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The Animal in Man – An Image Pattern in Frank Norris' *Mcteague*

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Abstract

Every man possesses an animal instinct that lingers beneath the surface, waiting for an appropriate time to manifest. In Frank Norris' *McTeague*, some characters degenerate to the level of the animal, displaying brutality and striving like predators for survival. This study sought to investigate the animal metaphor as an image pattern in *McTeague.* The study used textual analysis as a design to analyse, interpret and evaluate *McTeague*. The study concluded that Joseph Le Conte's theory of Evolution and Cesare Lombroso's theory of criminology influenced the writing of *McTeague*. Thus, there is extensive use of the animal metaphor as an image pattern through the characters in the novel: McTeague, Trina, Marcus and Zerkow. They are metaphorically hustled up and down the evolutionary ladder between the levels of the animal and the human. Consequently, these characters degenerate to metaphorical animals and constitute an image pattern in the novel. When things are normal, their animal instincts are not only concealed but also tamed and only come out when things become abnormal. The study further established that the animal instinct is there in every human; hence, everyone must be conscious of this animal instinct and learn to control it in times of abnormality. The study recommends that future researchers investigate how this animal instinct can be tamed in man when faced with instinctual forces.

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Introduction

Frank Norris' *McTeague* (1899) is a naturalistic tale of moral degeneration under economic pressures. According to Surur and Dengela (2019), "environment and the situation are responsible for people's characters and development of their life stories" (p. 1724). The novel shows how a man's long-suppressed animal instincts can break through and permeate his civilised appearance, the unmaking of man's civility by the caprice of events, creating metaphorical animals in the novel.

The critical literature written on Norris certainly points to two sources as regards the naturalistic themes within his novel. Firstly, Norris is "a disciple of Zola" (Dieng, 2014, p. 91) and French Naturalism. Secondly, one of Norris's professors, Joseph Le Conte, who was notorious for his candid view on evolution given in his lectures, influenced him (Payne, 2019). This study, however, opines that Joseph Le Conte's theory of Evolution and Cesare Lombroso's theory of criminology mainly influenced the writing of *McTeague*.

The particular evolutionary theory that attracted Norris, Le Conte's version, tries to reconcile Charles Darwin's theory and God. According to Le Conte, God's energy creates a variety of complex levels in animals. At some point, God's energy converts the animal's consciousness into a spirit that has immortality (Le Conte, 1896). Since man is no more than an animal with an immortal spirit, he has a dual nature. This dual nature becomes the basis of Le Conte's theory. To Le Conte, sin or evil results when the animal part of man dominates. Pizer (1966) is of the view that if man surrenders to his animal instinct, he hampers himself in the evolutionary fight and ends up destroying himself.

Again, Le Conte theorises that the spirit without a supporting animal force is ineffectual. The animal force in man supplies the strength for him to perform his moral duty, a duty created by his spirit. In other words, the simultaneous existence of the spiritual and animal forces in man is, to Le Conte, the ideal expression of God's acting through evolution.

At the same time that the Darwinian evolution was so popular, a related theory was also fascinating the public; particularly, the college community. Cesare Lombroso, author of *Crime: Its Causes and Remedies* (1911), developed a theory that criminals are individuals at an earlier stage in evolution, like animals or savages. He regarded these degenerates as members of a new species fairly below the evolutionary level of ordinary men and at the level of animals.

Lombroso believed that some individuals became criminals because their ancestors had been criminals; therefore, they had inherited the criminal tendency. Some incident in one's life, to Lombroso, could trigger an individual's reversion to his ancestor's behavioural pattern. Lombroso also believed that arrested development in the individual could produce the same symptoms as a reversion to ancestral behaviour.

Specifically, Lombroso theorised that among criminals, about 40 percent are criminals because of either heredity or degeneration and that particular physical and psychological characteristics reveal this heredity or degeneration. To be categorised as a born criminal, an individual must exhibit five or six of these traits. A few traits, such as the enormous jaw, large ears, well-developed frontal sinuses, and zygomatic arches, which create the appearance of square-headedness, and a ferocious look, are the most suggestive of the criminal type.

Besides, Lombroso notes a number of other physical traits that reveal a born criminal. In *Crime: Its Causes and Remedies*, he listed a number of physical characteristics as those found in born criminals, a few of which Norris uses in his work. The prognathous jaw of the Lombrosan type is the one that Norris uses most frequently, as we see in the case of *McTeague*: an abundance of wrinkles, apelike ears, unusually long arms, and square-headedness are other physical symbols which he borrows from Lombroso to show the degeneracy or criminality of certain characters like McTeague. Some perceptual abnormalities that Lombroso noted as also being representative of the criminal, such as keen eyesight, sharp hearing, unusual sensitivity of smell, and insensibility to pain, are observable, too, in some characters. Extraordinary agility is also sometimes used by Norris to reveal the born criminal.

