

Charles University
Faculty of Education
Department of English Language and Literature

Bachelor Thesis

Victimhood motif in Naomi Shihab Nye's poetry

Motiv oběti v poezii Naomi Shihab Nye

Gabriela Dobiašová

Supervisor: Mgr. Jakub Ženíšek, Ph.D.

Study Program: Specialization in Education

Branch of Study: English – French

Prague 2020

Declaration

I hereby declare that this bachelor thesis, titled "Victimhood motif in Naomi Shihab Nye's poetry" is completely my own work and I used only the sources that are listed on the works cited page.

Prague, 2020

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank my supervisor, Mgr. Jakub Ženíšek, Ph.D., for his valuable time, his guidance and patience that made the completion of this thesis possible.

Abstrakt

Bakalářská práce se zabývá motivem oběti a procesu viktimizace jako psychologických jevů často se vyskytujících v psychice lidí ovlivněných nezvladatelnými a dlouhotrvajícími konflikty. Práce zkoumá sbírku *The Tiny Journalist* od Naomi Shihab Nye a rozvíjí hypotézu, že samotná básnířka prožívá pocit oběti vyplývající z jejího vztahu k izraelsko-palestinskému konfliktu, který je jedním z hlavních témat sbírky. V teoretické části práce je představen přehled teorií oběti a procesu viktimizace vypracovaných autory jako například Daniel Bar-Tal nebo Rainer Strobl. Praktická část práce zase využívá pojmů popsaných v teoretické části a nabízí analýzu vybraných básní. Cílem je na základě analýzy jednotlivých básní sbírky zařadit autorku do taxonomie obětí a dokázat přítomnost pocitu oběti v psychice autorky.

Klíčová slova

Naomi Shihab Nye, poezie, oběť, viktimizace

Abstract

The bachelor thesis deals with the concept of victimhood and victimization as psychological phenomena commonly present in the psyche of the people influenced by intractable conflicts. The thesis explores the collection *The Tiny Journalist* written by Naomi Shihab Nye and revolves around a hypothesis that the poetess herself experiences a sense of victimhood rising from her connection to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, which is one of the main topics of the collection. In the theoretical part, the thesis proposes an overview of victimhood and victimization theories developed by authors such as Daniel Bar-Tal or Rainer Strobl. The practical part of the thesis makes use of the concepts described in the theoretical part and seeks to offer an analysis of selected poems, focusing on reflections of victimhood or the process of victimization in the writings. The aim is to classify the author in the taxonomy of victims and to prove the presence of the sense of collective victimhood in the psyche of the author, all based on analysis of particular poems of *The Tiny Journalist*.

Key words

Naomi Shihab Nye, poetry, victim, victimhood, victimization

Table of contents

1	Introduction.....	7
2	Background information	7
2.1	Legitimacy of Nye’s writings.....	8
2.2	About the author.....	9
2.3	About the book.....	10
3	Victimhood and victimization from the perspective of psychology	11
3.1	Victim and victimhood.....	11
3.2	Victimization.....	12
3.4	Collective victimization	14
3.5	Victimhood in intractable conflicts.....	15
4	Analysis of selected poems: Victimhood among Palestinians	18
4.1	"In Northern Ireland They Called It "The Troubles""	18
4.2	"Losing as Its Own Flower"	21
5	Analysis of selected poems: Victimhood in the psyche of the author.....	27
5.1	The source of the sense of victimhood in the psyche of the author	28
5.1.1	"Mediterranean Blue".....	29
5.2	Identification of the adversary	31
5.2.1	"38 Billion"	32
5.3	Implications of collective victimhood reflected in selected poems	35
5.3.1	Sharing of a specific state of mind.....	36
5.3.2	A rigid and long-lasting perception of the conflict	38
5.3.3	Intense negative emotions	40
5.3.4	Emergence of a sense of victimhood and a sense of victimhood as a prism.....	43
5.3.5	Magnification of differences between the parties involved in the conflict	44
5.4	Signs of victimhood in the overall structure of the collection	46
5.4.1	The Realistic aspect of the poems and its effect	48
5.5	Symptoms of victimhood in selected poems.....	53
6	Conclusion	54
7	Sources.....	57

1 Introduction

Naomi Shihab Nye is chiefly known for her poetry and essays advocating worldwide peace. Her collection *The Tiny Journalist* is, however, predominantly dealing with the ongoing conflict between Israel and Palestine. Born and raised in the United States yet being of Palestinian descent and also having lived in Jerusalem, the author's origin plays a significant role in the collection's presentation of the conflict and the omnipresent motif of victimhood. This paper elaborates on a hypothesis that the author experiences a sense of collective victimhood, a phenomenon often present in the psyche of people directly or indirectly involved in an intractable conflict. In order to conceptualize this phenomenon, the theoretical part of this thesis explores specific theories of victimhood and victimization, developed by authors such as Daniel Bar-Tal or Rainer Strobl. These then serve as a basis of the subsequent analysis of selected poems from the collection. The analysis focuses on the identification of the potential source of victimhood in the psyche of the poet, the influence of her particular background on her writings, particularly the identification of the adversary in the author's perception of the conflict. Furthermore, the paper strives to classify the author in the taxonomy of victims, taking into consideration her origin and her relatives, as reflected in selected poems. On top of that follows the identification of specific effects and symptoms of victimhood reflected in the poems where the author can be identified as the narrator and it can thus be presumed that these poems illustrate the author's personal standpoint and reflect her psyche. The introduction also seeks to legitimize Nye's artistic approach to delivering an undisguised political message by means of literature.

2 Background information

The following part of the thesis provides the readers with some information about the biography of Naomi Shihab Nye, the themes of the collection *The Tiny Journalist*, and the character of Nye's writings, as politically charged and yet literary pieces of work.

2.1 Legitimacy of Nye's writings

First of all, it is necessary to address the character of Nye's works as a political testimony expressing the author's own ideological inclination. This subchapter therefore addresses the deliberate lack of creative remove which is often quite transparent in Nye's poems, and considers its impact on the artistic value of her writings.

Nye often uses primary sources, such as news articles or personal letters, in order to convey a political message related to a particular historical narrative, in this case, that of the Israeli-Palestinian relations. Based on these recurring principles, Nye's works could be generally classified as documentary poetry, full of political ideology and efforts to bring actual social change, and as such, they might easily become a target of criticism. Some might argue that primary sources deprive poetry of its artistic quality, or that, in defense of the art for art's sake philosophy, no didactic or political purpose should be assigned to artistic works. Nye's writings could consequently be easily dismissed as undeserving of the poetic title. On the other hand, Nye certainly did not invent the practice of using literary language as a vehicle for activism or political engagement. Numerous practitioners of this approach are in fact now considered classics. Thanks to their common purpose - to address injustice and inequality and bring social changes, the authors of such works are generally related to minority literatures. If we remain within the realm of American women writers, which suggests itself in connection to Nye, we may mention canonical authors such as Harriet Jacobs, Charlotte Perkins Gilman (Stetson), Sylvia Plath or Nikki Giovanni, all of whom produced a sizable poetic work in addition to prose, thereby aligning with Nye's literary career.

Harriet Jacobs was a 19th century African-American, who documented the struggles, sexual abuse, or motherhood of a slave-born woman in her own biography. Charlotte Perkins Gilman was one of the leading figures of the American women's movement, a lecturer, and a writer mainly concerned with the economic independence of women, gender equality, ethics or labour. Sylvia Plath, as one of the most prominent writers of the 20th century, mainly delved into the themes of depression, death and disillusionment, but also touched upon the principles of feminism or double standards in

society. Nikki Giovanni challenges racial and gender prejudices in American society, explores the themes of loneliness, affection, and pride and strives to spotlight the condition of African-Americans (Encyclopaedia Britannica).

The writings of the authors mentioned above, whether prose or poetry, all communicate political standpoints and call for social changes that would end inequality and injustice experienced by the particular minority. Their being politically charged, however, does not delegitimize them as literati, on the contrary, this ideological clarity and prominence contributes to their canonical status within the ranks of American literature. Similarly to their artistic creation, Nye composes poems filled with primary sources, revolving around actual events and real people, and thus manages to convey a political message. As such, Nye's poetry might not be primarily "beautiful", but it certainly fulfills other functions of art, as explored by Claude Lévi-Strauss, such as political change or social causes (Schiuma 37).

2.2 About the author

Naomi Shihab Nye is a contemporary American poet, essayist, novelist, and editor of Palestinian descent. Nye was born in 1952 to a Palestinian father, journalist Aziz Shihab and an American mother of German and Swiss origin, Miriam Allwardt. She spent her childhood in St. Louis, Missouri, however, at the age of fourteen, she and her family moved to Jerusalem. This experience allowed Shihab Nye to explore her cultural heritage, absorb impressions, and broaden her perspective on the differences and similarities of Eastern and Western cultures. Her residence in Jerusalem, influenced by the city's vibrant atmosphere but also political tension preceding the Six-Day War, is a recurring theme and an inexhaustible source of inspiration in her writings. Shihab Nye graduated from Trinity University in San Antonio where she studied English and world religions. Her interest in poetry developed early during her childhood and was influenced by authors such as Allen Ginsberg, Jack Kerouac, William Stafford or W.S. Merwin. She published her debut collection of poems, *Tattooed Feet*, in 1977. Her poems deal with the images of exile, cultural diversity, daily life, war trauma, and humanity. In her works, Nye

celebrates the beauty of the ordinary and in her texts concerning the ongoing conflict in Palestine, she manages to embody a voice and put a human face on the forgotten victims of the war, while nevertheless maintaining her straightforward, accessible, yet evocative style. Nye has received the Golden Rose Award, Neustadt Award for Children's Literature, May Hill Arbutnot Honor Lecture award, or the Ivan Sandrof Award of Lifetime Achievement, awarded by the National Book Critics Circle. Among her most prominent works are *Tattooed Feet* (1976), *Different Ways to Pray* (1980), *Red Suitcase* (1994), *Habibi* (1997), or *19 Varieties of Gazelle* (2002). Currently, Nye occupies the post of a creative writing professor at Texas State University (Poetry Foundation).

2.3 About the book

The Tiny Journalist is Nye's collection of poems published in 2019. The title of the collection refers to Janna Jihad Ayyad, a Palestinian child activist and amateur journalist, who at the age of seven started recording the events in the occupied West Bank in Palestine, aspiring to document the conflict authentically. The collection reflects Nye's double cultural background, dealing with the Israeli-Palestinian state of war and the current political situation in the United States, paying special attention to the connection between the two territories. The book is divided into two parts. In the first part, Nye offers a penetrating depiction of the suffering of Palestinians as perceived through the eyes of the people within the conflict, all accompanied by vivid images of the Middle Eastern land, people, and traditions. She expresses her vehement support of Janna's work and Shihab Nye herself calls for a peaceful resolution of the combat in numerous poems. The major theme of the second part of the book is the author's open criticism of American foreign politics, but the author also touches upon ongoing violent conflicts worldwide and provides the reader with insight into her relationship with her father and her personal experiences and opinions related to some war conflicts.

3 Victimhood and victimization from the perspective of psychology

The next part of the thesis constitutes a theoretical basis for the following analysis. The theoretical part deals with concepts of victimhood and victimization, mainly on a collective level, and summarizes theories developed by authors such as D. Bar-Tal or R. Strobl.

