense of disconnection, the speaker alters his viewpoint in the following lines:

Yes, they reclaim you in a way you need not understand:
 candles that never gutter and go out in the breeze,
 or tears that glint on night’s face for every island (Walcott,
 2014, p. 461).

The island’s allure on the speaker shifts his perspective. This change represents a major difference in attitude, as he no longer doubts his connection to the island. Instead, he recognises that this feeling of belonging is beyond his control. The familiar aspects of island living overcome his earlier feeling of detachment. Alienation for Walcott is not just separation from homeland or community, but also a division within himself. This emotional distance causes inner conflict, but it is possible to overcome it through a change in the viewpoint. In conclusion, “Parang I: Christmas Eve” reflects the postmodern feeling of alienation intensely while providing a guide, an attitudinal pathway for overcoming it by shifting one’s perspective from the burden of those feelings toward the familiar world.

Looking at Walcott’s poetry through Frankl’s attitudinal pathway, one can understand how meaning can be found in pain, grief, and the challenges of the modern world. His lines show that facing adversity end in growth and understanding life’s cycles. Moreover, his reflections show a shift in perspective, embracing the present, appreciating simplicity, and grasping life’s rhythms. His poems promote accepting and reconciling personal and collective history, cultivating gratitude and elegance in challenging times. In sum, Walcott’s exploration of human experience aligns with Logotherapy’s attitudinal focus on personal accountability and meaning, urging a hopeful outlook on life’s predicaments.

CHAPTER THREE — CAROL ANN DUFFY

In Chapter Three, there is a detailed exploration of Carol Ann Duffy's selected poems after briefly overviewing her poetry's historical, cultural, and political context. The analysis of the selected poems is approached from the standpoint of Viktor Frankl's Logotherapy, focusing on how Duffy demonstrates the three pathways through the speakers of her poems, as well as her approach to overcoming the obstacles in her life.

3.1. Historical, Cultural, and Political Background of Duffy's Poetry

Dame Carol Ann Duffy (1955-) is a Scottish poet, born in Glasgow into a Catholic, working-class, and Irish descent family (Rees-Jones, 2010). When she was six years old, her family moved to Stafford, England, where she spent her formative years. She studied Philosophy at the University of Liverpool and completed her studies with an M.A. in 1977. In college, Duffy joined a Scottish theatre group and later moved to London, where she worked various jobs, including as a music promoter and an editor at a magazine, called *Ambit*. She rose to prominence in the early 1980s with her poem "Whoever She Was." As a poet, her reputation increased over the next two decades with the release of multiple collections, earning more awards. Her role as "the first female Poet Laureate of the UK" from 2009 to 2019 further augmented her influence on society and enabled her poems to become widely recognized (Dowson, 2016, p. 2). Naturally, Duffy's status as the only female, Scottish, and LGBTQ+ writer to hold this title raised concerns over her role in an institution that had historically been closed to different points of view and her connection to the dominant poetic tradition. Nevertheless, these roles as the Poet Laureate and a Dame in 2015 were largely ceremonial for Duffy, primarily strengthening her commitment to using language as a tool for social reflection and change (Dowson, 2016). Throughout her Poet Laureate times, she created opportunities for poets, involving established writers, nurturing new voices, supporting prizes and competitions, and educating future poets in schools nationwide. She prioritized serving poetry over the Establishment.

Duffy's acute understanding of literature and language forms the foundation of her introspective poetry, which delves into existential themes such as identity, love, and suffering through the eyes of her women speakers, offering a comprehensive reflection on the state of humanity. Her choice of words, which frequently consists of clichés and local language, and the employment of the dramatic monologue contributes to her accessibility to a broad readership (Woods, 2002). Her first collection, *Standing Female Nude* (1985), represents a non-traditional feminist stance, which is satirical and allusive rather than simply anti-male (Woods, 2002). While early collections such as *Selling Manhattan* (1987), *The Other Country* (1990), and *Mean Time* (1993) have strong monologues from males discussing their relationships with or desires for women, the highly regarded *The World's Wife* (1999) focuses specifically on women's desires, discontents, and frustrations arising from their complex partnerships with men. Duffy adopts an unconventional approach in *The World's Wife* (1999) by revisiting the narratives of well-known women from mythology and history. According to Akkoyun (2021), she deliberately highlights and denounces "the detrimental impact of patriarchal norms and social structures on women and gender equity" as part of her revisionist mythmaking project (p. 562). This assertive feminist voice takes on a more sophisticated form, becoming gentler and even depersonalised in some *Rapture* (2005) and *The Bees* (2011) poems. Her other notable collections are *Feminine Gospels* (2002) and *Sincerity* (2018), which fundamentally echo the inequities and marginalised groups, women and the world, nostalgia, and the like. In addition to writing numerous volumes of poetry, she has also published critical essays and edited anthologies. To sum up, Duffy's diverse body of work, characterized by its accessibility, feminist viewpoints, and linguistic creativity, firmly establishes her as a significant voice in postmodern poetry, advocating for social awareness and the exploration of human experience.

The emotional impact of Duffy's poems is enriched by the depth of her understanding of the culture from which she writes. For one, her displacement and changes in language and accent are evident in her works. Living on a boundary as a Scot in England puts her in a position where she must either acknowledge assimilation or maintain her difference. She strongly juxtaposes her childhood memories, motherland, and loss in many of her poems. For instance, her poem "Nostalgia" emphasizes the Scottish landscape and is acutely felt by both the displaced and those who stay behind. For another, she faces resistance and disapproval as a poet with a lesbian identity in a heterosexual society. Still, she insists on presenting love in her works in various relationships as multifaceted and unconventional—between people of different preferences or just people in general. This sense of displacement and estrangement motivates her to transform the

bittersweet experiences of individuals with similar circumstances living in contemporary Britain into poetry (Bala, 2011).

Carol Ann Duffy's poetry is firmly embedded in a political framework, showcasing her commitment to social justice, feminist principles, and critiques of power dynamics. These elements have influenced her artistry and defined her position as a transformative presence in contemporary British poetry, which have paved the way for her lifetime purpose: poetry is a means for change, freedom, and achieving social justice. Gender roles discussions in the 1950s, the economic uplift, consumerism, and the desire for freedom in the 1980s, and especially the period from 2000 to 2019, were breakthrough years because of both a greater feminist impulse for genuine change in female/male relationships and the transformation of the political actions, movements, and social networks into a genuinely feminist political movement. Rooted in this political atmosphere, Duffy has supplied her community and the world with a sociological reading of British politics, albeit in complex and devastating forms. Her responsiveness to her past and present political and social issues, besides her criticism of Thatcherite policies and social divisions, shows that she has ingenuously engaged with the external world. Through her female characters, Duffy has expressed her poignant ideas about justice and freedom and her cynicism about the political leaders' craze for reaching the top. According to her, poetry comes from a political stance and should provoke discussion and dissent and shake its readers from their assumptions. She is a poet committed to social justice. She feels duty-bound to become the voice of women, ethnic groups, diverse sexualities, the countryside, and religions that she feels have been left out of the anthologies. She is concerned with the oppressed and the outsider, as well as the tension and conflict that inevitably result from living on the margins of society as othered or demonized. For this reason, her historical narrative invites readers to question the legitimacy and origins of authority. One could easily infer that Duffy's critical perspective is sharply directed against leaders who misuse their power and their followers, as well as against methods and opinions that they employ to achieve and justify their deeds (Das, 2020; Dillon, 2022; Lum, 2022; Öztürk, 2023). Her life and social justice activism have greatly influenced her poetry, making her a poet deeply connected to the socio-political fabric of contemporary Britain. She pushes the boundaries of language and form to capture the essence of her era. She has not only voiced public concerns in political matters but also criticized politicians during national disasters. Her work challenges societal norms and power structures, merging personal and political themes to illuminate the complexities of identity, love, and suffering. Duffy's legacy lies in her dedication to challenging oppression and amplifying silenced voices, solidifying her as a transformative figure in postmodern poetry.

Consequently, by her steadfast dedication to social justice and her sharp analysis of social and political disparities, Carol Ann Duffy has established her legacy as a poet who both mirrors and transforms the socio-political environment of modern British poetry.

3.2. Analysis of Duffy's Poetry in Light of Logotherapy

Carol Ann Duffy is one of the most significant voices in postmodern literature. The dominant and recurring themes of love, betrayal, anger, and hopelessness in her writing serve as powerful indicators of her perspectives shaped over time in what is currently Ireland, Scotland, and England. Duffy's ability to deeply understand the family relationships within a community and their surroundings showcases her sharp power of observation that shape her poetry. Her writing includes both local language and standard English, making it accessible to a wide range of people and life experiences. Her poems articulate an important feminist perspective by challenging the socially acceptable definitions of gender identity. Duffy's expertise in language, choice of themes, and active engagement with the complexity of human life depict a poet who is highly conscious of the value of meaning, the transforming potential of suffering, and the close relationship between individual narratives and the broader scope of human existence (Seddeek & Ismaiel, 2018). Her literary journey confirms the principles of Logotherapy's never-ending search for meaning and purpose. In the rest of this chapter, selected poems by Carol Ann Duffy will be analysed and interpreted in the context of Logotherapy's triad of pathways.

3.2.1. The Creative Pathway in Duffy's Poetry

The creative pathway of Logotherapy aids people to reach their meaning and essence of life through drawing upon their unique skills. It possesses a healing potential to relieve existential anxiety and shapes an action-oriented character, activating the inventor in human and highlighting the necessary responsibility for self-development. In doing this, one also discovers new aspects of oneself. In this sense, poetry, as a special kind of creativity, embodies self-expression and meaning-making. As a creative poet, playwright, essayist, and educator, Carol Ann Duffy has dedicated four decades of time and effort to understanding the importance of creative art. In the following paragraphs, Duffy's two aspects of creativity in her selected poems will be explored: While her creative aspects as a poet are scrutinized in her pieces, her speakers' creativity is also analysed through Frankl's creative pathway of Logotherapy.

In Duffy's poetry, one of the most creative aspects is the convergence of many themes and motifs represented in a contemporary manner. These contemporary themes and motifs are her masks, created out of her understanding and imaginings; each mask is based on a cluster of ideas, moral qualities, or personae given structure and form to reach her meaning of life through the creative pathway of Logotherapy. Her work is valued for its relevance in terms of how far it reflects societal changes and what human experiences it portrays and represents. Through the themes of love, gender, justice, war, dislocation, the struggle to create individual identity and integrity, the degrading racial, cultural, and geographical boundaries and barriers, and the plague of pragmatism and hedonism, Duffy addresses many important issues that have shaped the society. Primarily, she often drifts into talking about the identity of the individual, especially concerning society and how identity can be affected by gender. Duffy, as a feminist, offers intense and witty observations about her speakers and skilfully bases them in a poetic tradition that forces the reader towards a deeper understanding both of themselves and the power of poetry. She mostly attempts to reverse a primarily male canon of works and stereotypes of society and give voice to those women who have been traditionally ignored. In other words, she presents the stereotype of the passive married woman with the expectations of the patriarchy. Still, Duffy challenges the stereotype by suggesting that a mother, married or single, knows women's strength fundamentally, psychologically, and intellectually. The speakers in her poems produce alternative perspectives of their times and power relationships. Afterward, love takes various forms and contexts in her poems. Duffy's love poetry speaks of feelings and perceptions in the physical. It is about how one reacts to touch, taste, sound, sight, and smell. It is sometimes deeply and memorably delicate. In addition, her views about relations between the opposite sexes are not traditional. She sees women as individuals with the right to express their opinions. They are not secondary to men; women are as important. Duffy sees love as an ever-evolving thing, the rules of which differed from the present in the past. Both personal influences and societal circumstances mould her intentions; therefore, the result is the cold, hard reality of the postmodern relationship. Furthermore, as one of the 20th-century poets in favour of presenting relationships of all forms, Duffy promotes the inclusive celebration of various abilities to love and emotions, advocating for love of all forms—presenting love as a complex, often painful emotion open to everyone. Currently, as the norm shifts again with audiences considering identities under LGBTQ+, this perspective mirrors the self and the now of love literature; Duffy encourages people to reflect on the notion of an 'acceptable' emotion further in embodying the self as the norm, resisting or even rejecting the historical, biological, and psychoanalytic associations made with each type of love. Finally, throughout her poetic career, Duffy has

returned again and again to social injustice as a theme and the need to engage with it as an act of ethical, emotional, and aesthetic responsibility. To Duffy, persecution is inexcusable, and she represents it in her poetry as a species of incivility caused by the abuse of power and the failure to empathize. Duffy's wish to describe the experience of whole communities who have faced oppression or suffering shows how attached she is to emotional truth and how little she witnesses the society has changed regarding these issues. For this reason, she generally writes about what it takes to live and the influence that history and power have over one's attempts to construct a self that can make a meaningful impact on the world. In conclusion, it can seem from her works that Duffy explores her personal meaning through the integration of personal and public exploration of the many contemporary themes.

Another creative characteristic of Duffy in the quest for meaning is intertextuality and the inclusion of the reader. Many poems of Carol Ann Duffy contain direct or indirect references to their predecessors. These references take various forms, including echo, parody, translation, allusion, quotation, and metaphor. Since Duffy contests the notion of the self or the author who is solely responsible for creating new and original texts, she unpacks the reader from a passive role in front of the text. At one point or another, Duffy's works create dialogues with a broad spectrum of local and global literary traditions whereby the reader becomes a partner in a dynamic relationship, not only with the text and its potential meaning but also with the greater intertext formed by all the coexistent literary works. As a result, different readers bring different literal and metaphorical interpretations to the same poem. Eventually, the poem attains its universality through this lack of finality and closure. Duffy's intertextual network is extremely diverse. From the ancient poets of Greece and Rome, through Shakespeare and his contemporaries, via the precursors of the Romantics, to the poetry of the last 140 years, she draws on a great range of source material. Her lines remind the readers memories of films and novels, then recompose these cultural icons to shift the centre of the narrative toward the female. *The World's Wife*, for instance, employs humour as a different point of view of examining classic texts: "Mrs. Sisyphus," "Mrs. Darwin," "Mrs. Quasimodo," "Medusa," and "Eurydice" are merely some of the main ones. To illustrate, in her poem "Mrs Sisyphus," Duffy provides a satirical and feminist rendition of the Greek myth of Sisyphus. The poem opens with the introduction of Mrs. Sisyphus' marriage to an uncaring husband, the mythological figure Sisyphus who was punished to continuously push a stone uphill and watch it fall, because of his deceitfulness. Throughout the poem, apparently, Duffy derives pleasure both from the humorous narrative and exaggerated rhyme scheme that ridicule and defy the conventional rhyme schemes, in line with the "consensus that all men are fools" prevalent in *The World's Wife* (Dowson, 2016, pp. 137-140):

That's him pushing the stone up the hill, the jerk.
 I call it a stone – it's nearer the size of a kirk.
 When he first started out, it just used to irk,
 but now it incenses me, and him, the absolute berk.
 I could do something vicious to him with a dirk (Duffy, 1999,
 p. 24).

Duffy examines themes of meaninglessness, existential vacuum, and the impact on personal relationships through Sisyphus' wife's perspective. She re-envisions a myth, allowing the speaker to express disillusionment. The poem is a great illustration of Viktor Frankl's creative pathway of Logotherapy, in which creating art and reinterpreting experiences helps people find meaning in life (Frankl, 2000). Duffy's incorporation of intertextuality adds depth to the poem and enhances its exploration of meaning by juxtaposing ancient myths with present-day experiences while inviting the readers to the essence of her lines and guiding them for the intended awareness—shifting the focus to women's emotional labour and isolation. This change shows how creativity brings new perspectives to familiar stories. Regarding "Mrs Sisyphus", it focuses on the speaker's emotional weight of her husband's never-ending and pointless work. In the postmodern sense, Duffy emphasizes the themes of frustration, absurdity, and strain in relationships, shedding light on the emotional toll that can be overlooked when one partner becomes overly focused on a job or business. The intertextual references in "Mrs Sisyphus" go beyond just the myth of Sisyphus. Duffy humorously references other historical and mythical women, such as Noah's wife and Frau Johann Sebastian Bach, to suggest that Mrs. Sisyphus is not the only one facing such challenges:

But I lie alone in the dark,
 feeling like Noah's wife did
 when he hammered away at the Ark;
 like Frau Johann Sebastian Bach.
 My voice reduced to a squawk,
 my smile to a twisted smirk;
 while, up on the deepening murk of the hill,
 he is giving one hundred per cent and more to his work (Duffy,
 2001, pp. 24-25).

By connecting with other texts, the poem gains depth, as it includes Mrs. Sisyphus among a group of women who have suffered through their

husbands' all-consuming passions, whether they were for divinity or art, all the while being overlooked and ignored. Duffy's use of intertextuality also criticizes traditional gender roles and the sacrifices women are expected to make for their husbands' endeavours. Mrs. Sisyphus speaks with bitterness and sarcasm as she describes her husband's endless labour and the attention it attracts from observers: "Folk flock from miles around just to gawk. / They think it's a quirk, / a bit of a lark" (Duffy, 2001, p. 24). In these lines, Duffy employs intertextuality to reveal the absurdity of Sisyphus' punishment and how it is either glamorized or made to seem unimportant by those who observe it. Duffy critiques the glorification of struggles and the emotional toll they take on those left in the background, especially women, by referencing the myth in a modern, conversational tone. She challenges the traditional narrative of passive female support in the face of male endeavour. In summary, through her creative stance for meaning, Duffy links Mrs. Sisyphus's struggles to those of other historical and mythological women, offering a wide commentary on the emotional difficulty and isolation women experience in patriarchal societies via the use of intertextuality and inclusion of the readers.

For a universal prevalence of poetry and representation of her life's meaning, Duffy also frequently employs her creative dramatic monologues, conveying feelings of openness, honesty, sincerity, directness, and intimacy. Via the females central to her monologues, the focus is generally the identity conflict in a multicultural society. Like a soliloquy works in drama, she uses these dramatic monologues to portray the speaker's pure state. For example, in the poem "Medusa," Duffy offers a compelling rendition of the legendary Gorgon, presenting her speaker's feelings of jealousy, insecurity, and paranoia through a dramatic monologue. She transforms Medusa into a vivid, imaginative creation; however, she gives her story so much psychological depth that the mythology fades away as a defining agent. The narrative differs from the malicious mythic portrayal to show an isolated woman lamenting the loss of her physical attraction and her partner's affection (Dowson, 2016). Duffy gives Medusa an inner voice that makes her more human. Medusa compares her current monstrous shape to her former condition of beauty and fragrance, asking, "Wasn't I beautiful? / Wasn't I fragrant and young?" (Duffy, 2001, p. 43). This moment of self-awareness provides insight into the speaker's diminished sense of identity, showing the extent of her transformation because of the burden of her jealousy. Writing this monologue allows Medusa to express her story, taking control of how she is seen and understood by herself and those around her. Duffy's reason to choose Medusa for an examination of the profound emotional wounds that caused her transformation is beyond just showing her as a mythical monster to expose the pain and vulnerability at the core of Medusa's character. The

poem portrays Medusa's inner turmoil vividly through imagery emphasizing her gaze's destructive force. Whenever she looks at any living being, it either turns to stone or crumbles into dust. "I glanced at a buzzing bee, / a dull grey pebble fell / to the ground" (Duffy, 2001, p. 42). These experiences of change, described in rich sensory and emotional details, emphasize that Medusa's struggles are the main cause of the destruction she brings to those around her. Duffy uses these images to highlight how uncontrolled jealousy and paranoia can result in ruining relationships and one's identity. The dramatic monologue lets Medusa tell her own story of becoming a monster, showing how reflecting and telling her story can help her understand her pain, even if it cannot change it, which aligns well with the creative pathway (Frankl, 2017). The conversational tone of the monologue establishes an intimate atmosphere as if Medusa is speaking directly to herself, her beloved, or even to the reader. Her emotions for this "perfect man, Greek God, my own" play a crucial part in her psychological breakdown, as she confesses her fear of being left alone: "but I know you'll go, betray me, stray / from home" (Duffy, 2001, p. 42). This fear of being betrayed, which is frequently experienced in human relationships, is the driving force behind Medusa's jealousy and, ultimately, her metamorphosis into a Gorgon:

I stared in the mirror.

Love gone bad

showed me a Gorgon.

I stared at a dragon (Duffy, 2001, p. 43).

The dramatic monologue allows Medusa to address these emotions, becoming a means of self-discovery that underlies her physical appearance and creates a space to express her inner sadness and remorse. At the poem's end, Medusa speaks to her lover: "And here you come / with a shield for a heart / and a sword for a tongue / and your girls, your girls" (Duffy, 2001, p. 43). Medusa's fears of betrayal and her rightfulness when she accuses her partner of being emotionally distant and unfaithful have come true. The shield and the sword recall the myth of Perseus to defeat Medusa by using a reflective shield and avoid direct eye contact with her. In Duffy's poem, these symbols have a more personal meaning, representing the emotional barriers and hurtful words that Medusa believes have caused a rift between her and her lover. The dramatic monologue allows Medusa to express her feelings of abandonment and betrayal, showing how sharing her truth helps her accept her emotions. Duffy gives Medusa a voice to express her agony and envy, transforming her from a legendary monster into a relatable figure with common fears. Consequently, through her creative use of dramatic monologues, Carol Ann Duffy not only reimagines mythical figures with

psychological depth but also underscores the universal human struggles and the search for meaning, illustrating the transformative power of storytelling and emotional reflection.