Beside physical attributes, Lombroso suggested that certain psychological behaviour distinguishes the criminal type. Similarly, Norris imbues some of his characters with the criminal's psychology. Deterioration in moral and emotional sensibilities is the primary sign of degeneration. An increased desire for sensual pleasure, combined with a passion for drinking and gambling, hastens this deterioration.

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Impulsiveness, recognisable in unstable and inconsistent passions, is part of the criminal's behaviour. Norris also includes a lack of remorse or guilt in his degenerate characters like McTeague and Trina. Sluggishness and excessive idleness occur in his criminal character types. Norris selects only traits that can easily be assimilated into a character inconspicuously, not, as French (1962) suggests, because he disliked studying and had only a superficial knowledge of his subject, but as a result of deliberate choice.

The question arises as to what stimulated Norris to use these two theories in his novel. Mere exposure to them seems an inadequate reason; many other ideas to which he was exposed never appear in his writing at all.

One possible answer can be deduced from Norris' philosophy of literature. He explains in *The Need of a Literary Conscience* that an author must take the responsibility of telling the truth in his writing. To Norris, truth is the practical, tangible, concrete work of daily life. Representing daily life in his fiction, to Norris, expresses truth. Without question, evolutionary theories; particularly, those of Le Conte and Lombroso, influenced Norris' perception and interpretation of truth; that is, daily experience, in his works.

Another aspect of his literary thoughts, revealing a reason for using evolution in fiction, is his belief that the subject ought to be treated objectively: It is the thing that is one's own, the detection of an issue appropriate for fabricated tale that has never been treated, and the meticulous study of that issue and the reasonable display of results. Using scientific theory to document the atavism of his characters may have seemed to him the most objective procedure. Perhaps, the most distinctive literary comment is his observation in *The Novel with a Purpose* that a novel must reveal something about the main character as a representative, in his behaviour, of all men:

Because Le Conte's ideas encompass all men, and because Lombroso's 'born criminal' describes a type, Norris' use of their theories seems quite plausible in light of his own literary criteria. This is because in Norris' formative years, evolution became the catchword of the era, and his intellectual environment fostered the development of characters who display brutality (as in Lombroso's theory) or those who struggle for spiritual dominance (as in Le Conte's). The combined force of exposure to these scientific ideas and his own philosophy cast the die for a character like McTeague.

Norris' conception of naturalism embraces the drama of everyday life; hence, the characters in his *McTeague* are suitable for literary naturalism (Payne, 2019), and they bear the distinct evolutionary and genetic mark of Le Conte's theories. The characters degenerate to metaphorical animals due to social and economic pressure. Thus, the study sought to examine the animal metaphor as an image pattern in the novel. Dovetailed into it is the question of how the animal metaphor is presented as an image pattern in *McTeague*.

Frank Norris' *McTeague* has received a lot of critical attention due to its literary significance. Although a number of previous studies on *McTeague* had employed textual analysis just as the present study, many of them focused attention on different issues other than the animal metaphor as an image pattern in the novel. Dieng (2014), for instance, employed textual analysis to carry out a comparative study of Emily Zola's *Thèrése Raquin* and Frank Norris' *McTeague*, focusing on the narrating instances, characterization, narrative structures, and aesthetic crafting of the two novels. One of the key findings of Dieng (2014) about *McTeague* was that the characters exhibit greed, hypocrisy and other common societal problems. However, Dieng's study could not establish that the display of social vices by these characters constitutes the animal metaphor as an image pattern in the novel, although Dieng's study also employed textual analysis just as the present study.

Schreiter (2012) also conducted a comparative study on Frank Norris' *McTeague* and Jack London's Novels, concentrating on the use of naturalistic techniques in the novels. Equally employing textual analysis, Schreiter identified sexuality and violence as major naturalistic themes in Frank Norris' *McTeague*.

Schreiter further established that Norris fixes his characters in unavoidable tragic circumstances and only expects them to exhibit the worst form of behaviour. Although the study of Schreiter (2012) could not establish it, the assertion that the characters in *McTeague* exhibit the worst form of behaviour implies that there is a huge manifestation of the animal metaphor as an image pattern in the novel.