3.1 Victim and victimhood

First of all, a victim is anyone who currently is or has been in the past, directly or indirectly harmed due to an intentional or unintentional act. More commonly speaking, a person is considered a victim if they are or have been affected, hurt, or killed due to a criminal act or an accident, or if they are or have been cheated or tricked. Such events generally result in certain changes in the person's psyche, for instance, the emergence of feelings of helplessness, self-pity, self-inefficacy, low self-esteem, hopelessness, guilt, loss of trust, passivity, weakness, distress, a tendency to blame, and an external locus of control. Moreover, such conditions excite the need for some medical, material, or financial support and also suggest the person's inability to meet these needs without any assistance. Eventually, the harmful experience can lead to the person's ambition to gain recognition, to attain justice, to profit from reparations or anyhow affect public opinion or attitude towards the perceived perpetrator (Meredith 206; Leider 102).

The sense of victimhood can be approached as an interplay of several necessary conditions. This approach suggests that individuals identify themselves as victims if they are convinced that: (1) they have been harmed; (2) they were not responsible for the harmful incident; (3) they had no means to avert the harmful incident; (4) they are morally right and enduring injustice; (5) they deserve compassion. This approach also emphasizes that the mere occurrence of the harmful event is not sufficient for the development of the sense of victimhood, but the event has to be regarded as undeserved, unjust, immoral, and inescapable (Bar-Tal et al. 232).

Furthermore, the harm experienced by the individuals may be direct or indirect, meaning that individuals may endure psychological or physical suffering directly, or they may be related to the individuals suffering harm directly and thus become indirect victims of the harm (Bar-Tal et al. 232, as cited in D. Bloomfield, T. Barnes and L. Huyse 275-294).

Overall, the notion of victimhood involves some enduring psychological state of mind that affects one's beliefs, attitudes, emotions, and behavior.

3.2 Victimization

The term victimization denotes an act or a process of singling someone out for cruel or unfair treatment, typically through physical or emotional abuse. It can also be regarded as a dynamic process consisting of several stages necessary to assign someone the status of a victim (Bar-Tal et al. 233).

The approach of E. C. Viano proposes four such stages: (1) individuals experience harm, injury, or suffering caused by another person or people or by institutions; (2) some of them perceive this harm as undeserved, unfair, and unjust, leading them to view themselves as a victim; (3) some of those who perceive themselves as a victim attempt to gain social validation by persuading others (family, friends, authorities, etc.) to recognize that the harm occurred and that they are victims; (4) some of those who assert that they have been victimized receive external validation of their claim, thus becoming "official" victims (as a result they may receive social or institutional support or compensation) (Bar-Tal et al. 233 as cited in E. C. Viano 3-14) .

In an alike manner, five conditions to receive the status of a victim are proposed by R. Strobl: (1) identifiable single event of harm; (2) negative evaluation of the event; (3) the event viewed as uncontrollable; (4) the attribution of the event to a personal or social offender; (5) the consideration of the event as violating a socially shared norm (Strobl 300).

3.3 Collective victimhood

As has been mentioned above, individuals can experience a sense of victimhood indirectly, based on their relation to other individuals, who are or have been directly harmed. This assumption leads to the conclusion that victimhood does not only exist on the individual level, but also among a group or a collective. In such cases, the affected people experience a sense of collective victimhood (Breen Smyth 41; Ndahinda 140-141).

In general, collective victimhood is a mindset shared within a group, which results from perceived intentional harm with serious and enduring impact imposed on a group by another group or groups, a harm that is regarded as undeserved, unjust, immoral, and unpreventable. Such harm can be conducted in the present, recent past or distant past, deeply remembered in the collective memory. It can be real or imagined, even though it predominantly rises from authentic experiences and it can also result from a one-time event or from long-term harmful conduct, such as slavery or occupation (Bar-Tal et al. 238).

Subjects involved in collective victimhood can be described within several categories: individual and collective victims; direct and indirect victims; first-generation and second-generation victims. Firstly, individual victims are those upon whom intentional harm has been or is being inflicted, independently of their belonging to some group. Collective victims, on the other hand, come to existence when violence is directed at a specific group, collective, or population, and individuals are harmed because of their relation to the group, collective, or population. Furthermore, direct victims are those who have suffered or are suffering from direct violence and are affected physically or psychologically. Indirect victims are those towards whom violent acts are not directed, but they suffer due to their relation to direct victims. Generally, indirect victims are family members of direct victims, or even their neighbors, friends, or other witnesses of violent acts directed towards a specific person, or a group who have endured or are enduring trauma caused by such violent experience. Finally, the term first-generation victims refers to those who have been victimized at some point in their lives. The second-generation victims are hence the children of the first-generation victims, who tend to incorporate the trauma of their ancestors, consciously or unconsciously (Huyse 54-55; Strobl 303).

The collective sense of victimhood generally results from harmful events affecting the members of the group, some of whom are harmed directly, while others share this experience indirectly. Just like in the case of individuals, victimization in groups does not result only from the harmful event itself, but equally depends on the way this event is perceived by the members of the group or those outside of it. To experience collective victimhood, this event has to be considered as intentionally conducted against the group or against its members because of their relation to the group (Bar-Tal et al. 238).

Once developed, the collective sense of victimhood consists of beliefs, attitudes, and behavioral tendencies, all of which are strongly related to the harm inflicted on the group. According to these beliefs and attitudes, the harm directed towards the inflicted group was unjust, immoral, and unavoidable, as it was controlled by another group. This other group is perceived as a perpetrator and viewed ultimately negatively, while positive characteristics are attributed to the group of the victims. Further effects of collective victimhood include reduced compassion towards the adversary, decreased willingness to admit the in-group's responsibility for the violent actions committed during the conflict, decreased willingness for pardon and compromise, the belief that the in-group is free to do anything to ensure the safety of its members, disregarding the moral aspect of its actions, delegitimization of the rival and decreased sense of guilt or responsibility within the group. (Schori-Eyal, Halperin, Bar-Tal 781; Terhoeven 8).

3.4 Collective victimization

Similarly to individual victimization, the development of the collective sense of victimhood consists of several stages. First, a harmful event must occur. Following its occurrence is its assessment as harmful, undeserved, unjust, and conducted by another group. Further, the harmed group identifies itself as a victim. Finally, unlike in the case of individual victimization, in this case, no need for public acknowledgement and recognition is needed. The group can maintain a collective sense of victimhood without outer recognition, even in cases where the group may be generally viewed as the perpetrator, not the victim (Bar-Tal et al. 239).

3.5 Victimhood in intractable conflicts

Intractable conflicts are violent long-term conflicts lasting for more than one generation, in which all parties involved invest significant material and non-material resources, and yet no clear victory can be declared for any of the involved parties. The conflict causes numerous small or large damages and is usually perceived as irresolvable. (Kriesberg 417-421). In intractable conflicts, victimhood plays a key role in the narrative of the involved group as a part of their collective memory, depicting the in-group in a more positive light and at the same time presenting the opposing group as the perpetrator responsible for the perceived unjust and undeserved violent conduct towards the in-group (Bar-Tal 241).

Collective victimhood thus influences the group's culture and its attitude towards the conflict and its evolution. The beliefs involved in collective victimhood, for example, the belief that the conflict was unpreventable by the in-group, are formed during a long-lasting and violent process. The longer this process is, the deeper the beliefs and therefore the sense of collective victimhood. These beliefs imply the justness, moral rightness, and humaneness of the in-group and emphasize the malicious character of the opponent, the immorality of their actions and intentions, their responsibility for the conflict's emergence, etc. Depicting the in-group exclusively positively and the adversary wholly negatively leads to the in-group's motivation and mobilization to pursue the goals perceived by them as justified and right and eventually makes the conflict irresolvable (Bar-Tal et al. 241). Eventually, this might also reduce the in-group's capacity to fully acknowledge the impact of their actions (Breen Smyth 41).

In intractable conflicts, as they generally involve larger groups, societies, or even populations, the actual strength or power of the subjects involved in the conflict is of little importance when it comes to the sense of collective victimhood. Any party may perceive, and in intractable conflicts, both or all parties involved tend to perceive themselves as victims, despite their potential military, political or economical dominance. However, it is also important to note that certain weakness may help depict a group as a victim of the

conflict in the eyes of the international community, which naturally tends to sympathize with the victim (Bar-Tal et al. 669).

The collective sense of victimhood thus inevitably has several functions in the societies trapped within an intractable conflict. Establishing strong beliefs about the rightness of the in-group's actions and motifs, collective victimhood helps to provide certain explanations about the conflict. It can also function as a supportive coping mechanism in stressful situations, where the subject needs to somehow mentally organize and make sense of the ongoing outer chaos. Collective victimhood may also provide some sort of moral justification, as it identifies the opposing group as responsible for the outbreak of the conflict and its consequences. Furthermore, it gives the in-group a sense of superiority, depicting it in a predominantly positive light. It can also support the group's psychological preparation against the effects of a long-lasting conflict, helping the society deal with sudden attacks better and more effectively. Collective victimhood equally generates a feeling of solidarity, as it stresses the importance of cooperation and unity and it can eventually lead to patriotism and mobilization in some situations of emergency. Finally, a sense of collective victimhood is a common facilitator in gaining international support, especially when the group is commonly considered as weaker, or more affected. The in-group thus often expects and obtains some kind of advantage in form of support, assistance, apology, etc. (Bar-Tal et al. 243-248; Breen Smyth 41).

In short, the sense of collective victimhood in intractable conflicts can be characterised in regard of several effects on the society members: (1) the members of the group share a specific state of mind; (2) there is a rigid long-lasting perception which is generally unlikely to change during the conflict and will presumably continue after the conflict's resolution; (3) intense negative emotions like anger, hopelessness, fear or self-pity are present; (4) the sense of victimhood emerges automatically in violent situations due to its fundamentally emotional and teleological character; (5) it serves as a prism through which the group or the group members judge their experiences, especially the ones related to the conflict; (6) it magnifies the difference between the groups involved in the conflict; (7) the adversary is perceived as potentially harmful which leads to constant insecurity of the in-group, which believes to live under continual threat ; (8) it

influences the emotional and cognitive capacity of the group members and strengthens the group perception of self as a victim; (9) it influences the behavioral tendencies in the group, which is convinced that it does not deserve the violent treatment and consequently strives to prevent further violent actions from the side of the adversary, and eventually intends to punish the opponent (Bar-Tal et al. 242).

It has also been suggested that the collective sense of victimhood consists of three layers which may appear independently, although they tend to occur in combinations and which interact with one another, significantly influencing the group involved (Schori-Eyal, Halperin, Bar-Tal 779-780).

The fundamental layer of collective victimhood is historical collective victimhood. This emerges from an experience of significant harm implanted in the collective memory of a group as serious and unjust or from a series of remembered violent actions conducted by several groups throughout the history of the in-group, that are perceived as serious and unjust by the in-group. It involves a sense of remembered shared trauma and unjustified violent actions done by the opposing group and blaming of the other group for the outbreak of the conflict and its consequences.

The second layer of collective victimhood is called general conflict victimhood and it is related to a specific ongoing conflict with a specific adversary. In intractable conflict, general conflict victimhood is reflected in competitive victimhood, which refers to the in-group's subjective belief that they suffered more than the out-group, it generally involves the efforts of the groups involved to depict themselves as more harmed and affected (Andrighetto 513).