Carol Ann Duffy's poetry explores personal and societal experiences, addresses current issues, challenges traditional stories, and amplifies the voices of marginalized individuals. Her lines interpret societal expectations, accept different kinds of love, and guide readers in finding meaning in their lives. In the subsequent paragraphs, Duffy's speakers' varied experiences, unique philosophies, and subtle observations will be explored to reach a deeper appreciation for the vast potential that the creative pathway of Logotherapy holds in unlocking meaning.

One illustrative example from Duffy's poetry is a woman who tackles her mid-life crisis by finding meaning in her creations. Indeed, mid-life crisis denotes a particular life stage marked by a profound sense of loss, sadness, fear of death, and existential questioning. At the same time, individuals begin searching for ways to restore their sense of happiness and life satisfaction. This crisis period could lead to changes in identity, personal values, and expectations. For many individuals, this moment may represent a critical turning point, prompting them to reassess their lives and seek new sources of meaning (Jackson, 2020). This crisis is an ideal period for deep self-reflection and self-assessment, focusing on potential future life achievements in the limited time left. Crisis and creativity are intertwined, with each enhancing the other. According to Logotherapy, personal meaning can be achieved through creative activities, especially during challenging times of life (Frankl, 2020). In that regard, Duffy's "Mrs. Rip Van Winkle" presents a reinterpreted version of the tale, Rip Van Winkle, from the perspective of Rip Van Winkle's wife, who overcomes her mid-life crisis via creative activities during her husband's years of sleep. From Duffy's viewpoint, it is inferred that Mrs. Rip Van Winkle's journey is a representation of most couples in terms of both physical decline and marital stagnation, thus becomes a testament to how women could be after creative pursuits to redefine their identity and provide a sense of meaning until the irritating interferences of men occur. The poem commences with the speaker contemplating the arrival of middle age, articulating her gradual physical deterioration through striking imagery:

I sank like a stone
 into the still, deep waters of late middle age,
 aching from head to foot.

I took up food
 and gave up exercise.
 It did me good (Duffy, 2001, p. 55).

This symbolic journey into middle age demonstrates the significant effects of aging on both her physical and emotional well-being. Confronted with these difficulties, the speaker initially reacts by adopting a more inactive way of living. While this transformation indicates an acknowledgment of her changing body, it also paves the way for a deeper engagement in her creativity. As the poem progresses, the speaker finds solace and meaning through creative pursuits. She immerses herself in the world of painting, allowing her creativity to transport her to distant places through the vibrant strokes and vivid colours of her artwork:

And while he slept
 I found some hobbies for myself.
 Painting. Seeing the sights I'd always dreamed about:

The Leaning Tower.
 The Pyramids. The Taj Mahal.
 I made a little watercolour of them all (Duffy, 2001, p. 55).

Engaging in these activities provides her with an escape from her physical pain while simultaneously allowing her to express herself and find a sense of meaning. The creation of watercolours depicting these famous landmarks represents her connection to her creative potential, enabling her to rise above her physical constraints and reconnect with her dreams. The poem's conclusion reveals a striking instance of dramatic irony that highlights the disparity between the speaker's personal development and her husband's static beliefs. After arriving back home from finishing her painting of Niagara Falls, she finds her husband "sitting up in bed rattling Viagra" (Duffy, 2001, p. 55). The speaker wholeheartedly embraces her creativity to discover new meaning, whereas her husband persists in adhering to a superficial remedy to reclaim his youth and masculine identity. This twist emphasizes the significant contrast between her husband's approach to aging and that of most men in society and her perspective. It also acts as a commentary on the disconnection between individual fulfilment and societal expectations. Mrs. Rip Van Winkle discovers meaning internally through creative self-expression. The husband's ongoing commitment to traditional roles starkly diverges from the speaker's renewed creativity, highlighting her endeavours of freedom and self-discovery. To conclude, in "Mrs. Rip Van Winkle," the

speaker asserts her independence and demonstrates the powerful ability of creativity to reach her life's meaning by engaging in her artistic pursuits and defying conventional norms, effectively illustrating the creative pathway in Logotherapy (Frankl, 2000).

In Duffy's poetry, another speaker copes with her feeling of longing by the creative work of embroidery and that guides her for a more meaningful and tolerable life. For many, embroidery might sound like a hobby or a mere craft kept at the surface of visual aesthetics. Nevertheless, needlework has been used to reflect a wide range of emotions; it has been a medium to express one's unspoken feelings, be it happiness or distress. It does not only include needles, thread, fabric, patterns, and things but also involves feelings, a psychological phase, and a reflection of internal emotion. Embroidery can be said to be one of the most meditative practices. After all, diverting the focus from a challenging phase is maintained by being creative. The person will gradually climb the means of self-discovery using different stitch categories (Le Lagadec et al., 2024). In Duffy's poem "Penelope," the character from Homer's *Odyssey* discovers herself through embroidery, highlighting resilience and creativity. This poem presents a sophisticated depiction of creativity's role as a vehicle for self-exploration, particularly when analysed in light of Viktor Frankl's concept of the creative pathway. As Frankl suggests, embracing creative endeavours can significantly enhance self-awareness and catalyse personal growth (Frankl, 2017). Duffy's portrayal of Penelope's creative method offers a captivating example of this pathway. Penelope's engagement in embroidery serves as her method of dealing with the enduring absence of her husband, Odysseus. The poem begins with Penelope reflecting on the flow of time and its impact on shaping her sense of self:

At first, I looked along the road
hoping to see him saunter home
among the olive trees,
(...)
then I noticed that whole days had passed
without my noticing (Duffy, 2001, p. 71).

Penelope's deep yearnings and aspirations vividly demonstrate the intensity of her feelings as she constantly waits for her husband's return. As time passes, she experiences comfort and personal growth through embroidery, which transcends simple sewing; it transforms into a deep form of expression that connects with her core identity and the wide range of emotions she feels: "I sorted cloth and scissors, needle, thread, / thinking to

amuse myself, / but found a lifetime's industry instead" (Duffy, 2001, p. 71). Penelope uses her creativity to explore her emotions, turning her loneliness and anticipation into something concrete. Her careful selection of colours and designs, including "smoky pink" and "shadow's grey," indicates her complex emotional state (Duffy, 2001, p. 71). With every stitch and choice she makes, a journey unfolds through her soul's depths, revealing her struggles and dreams. The process of sewing represents Penelope's search for meaning and self-awareness. The imagery—like a "maiden in a deep embrace / with heroism's boy"—reflects her emotions of affection and grief (Duffy, 2001, p. 71). Penelope dedicates herself to her art in this setting, discovering a realm where she can face and work through her feelings. Her repeated efforts in embroidery illustrate her journey of emotional reflection:

Grey threads and brown

pursued my needle's leaping fish
to form a river that would never reach the sea.

I tricked it (Duffy, 2001, p. 72).

These lines show her difficulty in dealing with the flow of time and her evolving situation. In the final lines, when she licks her scarlet thread and aims it "at the middle of the needle's eye once more," she transforms her patience and acknowledgment into new beginnings for her meaning quest. As a result, in "Penelope," Carol Ann Duffy powerfully illustrates how creative art is a means for self-discovery and individual development.

Duffy also creates alternative expressions in her verses against the clichés of society to make her life and art more meaningful and purposeful. For instance, couples are stuck in clichés of love in a relational system at rest. These clichés tend to create a new norm, advocating romanticism and commercialized actions, leaving no room for other forms of romance. On the other hand, love is a dynamic and evolving process with various modes of expression. In addition, different figurative expressions allow people to discard clichés and express themselves authentically, leading to greater fulfilment, intimacy, and satisfaction in a relationship. In this vein, in "Hard to Say," Duffy's speaker defies antiquated expressions of love by creating original metaphors and similes. She confronts the struggle of conveying love authentically, rising above worn-out clichés. Through a quest for a new and genuine meaning of love, the poem illustrates the profound ability of creativity to act as a catalyst for self-exploration and personal development (Dowson, 2021). The poem opens with a desire to portray love that transcends mere words. The speaker's dissatisfaction with conventional methods of

meaning, reshape pain, and encourage self-exploration and development. Through her work, one can understand the action-oriented nature of Logotherapy. Creating art is seen as the highest level of responsibility and a way to cultivate a genuine, purposeful self. Duffy's work shows how the creative pathway can be a powerful force for healing, bringing together the artist, the narrative, and the reader in a joint search for meaning and resilience.

3.2.2. The Experiential Pathway in Duffy's Poetry

Life experiences are essential in shaping a person's journey to finding meaning and greatly impact personal growth and self-discovery. Each experience reveals new paths of meaning and guidance, whether positive or negative, fostering an understanding of self, relationships, and the world with a greater insight into life. In that regard, Carol Ann Duffy's poetry captures moments of change, showing how deeply personal experiences shape one's sense of purpose. Her pieces represent the experiential pathway of Logotherapy through close connections and emotional experiences. In the following paragraphs, examples of transformative experiences such as motherhood, childhood memories, love, and the transient essence of life are explored in the poetry of Carol Ann Duffy through the lens of the experiential pathway of Logotherapy.

Motherhood is one of the most transformative experiences through which Duffy finds meaning in her poems. It is a unique life event postulated to be a universally desired experience for a woman. Furthermore, it is an emotional experience that alters the nature of past bonding ties and creates new compensatory relationships. It is associated with a sense of purpose and meaning and focuses on a completely different identity. In this context, Duffy's poem "Thetis" presents a mythological sea nymph as a speaker who undergoes a succession of metamorphoses to break free from male hegemony, ultimately discovering her true purpose and meaning through the journey of motherhood. Dowson (2016) explains that Duffy admits Ella, her daughter, became her focus and inspired her to write this poem after she was born in 1995. Throughout the poem, she transforms into different animals, such as a bird, a snake, a lion, a fish, and even natural elements like the wind. However, in every form, she is pursued, captured, or overpowered by the authority of men. The ongoing battle between the speaker and male forces shows the speaker's persistent efforts to break free from oppression while also coming to understand that true freedom cannot be achieved through outward change. When seen through Viktor Frankl's Logotherapy, the poem's emphasis on the speaker's maternal love at the end signifies an experience that gives her life its highest meaning and purpose (Weisskopf-

Joelson, 1975). Upon recounting her efforts to liberate herself from various forms of manipulation, the speaker concludes with the following words:

So I changed, I learned,
turned inside out – or that’s
how it felt when the child burst out (Duffy, 2001, p. 9).

This change differs from her previous ones, allowing the speaker to feel a sense of authority, significance, and inner satisfaction. It is the first time in this poem that the change is not due to being afraid, needing to survive, or fighting against male dominance. Instead, it is because of a deep internal connection to motherhood. The phrase “turned inside out” describes the significant emotional and physical transformations that occur when a child enters the picture, signifying a major shift in self-awareness and the significance of embracing motherhood. Likewise, in Duffy’s “Pope Joan,” the experience of giving birth unfolds as a powerful journey of self-discovery, marking a significant turning point in her life. Joan’s life as a Pope, characterized by her commitment to fulfilling sacred responsibilities and representing spiritual leadership, completely contrasts with the deeply personal and transformative effect of giving birth:

(...) the closest I felt

to the power of God
was the sense of a hand
lifting me, flinging me down,

lifting me, flinging me down,
as my baby pushed out
from between my legs
where I lay in the road
in my miracle,
not a man or a pope at all (Duffy, 2001, pp. 69-70).

This moment of giving birth is portrayed as a more genuine link to the divine, representing her authentic identity than her religious duties. This insight resonates with Frankl’s idea that meaning can be found in deep, sincere relationships and life-changing moments (Lukas, 2020). The journey of motherhood leads to a remarkable emotional and physical transformation that marks a meaningful change from the limitations of

her prior, externally defined roles. This shift not only underscores a deeply personal awakening but also emphasizes the incredible growth and self-discovery that come from embracing the motherhood experience. In the context of the experiential pathway of Logotherapy, the experience of motherhood seamlessly corresponds with Frankl's concept that meaning can be discovered through sincere bonds with others, especially through love (Frankl, 1985). This ultimate transformation is internal and life-affirming. External situations do not enforce it but arise from within them, symbolizing their rebirth together with the babies and their rediscovery of their strength and purpose. To sum up, in "Thetis" and "Pope Joan," the speakers' maternal love becomes a focal point, as it is through the birth of their children that they ultimately experience fulfilment, self-discovery and meaning.

Besides motherhood, childhood memories are central for Duffy's poetry in finding life's meaning. They are the foundational core of experience and are integral to constructing the human self. Every human being has memories attached to various stages of their life. Childhood memories can potentially shape personal identity and an individual's entire life. They are a starting point for establishing values and beliefs and interpreting human behaviour and emotional responses. In hindsight, the past becomes the social future, and personal and shared memories can frame situations to encourage individuals to react accordingly (Wang, 2021). In other words, childhood thoughts concerning certain parts of life are stored in memory, which can always be brought back to mind and guide an individual's perception and behavioural patterns. In Carol Ann Duffy's poem "In Mrs. Tilscher's Class," the speaker reflects on vivid recollections of childhood and the impactful moments of education facilitated by a caring teacher. This poem is a touching exploration of the purity of childhood and the deep bonds created through learning. In the context of Viktor Frankl's experiential pathway, Duffy's poem highlights how significant experiences influence perceptions of the world and identities (Lukas, 2020). In the poem, Mrs. Tilscher, the teacher, is portrayed as a guide, describing the landscapes of different places. Her enthusiastic involvement in teaching fosters an atmosphere where students can discover their internal and external worlds. The beauty that children encounter through their learning experiences plays a crucial role in shaping their sense of meaning in life. As the poem progresses, Duffy uses sensory imagery to convey the lively atmosphere of the classroom. Expressions like "The classroom glowed like a sweet shop" and "Sugar paper. Coloured shapes" illustrate a setting filled with wonder and happiness (Duffy, 1998, p. 8). This rich illustration of the classroom highlights the significance of the experiential pathway, showcasing how the joy of exploration deepens the emotional bond with understanding. Such experiences enable children

to discover meaning and joy in their educational journey, highlighting that learning is not simply a duty but a source of happiness and fulfilment. Duffy further emphasizes the purity of childhood and the simple happiness derived from ordinary experiences. The phrase “the laugh of a bell swung by a running child” evokes the pure joy that defines this specific stage of life (Duffy, 1998, p. 8). This happiness is juxtaposed with the harsher truths beyond the classroom, as the mentions of “(...) Brady and Hindley / faded, like the faint, uneasy smudge of a mistake” imply a reality replete with challenges (Duffy, 1998, p. 8). Nonetheless, in the secure environment of Mrs. Tilscher’s classroom, the children can delve into ideas and emotions without fear, thus establishing a haven for learning that nurtures their emotional development. Frankl’s belief that meaningful connections form the basis for a fulfilling life is evident in the nurturing bond shared between the students and their teacher (Frankl, 2000). The journey from childhood’s simplicity into adolescence’s challenges is a key theme in the poem’s closing lines. Duffy conveys this emotional turmoil by employing the imagery of “that feverish July,” in which the air “tasted of electricity.” The metaphor hints at an approaching change, evoking the unease often felt in growing up. Nevertheless, the moments of joy and discovery in the classroom are a basis for comprehending and addressing these complexities, strengthening the notion that significant experiences can offer comfort and understanding. In conclusion, Duffy’s poem “In Mrs Tilscher’s Class” effectively represents the fundamental principles of the experiential pathway of Logotherapy. Through the perspective of childhood experiences, the poem demonstrates how learning and significant relationships can enhance lives. The speaker’s progression from a state of naivety to a heightened consciousness underscores the significance of accepting the various experiences that contribute to one’s comprehension of the external environment and personal identity. The poem highlights education’s transformative power and the bonds it creates, affirming that meaningful experiences are vital for a more meaningful and fulfilled life.

In Duffy’s search for meaning, love is another life-changing experience that she focuses on in her poems. No one agrees on a universal definition of love, but everyone agrees that love is central to the human experience. One of the psychological effects of being in love is feeling like the world is a more beautiful place. At a basic level, this heightened appreciation for beauty is explained by the classic psychological mechanisms that underlie a greater propensity to consider sensory information more extensively and deeply when in a positive mood (Rokach, 2024). Furthermore, when infatuation and love are reciprocated, it is not only a positive bias in the appraisal of what is seen; one could also feel more secure and trusting in the world, which could double the advantage for mental well-being. Love expands with the beloved,

beautifying all who are touched by it. For this reason, it is not merely inapprehensible but also transformative. One of the moments in life when love can transform one's way of seeing the world is vividly represented in Duffy's poem "The Kissing Gate." Illustrating the experiential pathway of Frankl's Logotherapy, this poem exemplifies a reciprocal principle wherein a positive emotion of love can help individuals see beauty in the world around them (Weisskopf-Joelson, 1958). It demonstrates that love can change and improve the way people perceive the world, making ordinary sights and sensations more intense and meaningful. The poem starts with the speaker remembering a talk with a loved one, then walking to a gate at the edge of a field:

After I've spoken to you, I walk out to the gate
at the edge of the field, watch a bird make a nonsense
of the air, and wish. This is not my landscape,
though I feel at home here, in a way, in a light
that rolls a dreg of memory around itself, spills it.
You'll not see it now. The bird. Me at the gate. Call it
a yellowy light. There it goes, into the grass, green,
greener, going (...) (Duffy, 1998, p. 46).

The fact that the landscape does not belong to the speaker but feels familiar shows that love's impact on the speaker is not rooted in ownership but rather in the emotional connections it generates. As the poem proceeds, the sunlight in the field has a warm "yellowy" glow, carrying with it "a dreg of memory" that seems to alter the scenery into a more personal and intimate setting (Duffy, 1998, p. 46). The speaker's awareness is heightened by the experience of love, causing her to perceive the landscape in a new and different way. The bird flying overhead, the lush green grass, and the changing light are common sights in nature, but the speaker's feelings cause her to perceive these things more intensely. Discovering meaning through deep emotional involvement is the core of Logotherapy's experiential pathway (Frankl, 2000). One could understand that the bird's movement is no longer random but a beautiful symbol of freedom or longing for a loved one. In the following lines, the speaker emphasizes how love changes her perception of nature by emphasizing light, memory, and landscape interaction. Love is compared to a stone that becomes smoother through repeated actions over time. This metaphor highlights how love enhances and moulds perception, causing everyday moments or objects to seem deep and meaningful. Both light and birds have emotional significance in nature. The light reflects memories, longing, and love, while the bird's

movements mirror the speaker's emotional changes. The poem contrasts the speaker's disconnection with her strong emotional connection to the natural surroundings. The absence of the loved one does not cause despair but increases the speaker's appreciation of the landscape. In conclusion, "The Kissing Gate" illustrates how love can change one's view of the world and give value to basic experiences, finding emotional meaning in nature and love.

The transient essence of life is also an illustrative example in Duffy's poetry, through which she guides herself and her readers to draw a meaningful frame of life. Everything in life constantly transitions to disintegration, transformation, and recreation. Acknowledging moments' transience is vital to fully appreciating experiences and the relationships that define life. For instance, embracing change and the impermanence of time can be incredibly beneficial for mental health. It can reduce anxiety and help the individual develop a stronger sense of emotional resilience. Furthermore, learning to reflect on life's impermanence also forces a person to flourish and connect with the world, honing the ability to cultivate meaningful relationships that can lead to a lifetime of happiness and comfort. Those who enter situations and relationships with a sense of open-minded appreciation will find themselves better able to derive joy from their experiences. Engaging positively with the transitory nature of time and change has a distinct advantage when coping with the inevitable fluctuations in a person's emotional well-being. This mindset can open individuals to new and exciting possibilities, knowing they can continually reshape themselves. The potential for personal transformation lies in embracing life's fleeting yet beautiful moments (Abdusattorova, 2024). Duffy's poem "Christmas Eve" exemplifies the serene and heartfelt examination of meaning within fleeting moments from a mother's perspective of her child. The poem strongly resonates with Viktor Frankl's experiential pathway, exploring themes of acceptance, ritual, hope, and time's passage to reveal the transformative power of human attitudes in fleeting moments (Frankl, 2000). Duffy starts the poem by describing time as gently flowing, metaphorizing "slow snow sieving the night" (Duffy, 2014, p. 44). This image conveys the quiet and inevitable passage of moments. Like time, snow is temporary and fleeting, leaving behind only a temporary mark before it melts. This transient nature reflects Frankl's idea of accepting the unpredictable aspects of life as they are (Lukas, 2020). Duffy suggests that instead of fighting against the passage of time, one should practice a mindful acceptance of its gradual flow, viewing it as something natural and significant. This example of acceptance showcases Frankl's belief that recognizing the temporary nature of life can result in greater gratitude for the present moment, ultimately cultivating a sense of inner peace and turning suffering into growth opportunities, valuing each

moment (Batthyány, 2016). Traditions, especially those tied to the festive season, have a major role in the poem and are a key source of meaning. “The ritual lighting of the candles” suggests a shared custom that brings warmth and connection (Duffy, 2014, p. 44). The act of lighting a candle goes beyond just a simple action. It represents finding hope and comfort by connecting to something larger than oneself. In the poem, Duffy illustrates a moment of deep wonder as witnessed from a child’s perspective, where even fleeting wishes are important. The line, “And your wishes went up in smoke,” recalls the purity of childhood aspirations and the realization of their temporary nature (Duffy, 2014, p. 44). The transitory essence of desires implies that meaning lies in embracing the value of the present moment, an outlook that Frankl viewed as essential for leading a satisfying life. The poem’s tranquil images and words encourage readers to enjoy and value the natural beauty of a winter night. The lines “Snow was the mind of Time, sifting / itself, drafting the old year’s end” capture the idea of time passing in a way that is not sad or worried but instead grateful (Duffy, 2014, p. 44). Duffy compares snow to “the mind of Time,” expressing the beauty of nature’s simplicity and the recurring rhythm of time (Duffy, 2014, p. 44). Frankl emphasizes that one can find meaning in beauty—in life’s aesthetic experiences, such as nature’s quiet presence or the delicate play of light on a winter’s night. The poem implies that meaningful moments can be found in simple things like snowfall and the peacefulness of appreciating small moments of beauty. The last image of the child looking at the snow is a powerful reminder that the meaning of life often comes from moments of shared human experience and cultural traditions. The collective memory created by such moments reinforces Frankl’s view that engaging with life deeply, whether through nature, loved ones, or rituals, provides a lasting source of meaning (Frankl, 2020). Duffy’s portrayal of Christmas Eve is universal, capturing not only the experience of a child from her mother’s eyes but a shared human experience that goes beyond the individual. In her poem “Christmas Eve,” Carol Ann Duffy skilfully reflects on time, memory, and the significance of life’s rituals, echoing the themes of Viktor Frankl’s Logotherapy. The poem shows how one can find meaning by embracing the present, participating in traditions, and appreciating the beauty of everyday moments. Through the perspective of a young child, Duffy prompts her readers to remember the natural awe that comes from experiencing the beauty of life and discover their meaning.