Again, Surur and Dengela (2019) carried out a textual analysis of elements of naturalism in Frank Norris' *McTeague*. Through close reading, they identified in *McTeague*, such naturalistic elements as determinism, lower class plausible characters, objectivity, immoral contents**,** language of the actual world and pessimism. The study of Surur and Dengela revealed that hereditary and environmental constraints accounted for the animistic behaviour of the major characters in *McTeague*. Hence, Surur and Dengela also indirectly appreciated the fact that animalism is evident in *McTeague*.

Moreover, McGlynn (2008), in reviewing *McTeague* admitted that many of the characters are violent: McTeague, Trina, Zerkow, and Maria demonstrate similar foolishness and desire for violence. McGlynn concluded that the common cause of violence in *McTeague* is the various characters' hunger for money. This presupposes that the animal metaphor manifests as an image pattern in the novel. However, McGlynn's review of *McTeague* seems to have overlooked it. The present study thus fills this lacuna.

Sams (2021) also examined *McTeague* from a cultural-historical perspective; the aim of his study was to give the novel more room for future readings. Sams' study employed a multidisciplinary approach and focused on essential themes in *McTeague,* such as Americanness, masculinity, and the crisis of masculinity, violence, power, and the frontier myth. Themes such as the crisis of masculinity, violence, and power, as established by Sams (2021), suggest that there is evidence of animalism in *McTeague.* The present study, therefore, contextualises the animal metaphor as an image pattern in the novel by doing a textual analysis as explained under the methodology.

Besides, Masoomi et al. (2016) conducted a textual analysis of *McTeague* as an entropic melodrama. These scholars considered how a particular negative human nature can gradually escalate and destroy everything. Masoomi et al. opined that in *McTeague*, Frank Norris metaphorically applied entropy to illustrate the distinct devolutions that unavoidably encompassed community entropy. Masoomi et al. concluded that *McTeague* explains Norris' concern for a society full of disorder. This also suggests a society filled with acts of animalism. Since the study by Masoomi et al. only subtly touched on animalism in *McTeague*, the present study obviously makes it clearer by focusing on the animal metaphor as an image pattern in the novel.

From the foregoing review, it is obvious that although many of the previous works had carried out textual analyses of Frank Norris' *McTeague*, little or no research attention has been directed towards the study of the animal metaphor as an image pattern in the novel. There is, therefore, a lacuna in related literature in this regard, which the present study sought to explore.

To help achieve the intended purpose and significance of the study, the paper is hinged on the following hypotheses:

1. Everyone is both human and animal.
2. The animal metaphor manifests to form an image pattern in Norris' *McTeague*.

Methodology

The study is a qualitative research as proposed by Creswell (2013), and the literary approach employed by the study is new criticism. New criticism is a formalist literary criticism that proposes that the text is a self-contained object and that everything the reader needs to know to understand it is already in the text. New criticism focuses on the layers in the text. This literary approach concentrates on the elements of a text only, such as irony, paradox, metaphor, symbol, plot,

and the like, by engaging in very close textual analysis.

The instrument used to collect data for the study was text. According to Ofori-Birikorang (2017), a text is something that we make meaning from. We interpret texts in order to try and obtain a sense of the ways in which, in particular cultures at particular times, people make sense of the world around them. The research design is textual analysis. Mahasha (2014) postulated that textual analysis "is the study of literature which includes analysis, interpretation, and evaluation of literary works" (p. 17).

The study thus falls within the interpretive paradigm of meaning making as explained by Kusi (2012). Kusi explained that the interpretive paradigm describes a philosophical position which considers reality as a social creation which is experienced subjectively. According to him, interpretive research acknowledges interpretations as "socially constructed realities" (p. 178). This implies that knowledge and meaning-making stem from interpretation; therefore, knowledge construction is not autonomous of thinking and reasoning individuals. Interpretive paradigm is reinforced by observation and interpretation, hence, to observe is to gather data about happenings, while to interpret is to make sense of that information by drawing inferences or by judging the correlation between the information and some abstract pattern. This implies that interpretive research puts analysis in context. The present study therefore contextualises the animal metaphor as an image pattern in Frank Norris' *McTeague* by doing a textual analysis as hypothesized by Mahasha (2014), of how some characters are portrayed in the novel. Hence, the study analysed, interpreted and evaluated the animal metaphor as an image pattern in the novel.