The last layer of collective victimhood is conflict event victimhood, which is related to a specific event embedded in the collective memory as immensely severe and unjust and conducted by the opposing group.

4 Analysis of selected poems: Victimhood among Palestinians

The following part of the thesis consists of an analysis of selected poems of *The Tiny Journalist*, namely "In Northern Ireland They Called It "The Troubles"" and "Losing as Its Own Flower". The analysis focuses on the signs of victimhood (as described in the theoretical part of the thesis) among Palestinians, exploring illustrations of different stages of the process of victimization, types of victimhood, and the overall effects of victimhood on the psyche of the members of the Palestinian society. The presence of the sense of collective victimhood among Palestinians is necessary for the development of the same sense of collective victimhood in the psyche of the author and therefore to prove its presence means to find the cornerstone of the hypothesis that the author herself experiences the sense of collective victimhood. In addition, it is essential to note that the poems are interpreted with consideration to the contextual background of the collection, which is predominantly concerned with the infamous conflict between Israel and Palestine. Hence, the in-group refers to Palestine while the out-group refers to the Israeli forces or the United States.

4.1 "In Northern Ireland They Called It "The Troubles""

The poem "In Northern Ireland They Called It "The Troubles"" illustrates the psychological impact of a harmful experience on a person trapped in an intractable conflict. The poem offers a perspective of a person living within a conflict, depicting their thoughts and emotions.

Formally, the poem consists of five stanzas, the first being a tercet, the last a couplet, and the three in between consisting of four verses. There are no rhymes in the poem, but the author employs hypothetical questions and enjambments to enhance the artistic character of the poem.

What do we call it?

The very endless nightmare?

The toothache of tragedy?

*I call it the life no one would choose.
To be always on guard,
never secure,
jumping when a skillet drops.*

The title of the poem refers to "The Troubles" in Northern Ireland, which collocates an exceptionally distressful period of the history of Northern Ireland. "The Troubles" denote a conflict between protestant unionists and Roman catholic nationalists over the independence of their land. The conflict spread from 1968 until 1998 (Encyclopaedia Britannica) and is known for its especially violent character. The "it" in the title would thus stand for an outstandingly violent conflict of dispossession and relegation, which in this context would point to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

As for the narrator of the poem, we are provided very little information and therefore their precise identity remains clandestine. However, it can be inferred that the narrator of the poem seems to be a Palestinian who quite overtly speaks on behalf the Palestinian people in general. The narrator switches from the personal pronoun "I" to "We", depicts images of the Palestinian life, and refers to Palestine as "here", which pinpoints their geolocation and provides us with a more tangible idea of their identity. This inference may then lead to the conclusion that as far as this poem is concerned, the author does not speak for herself, but rather lends her voice and presents the readers with what she believes is the perception of a generic Palestinian living within the conflict. Such a relegation of narrative authority may legitimately qualify as an act of creative remove, a feature that would redeem the poem from undiluted ideological fiction.

The first verse of the poem is a hypothetical question "What do we call it?", related to the title of the poem. The following two verses of the first stanza are as well hypothetical questions, but serving as answer suggestions to the question in the first verse. They suggest that the Palestinians would call the conflict in their country a "very endless nightmare" or a "toothache of tragedy", indicating its unending and poignant character.

What do we call it?

The endless nightmare?

The toothache of tragedy?

Based on such indications, the conflict could be described as an intractable conflict, which is generally characterized as long-term and especially violent and which provides conditions for the development of a sense of victimhood. The "toothache of tragedy" would imply the severe and harmful nature of the conflict, which stands at the origin of the process of victimization.

The second stanza of the poem provides a more personal perspective as the personal pronoun switches from "we" to "I". The narrator provides their personal answer to the question, saying that they call it "the life no one would choose". This brings the readers closer to the narrator, as both most likely share this opinion, and the narrator gains a more human and therefore more relatable character. The narrator further claims "to be always on guard, never secure, jumping when a skillet drops". This evokes the presence of intense negative emotions such as fear or distress together with a total loss of security of the in-group, all manifestations related to the sense of victimhood as described by Bar-Tal.

The following stanza evokes children involved in the conflict.

I watch babies finger their

cups and spoons and think

they don't know yet.

This image of babies helps engage the readers emotionally, depicting the babies discovering the world around them and suggesting their innocence and purity. The narrator watches the babies and wonders about their future and childish naivety. The readers are presented with a picture of an empty cup of hope, implying the hopelessness of the narrator, an intense negative emotion, one of the effects of harmful experience on one's psyche, and an aspect related to victimhood.

*They don't know how empty
the cup of hope can feel.*

The motif of a cup is further developed by an imagery of "the land of tea and coffee". The author evokes hospitality of Palestinians, saying that they pour a cup of tea or coffee a million times a day and yet, they could die of thirst, as the cup of hope is empty, suggesting that the situation where the Palestinians find themselves is continually desperate. The poor living conditions of Palestinians enter into a startling contrast with their hospitality. Palestinians are hence portrayed very positively, as kind and generous people who became victims of outer circumstances. The claim that you could die craving for a better life comes in the last stanza, stranded as a poignant climax of the poem.

Overall, the poem illustrates the impact of an intractable conflict on the psyche of the people within the conflict. It evokes their loss of security, distress, hypersensitivity, and hopelessness, it depicts Palestinians, the in-group, in a positive light and through intense images affects the emotions of the reader. The aspects of victimhood thus clearly underlie the entire poem and even though it provides the readers with a very personal and intimate insight into the psychological state of a victim, it is essential to note that the experience depicted represents a very frequent and common experience lived by many of those trapped within a conflict.

4.2 "Losing as Its Own Flower"

Formally, this poem consists of 14 stanzas and 2 stranded verses that may be regarded as a kind of a refrain of the poem. Altogether, there are 76 verses and 56 sentences, so the author once again employs enjambment to create a fluid impression of the poem. As in the previously analyzed poem, the author also asks many hypothetical questions.

*What if we had just said, OK we lose.
How would they have treated us then?*

*I ask my people, they gasp,
and all have different answers.*

As for the major themes of the poem, it is narrated in the first person and depicts the personal experience of contemplating the implications of losing or giving up in an intense conflict.

The poem opens with a hypothesis where the narrator wonders about what would happen if their group admitted its loss and how they would then be treated. The theme of a conflict is thus opened directly at the beginning of the poem, accompanied by a dichotomy of "we" and "they".

*What if we had just said, OK we lose.
How would they have treated us then?*

In the second stanza, the answers to the narrator's question are proposed, all condemning the idea of giving up and encouraging continuous action. The notion of truth is evoked through images of simple and ordinary things such as cabbages, succulent tomatoes, or orange petals, which help envisage the character of the land. Finally, a proposal arises, to hold on to the little the people have, suggesting the poor living conditions of the people.

A further reason for continuation in the struggle is presented in the third stanza where ancestors are evoked as a source of motivation. The opponents of the conflict are in this stanza called "invaders", a noun with chiefly negative connotations. This critique continues through a bitter picture of the adversaries calling the land of the in-group "barren and sad" and the Palestinians "anti-Semitic". The stanza ends with a hypothetical question about the possibilities of Palestinians in such a situation. Following the stanza is a stranded verse stating that "giving up is different from losing".

In the next stanza, the concept of losing is developed. The narrator admits that they have already lost, as their population is dispersed around the world and gradually merging with other cultures. The population is compared to pollen, again an image of a

simple and delicate thing, easy to diffuse and eventually disappear in a much greater world. The image of a "great bubbling stew of the world" is also presented, evoking the global character of the world, where societies and cultures blend into one.

The following stanzas depict the confrontation between the perceived invaders and the narrator's ingroup. The narrator presents the adversary's reasons for occupation, claiming the land based on a religious connection to it and at the same time denying any ties the narrator's group might have had with it. The narrator wonders about the impossibility of compromise and the legacy of their link to the land. This legacy is illustrated by the images of shining keys and footprints in a stone stoop, all indicating the narrator's long-term connection to the place. Further in the poem, the invaders are criticized for calling the Palestinians crazy and denying their claims to the land. This part of the poem ends with a stranded verse where the narrator admits to being the losing party.

In the next part of the poem, the narrator explores the practices employed by the adversary during the invasion, mainly the efforts to silence the invaded population and the aim to alter the opinion of the international community. Also, the efforts to "erase" the community are evoked, suggesting use of some violent methods possibly leading to the extermination of the community. Additionally, the narrator calls their group undeserving of any such treatment.

The next part of the poem is dedicated to the reality of the emigration of the local population. The narrator mentions for example professors, students, artists or fruit vendors, who fled the conflict and found peace abroad and this direct naming of the professions of refugees helps create an authentic impression and put a human face on the people fleeing war. The narrator further confesses to dreaming of European countries serving as a haven where people are safe and secure and do not need to constantly watch their back. The source of this distress is illustrated by tanks and jeeps, objects associated with war and violence, strengthening the intensely painful circumstances surrounding the narrator. The narrator nevertheless in the end claims that doing what she is doing is her job, which prevents her from fleeing abroad as many others did.

In the penultimate stanza of the poem, we are finally able to guess the narrator's identity as the tiny journalist, Janna Jihad Ayyad. This assumption is deduced from the narrator claiming that even when she was only a little child, she knew the importance of paying attention, of documenting. This is the main occupation of Jihad Ayyad, who is an amateur journalist and activist documenting the ongoing conflict in her land. She also mentions wearing a striped t-shirt which Jihad Ayyad was captured wearing in several of her videos. The author thus borrows the character of Janna and provides the readers with her idea of what Janna's life feels like.

In the last poem of the stanza, the narrator summarizes the practices of the invaders, evoking prosecution, domination, or dumping sewage, and asks the readers whether they were aware of such actions conducted by their adversary. This image is contrasted with the narrator's suggestion that their trying to lead normal lives is clearly a problem for the opponents. The last verse of the poem states "Not just refusing to lose.", as a call for action, not mere passivity.

On the whole, the poem explores the perseverance of a group involved in a conflict and its perception of its adversary and provides an interesting insight into the concept of collective victimhood. The analysis of the concept will again proceed from the signs linked to the beginning of victimization towards actual manifestations of collective victimhood, its functions, and effects. The narrator's side, more specifically the Palestinians, will be referred to as the in-group, while the opposing side will be referred to as the out-group.

The impulse for victimization is, as it has been mentioned, a one-time harmful event or a long-term series of harmful actions or harmful conduct in general. Especially in the case of collective victimhood, long-term violent treatment is identified as a stimulus of the process of victimization. This poem deals with an in-group's perception of invasion and ongoing occupation, which are prototypical examples of affairs - intractable conflicts, leading to collective victimhood. The long-lasting nature of the conflict is supported by the evocation of "ancestors" who were involved in the same conflict, so it clearly stretches from the past all the way to the present.

The next stage of victimization is the assessment of the violent experience as unjust, undeserved, unpreventable, and conducted by the out-group. This is best illustrated by a verse in the 10th stanza where the narrator says: "We were the undeserving", openly expressing the attitude of the in-group, believing that they did not merit such cruel treatment. The unjust attribute of the adversary's conduct is evoked through the images of the out-group's denying the in-group's rights to inhabit the land, and the critics of the out-group's claiming the land based on a religious tie to it, which the narrator seems to consider nonsensical, even ridiculous:

Why couldn't we all have ties?