To conclude, Duffy’s poetry shows how meaning is found in personal connections, emotional ties, and life-changing experiences. She creates powerful moments of reflection and growth by capturing intense emotions, such as becoming a mother, falling in love, and recalling memories. Her poetry explores the transformative moments of human life, like motherhood,

childhood memories, love, and impermanence. Duffy's lyrical mastery captures these themes and shows that meaning is a constant part of human experience, achievable through personal connections and embracing life's beauty and complexity.

3.2.3. The Attitudinal Pathway in Duffy's Poetry

Carol Ann Duffy explores themes aligned with Viktor Frankl's Logotherapy, focusing on resilience and the search for meaning in suffering. Her poems address societal problems, personal sorrow, and the complexities of existence. Through analysis, one can uncover messages of personal responsibility and find meaning in life's challenges, which is central to Logotherapy. This part of the chapter examines the speakers challenging the patriarchal societies, grief, fragmented memories, life's difficulties, and political manipulation in Duffy's selected poems, using the lens of Logotherapy's attitudinal pathway.

In her search for meaning, one of Duffy's most obvious attitudinal values is toward the patriarchal societies. Today, there is a general awareness that patriarchy has created a long and grievous record of violating women's rights and gender justice; however, this awareness is still in its initial stages. Women in many parts of the world still become visible only through their connection to fathers, brothers, and husbands, which confirms their subordinate position. Although patriarchal culture has impeded the female quest for self-definition and self-assertion based solely on individuality and creativity, there have always been those women who were able to break the obstructive barrier, challenge its essence, and strive for freedom in all walks of life. In that regard, the attitudinal pathway of Logotherapy proposes that individuals can discover meaning in life by choosing their attitudes toward inevitable suffering or oppressive circumstances (Frankl, 2000). To illustrate, Duffy showcases her fight against this unjust system in her poem "Little Red-Cap," which opens her renowned collection, *The World's Wife*. This poem refers to the well-known Grimm brothers' fairy tale of Little Red Riding Hood, in which women were traditionally depicted as consistently weak, ignorant, and incompetent (Keif & Hamad, 2020). Duffy's version utilizes a feminist revisionist technique that adapts and modifies the story to represent female experiences and insights, turning the traditional story into portrayals of women's viewpoints of the divine and demonic within themselves, as well as inspirational reflections on the suffering of historical women and, in some cases, survival lessons (Garcia, 2007). When scrutinized in light of Logotherapy, one could interpret it as a journey of self-awareness, exploring themes of transformation and the search for meaning. By embracing an empowered viewpoint, the speaker demonstrates control

over her narrative, aligning with Frankl's idea that meaning can be found through one's chosen attitude, even when faced with difficult situations. From the poem's beginning, the dominant figure is the patriarchal wolf, representing male authority and intellectual charm that instantly captivates Little Red-Cap. In that regard, it is possible to view the speaker's submission and fascination with the wolf's poetry as a representation of masculine dominance in art and literature, as well as the fact that males typically, although not always, have more options for publishing (Akkoyun, 2021). The impact of the wolf on her is evident in the following scene:

The wolf, I knew, would lead me deep into the woods,
 away from home, to a dark tangled thorny place
 lit by the eyes of owls. I crawled in his wake,
 my stockings ripped to shreds, scraps of red from my blazer
 snagged on twig and branch, murder clues. I lost both shoes
 but got there, wolf's lair, better beware. Lesson one that night,
 breath of the wolf in my ear, was the love poem.
 I clung till dawn to his thrashing fur,
 for what little girl doesn't dearly love a wolf? (Duffy, 2001, p. 6)

Evoking Frankl's theory that certain types of suffering and external repression are unavoidable, Duffy's poem portrays a truth in which women, especially young women, frequently encounter and are impacted by the prevailing male-dominated culture. The wolf has extensive knowledge and a strong creative ability. He allures the speaker with his captivating manner of speaking and poetry, and she accompanies him "deep into the woods," willingly submitting herself to his intellectual and emotional control. The red scraps and torn stockings represent the sacrifices and trials that follow the pursuit of a sense of self and a deeper awareness of life. Subsequently, while she spends time in the forest, she starts to perceive the true nature behind his authority. As the poem unfolds, the speaker's perspective on the wolf evolves from admiration and respect to realizing the wolf's superficial and monotonous characteristics. Her relationship with the wolf slowly transforms Little Red-Cap from innocence to experience, childhood to adulthood, and ultimately from maidenhood to womanhood. It is the speaker's viewpoint on this situation that eventually transforms the experience into an act of self-liberation:

But then I was young – and it took ten years
 in the woods to tell that a mushroom

stoppers the mouth of a buried corpse, that birds
are the uttered thought of trees, that a greying wolf
howls the same old song at the moon, year in, year out,
season after season, same rhyme, same reason (Duffy, 2001, p. 7).

From this experience comes a transforming understanding, an awakening. The girl has been irrevocably altered, and the world is reinterpreted in terms of a new adult understanding of the dynamics of power, possession, and omnipotent monsters, allowing her to roam with impunity in the darkened woods. As Frankl describes, this realization is crucial for the speaker's growth and signifies the important change in the attitude from being oppressed to rising in rebellion (Lukas, 2020). Soon after that, the scene is reversed by the darkness of oppression, control, fear, and ultimately murderous violence after an embodiment of years of imprisonment and abuse.

(...) I took an axe
to a willow to see how it wept. I took an axe to a salmon
to see how it leapt. I took an axe to the wolf
as he slept, one chop, scrotum to throat, and saw
the glistening, virgin white of my grandmother's bones (Duffy,
2001, p. 7).

The peak of the speaker's rebellion is depicted in the bold act of killing the wolf. She reclaims her agency by symbolically cutting off the wolf's patriarchal power. This moment marks a substantial shift in the speaker's relationship to the controlling forces that once had authority over her. Deciding to end the wolf's life demonstrates her readiness to take responsibility for her actions, which proves Frankl's point that people can find meaning by choosing how to deal with inevitable challenges (Frankl, 1985). In demonstrating agency over her destiny, the speaker illustrates a fundamental aspect of the attitudinal pathway in "Little Red-Cap": the capacity to alter one's internal perspective to live a more meaningful life even in the face of enduring adversity or repression.

Grief is another clear example against which Duffy takes a constructive attitude allowing her to create a stronger sense of self and meaning. Whether it is a physical loss or an event that emotionally separates the deceased from those who are left behind, grief affects the individual mentally and psychologically in daily life. This chaos results from the inner conflict of reconciling with the 'new normal.' When people triumph over their grief of loss, they bring healing to their world (Zalli, 2024). Suffering becomes

the liberation from suffering. According to Logotherapy, overcoming the grief of loss by exploring the inherent meaning of the experience can help build resilience (Wong, 2019). In this sense, Duffy's poem "Mrs. Lazarus" portrays a speaker who moves through the fog of grief and finds her inner strength from her husband's loss. By centring the widow's perspective, Duffy subverts the traditional Lazarus myth—a deliberate attitudinal choice that reflects her broader critique of patriarchal narratives that silence women's voices. Mrs. Lazarus is not merely a character but a persona through which Duffy challenges societal expectations of female mourning. Furthermore, with the power of her new meaning, even after Lazarus's resurrection by Jesus, this speaker stands firm in the face of the draining attitudes of the society directed towards her as a widow. Her shifted attitude leads her to re-engineer her relationships to evolve herself in her journey toward a more fulfilling stage. From the outset, Mrs. Lazarus endures significant pain, which is a crucial element of the attitudinal pathway. Her mourning is unavoidable: Her emotional state cannot be overlooked; she is immersed in deep sorrow, clearly illustrated by her act of tearing her clothes and her heartfelt cries of distress:

I had grieved. I had wept for a night and a day
 over my loss, ripped the cloth I was married in
 from my breasts, howled, shrieked (Duffy, 2001, p. 51).

In exploring the "Stations of Bereavement," she reveals how grief has shaped her identity and experiences (Duffy, 2001, p. 51). Her anguish is both undeniable and deep; however, it is through this very suffering that she commences her journey toward recovery. Over time, she gradually transcends the insurmountable anguish of her loss and begins the process of reasserting control over her life. Her connection to her grief goes beyond simple survival; it demonstrates her capacity to extract meaning from pain. She confronts the death of her husband with a strength that ultimately allows her to rise above the situation, resulting in a condition where the remembrance of her loss no longer defines who she is. According to Frankl's Logotherapy, Mrs. Lazarus's decision to bear suffering with dignity allows her to experience personal development and turn her suffering into a source of resilience and recovery (Lukas, 2020) Duffy aligns this Logotherapeutic principle with her own poetic mission: to empower marginalized voices. Mrs. Lazarus's resilience is not an isolated character trait but a deliberate amplification of Duffy's belief in art as a tool for subverting oppressive narratives:

he was going away from me, dwindling
 to the shrunk size of a snapshot

(...) he was vanishing
to the small zero held by the gold of my ring (Duffy, 2001, p. 51).

Societal and cultural expectations can heavily influence the grieving process and how one should grieve. The cultural assumptions about how the grieving process is to be managed may lead to hold that there is a stereotype of the 'correct' way to sorrow and grieve. In Mrs. Lazarus's case, when the widow does not do what society thinks she is 'supposed' to do, she is likely to be the recipient of countless pearls of wisdom from so-called friends and family members, who all seem to know exactly the 'right' way to grieve. In the closing lines, Duffy critically examines the societal norms and expectations linked to widowhood. Mrs. Lazarus's experience involves not just personal sorrow but is also influenced by the expectations and pressures from a society that insists widows cling to traditions. Society anticipates that she will remain in mourning, never truly progressing and certainly not opening herself up to the chance of new love. Duffy's decision to confront these norms through Mrs. Lazarus's rebellion is emblematic of her attitudinal pathway as a poet. Her work often weaponizes female voices to dismantle oppressive traditions, positioning Mrs. Lazarus's defiance as a reflection of Duffy's own feminist ethos. She allows Mrs. Lazarus to reclaim her independence, as she slowly moves away from her life as she "could stand that evening in the field / in a shawl of fine air, healed" (Duffy, 2001, pp. 51-52). Her relationship with the schoolteacher illustrates her resistance to the rigid societal norms that constrain her. In her decision to heal, love, and re-engage with life, Mrs. Lazarus actively opposes the notion that the loss of her husband should solely delineate her identity. This act of reclamation is not just the speaker's triumph but Duffy's attitudinal manifesto. By rejecting Lazarus's resurrection as a grotesque interruption ("croaking his cuckold name"), Duffy critiques the patriarchal glorification of male-centred miracles, reframing Mrs. Lazarus's healing as the true transformative act (Duffy, 2001, p. 52). This act of defiance against established societal norms serves as a manifestation of the attitudinal pathway of Logotherapy (Frankl, 2000). Mrs. Lazarus employs a unique strategy for dealing with suffering; rather than merely accepting her situation without action, she actively takes decisive steps to reclaim authority over her life. The return of Lazarus presents a significant challenge to Mrs. Lazarus's newly formed sense of self and her healing process. His resurrection, frequently regarded as a miraculous event, serves as a substantial interruption to her advancement. The closing scene highlights how unnatural and unwelcome he now appears in her life:

He lived. I saw the horror on his face. I heard
his mother's crazy song. I breathed

his stench; my bridegroom in his rotting shroud,
 moist and dishevelled from the grave's slack chew,
 croaking his cuckold name, disinherited, out of his time (Duffy,
 2001, p. 52).

Lazarus's return threatens Mrs. Lazarus's emotional progress. She refuses to return to her former state of grief, exemplifying defiance and resilience. Her attitude can inspire others to face their struggles courageously. Through "Mrs. Lazarus," Duffy enacts her attitudinal pathway as a poet: a feminist reimagining of myth that prioritizes female agency over patriarchal dogma. Mrs. Lazarus's journey from grief to self-liberation mirrors Duffy's broader project of using poetry to critique societal norms and reclaim marginalized narratives. The poem is not just a character study but a reflection of Duffy's own philosophical stance—one that transforms suffering into a radical act of artistic and existential defiance. Her attitudinal pathway mirrors Logotherapy's emphasis on meaning-making, but she expands it into a poetic and feminist act—transforming personal grief into a collective critique of patriarchal systems. This journey involves healing from sorrow and rebelling against social conventions, empowering her self-discovery.

Another attitudinal way of finding meaning on which Duffy builds her strong and assertive character is fragmented memories. Indeed, memories are a significant and fascinating part of life. Accurately encoding and retrieving them is essential for everyday existence and identity formation. They may also be fragmented as much as they shape personal identity and guide personal narratives, impeding the coherent creation and reconstruction of one's life story. In other words, to the extent that individuals are stuck in their past or are constantly haunted by their fragmented memories, they are unable to face and integrate their emotional hurt. Thus, fragmentation of the self and broken identity begins. As part of a defence reaction, their feelings of sadness, disappointment, anger, or grief could put their lives on hold. On the other hand, acknowledging what one feels is a big and important step since acceptance promotes healing and the potential for significant change, which often fosters further self-understanding (Schuman-Olivier et al., 2020). By accepting and identifying the importance of fragmented memories, one could construct a further shift from disconnected memories to integration or reconnection, reducing hopelessness, shame, and despair. Indeed, acceptance enables individuals to articulate events as part of an autobiography, including earlier lack of understanding. It paves the way for mindfulness and liberates individuals from the prison of their past. The construction of a narrative of a liveable life enables the individual's distress to be underpinned in language and meaning, as well as possible reduction in distress. A successful integration of the self begins when the individual

accepts their fragmented past. In this respect, Duffy's "M-M-Memory" thoroughly analyses the connection between memory, identity, and the emotional weight regarding them. Within the framework of Frankl's attitudinal pathway, the poem illustrates how people can discover meaning in their pain and how they decide to react to their memories (Weiskopf-Joelson, 1972). Frankl highlights that although individuals cannot dictate situations, they can manage their mindset, and Duffy's poem captures this challenge elegantly. The poem commences with a striking picture of the speaker gathering "spilled, soft, broken oil" from a stone floor into a clay bowl, evoking a sensory memory that feels fragile and unstable (Duffy, 1998, p. 36). This imagery symbolizes the delicate nature of memory and illustrates how the past can elude one's grasp, akin to oil. Gathering these memories represents the speaker's desire to keep what has been lost alive. The phrase "m-m-memory" hints at a hesitant way of recalling the past, highlighting how heavy and impactful memories can be (Duffy, 1998, p. 36). It corresponds with Frankl's idea that memories, especially those that trigger intense emotions, can be sources of suffering and insight (Frankl, 2014). As the poem progresses, Duffy delves deeper into the emotional conflicts of memory by mentioning the sensory experiences. The "dull scrape of the spoon on the cool stone" evokes a feeling of detachment, suggesting the speaker's difficulty in expressing her emotions and thoughts. The line "forgotten, half-forgotten, half-recalled" implies a fragmented memory, emphasizing the challenges of confronting one's past (Duffy, 1998, p. 36). In Logotherapy, this challenge transforms into a pathway for discovering meaning. Frankl suggests that people must face their suffering and find a means to embrace it, which the speaker implicitly strives to achieve through recollection (Batthyány, 2016). The poem shifts to a more reflective tone as the speaker ponders the clouds hiding the sun, serving as a metaphor for the darker parts of memory. The imagery of "exhaling grey smoke into a purpling, religious light" contrasts hopelessness and a desire for insight or clarity (Duffy, 1998, p. 36). The speaker confronts that a complete understanding or remembering of the past may not be possible, yet this struggle can foster healing. In the closure, the lines "Those unstrung beads of oil / seem precious now, now / that the light has changed" act as a remarkable metaphor illustrating how memories can hold great value despite their fragmented nature (Duffy, 1998, p. 36). In "M-M-Memory," Duffy's examination of memory embodies the core of Frankl's attitudinal pathway: that people can discover purpose and meaning not through evasion of suffering but by facing it and selecting their response (Wong, 2014). By confronting and internalizing the fragments of life, the speaker exemplifies Frankl's belief in the transformative power of attitude, suggesting that meaning can be found even in the depths of broken memories.

Life's difficulties also serve as important tests of personal attitudes, and Carol Ann Duffy's poetry frequently explores these using humour as a unique way to cope with and express the quest for meaning. Regardless of how it is classified, humour has been demonstrated scientifically and throughout the centuries to have significant influences on humans. This coping mechanism is vital to maintaining good mental health and overall well-being (Gonot-Schoupinsky et al., 2020). Utilizing this resource helps people manage daily stress, trauma, grief, and other emotional states. Furthermore, humour has led to increased production of immune cells and antibodies. Thus, one could conclude that engaging with humour improves holistic health and offers a multidimensional healing approach. It could be something crazy or absurd, such as imagining the annoyance as a gigantic ogre in a children's fairytale, or comedy could be found in the minor annoyance itself as a ridiculous problem for both the ogre and other fairytale creatures alike to outsmart to restore peace in their kingdom. In this context, Duffy's poem "The Dark" invites readers to view fear and challenges from a light and playful perspective. Her interpretation of life is consistent with Frankl's attitudinal pathway of Logotherapy, which suggests that although people may not have control over their situations, they can choose their attitudes toward them (Frankl, 2000). The poem teaches an important lesson about acceptance and resilience against life's uncertainties by turning fear into something amusing and promoting a change in perspective. The poem commences with the speaker's inviting the readers to playfully rethink the concept of darkness, proposing to consider it as "a black park" and imagine the moon as "a bounced ball" to dispel fear (Duffy, 2009, p. 87). This metaphorical shift is essential for understanding how perspective can influence emotions. Moreover, the concept of darkness, often linked to fear and uncertainty, transforms into a comforting and friendly environment that sparks curiosity rather than fear. This reframing captures the core of the attitudinal pathway. The speaker's expression that "there's nothing to be frightened of at all" suggests that fear can be conquered by adopting a more positive perspective (Duffy, 2009, p. 87). The poem's playful tone is accentuated by the humorous reference to "aliens" as a possible cause of fear (Duffy, 2009, p. 87). This surprising turn brings an easy-going perspective to the conversation about darkness, indicating that even though fears are present, they can be understood in a way that makes them less daunting. Frankl thought that humour could create a detachment from pain, allowing people to confront their obstacles with a feeling of control (Lukas, 2020). In this context, the poem's use of humour in addressing fear demonstrates how laughter can serve as a means of acknowledgment, turning challenges into a common human experience. It is in line with Frankl's lessons on discovering meaning amid suffering; the poem shows that acknowledging fears is not giving up but a deliberate decision to approach them in a new

way (Frankl, 2017). In other words, it promotes a mindset prioritizing acceptance rather than avoidance. Ultimately, it is a reminder that even though one cannot always control what happens to them, they can choose their attitude. It allows the readers to find purpose and strength even when facing tough times. In “The Dark,” the playful exploration of fear offers valuable insights into the attitudinal pathway of Logotherapy. By reframing darkness as a source of curiosity rather than dread and embracing humour as a coping mechanism, the poem illustrates the power of perspective in navigating life’s adversities. Through this lens, “The Dark” is a testament to the human capacity for acceptance and the transformative power of attitude in the quest for meaning.