Results and Discussion

The Nineteenth Century American literature presents animalism as a reprehensible side of humanity that lingered beneath the surface, waiting for an opportune time to come out. In Frank Norris' *McTeague*, the animal in man is metaphorically presented through characterisation. The eponymous character, McTeague, for instance, acts like a grizzly bear keeping its mate from wandering too far; yet, this does not please his brutal nature: McTeague begins to drink, and his alcohol-sodden brain allows the animal to take full control of him. He begins biting Trina's fingers. Although the skin is not usually broken by his chomps, her fingers are bruised to the point where she finds work difficult, if not unbearable. Eventually, McTeague begins to break her flesh with his teeth, and the paint she works with poisons her fingers, requiring amputation. Mutilated and finally crushed, Trina leaves McTeague, causing the animal to take full control of the fallen man.

The above incident confirms the argument raised by Coyle (1988) that "what the reader finds in the major fiction of Norris is an ongoing battle between the major forces of 'good' and 'evil' that exist within the lives of his protagonists" (p. 8). And Le Conte is of the view that sin or evil results when the animal part of man dominates. Hence, McTeague's brutality to Trina clearly shows that his animal instinct dominates him, and he seems to have no control of it. This is contrary to the argument put forward by Pizer (1966) that man has the exclusive ability to control rather than be controlled by his environment, so man must resist the sensual as well as have the strength to resist the pressure of the environment. It is therefore not surprising that McTeague's surrender to his animal part brings about his destruction because according to Pizer, if man surrenders to either of the two remnants of his animal instinct, he handicaps himself in the evolutionary struggle, and his self-imposed destruction soon follows.

McTeague's animal nature is sealed when he kills Trina in the coatroom of a school. When he flees, he relies on his animal instincts to keep him alive. Like a deer chased by a wolf, McTeague manages to elude his pursuers until they trap him in Death Valley. The hunting pack then closes in, and McTeague joins the hunters in a blood-soaked death.

In fact, there is a kind of commonality between the character of McTeague and that of Patrick Collins of San Francisco, a real-life

murderer who murdered his wife in the 1890s and had to be charged by the jury. The following portrayal of Patrick Collins by *The San Francisco Examiner* (newspaper) of 14th October, 1893, justifies this claim:

> *...he is not a man who has sunk, but one who was made an animal by nature to start with... A Collins is never annoyed by the want of a good opinion of himself. A grotesque egoism is at the bottom of the concentrated selfishness which marks the character of all such brutes and pushes them into their crimes. Self excludes the capacity to feel for others... There is an immense capacity for hatred in a Collins* (p. 8)

Apparently, both McTeague and the real-life Patrick Collins of San Francisco committed a crime (of murder) in their respective situations because they were driven by the animal instinct. They are both criminals; individuals at an earlier stage in evolution that Caesare Lombroso describes as degenerates and members of a new species fairly below the evolutionary level of ordinary men and at the level of animals or savages.

Besides, Trina is as much an animal as her husband. She is initially repelled by the dentist's brutish nature, but as soon as he casts his dominating spell on her, her masochistic animal nature awakens. She experiences sexual arousal from McTeague's domination, and is hooked from the first time: "Suddenly he took her in his enormous arms, crushing down her struggle with his immense strength. Then Trina gave up, all in an instant, turning her head to his. They kissed each other grossly, full in the mouth" (p. 69).

Actually, Trina's love is a fatal addiction. In the words of Norris, "Trina's emotions had narrowed with the narrowing of her daily life. They reduced themselves at last to but two, her passion for her money and her perverted love for her husband when he was brutal" (p. 239). This negates the general assumption that the brutality of a man to his wife kills the love she has for him. However, it confirms the theory that love is blind. Despite McTeague's brutality, Trina's love for him remains unwavering because her love is sightless and cannot see the brute in McTeague. Moreover, McTeague's brutality and Trina's affection for money to the neglect of her husband also prove the hypothesis that the animal instinct is there in everyone but covered; so, anybody can degenerate into an animal when the environment is ripe. This image pattern was what the study looked at in *McTeague*.

Trina's affection for money, for example, is so strong that she openly expresses her love for it:

> *At times, when she knew that McTeague was far from home, she would lock her door, open her trunk, and pile all her little hoard on her table...Trina would play with this money by the hour, piling it and repiling it, or gathering it all into one heap... She loved her money with an intensity that she could hardly express. She would plunge her small fingers into the pile with little murmurs of affection, her long, narrow eyes half closed and shining, her breath coming in long sighs. "Ah, the dear money, the dear money," she would whisper. "I love you so! All mine, every penny of it. No one shall ever, ever get you..."* (p. 238).