They said God said.

(Always trouble.)

We can also observe the unpreventable nature of the invasion after the narrator mentions it for the first time and immediately asks a hypothetical question: "What could we do?", suggesting that there was nothing the in-group could have done to avoid the happening. It also implies the out-group's responsibility for the emergence of the conflict, which is one of the pillars of the concept of victimhood.

This is inevitably accompanied by a formation of other beliefs constituting the sense of collective victimhood, which include the portraying of the out-group predominantly negatively as immoral, aggressive, or dishonest and on the other hand depicting the in-group overall positively. The idea of a likable nature of the in-group emerges from its picturing as "real" human beings, victims of the circumstances they could not influence, and also from the evocation of refugees represented by educated characters of professors and students. Also, at the beginning of the poem, the in-group is encouraged not to give up because "truth unfolds" eventually, which implies that the in-group perceives itself as entirely legitimate.

Considering all of the above, we can see that the poem properly illustrates the process of victimization as described by R. Strobl and the formation of the sense of victimhood in general, but its collective nature can be also identified with relative ease.

Firstly, the poem develops from the narrator asking her people what would happen if they admitted that they had lost. The single picture of a group discussion over the question invokes the existence of a close bond between the individual participants, creating a firm group. The expression "my people" yet reinforces this impression. Frequent usage of personal and possessive pronouns "we" and "our" equally implies that the narrator is experiencing the situation together with others, creating a unity.

Another key image of the poem illustrating the presence of collective victimhood can be found in the third stanza where ancestors emerge as one of the major sources of the in-group's motivation in the conflict:

*The ancestors would be ashamed
if we gave up. The invaders said our land
was barren and sad.*

This image suggests that the ancestors of the current members of the in-group were as well involved in the conflict and their sense of victimhood was somehow transferred to the younger generation. The current members of the in-group thus not only struggle with the actual ongoing issues but also adopt the issues of the past and can be labeled as the second-generation victims of the conflict. The in-group's concern with past events may equally suggest the embedding of the long-term conflict in the collective memory of the in-group and therefore the historical nature of the in-group's collective victimhood, which presumes remembered violent actions of the adversary, shared trauma, and blaming of the opponent for the emergence of the conflict. As this conflict is long-lasting and remains unresolved, the historical collective victimhood merges with general conflict victimhood, which is, in Andrighetto's theory, linked to an ongoing conflict with a specific adversary.

Furthermore, the effects of collective victimhood can also be observed. To begin with, intense negative emotions are evoked, such as loss of security, in the stanza where the narrator depicts her looking over her shoulder or helplessness in the verse "What could we do?" or in the act of repeatedly admitting that the in-group has lost. Collective victimhood also commonly generates a sense of solidarity, which can be deduced from

the frequent use of the personal pronoun "we" or the expression "my people". Mobilization as an effect of collective victimhood emerges from the encouragement to remain strong and never give up, a theme underlying the entire poem. Finally, the delegitimization of the rival can be perceived in the narrator's refusal to accept the out-group's justification of invasion.

Overall, both of the poems analyzed above display signs of collective victimhood among Palestinians, whether it is the process of victimization or its actual symptoms, such as intense negative emotions, a sense of solidarity, or efforts to mobilize. Judging by the poems, the sense of collective victimhood in the Palestinian society seems basically certain, yet at this point, it could be argued that as these are mere images created by the author, they may not have a real basis and therefore would not constitute a cornerstone of the development of the sense of collective victimhood in the psyche of the author. On the other hand, if we are to explore the sense of collective victimhood in the psyche of the author, it is the author's perception, her beliefs, and her opinions that matter. If the images that the author provides us with reflect what she considers true, the actual presence of collective victimhood in Palestinian society is not important, as it is the author's point of view that ultimately matters. In other words, even if the images depicted in the poems were not truthful, their confirmation in the author's psyche is sufficient to contribute to the development of the sense of collective victimhood. As the symptoms of collective victimhood among Palestinians are evident in the analyzed poems, it can be concluded that the basis for the development of the sense of collective victimhood in the psyche of the author has been identified.

5 Analysis of selected poems: Victimhood in the psyche of the author

The following part of the thesis focuses on the analysis of poems where the narrator can be identified as the author, Naomi Shihab Nye, and therefore it can be supposed that the author is presenting the readers with her personal experiences, opinions, emotions, and her standpoint in general. The analysis further focuses on the concept of victimhood related to the poet herself, exploring potential signs of victimization and

implications of victimhood as theorized by Bar-Tal, in the author's writing. Following Huysse's typification of victims, the analysis also strives to classify the author as either individual or collective, direct or indirect, and first-generation or second-generation victim.

5.1 The source of the sense of victimhood in the psyche of the author

The Tiny Journalist is Nye's collection, predominantly dealing with the intractable Israeli-Palestinian conflict. The author's concern with this conflict, in particular is, however, not coincidental, as she herself is of Palestinian origin. Her father, Aziz Shihab, was a Palestinian journalist, who emigrated to the United States and had an immense influence on his daughter, considering frequent and emotional mentions of him in Nye's latest collection (*The Austin Chronicle*). We can therefore suppose that Nye's Palestinian origin forms a significant part of her identity, resulting in her passionate advocacy for peace in the Middle East. Identifying herself as not only American, but also Palestinian, and largely sympathizing with her father's standpoint, it can also be assumed that the author might share the Palestinian sense of collective victimhood.

First of all, the author is a direct descendant of a Palestinian refugee and from her writings, it is obvious that she had a strong bond with her father. This fact could suggest that, had the author's father been a direct victim of the conflict, and had the author appropriated her father's beliefs and struggles, Nye herself might be classified as a second-generation victim of the conflict. The aim of the following analysis is to demonstrate the signs of the victimhood of Nye's father and also the author's strong attachment to her father along with an inclination to support his standpoint, which would indicate that the author could be classified as a second-generation victim, who is incorporating the trauma of her ancestor.

5.1.1 "Mediterranean Blue"

Formally, this poem consists of 16 verses, out of which 15 all constitute one stanza, while the last verse is stranded, presenting the climax of the poem. As usual in Shihab Nye's poetry, there are no rhymes present, but the poem is full of enjambments and symbols.

*My father couldn't swim either. He swam through
sorrow, though, and made it to the other side
on a ship, pitching his old clothes overboard
at landing, then tried to be happy, make a new life*

Thematically, the poem explores the refugee crisis the world has been experiencing in the past years, adding the author's personal standpoint in the arduous situation.

The poem opens with contemplation over the refugees' descendants' perception of the mentioned crisis. The author suggests that children of refugees are more thoughtful of the conditions of other refugees, even in case their own relatives have already found their haven and established a new life. This idea is further illustrated by the author's own insight, depicting the struggle of her own father and his later life.

*If you are the child of a refugee, you do not
sleep easily when they are crossing the sea
on small rafts and you know they can't swim.*

In the third and the fourth verse, swimming is evoked by the author and it is this action that creates a parallel between the refugees of the 21st-century crisis and the author's father. In the fourth verse, the author states: "My father couldn't swim either", indicating the association which allows the readers to identify Nye's father also as a refugee. The expression "refugee" is generally used to denote a person who has fled their home due to war, conflict, or persecution for political, religious, or social reasons, in order

to find safety in another country (United Nations Refugee Agency 14-15). We can therefore suppose that the people fleeing their country have experienced some harmful, traumatic events which motivated them to leave and which would potentially turn them into victims. Such events stand at the beginning of the process of victimization, working as a sort of stimulus for the development of the sense of victimhood. The association between refugees in general and the author's father thus implies that he too is a victim of the happenings in his homeland.

The struggles of the author's father and his emotional state are more specifically depicted in the fifth, sixth, and seventh verse of the poem, where the author paints a picture of him swimming through sorrow, symbolizing his despair, sadness, but also his determination and willingness to leave his old life behind.

*My father couldn't swim either. He swam through
sorrow, though, and made it to the other side
on a ship, pitching his old clothes overboard
at landing, then he tried to be happy, make a new life.*

These emotions are as well linked to the notion of victimhood and its effects. We can, however, also observe how difficult the abandoning of the old self is and that the inclination to return to one's roots nevertheless persists, indicating a strong bond one has with their homeland "But something inside him was always paddling home". This may be interpreted as the father's uninterruptible bond with his culture, potentially his in-group.

The poem ends with the author defending refugees, presenting her vehement compassion for them, and encouraging others to help and support refugees in such difficult conditions, as they are no less human.

And if we can reach out a hand, we better.

The poem suggests the author's feeling of personal involvement in the issue, rising from her intimate relationship with someone who had endured some harmful treatment. The poem thus not only helps the readers understand the identity of the author's father,

but it also presents the author's sensibility to the conditions of refugees, indicating her personal involvement. Finally, the author's father may be considered a victim, and Shihab Nye's passionate advocacy and sympathy for the people similar to her father may suggest her empathy with his experience, potentially resulting in a sense of second-generation victimhood.

Overall, the author's connection with Palestine, though clear from her biography, infiltrates also into her poetry. While the previous part of the thesis demonstrated the presence of collective victimhood in Palestinian society, the poem analyzed in this part documents the source of collective victimhood in the individual psyche of the author. The analysis aimed at the classification of the author as an indirect or direct, collective or individual, and first-generation or second-generation victim. Based on the images proposed in the above-analyzed poem, it can be claimed that in this particular case, Nye's father can be classified as a direct, first-generation victim. The illustrations of a strong bond between the poet and her father, her inclination to share his opinions, and her overall compassion display how Nye appropriates her father's standpoint and adopts his sense of victimhood, consequently becoming a second-generation victim of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. As throughout the collection, the author did not provide the readers with images of her own experience of harmful treatment caused by the out-group, it might also be deduced that the author "only" adopts the sense of victimhood of her compatriots and is therefore not a direct or individual victim, but rather indirect and collective.

5.2 Identification of the adversary

As mentioned in the theoretical part of the thesis, the trigger of the process of victimization is the affected person's experience of harm. In the case of the second-generation victims, this experience is processed indirectly, as an incorporation of the direct trauma of one's ancestor. The poem analyzed above indicates that in the case of Naomi Shihab Nye, the origin of this experience is Nye's father, who was himself a direct victim of the conflict.

Together with the development of identical or similar opinions and beliefs comes an evaluation of the experience as undeserved, unfair, uncontrollable, and unjust and identification of an offender, who is believed to be responsible for the experienced harm. In this case, the American-Palestinian identity of the author comes to play. The poems studied in the first part of the analysis provided the readers with an example of the perception of the direct victims of the conflict, to be more specific, into the perception of the Palestinians. The aim of the poems was to depict the atrocious living conditions of the Palestinians as if narrated from their own perspective. This resulted in the adversary being identified as the Israeli military forces, who Nye considers to be the direct source of the harmful treatment of the Palestinians. However, Naomi Shihab Nye is not solely Palestinian and her view on the conflict is very much influenced by her double identity and her, in a way, broader perspective. In numerous poems of hers, where she presents the readers with her own opinions or experiences, it is not only Israel, who is perceived as the perpetrator, but also the United States, as a kind of *éminence grise*.

The author's criticism of the United States as an adversary is mainly focused on the American financing of the Israeli military actions against Palestine. This is best illustrated by the poems "38 billion" and "America Gives Israel Ten Million Dollars a Day".