Political manipulation stands out as another key theme in Carol Ann Duffy’s poetry, where she takes a critical and significant position through the perspectives of her speakers. Indeed, poetic discourses are often regarded as reflecting, shaping, disseminating, reinforcing, or transforming public perception of contemporary politics. Through various meanings and connotations taken under a socio-historic microscope, poets shape and dissect poetry as a form of power and knowledge. Stepping away from the loud slogans of political agendas, the poets penetrate the core of society with their works. In that regard, Carol Ann Duffy often expresses her thoughts and observations on parliament and current political figures through her poems, which foster an attitudinal awareness of society, especially against the world’s ruling powers, such as the UK and the USA (Öztürk, 2023). She believes it is necessary to activate the people and involve society in basic entrepreneurial activities to be awakened, informed, interested, and engaged in the state’s organization, structure, and prospects for living and the future. Accordingly, her employment of language is deliberate, and her political poems are noted for their unconventionality, scepticism, and playfulness. To illustrate, her poems “Swearing In,” “The Ex-Ministers,” “Gorilla,” and “Weasel Words” attract the attention of society to the theme of political disillusionment. They reveal the ethical emptiness of corrupt leadership and the influence of evasive and deceitful language on society’s view of governance. What her poetry can contribute towards is what some literary theorists have called ‘consciousness raising’—the aim is not just to change the individual but to get readers to think about the world in an entirely new way, to reconsider established patterns of seeing the world or established personalities. Through these poems, Duffy skilfully depicts the changing dynamics between the public and their leaders, urging readers to embrace a thoughtful and determined approach that resonates with Frankl’s attitudinal pathway of Logotherapy (Frankl, 2004). Duffy’s use of satire shows a path for readers to follow, encouraging them to adopt an attitude of awareness and accountability instead of passive cynicism. First,

in “Swearing In,” she begins with a sharp criticism of a newly-elected leader, presenting creative and unflattering names that diminish the politician to a collection of insincere personalities, such as “combover, thatch-fraud, rug-rogue” (Duffy, 2018, p. 23). This witty critique of shallowness demonstrates Duffy’s conviction in the significance of integrity over looks when it comes to leadership, highlighting the undeserved respect given to politicians. Duffy’s cunning style enables readers to see through the facade of political figures, encouraging them to maintain a sceptical but confident attitude when evaluating public leaders. Next, “The Ex-Ministers” shifts to a darker contemplation about former politicians exploiting their influence for their benefit, depicting them as cruising “on superyachts,” traveling in private jets, and keeping “deals and contracts in the old red boxes” for “sentimental reasons” (Duffy, 2018, p. 20). Duffy highlights the separation and advantage of these individuals, emphasizing their lack of connection to the people they previously served. This representation shows a profound societal disappointment, depicting these leaders as disconnected from their previous duties. Frankl (2000) suggests that the attitudinal pathway is essential because it empowers individuals to find meaning by fostering a mindset that insists on ethical clarity and responsibility rather than directly challenging powerful figures. Readers of Duffy are urged to hold their leaders responsible for their actions, even in a flawed political environment. It promotes an internal strength that does not rely on blind faith but prioritizes integrity. Then, in “Gorilla,” Duffy compares the look of a controlled gorilla with hidden aggression, creating a symbolic connection to political leaders concealing inner violence or frustration. By comparing the gorilla’s eyes to “smashed rage” and its mouth to “an unliftable curse,” she conveys a sense of suppressed anger within a restrained environment (Duffy, 2018, p. 22). The contrast challenges readers to question politicians’ polished image, leading to a critical perspective. Frankl suggests cultivating inner strength and being observant instead of compliant in a flawed system. “Weasel Words” amplifies this criticism by focusing on politicians’ language to mislead or influence the public. The weasel makes an absurd statement that “anyone here today could put a Weasel / down his trouser-leg and nothing would happen,” reflecting the outrageous promises or denials commonly offered by those who misuse words (Duffy, 1998, p. 14). This use of language manipulation directly relates to Frankl’s idea of attitude. Duffy urges people to identify and refuse insincere language, emphasizing the importance of honesty and openness. Duffy highlights the importance of an educated public not being satisfied with deceptive language from politicians. She encourages genuine communication and a clear understanding of how language affects perception. In conclusion, Duffy’s poems align with Frankl’s belief that meaning can be found despite external disillusionment by promoting critical thinking (Lukas, 2020). This

confident position promotes strength and moral responsibility, refusing to give in to hopelessness and instead choosing an approach that values honesty and transparency. Duffy's poetry urges readers to see beyond surface-level observations and adopt a mindset of attentive awareness and responsibility, using the attitudinal shift as a tool for inner strength in the face of a discouraging political environment. In conclusion, Duffy's poetry critiques political manipulation while also aligning with Viktor Frankl's logotherapy, which encourages readers to seek meaning through ethical clarity, critical awareness, and a strong commitment to integrity in the face of societal disillusionment.

Carol Ann Duffy's attitude allows her to shed some light on the power of poetry and its potential to transform people's lives by enabling them to reach their spiritual and existential meaning. When existential frustration is overcome, or meaning is saved, life suddenly changes; new beginnings are underway, and joy and creativity unfold. This freedom from and to freedom in Duffy's selected poems is clear and indicates to the reader that even when bad things happen, there is still good out there. It is just that sometimes, in moments of darkness, one might not have the capacity to see it. In a different light, darkness and despair can be just a doorway into a new world – a world with more meaning than we allow ourselves to believe. Every man and woman in Carol Ann Duffy's poems not only stands in for a few dozen more of the same gender in the flesh but also a much wider humanity that will stay operative since her major themes and manners are wisely selected to appeal and matter. Even in her sorrow, Duffy communicates empathy and carves rhetorical space for the reader through her lines to reflect on her responses to the realities of life. In conclusion, her pieces open the dialogue between the reader and the writer for a much deeper exploration of human meaning by adopting the attitudinal pathway of Logotherapy.

All in all, there is a crucial aspect of human psychological behaviour that all people share: the search for meaning and existential scope. A holistic approach to human dissatisfaction highlights how a person's resistance to life's demands is linked to insufficient understanding or achievement of higher purposes. The poems reveal not only the transformative qualities of suffering but the formation inflected by it to stand alone and live with a greater sense of identity, personal responsibility, and resilience through living. In this context, a clear pattern is seen between Frankl's pathways of Logotherapy and Carol Ann Duffy's corpus of poetry, emphasizing creativity, experiential exploration, and emotional resilience. Duffy highlights the healing power of creativity, allowing individuals to express themselves and confront fears. Her exploration of life experiences emphasizes the role of both positive and negative moments in personal growth and self-discovery.

Through her poetry, Duffy captures transformative experiences such as motherhood, love, and connection, illustrating how they contribute to finding meaning. She also addresses societal issues, grief, and the complexity of existence, encouraging readers to embrace struggles and take responsibility in the search for meaning. To sum up, Duffy's poetry embodies the essence of Frankl's Logotherapy, spotlighting creativity, experience, and resilience.

CHAPTER FOUR — PAUL MULDOON

In this chapter, after a succinct exploration of Paul Muldoon's historical, cultural, and political background, his selected pieces are scrutinized through the lens of Viktor Frankl's creative, experiential, and attitudinal pathways of Logotherapy. Like his contemporaries, while Muldoon employs elements of postmodernist poetry in his works, he also guides his readers through a search for meaning in an atmosphere replete with nihilism and paranoia. His difficult life and selected works of art demonstrate many examples of Frankl's pathways and educate society accordingly.

4.1. Historical, Cultural and Political Background of Muldoon's Poetry

Paul Muldoon (1951-) was born in County Armagh, Northern Ireland, near the border with the Republic of Ireland. His linguistic pursuits began to change during his years at Queen's University Belfast, where he had a degree in English Literature and developed a close connection with the poets of the Belfast Group. Seamus Heaney (1939-2013) was a formative mentor for Muldoon, leading him into the promising world of academic pursuits at American universities and prompting him to apply for a master's degree at the University of Leeds. Paul Muldoon has published more than thirty collections throughout his career. His debut collection, *New Weather* (1973), received a Gregory Award. Afterward, his poetry earned him the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation Fellowship in 1990 and the T. S. Eliot Prize (1994) for *The Annals of Chile* (1994). Furthermore, he has received numerous awards, including the Pulitzer Prize for Poetry (2003) and the Griffin Poetry Prize (2003) for *Moy Sand and Gravel* (2002). His home country honoured him, receiving the Irish Times Poetry Now Award for his *Hay* (1998) and *Maggot* (2010) collections. Recognising his literary achievement, the American Academy of Arts and Letters accepted him as an honorary foreign member. In 2017, he won the Queen's Gold Medal for Poetry and was knighted in the 2018 Birthday Honours list for services to literature. Besides writing, Muldoon has been a poetry professor

at Princeton University since 1987. He also served as the editor of *The New Yorker* and has contributed to promoting poetry in Ireland and the United States (Gaudern, 2020).

Muldoon's poetry combines personal and societal experiences of contemporary culture, such as gender, identity, violence, and the like, with Irish history, mythology, and colonialism. His early life was influenced largely by the teachers of rural and religious institutions; thus, his literary voice reflects that cultural background's isolation, conflict, and resilience. His family's migration history to and from the U.S. also intensified Muldoon's view of international events and allowed him to sympathize with the plight of various presences within his work. His allusive poetry not only reflects the confusions of postmodern life, either after or in the shadow of the creative destruction of modernism, but also, and increasingly, as he wrote through the decades of the late 20th and early 21st centuries, the updated understanding of the identity in narrative, poetry, or song. Therefore, his cunning wordplay and mixing of surreal elements with realistic ones are obvious in his works of art. He incorporates both traditional and free verse and features multi-layered storytelling. In addition, his essays and reviews delve into the topics explored in his poetry and provide literary, historical, and cultural analysis. Muldoon's works substantially contribute to one's comprehension of reading poetry in the postmodern era since they are the representatives of his cultural atmosphere locally and globally (Moi, 2020).

It is apparent that Ireland's long and often brutal history plays a significant role in the discussions of literary trends, and the key to understanding the background of Muldoon and his poetry is the knowledge and understanding of Irish history and politics. The twentieth century was a century of profound change for the people of Ireland. The War of Independence liberated the Irish state and led to a civil war. While these significant political events continued to shape the Irish state, Irish society struggled to develop a new identity. It was war-torn and economically unsteady, affecting the country's political perspective. Young Muldoon was intimately acquainted with the socio-political conflict that characterized the region for several decades during the second half of the 20th century—"The Troubles"—and beyond (Muldoon, 2004, p. 455). Given the timing and location of Muldoon's youth, one could imagine that the trauma and political instability that influenced South Armagh would frequently demand consideration either from the young poet himself or the community in which he lived. Included in the turmoil of these years were the beginnings of change as Catholics began to campaign for civil rights, and the British Army was deployed to the streets. These politically unstable years in which Muldoon came of age provide a prominent part of the backdrop to his poetry. More generally, the cultural

and economic privations of the poet's region, as well as his family's history of migration to and from the U.S., arguably intensified Muldoon's view of international events and allowed him to sympathize with the plight of various presences within his work (Wagner, 2021).

The multiple skin of Paul Muldoon is tied to different ancestral origins and the variety of cultures he is exposed to, but it is not free from the poet's influence. Firstly, Paul Muldoon's poetry and prose reflect the influences of his dual cultural background in the existence of two separate nations, the Irish Free State and Northern Ireland, in the British United Kingdom. As a result, his work is an intricate interweaving of diverse Irish and Anglophone literatures. On the other hand, it is mainly because of Muldoon's travel and experiences in the United States that one finds the influence of American poetry in his work. After almost three decades in the USA, the American intellectual scene – slang and idioms – has become the background to this poet's linguistic palette. In other words, America has enlarged Muldoon's artistic expression. Moreover, one could see that his cultural background involves issues relevant to postcolonial New Ireland and the Western United States and the globalizing phenomena that are part of everyone. Nor is it this poet's intellectual curiosity or desire to be inclusive of all cultures and trends to be a poet of the people. His art transcends the American openness to the world. He cannot be easily identified with one specific identity or culture, either American or Irish (or all of those). It complicates expectations, such as the label of Postcolonialist, which has been pasted to some of his work; though tempting, it is incomplete. Overall, in a world where the American West has become a fascination for so many people across the globe and where people anywhere can identify with the cultural mixing phenomenon, one could recognize a new story about the world's older adults in Paul Muldoon's words. While drawing on an extensive Irish poetical background ensures that Muldoon's poetry becomes the sum of the voices that went into its making, the outcome of a bilingual, bicultural condition, his personal and literary experiences in the USA add another layer to his unique individual identity (Pietrzak, 2022).

In conclusion, Paul Muldoon's poetry combines Irish culture, American influence, and the complexity of a poet's unique identity to create a meaningful body of work. His wordplay, fragmented structure, and use of intertextuality reflect postmodernism, allowing him to explore themes of identity and the search for meaning. Like Viktor Frankl's Logotherapy, Muldoon's speakers question existence and find meaning through creativity, myriad experiences, and constructive attitudes. By bridging the personal and the philosophical, the traditional and the modern, the familiar and the distinct, Muldoon's poetry remains timely and encourages readers to engage with the complexities of identity and meaning in the postmodern world.

4.2. Analysis of Muldoon's Poetry in Light of Logotherapy

Poetry enables life to be bearable and word-wearable. While presenting pain and despair within itself, it does not only cry or draw attention to itself with the pain it contains but also touches the audience, calling to them with its whole existence, whether it speaks or is silent, addressing all other sections. An image, thought, or event surrounding the readers contributes to their psycho-spiritual balance. Just as meaningful and healing Logotherapy is in one respect, so is authentic poetry in another. Much like a logotherapeutic practice, each piece of poetry reveals a great meaning that enlightens personal conscience. Paul Muldoon is one of the most significant Irish poets of the late 20th century and a poet of international stature. He has published numerous books of poetry and prose. Critics recognize his postmodern, pluralistic, and ludic style that can be associated with linguistic play, puns, allusions, and contradictions. Through an ongoing textual engagement with problematics, such as borders and boundaries, self-perception, and language, Muldoon can be placed in the line of contemporary poets, extending, modifying, and transforming the traditions of the past. His poetry can be considered an art and a medium of communication between him and his readers. It echoes human fears, desires, and anguish. Through the melody of his verses, his pain can be seen as a relief, and it similarly helps the readers to understand his longing for a more meaningful life. Accordingly, in this chapter, Muldoon's life and speakers in his selected poems will be analysed in light of Logotherapy's creative, experiential, and attitudinal pathways.

4.2.1. The Creative Pathway in Muldoon's Poetry

In Paul Muldoon's poetry, the most constant theme is innovation. He is known for his postmodern poetry, blending traditional forms with experimental styles. His work is marked by playful language, structure, and thematic contrasts, incorporating intertextuality, irony, fragmentation, and self-reflexivity. Muldoon's references to cultural, literary, and historical figures challenge fixed meanings, blurring boundaries between 'high' and 'low' culture—moreover, his work questions the nature of language, aligning with postmodern scepticism about objective meaning. Muldoon's poems resist linear narrative, encouraging active reader participation. He uses linguistic playfulness, rhyme, and wordplay to give his work a musical quality. Furthermore, he employs humour and anachronism to question historical 'truths.' Muldoon's poetry embodies a postmodern sensibility that embraces endless interpretation, paying homage to tradition while subverting its limits. In the following paragraphs, Muldoon's creative

aspects of poetry and the speakers in his selected poems will be scrutinized, considering the creative pathway of Frankl's Logotherapy.

Fragmented storytelling, mythology, historical allusions, and anachronism have always been the central issues in the critical reading of Paul Muldoon's poetry. Muldoon's poetry, diverse and eclectic in its topics, often feels fragmented, as if the words on the page act as a set of dislocated snapshots rather than a coherent narrative. Indeed, the most revolutionary literary experiment of the last century is a fragmented narrative that proceeds neither for the reader nor for its characters in a linear fashion. For Muldoon, like all postmodernist poets, this is the literature of the city in which more than one outcome is possible, more than one interpretation. In other words, what is represented in Muldoon's poems are not mere memories of the fragmented, but the fragmented itself, the disorienting love, worries, riddles, sorrows, joys, and histories of people worldwide. The interlacing of story and voice is a collage, not in a traditional dramatic or lyrical unity. Poetry is a broken knowledge that is pieced together like mosaics of memory. He customarily modifies the stories in an anachronistic style to fit his purposes. For example, Paul Muldoon's poem "Saffron" delves into a multidimensional exploration of history, self-reflection, and self-awareness through a postmodern lens. Muldoon employs fragmented narrative, mythological and historical allusions, anachronism, and symbolic imagery to illustrate the process of deriving meaning through the creative pathway of Logotherapy. Firstly, the recurring motif and title of the poem, "Saffron," carries significant symbolic weight. Throughout history, saffron has been a symbol of healing and transformation, often associated with purity and holiness. It represents physical and spiritual healing within this context, encapsulating the narrator's journey toward inner tranquility and understanding. The reference to saffron originating from the "sterile crocus" implies creative potential arising from unexpected or barren beginnings, mirroring the paradoxical essence of creativity (Muldoon, 2015, p. 30). Secondly, Muldoon uses historical and mythological figures like Alexander, Cleopatra, Anubis, and Ezekiel to creatively explore identity, temporality, and human experience. By integrating these figures into the narrator's reflections, Muldoon brings the weight of history and myth into conversation with personal and contemporary concerns. The speaker in the poem tells stories that transcend time, blending ancient and modern symbols to find meaning while pondering Julian of Norwich's conviction on the significance of sin for self-understanding. Here, Muldoon uses Julian's philosophy to show that ingenuity and self-awareness come from recognizing and addressing faults and constraints. By connecting himself with figures from the distant past, the speaker establishes his place in the present by creatively reimagining history to create personal meaning. Thirdly, the anachronisms, such as Alexander

and Cleopatra eating paella or a reference to the band A Flock of Seagulls, allow Muldoon to emphasize the timeless nature of human pursuits and challenges, suggesting that the quest for understanding continues across time and cultures. Muldoon's method of blending diverse cultural elements within a single narrative underscores the notion that meaning is not fixed but adaptable and multifaceted. His fragmented, non-linear writing technique mirrors the postmodern notion of questioning absolute truths, akin to Frankl's conviction that individuals must actively seek meaning rather than simply accepting it in a predetermined form (Frankl, 2000). This approach to poetry encourages readers to engage in the creative process, prompting them to interpret the symbols and allusions within the poem in a manner that personally resonates with them, essentially embodying the creative pathway through the act of reading. In a nutshell, Paul Muldoon's "Saffron" exemplifies the logotherapeutic creative pathway, intertwining historical, mythical, and personal narratives to explore human experience. Through allusion, symbolism, and language, Muldoon constructs a realm where imaginative engagement with ancient and contemporary figures becomes a conduit for self-discovery. His poem demonstrates how creative endeavours yield insights into identity and existence, prompting readers to contemplate harnessing creativity. That is how Muldoon uses historical content in his work to show that history is alive and lives not only in the individual but in the collective unconscious of communities worldwide. For Muldoon, history is told within a community, not just to the descendants of a famous forefather. He thus writes from various historical experiences.

Paul Muldoon's poetry has always been known for its innovation. He has written and published astonishingly complex poems that engage with the contemporary world. Like many modern poets, Muldoon blends experimental forms with traditional forms to write poems that inhabit both traditions easily. These experimental aspects, among many others, have made him one of English's most influential contemporary poets. By examining Paul Muldoon's poetry through the lens of Viktor Frankl's Logotherapy, one could observe how his inventive manipulation of language and structure parallels Frankl's idea of discovering meaning through the creative pathway (Frankl, 2020). For instance, his poem "The Plot," as a representation of concrete poetry, shows how a single word can have many different meanings and, thus, how Muldoon challenges typical ideas of representation and meaning in language. An extract from a traditional ballad in the first stanza draws a stark contrast with the second, which is a "Muldoonesque" comparison of the old-fashioned with the contemporary (Moi, 2020, p. 2):

a l f a l f a l f a l f a l f a l f a l f a
 l f a l f a l f a l f a l f a l f a l f a l
 f a l f a l f a l f a l f a l f a l f a l f
 a l f a a l f a
 l f a l l f a l
 f a l f f a l f
 a l f a a l p h a a l f a
 l f a l l f a l
 f a l f f a l f
 a l f a a l f a
 l f a l f a l f a l f a l f a l f a l f a l
 f a l f a l f a l f a l f a l f a l f a l f
 a l f a l f a l f a l f a l f a l f a l f a

Figure 6: “The Plot” (Muldoon, 2011, p. 483).

The poem attempts to convey a concept but acknowledges its limitations, thereby emphasizing the incompleteness of representation. It is the utilization of a distinct linguistic style that has not garnered as much attention from critics as Muldoon’s other, more widely recognized works. Jacques Derrida’s deconstruction theory inspires it: every word or illustration is inherently unfinished, layered, and open to interpretation, as it is influenced and shaped by numerous external factors and interruptions. Derrida posits that for one to approach a text, it must possess a clear and defined boundary that sets it apart. He believes that writing should challenge established norms. Similarly, Muldoon contends that poetry should provoke and encourage readers to rethink and perceive things differently. In the second stanza, both “alfa” and “alpha” represent the first letter of the Greek alphabet and can symbolize starting points, power, or significance (Muldoon, 2011, p. 483). “Alpha” is commonly spelled in English and relates to Western thought, the Greek alphabet, and its symbolic importance in philosophy, hierarchy, and science (Muldoon, 2011, p. 483). On the other hand, “alfa” has different meanings (Muldoon, 2011, p. 483). It may indicate phonetic transcription in other languages or refer to Muldoon’s Irish background, where the English language clashes with native traditions. This spelling shift showcases how language changes in different cultures, suggesting connections and differences in linguistic heritage. Furthermore, the various spellings make readers aware of how language can be changeable and make them wonder about the impact of small changes on meaning. To sum up, in Muldoon’s view, the creative pathway is embodied in his innovative poetry. He melds conventional structures with contemporary concerns and consistently stretches language boundaries to unearth new understandings of existence. In his poem “The Plot,” Muldoon’s exploration of language, combining concrete poetry and traditional elements, embodies Frankl’s concept of finding meaning through creative expression.