Trina's strong love for her money for the money's sake makes her degenerate to the level of an animal as she drifts away from union to selfishness. She therefore moves away from reason and lives by instinct like an animal, as money becomes a stimulus to trigger miserliness in her. She behaves miserly and becomes very insensitive to the plight of her husband. From McTeague's own words:

> *She let him walk the streets in the cold and in the rain... She knew it was going to rain. She KNEW it. Didn't I tell her? And she drives me out of my own home in the rain, for me to get money for her, more money, and she takes it. She took that money from me that I earned. 'Twasn't hers; it was mine; I earned it — and not a nickel for carfare. She don't care if I get wet and get a cold and die. No, she don't, as long as she's warm and's got her money* (p. 226).

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Having come to know McTeague and Trina in the circumstances of their ordinary lives, we are able to feel for them as their story unfolds. Therefore, they have an existence apart from the puppets they become, as the pressure of their fate in the latter parts of the novel hurries them on to their annihilation. These scenes are more successful in telling us about the characters than are Norris's theoretical devices.

One of these is the trick of giving everyone a sort of Darwinian double existence so that on the surface, people are domesticated and conventionalised; whereas underneath they are carnivorous beasts and for that matter, animals. In the naturalistic novel, the beast shows through the human exterior as the devil did in the older fiction: the modern Mephistopheles is a werewolf or, more likely, an ape-man. Because Le Conte's ideas encompass all men, and because Lombroso's 'born criminal' describes a type, Norris' use of their theories seems quite plausible in the light of his own literary criteria.

Both Pizer (1973) and Dillingham (1969) suggest that Norris' philosophy of life is reaffirmed in his use of Le Conte's suppositions. Donald Pizer explains that Norris had difficulty in reconciling his own sensual desires with his concern for morality. Because Le Conte explained man as possessing a dual nature, the animal heritage can account for man's sensual drives and violent behaviour without denying man's spirit. Dillingham, in the same fashion, implies that by accepting Le Conte's philosophy, Norris could still believe in the fundamental goodness of man, a vestige of his Christian background, while accepting the exciting discoveries of evolution. The combined force of exposure to these scientific ideas and his own philosophy cast the die for a character like McTeague.

McTeague therefore reveals the scientific theme that pervades some of Norris' works in that the main characters such as McTeague, Trina, and Marcus illustrate the reversion to a lower level of evolution; that is, the level of animals. For example, McTeague, a Lombrosan criminal, reverts to the behaviour of his father, brutal and criminal and for that matter, an animal. McTeague's criminality; for that matter, animalism does not spring to life because of some wilful act, but rather because of the effect of his environment on his brutal inheritance.

Set in the California's city of San Francisco, *McTeague* is a carefully plotted story based on a notorious murder. The eponymous McTeague, the young man in question, witnesses a decline in his fortunes and finds himself pitted against forces he has no control over. It is a naturalistic novel in which, right from the beginning, the notion of man as an animal cannot be downplayed. McTeague is moved irresistibly by heredity and unavoidably augmenting it is the environment. Even the subtitle of the novel, *A Story of San Francisco*, lays emphasis on this.

Norris's choice of San Francisco is very critical. In his view, he chooses San Francisco not only because the events on which *McTeague* is based took place in that city, but because San Francisco is isolated enough for the purpose (Pizer, 1964). This gives *McTeague* the necessary insulation as a naturalistic novel. The crucial role of the environment is particularly true of McTeague who loses his bearing and appears incapable of a conscious relationship with the environment. Thus from the onset, McTeague is taken out of his environment to see whether he can adapt. He, however, fails to adapt. He, instead, becomes more animalistic; in fact, beastly, with every twist in his fortunes; hence, the animal savagery at the background of his existence. It is from this story that the elements of man as animal metaphor is presented and analysed.

Basically, McTeague is an example of the Lombrosan criminal both physically and psychologically. McTeague has a square head, large arms and hands, and the prognathous jaw of the born criminal or an animal:

> *McTeague was a young giant, carrying his huge shock of blond hair six feet three inches from the ground; moving his immense limbs, heavy with ropes of muscles, slowly, ponderously. His hands were enormous, red and covered with a fell of stiff yellow hair; they were hard as wooden mallets, strong as vises, the hands*

> *of the old-time car-boy. Often he dispensed with forceps and extracted a refractory tooth with his thumb and finger. His head was square-cut, angular; the jaw salient, like that of the carnivora* (p.7).