5.2.1 "38 Billion"

Formally, the poem consists of 14 lines written in free verse and arranged in one complex stanza. The structure of the poem is therefore modern and the frequent usage of enjambments, making the poem so fluid, creates an impression of prose simply divided into verses. The poem can be found in the first part of the collection.

The poem opens with a contemplative declarative sentence in one verse, where the author presents the idea that it is difficult to envision "big numbers and distant concepts". Following the first verse are examples of such hardly imaginable notions, very different from one another.

It's hard to grasp very big numbers and distant concepts.

*Like imagining what our thoughts might have been
if we lived 300 years ago. Would they be centered
on a goat or six rocks piled together
or would they be wide as they are now?*

The first example presented is largely abstract. The author wonders about the thoughts people might have had 300 years prior, which is an entirely intangible and speculative concept. She poses hypothetical questions about people's main points of interest and their overall character and contemplates the complexity of human thinking. She wonders whether then, people would focus on simple things such as goats or rocks, or their thoughts would reach further. Furthermore, the author also meditates about the human character as compared to today's standards and wonders whether people back from 300 years ago were somehow more malicious, or on the other hand, more amiable. However, eventually the poet figures out that to such questions, she has no answer.

In contrast with such an inaccessible idea is a more palpable contemporary picture of money.

*In those long-ago days,
would people be meaner to one another
or nicer? I have no idea. But sometimes I wonder what
38 billion dollars could buy, instead of weapons aimed
against us and this is what comes to mind:*

A distant concept is replaced by a considerable number, which should be, according to the first verse, just as difficult to grasp. The author asks what could be bought with 38 billion dollars but unlike in the first case, she is now able to find an answer to her question. The poignant aspect of this concept is that the author is pondering what could have been bought instead of weapons and she further develops a distressing contrast between weapons, naturally related to pain and danger, and simple things in life as sources of pleasure. This time, the author is not hypothetically asking, but instead, she directly

proceeds to enumerate things one could have bought, as an answer to the question. Her answer spreads through four verses and in each one, she offers three simple things, such as pencils, ribbons, or running shoes.

Eggs. Pencils, Undershirts of very soft cotton.

Ribbons, Radios, Shining flashlights.

Handmade clay plates. Chocolates. Really soft pillow.

Baskets. Bracelets. Running shoes.

The triviality of the listed items stresses the contrast between them and the weapons that were really bought and it creates an impression that there, where weapons were brought, more basic things were needed. The items evoked may also be interpreted as symbols standing for broader concepts, eggs for food, pencils for education, or running shoes for hobbies and free time.

The figure of 38 million might seem entirely random to an unconcerned reader, but looking closer into the contextual background, we may easily decode the author's allusion. In 2016, The United States government pledged to provide 38 billion dollars in military aid to Israel. Taking into consideration the context *The Tiny Journalist* touches upon, it is obvious that the author is criticizing the use of such an enormous amount of money on weapons used in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict (The New York Times).

Creating such a striking contrast between the items that could have been bought and the items that were actually purchased, presents the United States as the sponsor of the conflict and therefore involved and responsible for the perceived harmful treatment of the Palestinians.

Another identification of the United States as the perpetrator in the conflict is present in the poem "America Gives Israel Ten Million Dollars a Day". The title of the poem is strongly suggestive, indicating a relation between Israeli war conduct and American foreign politics. The title, just like the previously analyzed poem, refers to the enormous financial aid provided by the United States to Israel under the Memorandum of Understanding. The amount of 38 billion dollars is to be given to Israel during a period

of 10 years, which, divided into days, makes over 10 million dollars. In the fifth stanza of the poem, the author claims that this money is provided to Israel to soothe them and consequently, it contributes to the Israeli indifference of the Palestinian condition. The rest of the poem is predominantly concerned with concrete examples of the victims of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

It is therefore clear that when it comes to the author's own perception of the conflict and mainly the identification of the perpetrator, not only Israel is presented as the opposing side, but also the United States, the author's actual homeland. This perception of Israel and also of the United States as adversaries is reflected in several other poems and influences the concept of victimhood of the poet. It is therefore clear that from the perspective of the author, Palestinian society is the victim of the conflict, presented as ultimately good, while Israel or United States are presented as villains responsible for the atrocities caused by the conflict.

5.3 Implications of collective victimhood reflected in selected poems

The aim of the following part of the thesis is to analyze selected poems in search of specific aspects of the sense of collective victimhood, their effects on the psyche of the author, and the collection.

The following part of the thesis serves to demonstrate that Nye shows further signs of the sense of collective victimhood. While the previous analysis was focused on the identification of the source of this sense of victimhood and general classification of the author's character of victimhood, the following part deals with the actual signs of victimhood of the author. Numerous poems of *The Tiny Journalist* present the author's thoughts and help the readers explore the author's standpoint in the conflict. The following examples are to demonstrate different aspects of the sense of collective victimhood as identified by Bar-Tal, such as sharing of a specific state of mind, a rigid and long-lasting perception of the conflict, intense negative emotions, the emergence of a sense of victimhood, and a sense of victimhood as a prism, or magnification of differences between the parties involved in the conflict.

5.3.1 Sharing of a specific state of mind

One of the main aspects of collective victimhood is an in-group sharing of a specific state of mind, which helps support the in-group's narrative of the conflict and strengthens the unity of the community. This phenomenon is to be observed in the following part of the thesis, namely in the poem "To Netanyahu".

5.3.1.1 "To Netanyahu"

Formally, this poem consists of four stanzas of three, four, three, and again four verses. The author typically uses enjambments, but also a metaphor of the desired state of affairs in the Israeli-Palestinian war zone.

From the thematic perspective, the poem depicts a donkey and compares it to Benjamin Netanyahu, Israeli politician and Prime Minister, to whom the poem is also addressed, as suggests the title.

In the first stanza of the poem, the author introduces the readers to her Palestinian father's donkey, named Yahu. The readers are also informed that while the uninformed thought the donkey was named after the Internet (Yahoo), her father, and most likely also the author and the rest of her family, were aware that the name is in fact an allusion to Benjamin Netanyahu. In such context, the adjective "Palestinian" attributed to the author's father at the beginning of the poem constitutes the basis of the criticism developed in the poem. The author's father, who is of Palestinian origin, named his donkey, stereotypically associated a low level of intelligence, after an Israeli politician. Yet intensifying this indirect criticism, in the third verse of the poem, the author says that her father had thus insulted the donkey. The very first stanza thus suggests that the author was not only familiar with her father's standpoint considering the situation in Palestine but also fiercely shares his opinions and even more intensely disapproves of the Israeli politics. The criticism and the antipathy towards Israel, in the author's group, more precisely in her family, has been present for a long time, which would suggest how the ingroup perceives the opposing party ultimately negatively.

The next stanza of the poem introduces a picture of a donkey and a horse peacefully sharing a field.

The donkey was friends with a horse, in a field.

The author emphasizes the fact that none of the animals tried to dominate the area, celebrating their serenity and in a way proposing an example of the ideal state of affairs between Israel and Palestine. Also, as a horse and a donkey are very similar animals, his parallel also suggests how alike the two parties in conflict are.

The third stanza of the poem constitutes the most radical criticism of the addressee of the poem. The author speaks directly to Netanyahu, opening the stanza with the word "Your", making Netanyahu implicitly responsible for the actions depicted. The author mentions the recent bombing of the United Nations refugees center or the occupation and poverty of Palestine and orders Netanyahu to "take it". The exclamation mark and strong expressions such as "bombed", "imprisoned", or "blood" evoke the author's strong emotional engagement in the cause and help create a vivid and overwhelming impression of anger and exasperation, as if the author herself was harmed by the actions. Moreover, the adverb "just" indicates that the author is concerned with current affairs and her interest is not directed merely to the actions of the past which may have affected her family, but she is equally distressed by the suffering of those presently involved in the conflict.

The last stanza of the poem yet again depicts a donkey in its idyllic environment, emphasizing its nonviolent and humble nature.

Overall, the poem presents the readers with the author's standpoint in the conflict between Israel and Palestine, accompanied by intense images suggesting the author's emotional involvement in the conflict. It indicates the bond between the author and her father and the author's adopting her father's attitude and opinions. In the poem, Nye passionately criticizes an Israeli politician and shows her attentiveness to the current state of affairs in Israel and Palestine, which indicates that the author not only sympathizes with her father, but with his in-group in general.

In conclusion, both poems, "Mediterranean Blue" and "To Netanyahu" illustrate the author's close bond with her father. The first poem demonstrates the victim-like

identity of the father and both poems demonstrate how deeply the author feels with her father and consequently also sympathizes with his compatriots. She clearly adopts her father's beliefs and viewpoints and develops them in her perception of the conflict, which may suggest that the author feels equally involved and may eventually also develop a sense of victimhood as a second-generation victim of the conflict, considering that even though Shihab Nye may not have endured any direct harm, she is nevertheless aware of her father's suffering and accepts and praises her Palestinian origin. Consequently, she experiences a sense of solidarity and compassion with the land and its people. In such a case, it would not be a directly experienced harmful event, which would be at the beginning of the author's victimization, but this would be experienced indirectly through the author's father, who would be the stimulus of the process, making Nye a second-generation indirect victim. This sharing of opinions or a specific state of mind among the members of the same group is also one of the signs of collective victimhood in intractable conflicts as presented in the works of Bar-Tal.

5.3.2 A rigid and long-lasting perception of the conflict

Another aspect is the in-group's firm and uncompromising perception of the conflict, unlikely to evolve during, or after the conflict. This inalterability in time and space can be observed in the poem "The Space We're In".

5.3.2.1 "The Space We're In"

The poem consists of three stanzas of 14, 6, and 8 verses, the first stanza being a continuation of the title of the poem. The poem is, as typical for Shihab Nye, written in free verse and can be found in the first part of the collection.

The author opens the poem with an image of time and space and reminds the reader of the profound and unalterable character of the two realities.

The Space We're In

echoes deeply

Time doesn't just crumple

the minute you turn the calendar page

She evokes the idea that nothing, no traditions, no habits, no strong values change overnight, because they are deep-rooted in the people who share them. This idea is followed by seemingly innocent verses where the author expresses her doubts about a "country being great", accusing such claims of blatant bragging and potential aggression. Considering the cultural context of *The Tiny Journalist* and the verses that follow, this allusion can be quickly identified as a reference to the popular slogan of the 2016 presidential campaign in the United States, "Make America Great Again". With this context in mind, the initial idea of the impossibility of an immediate major change gains a more concrete shape, that of the aftermath of the election, which tends to be considered a significant shift in history. Furthermore, this shift is, in the author's perception, associated with "more weapons", which, together with the author calling for the country to be "nice to all people", indicates a sort of violence and discrimination. Hence, the United States are presented rather negatively, as a perpetrator in the author's narrative. In the following verses, the author depicts her picture of an idyllic country, compassionate, tolerant, hospitable, and thoughtful.

I want a country to be nice to all people

Make them feel better

than people feel by themselves

Compassionate and gentle

In the second stanza of the poem, Shihab Nye recalls Palestinian hospitality. The author brings the reader inside a Palestinian home, offering them a drink and a little sweet dessert, doing so through direct questions that make the reader feel as if talking to someone face to face. The author further emphasizes that such treatment was common no matter who the guest was, even if it was a complete stranger. This comes as a sharp

contrast with the country evoked in the first stanza of the poem and suggests who the heroes and the villains of the story are, if it is narrated by the poet.