Another example of a growing tradition of visual poetry in the modern and contemporary period is Muldoon's "A Half-Door near Cluny." The genre is characterized by its ability to synthesize verbal and visual material, drawing attention to the printed word and its page—and often performance-based—context. It is a captivating study of language, form, and creativity. Muldoon seems to play with different word constructions and possible implications of the concept they represent. He encourages readers to engage with the poem on various levels by arranging words into a visual structure. Viewed through the lens of Viktor Frankl's Logotherapy, the poem illustrates how language and traditional structures can be transformed to create meaning, prompting readers to reconsider familiar concepts in fresh ways (Weisskopf-Joelson, 1975). Muldoon's innovative use of the page as a canvas shows that meaning can arise from form, symbols, and the interplay between language and visual space:

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s t a b l e s t a b l e s t a b l e s
t a b l e s t a b l e s t a b l e s t
a b l e s t a b l e s t a b l e s t a
b l e s                               s t a b
l e s t                               t a b l
e s t a                               a b l e
s t a b                               b l e s
t a b l                               b l é   l e s t
a b l e                               e s t a
b l e s                               s t a b
l e s t                               t a b l
e s t a                               a b l e
s t a b l e s t a b l e s t a b l e s
t a b l e s t a b l e s t a b l e s t
a b l e s t a b l e s t a b l e s t a
b l e s t a b l e s t a b l e s t a b
l e s t a b l e s t a b l e s t a b l
e s t a b l e s t a b l e s t a b l e
s t a b l e s t a b l e s t a b l e s

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Figure 7: "A Half-Door near Cluny" (Muldoon, 2011, p. 553).

The poem is almost entirely composed of the word "stable," arranged in a square border (Muldoon, 2011, p. 553). In the centre of this structure is "blé," the French word for wheat (Muldoon, 2011, p. 553). The repetition of "stable" immediately recalls physical and conceptual stability, connecting the poem to images of barns or rural life (Muldoon, 2011, p. 553). On the other hand, "blé" symbolizes nourishment, growth, and the raw material for sustenance (Muldoon, 2011, p. 553). Together, these words contrast permanence and vitality besides confinement and potential. Logotherapy's focus on finding meaning through creation and reinterpretation is evident in Muldoon's poem, which creates a meaningful experience through language arrangement alone (Frankl, 2004). How "stable" is arranged into a square visually resembles the stable itself—a solid, closed structure (Muldoon, 2011, p. 553). By creating this visual "stable" with words, Muldoon creatively blurs

the line between language and imagery, transforming the stable concept from a physical space into a metaphor for containment and security (Muldoon, 2011, p. 553). A “stable” also suggests where animals are kept, tended, and nurtured (Muldoon, 2011, p. 553). In this sense, the poem invites readers to reflect on the theme of preservation and containment and how language can act as a vessel for meaning. Muldoon’s creative use of repetition emphasizes the stability and uniformity of the structure, yet he introduces variation with “blé,” which presents a contrasting element of growth within confinement (Muldoon, 2011, p. 553). This interplay symbolizes the human capacity to cultivate meaning within structured or limited circumstances, a key tenet of Frankl’s creative pathway (Wong, 2019). Including “blé” in the middle of the stable-shaped structure brings depth to the poem (Muldoon, 2011, p. 553). The word “stable” suggests security and tradition, while “blé” represents sustenance and life, hinting at growth within boundaries (Muldoon, 2011, p. 553). Muldoon introduces cultural and linguistic differences using this French word, showcasing how diverse viewpoints and expressions can exist within a restricted framework (Kitchen, 1999). Further, “A Half-Door Near Cluny” reflects on borders and accessibility. The title suggests partial access, which is symbolized by a half door. It signifies the potential to find purpose within constraints, balancing safety with growth. The barn represents tradition and security, while the openness symbolized by “blé” allows for creativity (Muldoon, 2011, p. 553). Drawing from stability and new perspectives, Muldoon supports Frankl’s view that meaning can flourish even in limited environments (Lukas, 2020). Like “The Plot,” “A Half-Door near Cluny” also pushes readers to engage with language beyond its literal sense, turning it into an experiential and interpretive act. It aligns with the creative pathway in Logotherapy, where meaning is found by reimagining familiar aspects of life and interpreting them creatively (Frankl, 2000). In “A Half-Door Near Cluny,” words challenge readers to reconsider language as a creative act. Instead of simply reading the poem, readers must visually and spatially interact with its structure. Muldoon’s poem becomes a creative process inviting readers to engage with their interpretation and meaning-making. Like Frankl’s creative pathway, Muldoon offers readers a way to construct meaning actively.

One of the creative aspects of Muldoon’s poetry is the usage of epiphora. It is the stylistic device through which a word or a group of words is repeated at the end of two or more successive lines or clauses, building a connection between those words. It contributes to the rhythm of the verse, imparting resonance and profundity to the lines, and offers the poet a thematic view from another angle or a new point of view. As a strong rhetorical device, epiphora is rhythmical and conveys psychological effects. In these ways, epiphora not only reinforces tradition but also provides tools for

innovation. Paul Muldoon uses epiphora to transform existing structures and create innovative ones while creating familiarity and understanding. A representative example of this device is in Muldoon's "They That Wash on Thursday," a semi-autobiographical poem. The poem reflects various personal, family, and cultural histories using the hand motif. This recurring image, presented through epiphora and filled with changing meanings, highlights Viktor Frankl's logotherapy approach, which focuses on finding meaning through creation (Frankl, 2020). Muldoon's intentional use of language—employing the word "hand" as a structural and symbolic tool—presents a meaningful investigation of identity, legacy, and reconciliation (Muldoon, 2011, p. 534). The poem begins with a clear memory of the speaker's mother: "She was such a dab hand, my mother. Such a dab hand / at raising her hand / to a child" (Muldoon, 2011, p. 534). The "hand" symbolizes discipline, control, and authority in this context (Muldoon, 2011, p. 534). The maternal figure represents both a caregiver and a disciplinarian, embodying the conflicting emotions of love and authority that shape early childhood experiences. This conflict is a key theme in Muldoon's work, as he tells a story that does not ignore the pain of parental relationships while recognizing their complexity. By turning this tension into poetry, Muldoon demonstrates the creative process—using his emotional scars to create art and find meaning through self-reflection. Epiphora is used as a structural and thematic foundation, with the word "hand" appearing in various contexts, from literal to metaphorical, often blurring the line between the two (Muldoon, 2011, p. 534). The speaker reflects on his father, who "washed his hands of the matter" and "sat on his hands" (Muldoon, 2011, p. 534). Here, the father's inactivity contrasts with the mother's assertiveness, implying a dynamic of absence and presence within the family. The hand, a symbol of power and action, signifies absence in the father's case. By incorporating this motif into the poem, Muldoon creates a complex portrayal of his upbringing, where the interaction of active and passive forces influenced his perspective. As the poem continues, the theme of the hand becomes more complex and connected to broader cultural and historical aspects. The line "The show of hands / on a moonlit hill under the Red Hand" introduces the emblem of Ulster, a symbol tied to Irish identity and the complicated politics of Northern Ireland (Muldoon, 2011, p. 534). Here, the personal and the collective come together, as Muldoon's background and political situation are recalled through the same recurring image. Additionally, the Red Hand, a symbol of pride and division, reflects the speaker's struggle with cultural identity. By incorporating this symbol into his work, Muldoon actively engages with his heritage, finding meaning in creative expression. The poem also shows the speaker's changing connections with women, characterized by physical closeness in "hand-in-hand" moments that often end suddenly: "As soon as they were eating out of my hand / I dismissed them

out of hand” (Muldoon, 2011, p. 534). These brief relationships demonstrate the speaker’s difficulty forming bonds and being close, a topic that deeply connects with the creative process. Writing becomes a method of working through these experiences, finding meaning in moments that may appear confusing or uncertain. As the poem draws to a close, the recurring symbol of the hand takes on a redemptive quality, reaching its culmination in a moment of familial harmony: “Now she and I and the child of my right hand / stand hand in hand” (Muldoon, 2011, p. 535). This depiction of the speaker with his spouse and daughter implies a reconciliation with the past and an embrace of the future. The mention of the “child of my right hand” recalls biblical associations of favour and blessing, indicating a newfound sense of purpose and responsibility (Muldoon, 2011, p. 535). Composing this poem reflects the speaker’s quest for meaning as he weaves the fragmented pieces of his life into a unified narrative. The last lines complete the motif as the speaker reflects on his daughter’s “freehand version of the Muldoon ‘coat of arms’” (Muldoon, 2011, p. 535). This moment of artistic expression is connected to family history and personal creativity, capturing the core of the creative pathway (Frankl, 2004). The “green field” and “white hand” of the coat of arms represent cultural heritage and the act of creation—a symbol of continuity and rebirth (Muldoon, 2011, p. 535). Through its skilful repetition and exploration of personal, family, and cultural stories, “They That Wash on Thursday” showcases the creative pathway of Logotherapy by “the mining of meanings” (Moi, 2020, p. 267). Muldoon turns the ordinary image of the hand into a complex symbol of control, connection, and identity. By crafting a poem that questions his past while affirming his present, Muldoon shows how creating can help one find meaning in life’s challenges. The poem’s recurring theme ultimately proves art’s ability to bring together the broken parts of human experience.

Muldoon has a strong command of language, showing a predatory approach as he skilfully examines the complexities of words and phrases. He is known for his cunning wordplay, frequent use of puns, metaphors, and rich imagery, and his imaginative approach to language specifically for word-making. Some of his poems consist merely of these word-making exercises. The playfulness of his style makes him an interesting interlocutor for contemporary critics. He is often cited as the most innovative poet in the English language, from the idea of form to the concept of the poem. In other words, like a cat focusing on its target, he uncovers deep truths by highlighting the small details of language. In this context, Paul Muldoon’s adaptation of a well-known medieval Irish poem, “Anonymous: Myself and Pangur,” compares the speaker’s scholarly pursuits to the instincts of his cat, Pangur, demonstrating a mutual passion for mastering and discovering. The poem reflects on the fulfilment humans and animals derive from their

pursuits, celebrating focused, purposeful activity to find joy and meaning. In line with Viktor Frankl's Logotherapy, the poem suggests that creation and intellectual engagement can fulfil an existential need by providing direction, clarity, and purpose in one's life (Frankl, 2000). The speaker and his cat, Pangur, are partners in purpose, both dedicated to their respective tasks. For Pangur, it is hunting mice; for the speaker, it is hunting words, engaging deeply in intellectual work. That parallels Frankl's assertion that individuals find meaning by engaging fully in pursuits that utilize their talents and interests (Wong, 2014).

Myself and Pangur, my white cat,
 have much the same calling, in that
 much as Pangur goes after mice
 I go hunting for the precise

word (Muldoon, 2011, p. 526).

The speaker describes himself and Pangur as having "much the same calling," suggesting a meaningful alignment between intellectual labour and instinctual action (Muldoon, 2011, p. 526). Though disparate in form, the poet's search for the "precise / word" and the cat's hunt for mice symbolise dedication and concentration (Muldoon, 2011, p. 526). Like mice escaping from the cat, words escaping from the poet are illustrated in the enjambment of the opening stanzas (Moi, 2020). The speaker's contentment in his pursuit of creating resembles Pangur's satisfaction with his task, demonstrating the joy and fulfilment that can come from a focused, purpose-driven life. The cat and the speaker appear unaffected by outside recognition, embodying Frankl's idea that meaning in life comes from the intrinsic value of one's work rather than from external validation (Batthyány, 2016). The poem implies that meaning is found in dedication or mastery, regardless of sophistication. Frankl (2011) believed meaning can come from any task approached with dedication, fostering self-transcendence. In conclusion, "Anonymous: Myself and Pangur" suggests that intellectual and instinctual pursuits are valuable, fulfilling vital roles in life. The satisfaction the speaker derives from solving abstract puzzles mirrors the pleasure Pangur experiences from his concrete achievements, showing that engagement is where meaning is found. This poem demonstrates Viktor Frankl's creative pathway in Logotherapy, indicating that meaning can be discovered through intentional involvement in one's chosen art or passion (Lukas, 2020).

Words are vital to an understanding of concepts and ideas in the mind. The visual artist and writer claim to distil greater concepts and meanings into singular terms and phrases. In a poem, the power of a phrase or, especially, a

single word is fore fronted in poetry, giving way to abstractions, concepts larger than its denotative aspect provides. In one word, the concept of the painting emerges, as this one word's denotation is an immediate conceptual metaphor for said purpose. For Muldoon, words are the key element of beautiful and perfectly expressive art, and he thus uses them to their most penetrating end, connecting ordinary language with extraordinary worlds of feeling, emotion, intellect, and history. Each word he uses must be a transport of power, each its scan, and his exploration of the inherent multifaceted meanings in single words is what transforms his art into genius. His poetry shows how a single word, which is highly ambiguous, can have a web of deep effects within a poem. In the poem "Quoof," Paul Muldoon examines how individual and cultural forms of expression, even within a single word, can link people to their history and form close connections in unfamiliar surroundings. The speaker's use of a "family word" reminds him of his origins and creatively connects the past, present, and human connections across different regions and languages (Muldoon, 2011, p. 160). The poem focuses on "quoof," a term created in the speaker's family to refer to a hot water bottle. It represents family warmth, closeness, and lasting connections through generations. The speaker remembers how his father used to "juggle a red-hot half-brick / in an old sock / to his childhood settle," portraying a combination of creativity and tenderness (Muldoon, 2011, p. 160). This cultural memory is filled with meaning that goes beyond just being functional. It becomes a family tradition, a symbol of love and protection. In Logotherapy, meaning is often created through personal history and creative interpretation (Lukas, 2020). By treasuring this unique word, the speaker turns a family custom into something meaningful, a small but important part that helps him stay connected to his family, even when he is far away. Muldoon's decision to introduce "quoof" in different situations showcases how creativity influences human experiences (Muldoon, 2011, p. 160). As the speaker navigates through various settings, he brings his family's special word with him, even to a "strange bed," indicating the continuity of his identity across different circumstances (Muldoon, 2011, p. 160). This word, rich with personal history, becomes a portable piece of home that enables the speaker to bridge distances. The mention of placing "quoof" "between us like a sword" highlights the complexity of human relationships, where cultural or personal differences both separate and protect individuals (Muldoon, 2011, p. 160). The "sword" imagery suggests a dual role for "quoof": it is both a bond and a barrier, representing shared warmth and the subtle divide that cultural nuances can create (Muldoon, 2011, p. 160). Using this familial term demonstrates the paradoxical nature of human closeness, where one's unique identity is shared with and shielded from others. Additionally, the poem shows how creativity can help bridge cross-cultural gaps, particularly in the part of the poem that takes place in New York City. In these lines, the speaker is with "a girl who spoke hardly any English," but the tangible presence of

the hot water bottle, referred to as “quooof,” acts as a connection between them (Muldoon, 2011, p. 160). It seems that “quooof”—and, by extension, his identity—serves to connect, even when words fall short (Muldoon, 2011, p. 160). In summary, Muldoon’s “Quooof” is a prime example of how creativity can mold a person’s understanding of meaning and self. Using this family word, the speaker can connect with his heritage, navigate relationships, and bridge cultural gaps. That shows how Logotherapy can help individuals find meaning in their history and identity, even when distant from their roots (Frankl, 2000). The speaker creatively uses their family word in different situations to anchor himself and connect with others, proving that personal meaning can be created and maintained through memory, relationships, and culture (McCracken, 1990).

In a nutshell, Muldoon’s prodigious body of work is distinctly characterized by a delightful and playful tone, expertly interwoven within intricate and complex structures, offering a captivating reading experience. With great expertise, he combines conflicting elements to create a mesmerizing collage. His unique poetic voice is often enriched by his adept incorporation of references to various texts, historical events, and notable cultural figures. Through this compelling exploration, Muldoon effectively challenges the confines of conventional interpretations, skilfully disrupting previously fixed meanings. In doing so, he boldly proclaims the boundless possibilities within artistic expression. His writing is unafraid to delve deep into the inherent uncertainties and complexities of communication, aligning seamlessly with the profound doubts inherent within the postmodern school of thought regarding the existence of absolute meaning. Muldoon’s poems masterfully abandon traditional, linear narratives, actively encouraging readers to immerse themselves in the text and become co-creators of meaning. This unique and immersive reading experience allows for a delightful dance of interpretation, where each reader’s perspective contributes to the ever-evolving understanding of the poetry. In essence, Paul Muldoon’s remarkable body of work is a quintessential representation of postmodern thought. It seamlessly combines a respectful nod to tradition with a fearless spirit that breaks free from its constraints, daring to explore new creative territories. With his uniquely astute observations and unmatched artistic vision, Muldoon invites readers into a world where boundaries are continuously pushed, meaning is perpetually reimagined, and where the power of poetry knows no bounds. In both Muldoon’s and Frankl’s cases, the predominant emphasis lies unequivocally on an individual’s engagement in the perennial search for profound meaning, thereby inviting the reader or mere observer into an extraordinary journey of actively participating in the ineffable process of understanding, interpreting, and ultimately creating immense meaning in life.

4.2.2. The Experiential Pathway in Muldoon's Poetry

Experiences and connections play a large role in shaping individuals' personalities and perceptions about life. Individuals develop unique beliefs and attitudes through positive and negative experiences. The idea of self grows and becomes more solid as new experiences are encountered and new lessons are learned. In that regard, it cannot be denied that Muldoon's identity is in some way anchored in the politics and heartbreak of Northern Ireland. In all his work, there is a sense of the troubled existence experienced there. He uses events in Irish history as a backdrop to ordinary people's personal experiences and connections. Reading Muldoon, the reader is aware of getting engaged with someone for whom exile and belonging are deeply entwined concerns. In addition to experiences, relationships add depth to daily life; they help transcend life's ordinariness. Growth does not spring from simply living passively but stems from active participation. Paul Muldoon reflects his sense of life and connections in his poetry so profoundly that readers are introduced to a new way of being and living. In the following paragraphs, vivid examples of experiences and connections such as emotional struggle, marriage, grief, the weight of history, childhood innocence, solidarity, and small deeds will be analysed in the selected poems of the poet through Logotherapy's experiential pathway.

An emotional struggle is one example of the experiential pathway Muldoon illustrates in his poetry. The foundation of relationships often involves this challenge, where one person feels deeply for another, yet there are frequently feelings of uncertainty. Romantic relationships can especially be extremely tumultuous and unpredictable, creating stress and heartbreak, yet among the most joyous of life experiences. Namely, for love to foster deeper connections and shared experiences, individuals must face the complexities that come with it. Meaning is found in the struggle. Awareness of one's vulnerabilities and those of others can help people embrace their and their partners' imperfections, fostering an open and loving relationship. Believing in emotional vulnerability as a strength means understanding vulnerability as the birthplace of love, belonging, joy, courage, empathy, and creativity. Vulnerability and trust are interdependent. They both require the partners to take a risk with an unknown outcome besides a never-ending hope. The partners will be transformed in many beautiful ways, reflected by their ever-changing experiences, since love may change a person in ways that allow them to grow and cope with pressures in life. Regarding this, Muldoon's poem "Thinking of the Goldfish" metaphorically illustrates the emotional vulnerability and faith in love in the face of uncertainties. It explores the challenges of love and commitment, portraying the struggle between optimism and the unavoidable hardships in relationships. Through

the lens of Viktor Frankl's Logotherapy, the poem indicates that despite the possibility of disappointment, one can discover meaning by choosing to love, trust, and be open (Lukas, 2020). The poem's central image is the goldfish "beating in its plastic bag" and left "behind to die" (Muldoon, 2011, p. 30). It represents the speaker's feelings with a vulnerable heart, bought and offered as a gift but abandoned in a cold and insensitive environment. The fragility of the goldfish, unable to survive without warmth and care, mirrors the fragility of love and the speaker's potential for heartbreak. The speaker acknowledges the inherent risk of this emotional investment, yet instead of shying away, he locks the door and chooses to follow his loved one. This choice reflects the experiential pathway of Logotherapy, where meaning is found in embracing experiences, even those fraught with difficulty and uncertainty (Frankl, 2017). Rather than letting the fear of future pain stop him, the speaker follows his partner: "only glad of the law that I would always / Own the light above my head, / If simply borrow from my side" (Muldoon, 2011, p. 30). The light above his head symbolizes the hope and purpose he holds inside, a personal guiding "law" he sticks to no matter what is happening around him (Muldoon, 2011, p. 30). The inner strength and determination to find meaning in the experience of love reflects Frankl's philosophy of embracing life's uncertainties, finding meaning in the richness of the experience rather than control or permanence (Weisskopf-Joelson, 1972). To sum up, "Thinking of the Goldfish" demonstrates the experiential pathway of Logotherapy by highlighting the speaker's willingness to embrace the uncertainties and potential heartache of love. Using the goldfish as a metaphor, Muldoon emphasizes the delicate nature of love and the pain of vulnerability. However, by choosing to pursue his partner and accept the risks, the speaker shows the logotherapeutic concept that meaning can come from engaging in significant experiences, even if they involve disappointment. Ultimately, the poem suggests that, despite its uncertainties, love offers a profound opportunity for growth and meaning if one is brave and hopeful enough to embrace it.