McTeague also has great manual dexterity. At the end of the novel his senses, like those of a born criminal, have become quite acute. Norris repeatedly describes McTeague; he emphasises the physical description with its criminal features whenever McTeague frightens Trina. For example, she faints in McTeague's dental chair after he proposes to her. The description of her fainting scene is immediately preceded by a statement of the Lombrosan appearance of McTeague. A similar situation occurs after their marriage; after a quarrel over moving to a less expensive apartment, McTeague threatens Trina. The following description is part of that scene:

> *Trina looked at him fearfully, half blinded with weeping. Her husband's thick mane of yellow hair was disordered and rumpled upon his great square-cut head; his big red ears were redder than ever; his face was purple; the thick eyebrows were knotted over the small, twinkling eyes; the heavy yellow moustache, that smelt of alcohol, drooped over the massive, protruding chin, salient like that of the carnivora; the veins were swollen and throbbing on his thick red neck; while over her head Trina saw his upraised palm, calloused, enormous* (p. 232).

Again, Norris repeats the Lombrosan characteristics just before McTeague kills Trina. It seems likely that Norris is using his reading public's knowledge of Lombroso to help the reader understand McTeague's brutal behaviour. This is because in Norris's formative years, evolution became the catchword of the era (Payne, 2019), and his intellectual environment fostered the development of characters who display brutality (as in Lombroso's theory) or those who struggle for spiritual dominance (as in Le Conte's). He actually portrays McTeague as a born beast.

In other words, Norris makes Lombroso's theory practical in *McTeague*: McTeague's behaviour is motivated partially by his born criminal nature – allowing the readers to relate the violent behaviour to what they had previously recognised as the Lombrosan physique. For instance, Norris portrays McTeague as having a square head, large arms and hands, massive, protruding chin, big red ears, heavy moustache that smelt like alcohol, swollen and throbbing veins, thick neck, and the prognathous jaw follows. "Often McTeague dispensed with forceps and extracted a refractory tooth with his thumb and finger. His head was square-cut, angular; the jaw salient, like that of the carnivore" (p.7).

Psychologically, McTeague reacts as a born criminal and animal. He begins to deteriorate emotionally and morally once he loses his dental practice. For example, at first, he simply reverts to the behaviour of his bachelor days. He sleeps all afternoon and drinks cheap steamed beer. Later, he begins to drink hard liquor and punishes Trina by hitting her, pinching her, or biting her. Finally, he ends up killing her, an act for which he as if acting out the Lombrosan theory, feels absolutely no remorse or guilt. Here, McTeague behaves at the level of an animal because he is left with only instincts; just as any animal with instincts without spirit, to validate Le Conte's assertion that sin or evil results when the animal part of man dominates him. However, Le Conte theorises that the spirit without a supporting animal force is ineffectual; because, the animal force in man supplies the strength for him to perform his moral duty, a duty created by his spirit. This presupposes that the simultaneous existence of the spiritual and animal forces in man is, to Le Conte, the ideal expression of God's acting through evolution.

Another Lombrosan psychological characteristic is his tendency to be motivated by fleeting passions. For example, McTeague proposes to Trina within a few weeks of their meeting. His love begins to diminish after their marriage; he soon only tolerates her, and then he avidly dislikes her. Another example of his unstable passions is his brief anger towards Marcus for breaking his pipe; his anger vanishes, almost as quickly as it appears when Trina gives him the large gilded tooth.

It should be noted, however, that McTeague is not totally responsible for his psychological characteristics, any more than he is for his physical attributes, for in both respects, he is strongly influenced by heredity. This view is established by Caesare Lombroso's argument that some individuals became criminals because their ancestors had been criminals; therefore, they had inherited the criminal tendency.

Both McTeague and Trina fulfil the Lombrosan requirement of inherited weaknesses. Even though Trina is not a born criminal, her talent for animal carving is attributed to her German-Swiss ancestry, which corroborates Lombroso's further assertion that some incidents in one's life could also trigger an individual's reversion to his ancestor's behavioural pattern. Lombroso also believed that arrested development in the individual could also produce the same symptoms as a reversion to ancestral behaviour. It is therefore rational to read from *McTeague* that Trina's stinginess derives from her inherited peasant blood: generations of want, impoverishment, and frugality tinted with parsimony breed in her a tendency toward covetousness and hoarding.