The third stanza of the poem begins with "America being mean to Palestine is nothing new". The American actions linked to Palestine are presented as if they were a stable part of the American standards and manners as if they have always been such and as if, had they stayed the same forever, nobody would be surprised. It stresses the perception of the United States as a long-term adversary and Palestine as an indubitable victim of the circumstances. Nye further compares the American conduct towards Palestine to "the dark side of junior high school", suggesting how childish and inconsiderate this behavior is. The author closes the poem with the idea that those, who only want to maintain one strong relationship, usually end up lonely, which may be understood as the author's advice for reconsideration of American foreign politics.

This poem serves as an illustration of the constancy of societal habits and traditions in two different lands. While the United States are represented as the perpetrator whose standard manners may need some adjustments, Palestine is depicted exclusively positively, as hospitable and kind. The poem evokes a sharp contrast between American and Palestinian traditions, indicating a sort of antagonism. The conduct on both sides is presented as constant and unchangeable and therefore, the United States are standardly perceived negatively, as a source of discrimination and aggression, while Palestine is considered considerate and congenial. The perception on both sides seems to be presented as rather firm and in the long run invariable and indicates how rigid the perception of the conflict is, even in the psyche of the author, which is one of the signs of collective victimhood in Bar-Tal's taxonomy.

5.3.3 Intense negative emotions

Another aspect of collective victimhood is the presence of intense negative emotions such as anger, hopelessness, or self-pity. The analysis of the following poems is to demonstrate the author's own experience of such strong emotions, related to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, as a symptom of collective victimhood.

5.3.3.1 "A Person in Northern Ireland"

This poem only consists of six verses and it illustrates the author's response to a message she had received. The author evokes someone sending her a quote by R. M. Rilke intended to encourage hope for a bright future.

*And now let us believe
in a long year that is given to us, new, untouched, full of
things that have never been.*

However, the author's reaction to the message is very much different, as she expresses her worries over the possibility of experiencing such unprecedented things as if she were afraid that they might be even worse than what she has known so far. In the context of *The Tiny Journalist*, this may be interpreted as the author's fear over potential happenings in Palestine, where the current situation is by the author believed to be bad enough already and any new things coming might be unwelcome. Considering this interpretation, the indication of the geographical background of the two people mentioned in the poem gains more significance. The title introduces "A person in Northern Ireland" and the second verse of the poem mentions that Rilke was from Germany, two countries strikingly different from Palestine. It may be therefore suggested that such encouragement, coming from people unfamiliar with the Palestinian condition, might be inadequate and therefore irrelevant. Its effect hence does not result in hope, but contrariwise, in fear, a very common emotion experienced by people related to a conflict which influences their psyche and develops a sense of victimhood in their minds.

5.3.3.2 "Advice"

Formally, this poem is also very short, consisting of only four verses, out of which the last is stranded, proposing the poem's denouement.

My friend, dying, said do the hard thing first.

*Always do the hard thing and you will have a better day.
The second thing will seem less hard.
She didn't tell me what to do when everything seems hard.*

The author proposes an image of a dying friend giving her advice about life, suggesting that the most difficult things should be dealt with first, for then the rest will seem easy. As in "A Person in Northern Ireland", the reaction is not as anticipated, because, in exceptionally severe circumstances, a difficult thing might be followed by something equally difficult. The advice thus does not serve as a means of encouragement but becomes a source of frustration or despair, another intense negative emotion commonly experienced by people threatened by a conflict.

5.3.3.3 ""ISRAELIS LET BULLDOZERS GRIND TO HALT""

This poem consists of three stanzas and is therefore significantly longer than the two previously analyzed poems. The poem is written in free verse and the author employs enumeration in the first stanza, but no other literary devices can be identified.

Thematically, the poem deals with the author's anger over the representation of the Israeli violent conduct in American newspapers. The title of the poem refers to a headline in an American newspaper and in the first stanza, the author fiercely criticizes how the phrase deliberately presents bulldozers as objects with free will and therefore clears the actual people of responsibility in the subconsciousness of the readers. The author lists the destroyed building in the first stanza and continues the criticism of such depersonalization in the second stanza.

In the third stanza, the author explicitly expresses her fury over this public disguise of the violent conduct in Palestine.

"I am mad about language"

Overall, the poem is fraught with acrimony on the side of the author, who despises the coverage of the cruel actions of the Israelis. She does not only condemn the Israelis,

as the executors of the actions, but also the United States, who are, in the context of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, represented in the collection as another perpetrator.

It is therefore clear that when it comes to Shihab Nye's feelings about the conflict, based on the poems, she experiences intense negative emotions such as anger, frustration, or fear, caused by her perception of cruel actions conducted by the out-group of the conflict. All these emotions constitute one of the main implications of the sense of collective victimhood.

5.3.4 Emergence of a sense of victimhood and a sense of victimhood as a prism

The next part of the thesis will be dealing with the representation of the tendency of victimhood to automatically emerge in violent situations and it also serves as a prism to evaluate one's experiences. To illustrate these aspects, the anecdote False Alarm Hawai'i will be analyzed.

5.3.4.1 "False Alarm Hawai'i"

This anecdote narrates the author's perception of a false missile alert in Hawaii.

Nye evokes her husband, who, at the time of the alarm, was staying in Hawaii and therefore the author's experience is not direct, but anyway very intense. The poet describes the warning messages, her husband's confusion, and the chaos that followed among the people directly involved.

In such an intense and threatening situation, the author's relation to Palestine emerges to serve as a sort of standard. The author compares and judges the false alarm in Hawaii according to the conflict in Palestine, which becomes kind of a standard towards which other violent experiences are to be measured. The author says that while the warning in Hawaii was only misleading, this is rarely the case in Palestine, where people actually die and things get destroyed. The situation in Palestine is therefore depicted as significantly worse and an impression of victimhood of Palestinian people underlies the anecdote. Moreover, Hawaii too is presented as a victim of outer influences and

authorities, who are reported to be striving to gain control over the land. This suggests that a sense of victimhood extends from a past harmful experience to a new one where it emerges in a new form.

The image of a false alarm in Hawaii associated with the actual violence in Palestine in the author's perspective thus becomes an illustration of the tendency of victimhood to arise in threatening situations due to its embedding in one's psyche. The anecdote also demonstrates how the author's sense of victimhood, linked to a certain harmful experience, influences her evaluation of other harmful experiences. Such ingrained reaction to harmful events indicates that the sense of collective victimhood is embedded in Nye's psyche and comes to the foreground in times of emergency or danger, when the author associates her sense of victimhood evoked by her relation to Palestine, with a situation that is not anyhow linked to it. An association of two harmful experiences and a feeling of victimhood in both experiences is very unlikely to come to mind of anyone who is not strongly affected by them and therefore it might be concluded that the author is very much influenced by the conflict in Palestine and experiences a sense of victimhood in threatening situations, strengthened by the sense of victimhood related to her Israeli-Palestinian relation.

5.3.5 Magnification of differences between the parties involved in the conflict

A sense of victimhood in intractable conflict is also linked to the magnification of differences between the in-group and the out-group, which can be observed in another anecdote of *The Tiny Journalist*, called Pharmacy, where the poet provides us with her idea of the contrast between the American and Palestinian situation.

5.3.5.1 "Pharmacy"

The anecdote presents the readers with an image of an elderly man shopping, but this is accompanied by Nye's personal comments and associations.

The picture is presented from the perspective of the author, narrated in the first person and offering Nye's observations, opinions and standpoint. The text depicts an elderly man shopping, which is generally an innocent and peaceful image, but accompanied by the author's insights, this situation becomes an object of criticism. The author calls the man "the oldest man in the world" or "ancient", suggesting his advanced age, and she expresses her amazement by his purchase. The items that the man is buying are simple, but as the author has indicated, they contain in themselves a considerable amount of hope. The shopper is buying shaving cream, shampoo, and some sweets and even though these are altogether ordinary things, the author's take on the man's purchase is rather condemning. These items evoke the man's planning in advance and counting on the future, which is an idea that the author finds astonishing, even ridiculous, considering his overall look "his bowed posture, his pale suite, majestic movements, his cane with a plastic coin purse attached near the handle".

More importantly, though, the author contrasts this picture with her thoughts of a ten-year-old amateur journalist who is documenting the protests in her war-torn homeland all while the elderly man is shopping. The journalist can be easily identified as Janna Jihad, to whom the collection is dedicated and this evocation of her presents the readers with a striking difference between the two realities – the comfortable and safe world of the elderly man and a troubling and perilous home of the girl. The author goes as far as projecting Janna's words, confronting the readers with the girl's disturbing environment: "We just want to be left alone on our land. What is wrong with being on our land? ". These indications and other further details in the text also help us identify the geographical aspect of the evoked contrast as American vs. Palestinian. Following the vision of a struggle for land is a passage where the author contemplates the elderly man's life, asking hypothetical questions about the help and the support the man has received in his homeland, that made his life so pleasant. The sliding door, the man's carefully stepping into a car and a special parking place equally suggest how serene his life is, but this enumeration seems quite fraught with acrimony from the point of the view of the author and her judgment is concluded in the last sentence of the text, where the author bitterly admits that while it is obvious what the man's plans are, she has no idea what Janna will do.

It is clear that the two protagonists of the story come from two strikingly different environments and also from very distant generations. The author's representation of the two unrelated strangers in one story creates an immense contrast and points to the elderly man as to the American anti-hero and to the young journalist as to the poor, yet heroic victim. It almost seems as if the author believed that there is only one person who would deserve to plan their future, but it is necessary to note that the two worlds depicted are almost incomparable and such suggestions might seem rather unfair. Yet, the author, in her mind and consequently in her writing, links the elderly man to the young girl and deliberately presents the readers with this sharp contrast. This suggests that the author believes in an immense difference between the two involved parties represented by the two protagonists, Palestine and the United States. The fact that the author provides the readers with two very different characters, whether it is their sex, age or economic situation, only highlights how she links two worlds that, in reality, share no common point and are clearly independent of one another. The difference between the two sides is therefore measured by two utterly different standards and becomes a hyperbolized version of reality and such magnification of the actual difference is also one of the aspects of collective victimhood.

5.4 Signs of victimhood in the overall structure of the collection

Based on the previous part of the thesis where effects of collective victimhood on the author's writings and therefore on her psyche were identified, it can be claimed that the author experiences a sense of victimhood developed from her personal connection with Palestinians, as a group believing to have been harmed by outer forces, such as the state of Israel or the United States of America.

This identification with the Palestinians and also the recognition of the adversary as the Israelis or the Americans are however not unexpected. Shihab Nye, being of Palestinian origin might have a natural tendency to sympathize with the Palestinians first and foremost probably for being one's descendant. Such in-group bias, which results in perceiving the in-group as overall better or more competent, has been proven to grow

from a mere identification with the in-group. (Druckman 48). Moreover, this tendency to sympathize with the Palestinians might also rise from Palestinians being often perceived as the weaker side, and from the psychological perspective, it has been suggested that the general public show empathy towards the weaker side of a conflict. (Bar-Tal et al. 669) These factors might therefore be a source of almost prejudiced perception and consequently such presentation of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict in *The Tiny Journalist*.