Another example of the experiential value that one could find in Muldoon's poetry is marriage. It is a beautiful union between two individuals who commit to loving each other for the rest of their lives. In marriage, two different worlds come together, align, and support each other in every way. It makes partners become more than family; they become companions and, more importantly, best friends. Creating and nurturing a new family is a joyful exercise in the marriage institution. It is like co-authoring a work of art, with nothing but a blank canvas in front, ready to be filled with the tangible colours of one's affection. On the other hand, life is a journey that comes with many twists and turns. Marriage, in this instance, comes with its complexities as the years go by, including parenting, managing the

household, creating a budget, and more. Muldoon's poem "Long Finish" explores the complexities of a lasting partnership, portraying the deep emotional experience of marriage spanning ten years. By interpreting the poem through the experiential lens of Frankl's Logotherapy, which focuses on finding meaning in deeply felt experiences, particularly those rooted in love, one could understand how the poem captures the quest for meaning within enduring connections and shared life experiences (Wong, 2019). Muldoon employs the speaker's marriage experiences as proof of love's ability to give meaning to life, even when faced with challenges. By using vivid details and contrasting themes, he demonstrates how the speaker and his partner find meaning in both the happy and tough times, highlighting the powerful impact of love. The poem begins by remembering the speaker's wedding, creating a reflective mood that draws readers into the closeness of their relationship. The speaker remembers the wedding under a "chuppah of pine boughs," representing a natural and sacred space (Muldoon, 2011, p. 530). This initial memory symbolizes the depth and sincerity of their connection. Later, the speaker asks his spouse to "save... a piece of marchpane" while pouring her wine, a small gesture that shows the warmth and familiarity that has developed over their years together (Muldoon, 2011, p. 530). These details show that love and intimacy are in the simple, shared moments that unite the couple. The poem portrays marriage as a long-lasting commitment, with Muldoon using sensory descriptions related to taste and touch. The wine, described as having "hints of plum and pear" and an "oak backbone," symbolizes the complexity and strength of the marriage (Muldoon, 2011, p. 530). By depicting these simple moments, Muldoon shows how everyday acts of love become significant memories that give the speaker's life meaning and continuity. The poem implies that despite life's unpredictability, the love found in marriage offers stability and depth. "Long Finish" explores not only moments of tenderness but also the inevitable challenges that come with a long-term relationship. The speaker reflects on the "soars and slumps in the Dow / of ten years of marriage and parenthood," capturing the emotional ups and downs that have defined their journey (Muldoon, 2011, p. 530). This metaphor portrays the unpredictable nature of life together, where the responsibilities of marriage and parenthood bring both joy and hardship. It emphasizes the strength to sustain a lasting partnership amidst external and internal obstacles. As the poem progresses, there is a conflict between "longing and loss," a phrase repeated several times (Muldoon, 2011, pp. 530-532). It captures the experiential pathway's emphasis on finding meaning in life's fleeting and gloomy aspects (Weisskopf-Joelson, 1958). The speaker recognizes that loss is unavoidable, whether the longing for romance ebbs and flows within a marriage or the loss of loved ones and cherished locations. Furthermore, Muldoon refers to the Japanese Noh play *Matsukaze*, known as *Pining Wind*, featuring two sisters, "Pining Wind" and "Autumn Rain,"

who are left longing for their lost lover (Muldoon, 2011, p. 532). Through this reference, the poem highlights that longing is a universal and timeless experience. Like the sisters in *Matsukaze*, who find themselves torn between remembering and losing, the speaker also deals with the complicated emotions of his marriage. The “double meaning of ‘pine,’” which refers to the tree and the feeling of yearning, underscores the cyclical nature of longing for love and life (Muldoon, 2011, p. 531). The speaker suggests that meaning does not come from escaping this cycle but fully embracing it, allowing love to fill the gaps left by life’s losses. Muldoon’s portrayal of a fluctuating relationship illustrates the enduring power of love, suggesting that it provides the speaker with a sense of purpose, even in the face of imperfection. The poem echoes Frankl’s belief that meaning derives from connections with others, emphasizing that these bonds provide stability during challenging times (Frankl, 2020). In conclusion, recognizing the beauty and challenges of marriage, Muldoon perfectly conveys the essence of life’s journey through “Long Finish.” It portrays marriage as a testimony to the enduring power of love, which exists in Muldoon’s dual perspective “between longing and loss,” as a source of fulfilment and meaning through an emotional connection with life’s ups and downs (Muldoon, 2011, pp. 530-532).

In addition to marriage, grief is also dealt with in the verses of Muldoon to exemplify the experiential pathway of Logotherapy. The death of a close friend causes a grieving process not all that different from the grief that follows the loss of other attachments. It is a normal and natural response to loss, characterized by profound sadness and intense longing. Every person’s grief is as unique as the person living through it. In this case, many people ground their emotional management efforts in writing, which helps direct powerful, emotionally driven thinking toward various forms of symbolic expression. Additionally, commemorating the dialogues with loved ones can be a self-healing act. In this context, Paul Muldoon’s poem “The Hug” vividly captures the essence of his friendship with the late poet Joseph Brodsky (1940-1996) through his words, expressions, and dialogues, recalling fragments of their shared past and showing how these experiences have left an indelible mark in Muldoon’s life. In these vivid experiences, the speaker discovers meaning and forms a timeless connection with his friend, even as he deals with loss. The look back at the past fits well with Frankl’s idea of the experiential pathway, where meaning comes from relationships and memories (Wong, 2014). Muldoon opens with a fond recollection of Brodsky’s “peaches-and-diesel tenor” voice and his clever musings on the nature of politicians and poets (Muldoon, 2011, p. 555). This reminiscence is a glimpse into Brodsky’s character: witty, wise, and full of depth. The recollections are intricately specific, and these unique

moments depict Brodsky as a vibrant presence whose influence continues to enhance the speaker's world. Through these recollections, Muldoon discovers a path to meaning, drawing on past interactions with Brodsky to affirm the importance of their friendship and Brodsky's enduring impact. As the poem continues, Muldoon remembers visiting "the hallowed ground of Middagh Street" and enjoying "dim sum in Soho" together (Muldoon, 2011, p. 555). These moments may seem small, but they hold deep meaning when looked back on. Muldoon sees these shared meals and conversations as more than memories—they represent Brodsky's bravery and passion for life. The story's setting in Saint Ursula's church further explores mortality and memory. As the poet describes the church's "walls...swagged with human bones" and "Latin grammar of fibulas and femurs," he is struck by these remnants of life and death (Muldoon, 2011, p. 555). The bones act as a powerful reminder of death, leading to contemplation on the human condition and the inevitability of death. In Logotherapy, facing mortality strengthens one's quest for meaning, and the poet's encounter with this symbolic representation of death allows him to sense Brodsky's presence again (Frankl, 2017; Batthyány, 2016). The "blast of air" from the Caucasus, depicted as wrapping "its arms around [him]," evokes a spiritual connection with Brodsky, as if his friend's essence has reached beyond the boundary of death to offer one final hug (Muldoon, 2011, p. 556). This imagined "hug" confirms their enduring bond and serves as a moment of transcendence, an experience that brings Muldoon comfort and a renewed sense of meaning. Ultimately, in "The Hug," Muldoon shows how his experiences with Brodsky are more than just memories. They are important events that have shaped his understanding of life, death, and friendship. He finds comfort and strength by remembering these moments, proving that shared experiences can help one find meaning. Remembering Brodsky's love for life and sense of humour, Muldoon honours his friend's spirit, keeping it alive in his own life and showing how powerful shared experiences can be in finding meaning in one's most special moments.

Another experiential value that Muldoon mentions in his poetry is the weight of history. Understanding contemporary society and its sociocultural shape is difficult without discovering various interpretations within their historical legacies. The relationship between the past and the present is understood today as an inextricable part of numerous human events. Influences of the past encourage people to become more critical of contemporary perspectives. As a result, the knowledge and use of historical legacies of the past foster a more informed citizenry. It can also help to put in doubt or to deconstruct the motives for ethnic or national hate and the ideologies intended to fight against these sentiments. In other words, while interpreting historical legacies, the stress is placed on engagement

with the present rather than the past. In that regard, Paul Muldoon's "A Journey to Cracow" is a deeply evocative dive into cultural identity, shared experience, and the weight of history. Through the poem, as Keating (2020) states that "Muldoon suggests the connections between the conflict present in the interpersonal relationship and the broader historical religious and political conflicts witnessed in Twentieth Century Europe (...) to draw transnational connections between conflicts in Ireland and Poland" (p. 11). Using Viktor Frankl's Logotherapy framework, the poem shows how individual and collective experiences shape the quest for meaning (Frankl, 2017). Muldoon blends Cracow's historical and mythical imagery to create a mosaic of memory and introspection, highlighting the profound influence of cultural and interpersonal encounters. The poem begins with a vibrant portrayal of motion: "As we hightailed it across the meadows / toward what might have been common ground" (Muldoon, 2011, p. 542). This picture captures the feeling of urgency and pursuit, symbolizing the desire for connection and understanding – essential parts of the human experience. The phrase "common ground" indicates more than just a physical place but also a shared purpose or sense of belonging, showing the human need to find meaning through relationships and collective identity (Muldoon, 2011, p. 542). However, this journey is hindered by the symbolic weight of shadows, representing personal and historical burdens. The interaction between movement and obstruction shows the struggle to find meaning in experiences that are often challenging and unclear. The poem is filled with cultural and historical symbols, connecting its meaning exploration to a specific place and context. For example, the mention of "Wanda's mound" recalls the legend of Princess Wanda, who sacrificed herself to protect her people (Muldoon, 2011, p. 542). This reference ties the speaker and his companion's journey to the broader story of sacrifice and resilience, showing how historical events can shape and enhance personal understanding. Likewise, the image of a "black horse" charging through the dance floor represents chaos and disruption, recalling how the shadows of history can disrupt moments of joy (Muldoon, 2011, p. 542). These experiences of cultural heritage and historical reflection are at the heart of the experiential pathway, as they help individuals find meaning in their connection to a larger story (Batthyány, 2016). Muldoon further deepens this exploration through the recurring motif of the barn door. The barn door, removed from its hinges and repurposed as a tool to "beat out the black grain," symbolizes adaptability and continuity (Muldoon, 2011, p. 542). The speaker reflects on how "our forefathers did on threshing day," situating their own experiences within the context of generational labour and survival (Muldoon, 2011, p. 542). This imagery of shared work and ritual emphasizes the experiential pathway's focus on meaning derived from connections to the past and the preservation of cultural practices (Frankl, 2014).

Threshing grain becomes an emblem of resilience, transforming hardship into sustenance and purpose. The poem reaches its most intense moment when the speaker and his companion envision leaping into the “Vistula swollen with rain” (Muldoon, 2011, p. 542). The swollen and potentially hazardous river represents both the unpredictability of life and the chance for renewal. The imagined leap indicates a readiness to face uncertainty and fully engage in shared experiences. The speaker sees himself placing a cigarette on the barn door and dancing “rings around it forevermore,” merging the ordinary with the celebratory (Muldoon, 2011, p. 542). This dance, connected to traditional forms such as the polka and Cracovienne, confirms the ability of cultural expression to bring joy and meaning even in challenging times. Ultimately, “A Journey to Cracow” shows how meaning comes from combining personal, historical, and cultural experiences. The poem’s journey is real and symbolic, representing the quest for empathy and connection through shared history and relationships. By delving into the past and accepting the unpredictability of the present, the speaker discovers a greater purpose beyond his own experiences. Through its vibrant imagery and thought-provoking reflections, Muldoon’s poem showcases the power of experiencing life, where meaning is not found in avoiding challenges but in embracing them as chances for development and connection.

Likewise, the innocent and unspoiled world of childhood has always been a central theme in Muldoon’s poetry, also illustrating the experiential pathway. The fact that childhood innocence evokes a range of emotions in the adults, including longing, nostalgia, and regret for what they may have lost or never experienced, can result from their desire to return to that life stage (McCracken, 1990). It is because the more adults are exposed to life experiences, the more rigid and introverted they become as they grow older. For this reason, children can often develop relationships with animals that are deep, intense, and meaningful when compared to adults. As vulnerable and dependent beings, animals symbolize trust, loyalty, unconditional love, and an emotional resonance that no words can convey. Children often confide in animals because they do not judge, pouring out their emotional states. In these reciprocal acts of communion, each party feels understood and not alone. As a result, while adult connections are superficial, children develop more sincere and meaningful relationships. In this context, Paul Muldoon’s poem “Bran” delves into deep themes of loss, innocence, and the ability to experience joy through an intimate yet contrasting portrayal of human and animal relationships. Viktor Frankl’s experiential pathway offers a compelling lens to analyse this poem, emphasizing the search for meaning in deeply felt experiences and encounters with connections beyond the usual (Frankl, 1986). In the poem, the contrast between human yearning and the unadulterated joy of a child and his dog highlights the

complexity of finding meaning in fleeting moments of love and rapture. The poem introduces women who “have let themselves go,” sighing and moaning “for pure joy” (Muldoon, 2011, p. 113). In contrast to the women who sigh, the emotional heart of the poem is found in the image of a boy holding an “oatmeal Labrador” on a small farm (Muldoon, 2011, p. 113). The dog represents innocence and unconditional love, contrasting the women’s whim. The boy’s connection with his dog is depicted as a pure experience of joy—“all there is of rapture”—symbolizing genuine relationships’ simplicity and sincerity (Muldoon, 2011, p. 113). This moment goes beyond words, demonstrating Frankl’s belief that meaning can often be discovered in immediate, unspoken experiences (Lukas, 2020). For the boy, this bond embodies a world of understanding, trust, and happiness that defines his existence at that moment. The speaker’s reaction to the serene scene—“he weeps”—shows the struggle between innocence and the unavoidable loss of growing up and facing life’s challenges (Muldoon, 2011, p. 113). His tears may indicate an awareness that such pure happiness is rare and often brief, but it remains a deeply significant source of meaning. The boy finds happiness not from big accomplishments or societal approval but from fully accepting love and being present. The shortness of the poem intensifies its emotional effect, as it captures a deep story in only a few lines. This briefness reflects the fleetingness of the experiences. Like the boy’s joy with the dog, the poem becomes a fleeting yet profoundly impactful moment, urging readers to treasure such moments in their lives. Muldoon’s decision to contrast the sighing women with the boy and his dog also highlights the difference between longing and satisfaction, between pursuing joy and just feeling it. In conclusion, Paul Muldoon’s “Bran” explores Logotherapy’s experiential pathway, emphasizing the contrast between adult longing and a child’s pure joy. By starkly comparing human and animal connections, the poem shows how meaning can be found in moments of genuine love and presence, even amidst life’s inevitable change. Despite its brevity, Muldoon’s poem reflects on the power of rapture and the ongoing quest for meaning.

One of the experiential values in Muldoon’s poetry is solidarity. The concourse of love and friendship, arising at war’s darkest moment, pulsates against the marrow of war itself. The Christmas Truce of World War I is the most famous example of such an event; both sides are said to have intermingled with the soldiers they were trying to kill. Soldiers shook hands, sang songs, and even played soccer together. These gestures of friendship were a direct challenge to the war’s deep sense of hostility and provided a moment of shared human connection in circumstances of otherwise brutal violence. Through the common suffering of both sides comes the right to understand and recognize that the enemy is also a human being. To illustrate this, in his poem “Truce,” Muldoon draws a small yet comprehensive portrait

of the war atmosphere during the ceasefire. It depicts a rare moment of humanity during the war, highlighting the delicate connections that form in unexpected situations. The poem shows soldiers taking a break from fighting for a brief, humanizing moment, which resonates with Frankl's Logotherapy, which emphasises finding meaning through encounters with others, even in suffering (Batthyány, 2016). "Truce" explores how shared experiences can briefly overcome conflict, showing glimpses of unity and meaning during division. The poem starts with subtle and simple descriptions, portraying soldiers carrying baskets as if they were participating in a regular Christmas activity, like "wildfowling" (Muldoon, 2011, p. 127). This straightforwardness starkly contrasts with the wartime setting, highlighting the humanity of individuals who, despite being soldiers, still can engage in ordinary, even cheerful, activities. This perspective fits the idea that people can find meaning in small moments of connection or joy, even in difficult situations. The cautious movements and shared uncertainty of the soldiers show their mutual vulnerability, revealing a human aspect that goes against the dehumanization of war. The poem's central scene, a gathering around a fire, is a metaphor for warmth, connection, and shared humanity. The soldiers passing around "Polish vodka, fruit and bread" recall both a ritual and a communal gesture of peace by breaking of bread (Muldoon, 2011, p. 127). This moment of shared sustenance goes beyond the immediate suffering of war, embodying a fleeting yet profound experience of unity. According to Frankl (2011), such moments, however brief, can offer individuals a sense of meaning that helps them through hardship. The sharing of food and drink symbolizes a connection that transcends language or allegiance, reinforcing the idea that meaning can come from interpersonal encounters, even between supposed enemies. Music and games further emphasize the universal nature of human connection. The "air of an old German song" and the "rules of Patience" are cultural touchstones that bridge gaps, reminding soldiers of their common humanity (Muldoon, 2011, p. 127). These shared activities create a feeling of normality and friendship, if only for a short time. For Frankl (1985), these experiences are important because they enable people to connect with something larger than themselves through art, tradition, or personal relationships. In this way, the shared secrets and simple joys among the soldiers briefly replace the violence and isolation of war with a sense of belonging and mutual understanding. The poem's last stanza compares to "Friday-night lovers," adding a layer of heartfelt emotion and closeness to the soldiers' meeting (Muldoon, 2011, p. 127). Like lovers might "exchange names and addresses," the soldiers briefly acknowledge each other as individuals rather than nameless enemies (Muldoon, 2011, p. 127). This moment emphasizes the fragility of their bond, as it exists outside the context of war and is likely not long-lasting. However, this short-lived nature gives the truce its emotional depth and aligns it with Frankl's

experiential pathway. The soldiers can find meaning in enjoying the moment, even though it is brief, because it confirms their humanity and ability to connect. In conclusion, Paul Muldoon's "Truce" symbolizes the potential of human connection to rise above conflict and confirm the inherent dignity of individuals. Like Frankl's philosophy, the poem emphasises that meaning can be found not despite suffering, but within it, through the small yet important moments that reaffirm the shared humanity (Weisskopf-Joelson, 1975).

The experience of doing small deeds is another clear example of Muldoon's poetry. It is often said, especially of young children, that the small things hold meaning and bring about change. This emphasis on the small, whether temporal, physical, or emotional, can provide hope, energy, and good reason. The significance of small deeds is easy to overlook. As ordinary people, it can be tough to realize that some of the little things one does daily are having an effect. However, when individuals encounter helplessness or despair, the small deed represents an action of agency in a situation of likely constraint. Feeling helpful to others can make people think positively about themselves, adding to self-esteem and bringing a feeling of efficacy or competence to the fore (Wong, 2019). All these factors suggest that doing helpful acts of the smallest kind may be as good as it gets to enhance personal well-being and combat the depression and estrangement of modern urban life. In this context, Muldoon's piece "Charles Émile Jacque: Poultry Among Trees," which was inspired by a painting, vividly depicts the complex relationship between memory, responsibility, and small acts of kindness in everyday life (Moi, 2020). The poem is grounded in Muldoon's childhood and his father's simple yet profound act of caring for an injured chicken, demonstrating how small gestures of care and duty can evolve into significant experiences. Drawing from Viktor Frankl's Logotherapy, which emphasizes finding meaning through experiences, Muldoon's poem shows how a small act of kindness can be a deeply fulfilling and life-affirming action, shedding light on the nature of compassion and the pursuit of meaning (Lukas, 2020). The poem's central theme is the speaker's attempt to rescue a chicken hurt during a chaotic morning attack led by his dog, Sherlock. He remembers a similar action performed by his father, who "opened [a chicken] with a razor blade, reached / in, pulled out the shimmering sop, / then sewed it up with a darning needle and thread" (Muldoon, 2015, p. 14). This moment becomes symbolic of the meaning found in small, intentional actions. The speaker remembers this event with great respect, understanding it as a demonstration of how a small gesture can have a lasting impact on the recipient and those who witness it. The father's actions model the speaker's approach to life, influencing his values and compassion for others. The poem's vivid descriptions and close

attention to detail emphasize the importance of seemingly insignificant actions. The speaker carefully prepares a special mixture of “barley, whole wheat, and corn” and adds “marigolds, cottage cheese, raisins,” showing his dedication to the animal’s healing (Muldoon, 2015, p. 16). This meticulous care demonstrates the potential for small acts to bring about big changes, which aligns with Frankl’s experiential pathway (Frankl, 2017). The chicken’s strength and gradual recovery, as he “held out a quill pen” to help write his story of survival, represent the powerful impact of the speaker’s efforts, hinting at a shared journey toward healing (Muldoon, 2015, p. 16). In conclusion, “Charles Émile Jacque: Poultry Among Trees” showcases the experiential pathway of Logotherapy by demonstrating how small deeds can become a profound source of meaning. Muldoon captures the core of finding importance in everyday activities using lively descriptions, connections to one’s heritage, and thoughts on resilience. The poem stresses that even the most basic actions—such as preparing a meal, caring for an injured animal, or recalling a beloved memory—can create meaning waves and reveal all living beings’ interconnectedness.

Overall, Paul Muldoon’s poetry delves deeply into life’s complexities through various experiences and connections, aligning well with Viktor Frankl’s Logotherapy. It is a poetry of self-definition and literature seeking to engage with mores, memories, and the experiences of individuals, groups, and the like. Thus, language is both a plaything, a signifier, and a container of meaning, contemporary usage, and function compatible with various shades. Every object, sign, or symbol is adorned with a multiplicity of meanings and power dynamics, which the poet, through some philosophical inferences, seeks to subtend tonally, making what is seen as a flat and dead surface a medium of genuine conveyance between him and his readers. In this part of the chapter, Muldoon explores themes such as emotional struggle, marriage, grief, the weight of history, childhood innocence, solidarity, and small deeds, highlighting the importance of finding meaning through lived encounters and human relationships. His work encourages readers to consider how ordinary moments and profound experiences shape identity and perspective, often set against the backdrop of Northern Ireland’s political and cultural landscape. Muldoon’s poetry is a testament to the power of fully engaging with life, emphasising that meaning can emerge through shared connections and a thoughtful embrace of experience, even in challenging times. Through his work, he enriches the understanding of personal and cultural narratives, inspiring readers to seek their pathways to meaning in everyday life.