Logically, Norris' depiction of McTeague as a born criminal and Trina as a selfish person helps to consolidate Lombroso's hypothesis that among criminals, approximately 40 percent are criminals because of either heredity or degeneration, and that particular physical and psychological characteristics reveal this heredity or degeneration. Lombroso explains that in order to be categorised as a born criminal, an individual must exhibit five or six of these traits. According to him, a few traits, such as the enormous jaw, large ears, well-developed frontal sinuses and zygomatic arches, which create the appearance of square headedness and a ferocious look as epitomised by McTeague for instance, are the most suggestive of the criminal type.

In McTeague's case, the indictment of ancestors is more severe, for they are all pictured by Norris as evil men:

> *Below the fine fabric of all that was good in him ran the foul stream of hereditary evil, like a sewer. The vices and sins of his father and of his father's father, to the third and fourth and five hundredth generation, tainted him. The evil of an entire race flowed in his veins* (p. 29).

Specifically, Norris, in the opening of the novel, depicts McTeague's father as a steady worker much of the time; every two weeks, however, his father became a beast: "Every other Sunday he became an irresponsible animal, a beast, a brute, crazy with alcohol" (p. 6). McTeague inherits this same trait from his father:

> *But McTeague never became a drunkard in the generally received sense of the term. He did not drink to excess more than two or three times in a month, and never upon any occasion did he become maudlin or staggering. Perhaps his nerves were naturally too dull to admit of any excitation; perhaps he did not really care for the whiskey, and only drank because Heise and the other men at Frenna's did. Trina could often reproach him with drinking too much; she never could say that he was drunk. The alcohol had its effect for all that. It roused the man, or rather the brute in the man, and now not only roused it but goaded it to evil. McTeague's nature had changed* (pp. 236-237).

Norris continues by pointing out that the alcohol and several other factors lead to his abuse and murder of Trina.

Although the alcohol triggers the brutal action of the criminal, Norris reveals McTeague as a stupid, but strong savage early in the novel. McTeague's mental development is so limited that he can do only one task at a time. McTeague, for example, is incapable of working and talking at the same time. Similarly, his mental slowness prevents him from stopping the thievery of his maid. McTeague is proud of his immense, animal-like strength. He brags of killing a heifer with his bare hands, and he sometimes pulls teeth without the benefit of instruments because it helps to attract clients.

Another action showing his low evolutionary level or animal nature is his frenzied fighting. When angered, McTeague becomes indifferent to his surroundings or the circumstances of the disagreement. Evidence of this lower evolutionary state; in this case that of an earlier civilization is Norris' description of McTeague as he battles Marcus at a picnic:

> *Sluggish enough and slow to anger on ordinary occasions, McTeague when finally aroused became another man. His rage was a kind of obsession, an evil mania, the drunkenness of passion, the exalted and perverted fury of the berserk, blind and deaf, a thing insensate* (p. 182).

This savage fury, of course, causes McTeague's own destruction. He and Marcus struggle at the end of the novel. McTeague, blindly and foolishly, kills Marcus while they are handcuffed together and is trapped in the desert because of his uncontrollable anger.

Another sign of his primitive or animal nature is his inability to handle a love affair wisely. One of the most obvious revelations of his savage behaviour is his need to touch Trina or things that belong to her. While staying in her bedroom at her parents' home, he is compelled to smell her hairbrush and clothes. He also gathers the clothes to him so that through them he can recall Trina to his mind:

> *If he had suddenly discovered Trina herself there, smiling at him, holding out her hands, he could hardly have been more overcome... A whole group of Trinas faced him there. He went farther into the closet, touching the clothes gingerly, stroking them softly with his huge leathern palms. As he stirred them a delicate perfume disengaged itself from the folds. Ah, that exquisite feminine odour I It was not only her hair now, it was Trina herself — her mouth, her hands, her neck; the indescribably sweet, fleshly aroma that was a part of her, pure and clean, and redolent of youth and freshness. All at once, seized with an unreasoned impulse, McTeague opened his huge arms and gathered the little garments close to him, plunging his face deep amongst them, savouring their delicious odour with long breaths of luxury and supreme content* (pp. 65-66).

His desire to have Trina, regardless of her wishes or Marcus' jealousy, is reminiscent of a Neanderthal man's carrying of his chosen mate off to the cave. Norris, using the same image, states:

> *It was all one with him that his best friend, Marcus, might be in love with the same girl. He must have Trina in spite of everything; even in spite of herself. He did not stop to reflect about the matter; he followed his desire blindly, recklessly, furious and raging at every obstacle... It seemed so simple to him since he loved Trina to take her straight to himself, stopping at nothing, asking no questions, to have her, and by main strength to carry her far away somewhere, he did not know exactly where, to some vague country, some undiscovered place where every day was Sunday* (pp. 35-36).