On the other hand, Nye has spent a vast majority of her life in the United States and thus also has a personal connection with this country, and yet, the United States are presented mostly negatively in *The Tiny Journalist*. This too might be a result of her identification with the Palestinians, which, compared to Palestine, makes the United States the ultimate "villain" of the conflict. Altogether, the representation of the conflict might be rather biased.

These biases around the Israeli-Palestinian conflict are not only present as themes within poems, as has been shown in the previous section of this paper, but also spread to the overall structure of *The Tiny Journalist*. Of course, as *The Tiny Journalist* is in the first place a literary piece of work, some artistic freedom of the author comes to the foreground and contributes to a rather subjective representation of actual events. The poet leaves almost no space to the point of view of her group's adversary, which, when comes to the picture, is generally portrayed as cruel and hence the impression created by the collection is ultimately sympathetic to the Palestinians. Whether this is a result of the author's own psyche, which prefers the Palestinian input to that of the Israelis or the United States, or whether it is the author's intention aimed at forming the public opinion, remains questionable. This subjective representation does not mean though, that the author's point of view is utterly unjustified. The poetic license of the author should be accepted as a part of artistic creation and considering numerous of Nye's predecessors, who displayed their political beliefs in their works and are now considered classics, even the gap between reality and the poetic images should be respected. Moreover, Shihab Nye also employs numerous realistic elements in her writings, incorporates actual people and authentic events, and comes to create a more believable and rationalized context to her perspective, justifying her point of view. This would also result in a more intense reaction

among the readers and potentially launch a wave of compassion towards Palestine. Was such impact calculated, it would suggest that Nye is striving to gain the empathy of the general public, which in itself, is equally one of the signs of collective victimhood.

5.4.1 The Realistic aspect of the poems and its effect

Even though the author's perception of the conflict might be naturally subjective, she integrates a number of real-life events and people in her poems. This helps the poet support her cause, justify her perspective, and influence the readers' opinions. The following part of the thesis consists of an analysis of a unique poem of *The Tiny Journalist*, which provides the readers with real-life examples of Palestinian victims of the conflict in question. The aim of the analysis is to identify the people mentioned in the poem in order to highlight the author's actual efforts to influence public opinion and potentially obtain some sympathy, as identifiable victims generally draw more attention from the public and launch a significant wave of compassion (Jenni and Loewenstein 236).

5.4.1.1 "America Gives Israel Ten Million Dollars a Day"

This poem consists of 9 stanzas and altogether 56 verses, the number of which varies according to the stanza, with the last verse being stranded from the rest of the poem as its climax.

Thematically, the poem is predominantly concerned with concrete examples of victims of the conflict between Israel and Palestine. However, it also presents the readers with the author's personal insights and illustrations, criticizing not only the conflict itself but also, as the title suggests, the financial aid provided to Israel by the United States.

The urgency of the poem lays in the authenticity of the images the author depicts, all being real-life examples, and this realistic character of Shihab Nye's writings is what makes her so unique. She does not invent the objects or protagonists of her works, but

incorporates real people and events, creating an impression of certain poetic activism. This poem stands out as the most obvious example of realism in *The Tiny Journalist*.

The poem opens with a short simple verse "In jail:" and what follows is the enumeration of examples of people imprisoned under the Israeli occupation.

The first stanza is dedicated to Lama Khater and the very first sentence of the stanza mentions Khater's two-year-old child. Such a simple comment helps put a human face on an unknown name, evoking the prisoner's personal life and more specifically, a very sensitive role of a mother. The author further informs us about Khater's writing ban, multiple detainments, and imprisonment. We are also told that "The Israeli jail won't let her sleep" and we can easily pinpoint the antihero in the picture and what seems like a simple metaphor of Khater's constant nervousness caused by the Israeli conduct, turns out, upon further research, as yet another image of reality.

Lama Khater is a Palestinian writer and journalist arrested in July 2018 after a series of investigations executed by Israeli occupation forces concerning her writings and membership in banned organizations. Khater was accused of incitement to violence and according to the non-governmental organisation the Palestinian Prisoners Club, she endured "a harsh and continuous investigation, which lasted for more than 20 hours a day, confined to a chair all the time." Khater is a mother of five children (Palestine News Gazette).

The second stanza introduces Salah Hamouri, a French-Palestinian lawyer. The author informs the readers about Hamouri's detention and the invasion of his house following Hamouri's gaining admission to practice law. This dispassionate description is concluded by an exclamation "Party for justice!", which adds the impression of the author's emotional engagement in the cause.

Salah Hamouri is a French-Palestinian lawyer and a human rights activist who was kept in administrative detention without charges or trial for 13 months. He was arrested in August 2017, three days after having passed the Palestinian bar examination that would allow his lawyer practice. Hamouri's French nationality did not prevent the Israeli forces from taking Hamouri into custody (Samidoun).

Mustapha Awad is a Belgian artist and dancer that the author tells us about in the third stanza of the poem. We are informed that Awad was arrested upon visiting his family's properties and also that he does not possess a Palestinian ID. This simple description of the situation is, like the previous ones, accompanied by the author's emotional outbreak in, again, an exclamatory sentence "Travel at your leisure!". The tone of this message is clearly ironic, emphasizing the absurdity of the injustice.

Mustapha Awad is a refugee, today a Belgian citizen, and an activist for Palestinian rights. Awad, of Palestinian origin, was upon his first visit to Palestine seized by the Israeli occupation forces and taken into interrogation. Awad was sentenced to one year in an Israeli prison after a plea agreement (Samidoun).

The fourth stanza of the poem begins with the author's urge not only the readers but the society and the world as a whole, to get somehow involved and informed about Mohammed Zayed. The use of the personal pronoun "we", at the very beginning of the stanza draws the reader closer to the writer and to the issue evoked and it emphasizes the universality of the author's insistence. We are informed that Zayed has been imprisoned without any formal explanation and this after having already spent 19 years in prison. The evokes Zayed in an ordinary situation, wearing ordinary clothes, and mentions that Zayed has been a "Palestinian citizen of Israel since 1948". The last sentence of the stanza introduces a contemplation over how exhausted Zayed must be by now and it indicates the sinister situation of alike citizens.

Mohammed Zayed is a Palestinian political prisoner who was released from prison in 2011 after serving 19 years but arrested again in 2018 and sentenced to eight months for some other, unspecified matter. He is a leader of a Palestinian political movement active in the occupied parts of Palestine and while the author suggests that Zayed has been a Palestinian citizen since 1948, he was in fact born in 1960. The author's mark may be hence interpreted as a reference to the year 1948, which is a year of the Arab-Israeli War and may indicate the poor conditions of the Palestinian citizens since this conflict. On top of this, the photo the author mentions is in fact authentic and yet reinforces the realistic character of her writing (Samidoun).

In the fifth stanza, the author addresses the readers while criticizing Israel for arresting people without any consideration of their background. She illustrates her claims with examples of simple actions, such as a girl slapping a soldier for killing her relative and then asking the reader "Wouldn't you slap him too?". As in the previous stanza, through such direct vocation, Shihab Nye draws the reader closer to her and generalizes the situation so as it is relatable to everyone. It is also in this stanza that the author states that the United States give Israel 38 billion dollars as a kind of compensation. The author is referring to the financial aid the United States are to provide to Israel under the Memorandum of Understanding, which pledges the United States to provide 38 billion dollars to Israel during a period of 10 years, starting in 2019. If this sum was to be divided into days, it would make over 10 million dollars provided from the United States to Israel, which is the amount suggested in the title of the poem. The author further suggests the indifference of Israel towards Palestinians provoked by such generous sponsorship. Asking once again a hypothetical question "Why would they care who you are?", the author's wonder over the situation comes as a desperate cry in hopeless circumstances.

The following part of the poem no longer depicts the imprisoned citizens, but it focuses on the victims of difficult circumstances.

Firstly, we are introduced to Malak Mattar, an artist denied visas to see exhibitions of her works. The author says that Mattar knows that she would be welcomed, but Shihab further contemplates the authorities' perception of young artists, suggesting that the people in power consider them abnormal. The author even asks whether the authorities know about the existence of young artists, stressing the irrationality of their conduct.

Malak Mattar is a Palestinian emerging artist who was in 2018 denied visa to France and to the United Kingdom. Consequently, in her Facebook post, she expressed the idea that she knew she would have been welcomed in these countries, but some people seemingly did not want the Palestinians to lead "normal" lives. Her words later became a source of inspiration for Naomi Shihab Nye and once again we can observe how the images depicted in Nye's poetry are predominantly derived from reality (News teleSUR English).

The following stanza begins with the author addressing Yousef. She uses hypothetical questions concerned with his education, twice asking "How dare you?". However, the questions the author asks are so basic they are clearly absurd, satiric. The author further informs the readers that Yousef has been banned from his university campus despite having already paid his fees.

Yousef Dweikat is a Palestinian student who was in August 2018 banned from entering the campus of his university in occupied Nablus. He is a student of Electrical Engineering and a former prisoner, previously arrested by Israeli occupation forces for engagement in student activities and jailed for six months. The author hence yet again provides us with an image of a real-life person, a victim of difficult circumstances and not just a fictional character without background (Samidoun).

The next stanza provides us with the narrator's personal experience with a rabbi. The narrator tells us about a confrontation with a rabbi whom they have asked whether his people could have imagined the pain of the narrator's people. However, the rabbi did not reply to the narrator's question, which is yet highlighted by the verse "I made a rabbi quiet". As if to push him further and escalate the discussion, the narrator asks a more specific question, illustrating the severe situation she is asking about with an example of Ahmad Dawabsha. The rabbi is offered a picture of a little boy as the only survivor of an arson attack that killed his entire family. This time the rabbi's answer is clear "I don't know. I don't know if we can imagine it." The poem ends with a stranded verse, which concludes the dialogue between the narrator and the rabbi by claiming that the rabbi's people, unable to imagine the sorrows of Palestinians, are what is the problem.

It is therefore clear that while naturally being subjective in her writings, the author strives to provide authentic examples to support her beliefs and her beliefs only. While plentiful real-life examples of Palestinian victims, but also Palestinian activists are presented in the collection, essentially no space is given to the adversary. This lack of another perspective, and also a large number of concrete examples of the in-group's victims has an immense effect on the readers. While general images of Palestinian culture,

society, and omnipresent suffering proposed by the author might smoothly introduce the readers to the problematics, it is the exemplification which makes them emotionally engaged, as it launches the identifiable victim effect in the reader's psyche and makes the readers more compassionate with the Palestinians. This effect can be explained as a rising tendency to sympathize or help identified people more than anonymous or statistical victims (Jenni and Loewenstein 236). Also, as the adversary is oftentimes only referred to in groups, it remains unidentified and difficult to identify or sympathize with.

The fact that the author consciously provides the readers exclusively with concrete examples of Palestinian victims, might support one of the functions of collective victimhood, competitive victimhood. Competitive victimhood suggests that a group within a conflict strives to gain the status of a unique and ultimate victim of the conflict, in order to gain international support and potential financial aid. (Bar-Tal et al. 246). Such representation of the conflict together with the publication of the collection itself might be interpreted as alike efforts and therefore could also suggest the presence of collective victimhood in the author's psyche. Finally, if effects of collective victimhood could have been found in the poems themselves, the structure of *The Tiny Journalist* and its actual publication only add up to the assumption that the poet herself experiences a sense of collective victimhood and through her writings strives to obtain the sympathy of the general public, which too is one of the aspects of collective victimhood.