4.2.3. The Attitudinal Pathway in Muldoon's Poetry

Logotherapy is a form of psychotherapy that defends the idea that there are unique qualities among human beings that set them apart from the animal world and that the only aspect of life over which human beings have total control is their attitudes. Though Muldoon's poetry engages with features of postmodernism and the decentring of the subject, unnerving the continuity of artistic tradition, it also pivots on a deep search for meaning in a world of discontinuity. Prevalent in his numerous poems is the quest for answers, the longing for resolution and sense in a world that has gone otherwise. One could discover that his speakers are prone to stare down the encroaching darkness to bring to light the existence of something that adds vitality to the moment. In this part of the chapter, the attitudes of the speakers toward the challenges of human relations, post-war trauma, predicaments of life, injustice, mundanity, and the destruction of cultural heritage will be scrutinized in Muldoon's selected poems through the medium of the attitudinal pathway of Logotherapy.

One central theme that Muldoon explores through his speakers in his poetry to exemplify Logotherapy's attitudinal pathway is the challenges of human relations. Relationships are a significant part of human existence. In personal relationships, differences such as ideologies, values, interests, personalities, roles, needs, perceptions, and communication patterns often lead to conflicts. Such conflicts cause emotional stress, reduce personal efficiency, and create problems of acceptance and belonging. At first sight, isolation is a solution for relationship issues. However, whether peaceful or full of conflicts, each relationship contributes uniquely to a person's development. Logotherapy advocates that the attitude toward events without becoming fixated on people or things helps lead a meaningful life, even in challenging relationships (Frankl et al., 2010). Regarding this, Muldoon illustrates themes of conflict, interconnectedness, and resilience in his poem "Wind and Tree." It makes the poem deeply reflect on Frankl's Logotherapy, which focuses on finding meaning through accepting suffering, taking personal responsibility, and turning unavoidable hardships into purposeful growth (Wong, 2014). Muldoon's speaker wrestles with the difficulties of human relationships, using nature as a symbol of the struggle and growth that comes along with the pain of experience. The poem starts by comparing the wind and trees, emphasizing the inevitable challenges in relationships:

In the way that the most of the wind
Happens where there are trees,
Most of the world is centred
About ourselves (Muldoon, 2011, p. 17).

Muldoon recognizes that many of life's challenges stem from human connections, where people, like trees in the wind, cannot escape being influenced or hurt by their interactions. It fits with the attitudinal pathway, as the speaker acknowledges that conflict is a natural part of life rather than something to be avoided (Frankl, 2020). As the poem proceeds, the image of one tree embracing "another in her arms and hold[ing]" reveals an important truth about relationships (Muldoon, 2011, p. 17). Despite their potential for conflict, they also provide connection and support. This duality reflects the principle of the attitudinal pathway that life's difficulties, especially in relationships, offer opportunities to discover deeper meaning. The "grinding" of branches may cause the trees to break, but it also brings them together, forming a metaphorical ecosystem of mutual growth and strength (Muldoon, 2011, p. 17). Accepting these inevitable conflicts shows the attitude of facing suffering with grace and a sense of meaning. The speaker considers being alone as a method to avoid harm: "Often I think I should be like / The single tree, going nowhere" (Muldoon, 2011, p. 17). This desire for separation reflects the natural human longing to avoid conflict. Nevertheless, he does not directly embrace this choice, acknowledging that being alone may protect him and other people from harm but also gives up the opportunity for deep connections and personal development. The way of thinking focuses on the idea that meaning does not come from avoiding challenges but from confronting them with bravery and intention. He also acknowledges his vulnerability with his "broken bones" (Muldoon, 2011, p. 17). Conversely, the metaphor "new weather" implies a deeper understanding gained through pain, highlighting that suffering is not the end but rather a force for personal growth and renewal (Muldoon, 2011, p. 17). To conclude, the poem "Wind and Tree" vividly demonstrates Logotherapy's attitudinal pathway by exploring conflict, resilience, and transformation. The speaker's journey involves accepting suffering, refusing to be alone, and finding meaning in brokenness. It aligns with Frankl's belief that meaning can be found in every situation, particularly in response to the challenges of human relationships (Lukas, 2020).

In addition to human relations challenges, Muldoon exemplifies the attitudinal pathway by dealing with post-war trauma in his poetry. War has wide-ranging impacts beyond the battlefield, and it is not just the economic structures of conflict-affected countries that are destroyed. It has profound psychological implications for the combatants as well as their families. For them, it is hard to exist in peace and deal with the skills, values, and knowledge in an environment that they have previously destroyed. War changes people, and it leads to physical displacement and mental devastation. However, human beings are the repository of innate wisdom and directives to tap into resources necessary for rebuilding societies. The point lies in

recognizing human beings as proactive rather than purely passive entities. Required is the shedding of notions of the other and the self, opting instead for visions of the whole. When all the smoke has cleared, a need inevitably arises to heal and reintegrate into society, beloved land. In this context, Paul Muldoon's "The Narrow Road to the Deep North" focuses on war, loss, reconciliation, and resilience, mirroring Frankl's attitudinal pathway to find meaning in suffering. The poem examines the post-war experience of a soldier, highlighting the possibility of recovery after shock and embracing adversity despite significant disillusionment and grief. The poem starts with the appearance of a soldier who had been hiding in the woods when the war ended:

A Japanese soldier
Has just stumbled out of the forest.
The war has been over
These thirty years (Muldoon, 2011, p. 92).

The soldier in this scene is depicted as being stuck in the past, carrying the weight of a war that is long over. His appearance serves as a symbol of the difficulty in facing a present that has been shaped by years of distance and unaddressed sorrow. Regarding the attitudinal pathway, this moment highlights the struggle of acknowledging past pain and owning up to what comes next. The soldier has "all but his ceremonial sword," symbolizing the burden of tradition and duty that he still bears even though it is no longer necessary (Muldoon, 2011, p. 92). This sword, which represents his identity as a soldier, is now useless. The poem suggests that, though difficult, letting go of this attachment is necessary for the soldier to move forward. As Frankl (2014) points out, change often starts with acknowledging that holding on to the past is futile and embracing the potential for change is meaningful. Muldoon underscores the uncertainty of moral evaluation in the wake of war: "For all this comes too late. Too late / To break the sword across his knee, / To be right or wrong" (Muldoon, 2011, p. 92). This recognition of futility deeply connects to the attitudinal pathway. The soldier's inability to change the past or make sense of its moral complexities mirrors the universal truth that suffering cannot always be explained or justified. Instead, finding meaning lies in how one responds to suffering, not in trying to assign fault or change the past. The soldier's silent acceptance of an American cigarette, a symbol of kindness and irony, reflects his quiet acknowledgment of the situation's futility. His reaction is not rebellious or resigned; it is one of deep acceptance, a key principle of Frankl's philosophy that one's attitude during unchangeable circumstances is a source of strength and meaning (Weisskopf-Joelson, 1958). Afterward, the poem focuses on the soldier's intent to "go back to his old farm / And till the land" (Muldoon, 2011, p. 92). This decision

signifies a turning point, embodying Frankl's idea that life's meaning can be found in the tasks undertaken and the responsibilities assumed. The soldier's choice to return to farming, an act of creation and sustenance, contrasts sharply with the destruction of war. By seeking to nurture life, he transforms his suffering into a constructive force, symbolizing hope and renewal. The lines "never deny / The stone its sling, / The blade of grass its one good arm" captures his acknowledgment of life's innate challenges and imperfections (Muldoon, 2011, p. 92). The stone's sling and the blade of grass's arm symbolize strength and vulnerability, recognizing that life inherently involves adversity and fragility. This recognition is crucial to the mindset shift, highlighting that genuine meaning does not come from avoiding suffering but embracing and overcoming it. As a result, Muldoon's "The Narrow Road to the Deep North" is a meditation on the human capacity to find meaning in suffering through acceptance, responsibility, and renewal. The Japanese soldier, burdened by the remnants of war, embodies Frankl's attitudinal pathway by confronting his past with dignity and focusing on rebuilding his future (Wong, 2019). His decision to till the land, symbolizing creation and connection, transforms his pain into meaning.

Another central theme of Muldoon that aligns with the attitudinal pathway is life's predicaments. Life's journey is like conquering a mighty mountain, filled with obstacles that test resilience and determination. Once set out, smooth, uninterrupted progress is not guaranteed. All climbers—very similar to people—face unforeseen problems and physical, emotional, or financial difficulties. That is because everything worthwhile in life also comes with tremendous challenges. Logotherapy contends that resilience and perseverance are the qualities to fight back against life's challenges, keep going no matter what, and get stronger after events that would only set the person back (Lukas, 2020). In this vein, Muldoon's poem "The Rucksack" showcases determination, setbacks, and rejuvenation during adversity. The poem employs the symbolic representation of a mountain climbing journey to illustrate the speaker's encounter with physical and emotional obstacles, leading to a rediscovery of inner fortitude through contemplation of past experiences and knowledge. The poem commences with a dark moment of disappointment: "That morning Lars fell / He dragged the rest / Down with him" (Muldoon, 2011, p. 97). In this instance, the downfall of Lars, a fellow climber, represents an external force of loss and despair that jeopardizes the speaker's advancement. The actual descent signifies the tangible difficulty of mountain climbing and the emotional burden of mutual hardship. This situation embodies Frankl's belief that suffering is an unavoidable part of life, frequently experienced and intensified in human connections (Frankl, 2014). The speaker's struggle intensifies as he describes his deteriorating eyesight and increasing physical exhaustion: "My eyes have failed, / My

beard is blue with rime” (Muldoon, 2011, p. 97). These details highlight the impact of constant hardship, leading him to doubt the importance of perseverance: “Should I give up, turn back?” (Muldoon, 2011, p. 97) This moment of uncertainty connects with Frankl’s attitudinal pathway’s emphasis on choice: People can choose their attitude in any situation, even when dealing with overwhelming suffering (Frankl, 2017). The speaker’s hesitation highlights the conflict between hopelessness and the potential for a fresh start. The poem takes a turn when the speaker catches sight of a figure up ahead:

When, that one step

Ahead, on the crest,
Stands my little Sherpa,
Wild and weatherbeaten,

Lending me a hand (Muldoon, 2011, p. 97).

Worn down by the weather but still helping, the Sherpa—a mountain guide from the Sherpa community—symbolizes the speaker’s former self and the combined strength gained from prior endeavours. This idea is supported by the Sherpa wearing the speaker’s “old rucksack / From the first expedition” (Muldoon, 2011, p. 97). The rucksack represents the burden of past challenges, knowledge gained, and the toughness developed through experience. As per Moi (2020), the speaker’s journey symbolizes Muldoon’s “poetic process of tracing the textual tracks of literary forerunners” (p. 63). The Sherpa offering a hand to the speaker represents being kind to oneself and understanding that growing even when facing challenges is possible. The speaker’s decision to recognize and welcome this assistance demonstrates how changing how one views hardships can lead to positive change. Acknowledging the lessons learned and resilience gained from previous struggles, the speaker discovers the bravery needed to keep moving forward. The speaker’s journey involves more than just climbing a mountain; it also entails overcoming the psychological and emotional barriers that suffering creates. In summary, Paul Muldoon’s “The Rucksack” deeply reflects perseverance, failure, and independence, echoing Viktor Frankl’s attitudinal pathway of Logotherapy. The Sherpa, representing the speaker’s wisdom and resilience, symbolizes the strength of self-reflection and self-kindness in overcoming doubt. Through this inner dialogue, the speaker rediscovers his ability to find meaning in hardship, showing that the journey alone, with its struggles and renewals, gives life meaning.

Injustice is another theme in Muldoon's poetry that represents the attitudinal pathway of Logotherapy. In this context, numerous folk tales share the basic idea that wrongfully killed souls come back in some form to exact revenge. The emphasis is that the soul returns to obtain justice and re-enter equilibrium. It reflects a society's conscience while exploring existence and the supernatural. The violent death of a single individual can arouse not one but many others to the soul's search for justice, bringing about an empowering contestation of authority. Because man has a deep-rooted psyche that seeks and returns to justice, he does not console himself with the law. The soul will continue to awaken the profound desire to search together for justice for the deceased whose voice was silenced by the unjust death they suffered. Regarding this, Paul Muldoon's poem "The Hands" emphasizes the enduring nature of the human spirit, both physically and spiritually. The poem highlights the ability of people to persevere, rise above adversity, and seek connection despite facing severe injustice. The poem starts with a harsh portrayal of brutality: "To the chopping-block, on which the farmer Sebastian split / logs against the Asturian cold, / the Guardia Civil would shove him and spit" (Muldoon, 2011, p. 157). This scene emphasizes the dehumanization of Sebastian by oppressive forces, as his work—once a means of survival—becomes the source of his pain. The oppressors command to "clench the fist that you were so bold with," reducing his resistance to a physical action they want to crush (Muldoon, 2011, p. 157). The chopping block represents the human soul's actual and symbolic crushing. The axe severs Sebastian's hands, and the oppressors kill him. However, this mutilation does not mark the end of his story. The poem instead attributes almost mythic qualities to his hands: "He lay dead in the field. But his far-fetched hands / would stir at night, and the villagers heard / the fists come blattering on their windows, looking for a home" (Muldoon, 2011, p. 157). The hands, no longer attached to his body, go beyond their physical form to represent his spirit and identity. Their persistence, tapping windows and searching for a home, shows that meaning can be found in suffering when people stay connected to their inner dignity (Holdridge, 2008). Sebastian's hands represent his hard work, resistance, and humanity. They are searching for a "home," not physically, but to express Sebastian's unresolved desire for justice and belonging (Muldoon, 2011, p. 157). Frankl's Logotherapy emphasizes that meaning can still be found after death through the impact of one's actions and the lasting influence of life (Frankl, 2000). The hands' constant search reflects this concept, reminding Sebastian's ongoing fight for respect and justice. They compel the villagers, in their restlessness, to confront their complicity or silence in the presence of oppression, thereby suggesting a shared responsibility to remember and honour the suffering of others. In this regard, the poem addresses the focus of the attitudinal pathway, which

emphasizes taking responsibility for one's reaction to the suffering of others and discovering meaning in being a witness (Lukas, 2020). Overall, Muldoon's "The Hands" captures the enduring spirit of defiance and the haunting legacy of injustice, offering profound insights into the attitudinal pathway of Frankl's Logotherapy. Through the severed hands that persist beyond death, the poem illustrates how meaning can transcend physical suffering, residing in the unyielding human spirit and the memories of others. In their search for a home, Sebastian's hands embody the resilience and dignity that remain even in the face of the gravest oppression, reminding the readers of the responsibility to honour and give meaning to suffering through remembrance and action.

Another meaningful stance that Muldoon takes against is mundanity. Modern capitalist society leads people to focus on one meaning of prosperity: financial prosperity. Indeed, prosperity means spiritual, pastoral, and environmental abundance for many indigenous people. Adhering to modest, simple living scares many people because today's view of success is entwined with consumer culture, and they cannot imagine recognition or accomplishment any other way. However, the people who opt for materially simpler lifestyles tend to see less stuff and personal freedom as directly or indirectly interrelated. Moreover, contemporary academic work generally finds that happiness depends on fruitfully pursuing intrinsic rather than extrinsic values (Lukas, 2020). Arguments in the literature on happiness suggest that material wealth and personal well-being are often inversely proportional. Modern findings underscore that experiences can generally lead to joy in a way that material possessions do not. In this vein, Muldoon's poem "Anonymous: From 'Marban and Guaire'" examines the different lives of King Guaire and his brother Marban, emphasizing themes of simplicity, spiritual satisfaction, and contentment in nature. When this rendition of the Irish folktale Marban and Guaire is scrutinized through Viktor Frankl's attitudinal pathway of Logotherapy, it shows how one's outlook and beliefs can bring deep meaning, even without material wealth or social influence (Frankl, 1986; Svensson, 2020). Marban's decision to live as a hermit illustrates a deliberate effort to find meaning and happiness in simplicity, appreciation, and connection with nature while challenging King Guaire's attachment to material possessions. Marban's life in the woods is a prime example of the attitudinal pathway that Frankl (2000) describes as finding meaning through one's attitude toward limitations, lack of wealth, or a minimalist lifestyle. Even though King Guaire, with all his wealth and power, questions Marban's decision to live in nature: "why don't you sleep in a bed / instead of among pine trees," Marban's reply shows his profound sense of satisfaction and spiritual fulfilment: "I'm quite content / with what is lent

/ me by that self-same Christ” (Muldoon, 2015, pp. 43-48). He finds joy in admiring nature’s beauty and sees his current situation as a chance to live according to his beliefs and faith. His gratitude and acceptance demonstrate how a positive attitude can lead to transformation, a key aspect of the attitudinal pathway. Marban’s vivid depictions of his life in the forest show how much he values and cherishes the natural world. His home, known as the “hut in the forest,” is protected by an ash tree and adorned with sweet-smelling honeysuckle, creating a sense of belonging and meaning for him (Muldoon, 2015, p. 43). He takes pleasure in watching animals such as the beautiful fox, and he appreciates the nourishment provided by the land: “Hawthorn good for a pain in the heart. / Yew for giving it a start” (Muldoon, 2015, p. 46). Marban’s alignment with nature shows that he chooses to appreciate the abundance of his surroundings rather than focusing on any perceived scarcity. He shows how engaging with the present moment and environment can bring deep meaning by being grateful for these little joys. King Guaire starts questioning Marban about his lifestyle, focusing on material possessions and power. Nevertheless, as Marban shares the details of his life in nature, the king’s mindset begins to shift, and he starts to show an interest in living the same way as Marban: “I would give my kingdom / and all that’s due / to me (...) to live, Marban, as you” (Muldoon, 2015, p. 48). This transformation highlights the capacity of the attitudinal pathway to motivate others by showcasing how a shift in viewpoint can redefine the concept of leading a meaningful life (Weisskopf-Joelson, 1972). Marban’s refusal of “(...) aggravation / or din of battle” in favour of tranquillity and modesty starkly differs from the king’s responsibilities, ultimately prompting Guaire to ponder the significance of his riches and position (Muldoon, 2015, p. 48). Marban’s perspective is centred on his thankfulness for God’s abundant provision. He consistently credits his satisfaction to God’s giving: “Christ has left me / no less rich” (Muldoon, 2015, p. 47). Instead of seeing his loneliness and lack of material possessions as suffering, Marban sees his life as a blessing. This spiritual fulfilment is crucial to his mindset, as it shows how having a sense of purpose and gratitude can turn difficult situations into something meaningful. Marban’s humble and respectful attitude towards life shows how powerful an attitude can shape one’s reality. Muldoon’s “Anonymous: From ‘Marban and Guaire’” exemplifies Viktor Frankl’s Logotherapy by portraying Marban’s contentment and spiritual fulfilment in his hermit lifestyle. Through simplicity, gratitude, and harmony with nature, Marban redefines meaningful living, inspiring King Guaire to reevaluate his values. The poem suggests that true richness lies in one’s attitude towards life, not material wealth or power, demonstrating the potential for meaning in the simplest existence.

One of the themes that Muldoon tackles with a meaningful attitude through his speakers is the destruction of cultural heritage. Cultural heritage gives citizens a feeling of ownership and belonging, providing a reference point that assists in interpreting various aspects of national and personal life. It allows residents to identify with their cultural architecture, urban design, and landscape for development. Additionally, it is a window into the personal and collective past, which plays an essential role in shaping today's society. It provides individuals with a sense of identity, legacy, and continuity and directs their interactions. Despite all these benefits, the implications of neglecting or devaluing the heritage, especially by not maintaining it, are catastrophic for generations. Property developers and governments may decide to demolish ancient buildings or monuments due to economic priorities. For them, forgotten styles and aesthetics are a waste of land and investment. It is a fact that cultures require new space and forms to evolve. From a long-term perspective, however, one must also consider the products of the past that today will leave to future generations. Issues associated with transferring cultural identity to future generations arise because a city's or nation's sense of history, reflected in its architecture and culture, can be lost. In that regard, Paul Muldoon's "Tara of the Kings" explores themes of heritage, responsibility, and the conflict between modern advancement and the preservation of culture. When viewed through Viktor Frankl's attitudinal pathway, the poem highlights the importance of adopting a meaningful attitude in facing challenges, even when the circumstances cannot be altered (Lukas, 2020). In the poem, the speaker struggles with the idea of modern development endangering Tara, a holy place in Irish history. Tara represents Ireland's cultural and spiritual heritage, encompassing centuries of tradition. The intrusion of the M3 motorway through this area brings attention to a conflicting dilemma between economic progress and protecting historical landmarks. The speaker's sorrowful words—"We know the Stone of Destiny / Was set up in this soil"—convey a deep respect for the site's cultural importance (Muldoon, 2006, p. 37). This respect mirrors the poem's message to uphold values, even when faced with inevitable loss. Rather than giving in to hopelessness, the speaker insists on holding others responsible for their actions:

And lest they wish to be renowned
 For rape and ravishing,
 They'll not give us the runaround
 On Tara of the Kings (Muldoon, 2006, p. 37).

This rebellious attitude shows a deliberate decision to oppose the loss of heritage and adopt a significant attitude of defiance. In doing this, the speaker supports preserving cultural history, per Frankl's idea that finding meaning comes from how one reacts to inevitable struggles. The attitudinal pathway involves recognizing one's responsibility toward others, especially future generations (Frankl, 2000; Karhio, 2013). The poem directly mentions this responsibility:

Yet we are dread- and honour-bound
 To our unborn offspring
 To ensure the M3 run around
 Tara of the Kings (Muldoon, 2006, p. 38).