5.5 Symptoms of victimhood in selected poems

Based on the taxonomy proposed by Bar-Tal, once developed, a sense of collective victimhood consists of a set of beliefs, attitudes, emotions, and behavioral tendencies that can be observed in the psyche of the individual members of the collective. These beliefs emphasize that the harm inflicted on the in-group by another group was or is undeserved and unjustified, they render the out-group fully responsible for the harm, highlight the in-group's victim status and strive for a form of compensation. The attitudes include negative emotions directed at the out-group and positive emotions towards the in-group and its supporters. Other emotions linked to the sense of collective victimhood are

anger, fear, or self-pity. Finally, the behavioral tendencies in question include efforts to prevent future harmful treatment or to punish the out-group (Bar-Tal 239).

As it has been demonstrated in the previous part of the thesis, several of these symptoms overlap with the effects of collective victimhood on the psyche of the in-group members as described by Bar-Tal, and they can therefore also be identified in the above-analyzed poems and assigned to Nye.

While negative emotions such as fear or anger can be observed in the above analyzed poems ""ISRAELIS LET BULLDOZERS GRIND TO HALT"" or "Advice", positive self-perception is illustrated in e.g. "The Space We're In", where the Palestinians are presented as overall generous and considerate and on the other hand. The United States, on the other hand, are presented chiefly negatively in the poem, which emphasizes the negative attitude of the in-group towards the out-group. The same kind of antagonism can be observed in the anecdote "Pharmacy" or the poem "To Netanyahu". The poem "Losing as Its Own Flower" displays the in-group's beliefs that the harmful treatment inflicted on them was unjustified and the out-group is responsible for the atrocities that occurred during the conflict. The behavioral tendencies could then, to some extent, be found in the overall effect the author strives to imply on the readers, as the collection has the capacity to shape the public opinion and tilt the general sympathy to Palestine, presented as the ultimate victim of the narrative.

6 Conclusion

The thesis sought to explore the motif of victimhood in Nye's poems and juxtapose her artistic rendering of this theme with the established theories of victimhood and victimization. We have established that a considerable segment of poems from *The Tiny Journalist* collection align with Bar-Tal's or Strobl's taxonomy and thus support the idea that, despite the factual remove facilitated by her American upbringing, Nye herself experiences a sense of victimhood rising from her identification with the Palestinian people.

Firstly, signs of collective victimhood among Palestinians were scrutinized in the selected poems, typically against the background of taxonomies proposed by Bar-Tal or Strobl. The establishment of collective victimhood among Palestinians was essential in order to build a basis for the theory of a collective experiencing the sense of collective victimhood that the author could readily and legitimately identify with. The analysis of the poems "In Northern Ireland They Called It "The Troubles" and "Losing as Its Own Flower" proved that the author herself portrays the Palestinians as victims and in her writings illustrates the process of victimization and different symptoms of collective victimhood among them.

This was followed by efforts to identify the source of victimhood and therefore to classify Nye as a victim, according to the typology proposed by Huyse. Based on the analysis of poems "Mediterranean Blue" and "To Netanyahu" it can be concluded that the author is an indirect, second-generation, collective type of victim of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

To support this claim, the thesis further proposed an analysis of poems where Nye was clearly expressing her standpoint and could be identified as a narrator. Selected poems were analyzed so as to identify signs of victimhood, its implications or symptoms, as a reflection of the poet's psyche in her writings. The phenomena that were observed were beforehand selected based on Bar-Tal's theory of collective victimhood and included e.g. intense negative emotions, sharing of a specific state of mind, rigid and long-lasting perception of the conflict, or magnified differences between the opposing groups. Most of the signs proposed by Bar-Tal were found in the collection, namely in poems "The Space We're In", "A Person in Northern Ireland", "Advice", or in the "Pharmacy" anecdote.

However, some of the symptoms or implications of victimhood on the poet's psyche could not be pinpointed in the collection, even though they constitute an integral part of the collective victimhood as described in several theories. The thesis, therefore, cannot aspire to systemically identify signs of constant insecurity in the psyche of the author, the influence of victimhood on her emotional and cognitive capacity, or efforts to avenge the harmful treatment inflicted on the in-group. On the other hand though, this

might be caused by the fact that, no matter how invested in the conflict Nye may think she is, we need to be mindful of the fact that she does not live in the eye of the storm, so to speak, and is therefore not personally threatened. These alleviating factors may inevitably dampen the conflict's impact on her and consequently tone down the radicalism of her message.

Overall, numerous indications of Nye's own sense of collective victimhood related to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict have been identified in the poems of *The Tiny Journalist*. Even though not all of the signs related to the studied phenomena, generally proposed by victimhood theories, were found in the collection, we believe that those that have been confirmed constitute sufficient proof of the presence of the sense of collective victimhood in the psyche of the author. Taking into consideration the fact that the poet does not live directly in the conflict, it can be naturally presumed that she will not experience the sense of victimhood to the full extent as her compatriots in Palestine do. Nevertheless, the presence of the majority of victimhood symptoms and implications on Nye's psyche only emphasize the vast effect of intractable conflicts, spreading not only through the people trapped in it, but also through the friends, relatives, or partners, diasporic and dispersed around the world.

7 Sources

Shihab Nye, Naomi. *The Tiny Journalist*. BOA Editions, Ltd., 2019.

Schori-Eyal, Noa, Eran Halperin, and Daniel Bar-Tal. "Three layers of collective victimhood: effects of multileveled victimhood on intergroup conflicts in the Israeli–Arab context." *Journal of Applied Social Psychology*. Wiley Periodicals, 2014, 778-794.

Bar-Tal, Daniel, Lily Chernyak-Hai, Noa Schori, and Ayelet Gundar. "A sense of self-perceived collective victimhood in intractable conflicts" *International Review of the Red Cross*, vol. 91, no. 874, 2009.

Meredith, Valerie M. "Victim identity and respect for human dignity: a terminological analysis" *International Review of the Red Cross*, vol. 91, no. 874, 2009.

Bloomfield, David, Teresa Barnes, and Luc Huysse. *Reconciliation After Violent Conflict: A Handbook*. The International IDEA, 2003.

Druckman, Daniel. "Nationalism, Patriotism, and Group Loyalty: A Social Psychological Perspective" *Mershon International Studies Review*, vol. 38, no. 1, 1994, 43-68.

Klimecki, Olga M. "The Role of Empathy and Compassion in Conflict Resolution" *Emotion Review*, Vol. 11, 2019.

Terhoeven, Petra. "The Other Side of Terrorism" *Victimhood and Acknowledgment*. De Gruyter, 2018.

Leider, Jacques P. "History and Victimhood: Engaging with Rohingya Issues" *Insight Turkey*, vol. 20, no. 1, 2018, 99-118.

Andrighetto Luca, S. Mari, C. Volpato, and B. Behluli. "Reducing Competitive Victimhood in Kosovo: The Role of Extended Contact and Common Ingroup Identity". *Political Psychology*, vol. 33, no. 4, 2012, 513-529.

Breen-Smyth, M., "Suffering, Victims and Survivors in the Northern Ireland Conflict: Definitions, Policies and Politics." *Victimhood and Acknowledgment*. De Gruyter. 2018.

Ndahinda, Felix M. "Collective Victimization and Subjectivity in the Democratic Republic of Congo" *International Journal on Minority and Group Rights*, vol. 23, no. 2, 2016, 137-178.

Strobl, Rainer. "Constructing the Victim: Theoretical reflections and empirical examples" *International Review of Victimology*, vol.2, 2004, 295-311.

Kriesberg, Louis. "Intractable Conflicts" *Peace Review* 5, 1993, 417-421.

Jenni, Karen, George Loewenstein. "Explaining the Identifiable Victim Effect" *Journal of Risk and Uncertainty*, 1997, 235–257.

The United Nations Refugee Agency, *Convention and Protocole Relating to the Status of Refugees*, UNHCR Communications and Public Information Service, 2010.

Schiama, Giovanni. *The Value of Arts for Business*. Cambridge University Press, 2011, 37.

"Naomi Shihab Nye", *Poetry Foundation*, 2020.

<https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poets/naomi-shihab-nye>

"The Tiny Journalist by Naomi Shihab Nye", *World Literature Today*, 2019.

<https://www.worldliteraturetoday.org/2019/spring/tiny-journalist-naomi-shihab-nye>

"U.S. Finalizes Deal to Give Israel \$38 Billion in Military Aid", *The New York Times*, 2016.

<https://www.nytimes.com/2016/09/14/world/middleeast/israel-benjamin-netanyahu-military-aid.html>

"Israel releases Palestinian journalist Lama Khater", *Palestine News Gazette*, 2019.

www.palestinewgazette.com/israel-releases-palestinian-journalist-lama-khater/

"One year of arbitrary detention for French-Palestinian lawyer Salah Hamouri", *Samidoun*, 2018.

<https://samidoun.net/2018/08/one-year-of-arbitrary-detention-for-french-palestinian-lawyer-salah-hamouri/>

"Belgian-Palestinian artist Mustapha Awad sentenced to a year in Israeli prison", *Samidoun*, 2018.

<https://samidoun.net/2018/12/belgian-palestinian-artist-mustapha-awad-sentenced-to-a-year-in-israeli-prison/>

"Palestinian teen artist denied visas to France, UK to attend exhibits of her own work", *News teleSUR English*, 2018.

<http://wp.telesurtv.net/english/news/Palestinian-Teen-Artist-Denied-Visas-to-France-UK-to-Attend-Exhibits-of-Her-Own-Work-20180820-0028.html>

"Israeli occupation bans Palestinian student from his university campus", *Samidoun*, 2018.

<https://samidoun.net/2018/08/israeli-occupation-bans-palestinian-student-from-his-university-campus/>

"Israeli military reimposes sentence on former prisoner from occupied Palestine '48", *Samidoun*, 2018.

<https://samidoun.net/2018/08/israeli-military-reimposes-sentence-on-former-prisoner-from-occupied-palestine-48/>

"Year after bombing that killed his family, Ahmed Dawabsha leaves hospital", *The Times of Israel*, 2016.

<https://www.timesofisrael.com/year-after-firebombing-that-killed-his-family-ahmed-dawabsha-leaves-hospital>

Michael King "Arab Star", *The Austin Chronicle*, 2007.

<https://www.austinchronicle.com/books/2007-07-20/505077/>

Jeff Wallenfeldt, "The Troubles", *Encyclopædia Britannica*, 2020.

<https://www.britannica.com/event/The-Troubles-Northern-Ireland-history>

"Harriet Jacobs", *Encyclopædia Britannica*, 2020.

<https://www.britannica.com/biography/Harriet-Jacobs>

"Charlotte Perkins Gilman", *Encyclopædia Britannica*, 2020.
<https://www.britannica.com/biography/Charlotte-Perkins-Gilman>

"Sylvia Plath", *Encyclopædia Britannica*, 2020.
<https://www.britannica.com/biography/Sylvia-Plath>

"Nikki Giovanni", *Encyclopædia Britannica*, 2020.
<https://www.britannica.com/biography/Nikki-Giovanni>