The speaker recognizes the obligation to preserve the land, not for his benefit but as a heritage for future generations. This viewpoint aligns with Frankl's focus on self-transcendence and taking on responsibility as a significant aspect of meaning (Weisskopf-Joelson, 1975). The speaker is dedicated to protecting Tara, echoing Frankl's belief that humans must demonstrate their values through their attitudes and actions. Despite facing challenges, the speaker's determination to preserve Tara reflects a hopeful and steadfast attitude, showing how individuals can find meaning in the effort to uphold what is right. Muldoon's contemplation of Tara's violation illustrates the tangible absence of a significant location and the moral decisions that shape humanity's connection with its history. The speaker's condemnation of the "soldiers of destiny" exposes a conflict between political authority and ethical duty (Muldoon, 2006, p. 37). The poem assesses those prioritizing financial gain over conservation, declaring: "The soldiers of destiny / Are set to bank the spoils" (Muldoon, 2006, p. 37). This line shows that choosing personal gain over ethics can harm a community's moral and societal base. Muldoon illustrates Frankl's idea that individuals can decide how to respond to any situation, even when external circumstances cannot be changed (Frankl, 2014). To summarise, in "Tara of the Kings," Paul Muldoon demonstrates the attitudinal pathway of Logotherapy by showing how individuals can find meaning in their responses to cultural loss and ethical dilemmas. The speaker's reverence for Tara, his sense of responsibility to future generations, and his insistence on ethical action exemplify Frankl's belief that meaning comes from the choices one makes in response to suffering and challenges (Wong, 2014). As the speaker laments yet resists, he shows the power of attitude, reminding the reader that preserving cultural identity is a personal and collective act of meaning-making. Through this lens, Muldoon's poem becomes a critique of progress and a call to honour the enduring values of history and heritage.

In examining Muldoon's poetry from the perspective of the attitudinal pathway of Logotherapy, one uncovers a deep engagement with the human capacity to find meaning in the challenges of life. His speakers confront the fragmentation of modern existence—whether it be through cultural loss, personal struggles, or historical upheaval—with a determination that reflects the transformative power of attitude. This resistance against nihilism and despair underscores Muldoon's poetic exploration of how individuals navigate suffering, ethical dilemmas, and existential uncertainty. By highlighting how his speakers assert control over their attitudes in seemingly uncontrollable circumstances, Muldoon's work goes beyond postmodern disillusionment to explore resilience, responsibility, and the quest for meaning in a fractured world. Through this perspective, his poetry critiques and reaffirms the enduring potential for meaning in the human experience.

CONCLUSION

The age of globalization and postmodernism can directly be responsible for the fact that the number of people suffering from an ‘existential vacuum’ in life continues to grow despite the constant increase in material wealth and the security of physical survival of people. This atmosphere, with its focus on fragmentation, instability, and the decentralization of traditional authority, offers a unique scenery for poets who yearn for meaning and strive to create a link between their words and the world, which justifies poetry’s significance to remain relevant to today’s existential questions. In this context, this dissertation analyses the poetry of Derek Walcott, Carol Ann Duffy, and Paul Muldoon using Viktor Frankl’s Logotherapy as a framework, emphasizing the creative, experiential, and attitudinal pathways in the quest for meaning while also considering their historical, cultural, and political backgrounds. The creative pathway examines how these poets utilize their craft to reshape individual and shared challenges into lasting pieces of meaning. The experiential pathway explores how their poetry mirrors experiences of love, loss, nature, and history, highlighting the importance of these encounters in influencing their quest for meaning. Ultimately, the attitudinal pathway examines how their creations address suffering, defiance, and resilience, highlighting the poets’ capacity to take a meaningful stance toward life’s predicaments. The profound connections they establish with their respective backgrounds enable them to navigate the complexities of existence, transforming personal experiences into universal themes that resonate deeply within the human condition.

Within the context of contemporary global society, regardless of their different cultural, historical, and personal backgrounds, each poet, with their unique viewpoints and styles, embodies a timeless quest for understanding the essence of life. As an individual from a colonized background, Walcott reflects a strong determination to face life’s difficulties, emphasizing themes of identity, history, and the process of cultural decolonization. His writings embody a dual perspective as he navigates the influences of African and European cultures, striving to express the complex postcolonial Caribbean identity and its historical challenges. He does not simply recount the narrative of colonization; rather, his attitudinal pathway transforms it into a powerful force for artistic and personal liberation, allowing the beauty of his heritage to shine through the turbulence. On the other hand, Duffy, both as a woman and a mother in a patriarchal society, thrives in her life

experiences, delving into both uplifting and challenging moments that enhance her comprehension of humanity and interpersonal connections and epitomizes the experiential pathway from a feminist and socially conscious viewpoint. Her revisionist approach challenges patriarchal conventions while highlighting marginalized voices, intertwining personal and collective experiences to reveal deeper insights. Differently, Muldoon, through his commitment to innovation and expanding the limits of poetic expression, represents the creative pathway, utilizing art to convey meaning. His poetry often reflects the tumultuous environment of Northern Ireland, using metaphor and inventive language to explore identity problems and existential themes. Although each poet highlights one pathway more distinctly, they all weave together creativity, experience, and perspective in their pieces, demonstrating a complex involvement with life's difficulties and possibilities. This comparative analysis shows how the poetry of Walcott, Duffy, and Muldoon collectively illustrates that art can be a strong medium for discovering meaning during times of hardship and change.

The creative pathway of Logotherapy involves finding deeper meaning and fulfilment by creating work that benefits others and the world or serves a greater good. The poetry of Derek Walcott, Carol Ann Duffy, and Paul Muldoon provides unique insights into this pathway, though they do so using different styles, themes, and methods. All three poets utilize their creative abilities to delve into meaning; however, Muldoon's postmodern experimentalism arguably represents the most comprehensive creative pathway, followed by Walcott's blend of personal and cultural identity and Duffy's reinterpretation of marginalized voices and historical narratives. Paul Muldoon's poetry exemplifies the creative pathway through his imaginative use of language and a postmodern approach to constructing meaning. His poetry flourishes in ambiguity and fragmentation, viewing language as a means for exploration instead of resolution. By providing no clear answers and using methods like irony, anachronism, and intertextuality, Muldoon encourages readers to engage in a collaborative process of interpretation, reflecting the logotherapeutic focus on personal accountability in creating meaning. His poetic forms, merging classical styles with innovative experimentation, reflect human identity and memory's fragmented and complex essence. Muldoon enriches his linguistic creativity with epiphora, humour, and witty language. At the same time, his intentional disruption of traditional coherence urges readers to grapple with the fundamental uncertainties of life. By doing this, Muldoon illustrates how creativity can transform and help understand the shattered identity, culture, and memory in a postmodern world, presenting a way to find existential meaning through interaction with the text. In contrast, Derek Walcott's poetry establishes the creative pathway within a more conventional, yet profoundly

suggestive framework grounded in cultural and historical exploration. His striking imagery and symbolic references encapsulate both the beauty and pain of his native Caribbean, subtly intertwining personal narratives with collective cultural heritage. Walcott's poetry converts historical and cultural suffering into a significant artistic examination, focusing on themes of identity, colonial heritage, and the nature of humanity. His integration of linguistic diversity—encompassing Creole, archaism, and colloquial language—honours the multicultural identity of the Caribbean and simultaneously contests Eurocentric linguistic hierarchies. Walcott's commitment to artistic creation goes beyond mere personal expression; it reflects a duty to maintain and respect his cultural heritage. His dedication to his art embodies Frankl's idea of 'responsibleness,' as he transforms personal and communal struggles into a creative pursuit promoting self-awareness and cultural recognition. Thanks to his abundant descriptive skills and profound symbolism, Walcott illustrates how creativity can attain significance and elevate one's understanding. Carol Ann Duffy's poetry also fits within the creative pathway by providing a space for marginalized voices and re-examining historical and mythological stories from a feminist perspective. Her poetry delves into themes of love, identity, social justice, and the dismantling of conventional gender roles, questioning patriarchal systems and honouring various viewpoints. Duffy transforms mythological and historical characters into complicated but relatable figures by utilizing dramatic monologues and intertextual references, offering new perspectives on traditional stories. Her poetic innovation is rooted in her skill to link the personal with the universal, allowing readers to discover a connection in her fresh interpretations of history and mythology. Duffy's poetry encourages community dialogue and self-reflection by emphasizing the emotional weight of social norms and confronting current social issues. Her use of intertextuality and vivid sensory language encourages readers to become actively involved in her pieces, creating opportunities to investigate meaning and a sense of identity. While Duffy's examination of creativity is indeed significant, it could be argued that it is not as focused on ambiguity and interpretive breadth when juxtaposed with Muldoon's methodology. It renders her approach to the creative process distinctive, albeit narrower in its overall scope. In summary, Muldoon, Walcott, and Duffy each represent the creative pathway of Logotherapy through their distinctive poetic styles. Muldoon's postmodern fragmentation and playful language establish him as a leading figure in the creative pathway, highlighting the reader's involvement in generating meaning. Walcott's powerful imagery and cultural emphasis provide a profound and transformative examination of identity and history rooted in a commitment to artistic duty. In the meantime, Duffy's feminist reinterpretations and support for underrepresented voices offer a captivating and inclusive viewpoint on the creative pathway, highlighting emotional

richness and societal commentary. In conclusion, their artworks highlight the myriad ways creativity can act as a medium for discovering meaning and confronting the complexities of existence.

The experiential pathway of Logotherapy entails discovering meaning through experiences with love, beauty, nature, and the depth of lived moments. This pathway is deeply reflected in the verses of Derek Walcott, Carol Ann Duffy, and Paul Muldoon, each of whom examines how life's experiences—with nature, relationships, or culture—contribute to personal development, self-exploration, and the quest for meaning. Carol Ann Duffy's pieces exemplify this pathway, illustrating the transformative impact of deeply personal experiences. Her examination of motherhood, love, dedication, childhood memories, and nature highlights how emotionally impactful moments offer purpose and closely resonates with Frankl's focus on finding meaning through experiences. Motherhood appears frequently in Duffy's poetry, symbolizing a significant life experience that alters one's identity and sense of purpose. In her poetry, the speaker experiences transformations and defies external control; however, she ultimately attains fulfillment through maternal affection, which represents the realization of meaning through profound emotional bonds. She depicts childbirth as a transformative experience beyond traditional roles, showcasing a profound bond with the divine. Her poems embody Frankl's idea that meaning comes from deep connections and emotional growth rather than external successes. Devotion, another key theme in Duffy's poems, demonstrates how love and commitment can create meaning. The transformative essence of love goes beyond physical limits and nurtures deep emotional bonds. These themes align with Frankl's experiential pathway, emphasizing how personal connections offer stability and meaning. Moreover, Duffy examines the essential influence of childhood memories and their effect on identity and values. These memories influence how people view themselves and their surroundings, providing an understanding of personal development and self-awareness. Love is also portrayed as a powerful catalyst that enhances the appreciation of life's everyday experiences. Besides, nature serves as a wellspring of contemplation and wonder, offering insights into the fleeting nature of life and the pursuit of meaning. Overall, Duffy highlights the complex nature of human relationships, discovering meaning in their flaws and depth. She highlights life's fleeting yet meaningful moments, perfectly aligning with the experiential pathway, as she inspires readers to discover beauty and amazement in daily life. On the other hand, Walcott's poetry frequently showcases the experiential pathway through his vivid depictions of nature and ties to cultural identity. He combines his Caribbean heritage with his individual experiences related to nature, culture, and spirituality. His verses capture the feelings of shame, betrayal, and joy associated with

the Caribbean's colonial past and its stunning natural landscape. Nature also acts as a strong catalyst for self-reflection, enabling readers to face realities and discover peace. Walcott's incorporation of spiritual and mythic themes enhances his examination of identity and belonging, merging sacred and cultural aspects to honour the resilience and dignity of the Caribbean people. The sacred nature of the Caribbean landscape blends with spiritual reflection, showcasing a deep bond with the land and cultural heritage. Walcott's focus on ancestral ties and the historical foundation of the Caribbean highlights his dedication to cultural identity. Rejecting the traditions imposed by the West, he embraces pre-colonial history through folklore, memories, and the voices of his ancestors. In his poems, the Caribbean is conceived as a domain characterized by dignity and beauty. He aims to reestablish connections between its inhabitants and their cultural heritage while promoting pride and acceptance. By skillfully merging elements from both past and present, Walcott fosters a revitalized comprehension of identity and community. His works reflect Frankl's idea that people can discover meaning through a profound engagement with their surroundings, culture, and historical context. Paul Muldoon's poetry, though unique in its emphasis on the political landscape and emotional turmoil of Northern Ireland, also corresponds with the experiential pathway of Logotherapy. His involvement with this pathway is more subtle than that of Walcott and Duffy, and it is frequently expressed through his distinct irony and depth. His poems frequently fluctuate between the personal and the political, discovering meaning in instances of warmth while recognizing the absurdities of human life. His examination of personal relationships, marriage, loss, and unity illustrates how life's experiences influence identity and meaning. According to Muldoon, romantic relationships, filled with risks and unknowns, provide significant chances for personal development. His poetry reflects this dynamic, showcasing how the vulnerability of love requires bravery and inspires change. Marriage, illustrated as a collaborative journey of happiness and difficulty, proves love's strength and ability to provide stability in facing life's challenges. Grief, especially the passing of a dear friend, emerges as another key theme in Muldoon's poems. His thoughts about his friendships show how revisiting memories and conversations can provide a feeling of enduring connection and meaning. These acts of remembrance resonate with Frankl's conviction that people can discover purpose even amidst sorrow as they navigate their emotions and pay tribute to connections. Muldoon's examination of childhood purity, historical significance, and minor acts of solidarity highlights how significant and insignificant experiences influence individual development and meaning. His vibrant imagery and emotional richness encourage readers to contemplate the transformative impact of experiences, regardless of whether they are joyful or painful. In conclusion, the poetry of Duffy,

Walcott, and Muldoon showcases the experiential pathway of Logotherapy through their deep connection with life's experiences. Walcott's blending of Caribbean heritage, the beauty of nature, and spiritual elements emphasizes how cultural and historical interactions create connection and meaning. He conveys his people's passion for the freedom to move as it relates to emancipation from colonial oppression, political and economic constraints, and various institutional restrictions. He elevates the individual's integrity, self-dignity, and autonomy in his works to illustrate his people's desire for life preservation. Like Walcott, Muldoon exhibits a loving and nurturing spirit infused with compassion, understanding, and patience when dealing with the limitations and fragility of marginalized individuals. Besides, his thoughts on relationships, sorrow, and unity highlight the profound nature of human bonds and their ability to foster development and self-exploration. Walcott and Muldoon embrace a pen infused with struggle, conveying deep melancholy out of the existential vacuum through their seemingly cheerful lines. Still, their verses showcase striking representations of the marginalized or the buried individual striving to transcend their modest circumstances. Contrarily, Duffy highlights and fosters the power of the humane, the empathic, the mother, and the tranquil in herself, her lovers, and her challenging fictional encounters. Empathy, care, sensitivity, and tolerance soften the binaries, dualities, and confrontations, transforming potential adversaries into genuine friends, loving partners, and true companions. Her hopeful, positive, and all-encompassing poetry possesses therapeutic and practical benefits, spreading goodwill and life-affirming comfort and bringing together seekers and their efforts to create a compassionate and empathetic community. Carol Ann Duffy creates in her poetry a strong connection with the experiential pathway of Logotherapy, revolutionizing self-understanding, personal responsibility's expression, and the promotion of life. Together, all three poets' works illustrate the enduring themes of Frankl's philosophy, showcasing how literature is a significant medium for examining the experiential pathway in the quest for meaning.

The attitudinal pathway of Logotherapy focuses on discovering meaning by how one reacts to suffering, challenges, or inevitable situations. It provides a means to uncover meaning by concentrating on a person's attitudinal values, converting harmful attitudes into uplifting and positive spiritual viewpoints. It does not eliminate or interpret pain; it helps individuals withstand suffering by discovering meaning in it. This approach transforms life's unavoidable difficulties into significant accomplishments. Out of three poets, this pathway is most deeply illustrated in Derek Walcott's poetry, which highlights resilience, change, and the acceptance of life's fundamental challenges. Walcott's poetry, firmly grounded in humanist ideals and personal narratives, examines themes of pain, the colonial past,

and the natural rhythms of existence, illustrating the restorative force of embracing life's ups and downs. He deals with the themes of exile and loss, ultimately embracing the potential for self-reinvention through his experiences. Walcott's capacity to face the suffering of colonialism and personal estrangement with grace and creativity illustrates the attitudinal pathway, showcasing the transformative strength of perspective. His poetry conveys a universal message of optimism, promoting a change in mindset that welcomes the complexities of life and finds meaning in the face of adversity. His depiction of sorrow, loss, and recovery presents a universal theme of hope and resilience, highlighting humanity's capacity to triumph over challenges and find meaning in life's bleakest times. In conclusion, through his poetry, Walcott not only depicts the pain of his people but also provides a guide for embracing life's complexities and discovering meaning amidst suffering, resonating with the attitudinal pathway of Logotherapy. On the other hand, Carol Ann Duffy's poetry embodies the attitudinal pathway by her speakers who navigate their pain and suffering, ultimately turning these experiences into avenues for personal development and a deeper understanding of life's meaning. Specifically, through feminist resistance, navigating grief, and reconciling fragmented memories, her works highlight the significance of resilience, self-awareness, and the deliberate decision to embrace a purposeful approach to challenges. These aspects highlight the core concept of the attitudinal pathway, which suggests that individuals can discover meaning in life by adopting a particular attitude toward suffering and oppression. By asserting control over their destiny and resisting their oppressors, Duffy's speakers exhibit strength and autonomy, reflecting Frankl's idea that meaning can be found by changing one's internal viewpoint, even in challenging situations. Her narratives convey that recovering from sorrow necessitates emotional resilience and a deliberate choice to transcend societal limitations, thus restoring one's identity. Paul Muldoon's poetry also connects with the attitudinal pathway by exploring resilience and meaning in a fragmented world, frequently marked by irony and emotional depth. It is not as explicitly transformative as those of Walcott or Duffy, yet it still demonstrates a determination not to give in to hopelessness. Although his tone may seem detached, Muldoon's work frequently showcases a strong dedication to addressing life's absurdities with wit and resilience. His speakers face various challenges, ranging from relationship difficulties to the traumas of war, frequently echoing Frankl's focus on the importance of selecting one's attitude in the face of suffering. Throughout these, Muldoon's poems highlight the capacity of the human spirit to overcome challenges, encouraging readers to find meaning through perseverance and a deliberate change in perspective. In summary, Derek Walcott stands out as the prime illustration of the attitudinal pathway due to his focus on acceptance and resilience when confronted with extreme

historical and personal pain. Meanwhile, both Carol Ann Duffy and Paul Muldoon offer inspiring examples and interpretations by their speakers. Duffy's focus on feminist empowerment, grief, and memory, combined with Muldoon's exploration of relational conflicts and war trauma, deepens understanding of finding meaning amidst life's challenges, echoing the transformative power of the attitudinal pathway of Logotherapy. These remarkable poets illuminate the profound human capacity to confront immense suffering while discovering a sense of purpose. This journey is enabled through a deliberate attitudinal shift toward resilience, fostered by hope and a continuous focus on personal growth.

In summary, the poetry of Derek Walcott, Carol Ann Duffy, and Paul Muldoon provides a deep examination of Viktor Frankl's Logotherapy pathways—creative, experiential, and attitudinal—where each poet shines in a particular area while together illustrating the multifaceted search for meaning in life. Walcott embodies the attitudinal pathway by challenging colonial narratives and transforming cultural and historical suffering into a celebration of resilience and identity. Duffy, in contrast, shines in the experiential pathway by exploring the transformative effects of love, nature, and intimate personal experiences such as motherhood, especially from a feminist and socially conscious perspective. Ultimately, Muldoon represents the creative pathway through his imaginative language and postmodern experimentation, and he encourages readers to participate actively in the text in their quest for meaning. Together, these poets demonstrate the lasting significance of poetry in facing life's uncertainties, seeking meaning amid difficulties, and accepting the complex nature of human life. Their pieces remind readers that art remains a potent means of crafting meaning even during disconnection and an 'existential vacuum'.

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THE SEARCH FOR MEANING IN **POSTMODERN POETRY**


A Logotherapeutic Reading of Derek Walcott, Carol Ann Duffy, and Paul Muldoon


In a postmodern era with no universal truths or guiding values, lack of faith, scepticism, and relativism among individuals all lead to profound disorientation and fragmentation of worlds and identities in severe forms. As a result, individuals in the twenty-first century are compelled to take personal responsibility and exercise their freedom to create meaning in an otherwise absurd world through intentional choices and interactions. This dissertation explores the search for meaning in the poetry of Derek Walcott, Carol Ann Duffy, and Paul Muldoon through the ideas of Viktor Frankl's Logotherapy. The emphasis lies on how their efforts delve into the triad of pathways that lead to the exploration of meaning – creative, experiential and attitudinal pathways. Each poet draws upon their unique cultural and historical background, using poetry to confront life's challenges and search for purpose. Walcott's poetry reflects postcolonial struggles and cultural identity; Duffy's pieces emphasize the transformative power of love and personal experience, while Muldoon's postmodern style embraces creative expression to attain meaning. The study demonstrates how these poets employ their craft to explore individual and collective suffering, offering deep insights into the human quest for a meaningful life. By analysing their work through the lens of Logotherapy's pathways, this book underscores the enduring relevance of poetry in confronting existential questions in a postmodern society.


The postmodern landscape of the twenty-first century is often characterised by a profound existential unease. In the wake of postmodern thought, which interrogates grand narratives and universal truths, individuals are frequently left navigating a world that can appear fragmented, disoriented, and devoid of inherent guidance. This condition of scepticism and relativism, while liberating in its assertion of freedom, simultaneously imposes a weighty burden: the imperative to construct meaning personally in a universe that may seem intrinsically absurd. It is against this backdrop of cultural and philosophical pressure that the present study gains its urgency and relevance.



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