Because McTeague's desires become necessities for him, he marries a woman whose behaviour causes him to complete his role as a born criminal and animal through murder.

Another obvious metaphor which qualifies McTeague as an animal is his difficulty with communication through language. McTeague fails to comprehend Marcus's talk about a picnic; he cannot cope with Marcus's pretentious explanation of the horrors of capitalism. Only after some time can he understand that Trina has won $5,000 in the lottery. When McTeague receives the first notice that he must quit practising dentistry, he is dumbfounded by the paper and must have Trina explain what it means. French (1962) discusses McTeague's inability to cope with language and, through language, the law, by saying that he was a 'thing-handler', that is, capable of thinking only in terms of tangible items. That makes him no more than an animal.

Moreover, at a point in the novel, McTeague desires nothing but animal pleasures. At that point, McTeague's animal nature starts to dominate, making him repugnant:

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> *McTeague had lost his ambition. He did not care to better his situation. All he wanted was a warm place to sleep and three good meals a day. At the first—at the very first — he had chafed at his idleness and had spent the days with his wife in their one narrow room, walking back and forth with the restlessness of a caged brute, or sitting motionless for hours, watching Trina at her work, feeling a dull glow of shame at the idea that she was supporting him. This feeling had worn off quickly, however ... he was intractable, mean; and when he had drunk a little more heavily than usual, he found a certain pleasure in annoying and exasperating Trina, even in abusing and hurting her* (p. 235).

Lombrosan theory suggests that the criminal type is a breed different from other human beings. Norris utilises this distinction and creates animal images to apply to McTeague. He compares McTeague to a draught horse, a bull, a cat or dog, a bear, a snake or an anaconda and an elephant. But more than just being compared to an animal, McTeague is made to seem bestial when many of his actions are described in terms of animal behaviour.

Eating for McTeague is a matter of devouring food without discrimination, as an animal would devour it: “McTeague ate for the sake of eating, without choice; everything within reach of his hands found its way into his enormous mouth” (p.133). Later in the novel, McTeague’s hunger operates as a rider does on a horse: “Hunger rode him and rowelled him. He was no longer well fed, comfortable” (p. 280). When he is angry, he growls and grinds his teeth like some savage dog.

Another interesting image is Norris’ reference to McTeague's falling in love with Trina in terms of an animal's being ensnared in a trap:

> *Never had McTeague been so excited; never had he made so long a speech. His arms moved in fierce uncertain gestures, his face flushed, his enormous jaws shut together with a sharp click at every pause. It was like some colossal brute trapped in a delicate, invisible mesh, raging, exasperated, powerless to extricate himself* (p. 47).

The animal-like McTeague continues to work after he has been forced to stop practising. He is no more than a creature of habit in that he is inadaptable. McTeague lives in a room, his den, where he seeks only the sensual, animal pleasures. When denied these pleasures, he, like an animal, becomes aggressive:

> *He, who loved to be warm, to sleep and to be well fed, was icy cold, was exhausted and foot-sore from tramping the city. He could look forward to nothing better than a badly cooked supper at the coffee-joint— hot meat on a cold plate, half-done suet pudding, muddy coffee, and bad bread, and he was cold, miserably cold, and wet to the bone. All at once a sudden rage against Trina took possession of him. ... He became more and more indignant at the picture he made of himself. "I aint going to stand it much longer," he repeated* (pp. 225-226).

Pizer also suggests that McTeague’s return to Placer County, his childhood home, and the Big Dipper mine, represents the animal's returning to his den. While there, he acts like a nocturnal animal in that his fear causes him to work at night and sleep during the day. Again, in McTeague's flight from Marcus and the posse, his fear causes the animal in him to demand flight:

> *But once more the spur bit into his body, goading him on. There was to be no rest, no going back, no pause, no stop. Hurry, hurry, hurry on. The brute that in him slept so close to the surface was alive and alert, and tugging to be gone. There was no resisting that instinct. The brute felt an enemy, scented the trackers, clamoured and struggled and fought, and would not be gainsaid* (p. 328).

The claim of the Lombrosan theory that criminals' evolutionary levels are the same as those of animals or savages makes it quite logical for Norris to discuss McTeague in bestial terms.

Norris expands the animal metaphor when he describes McTeague's behaviour as being instinctive rather than rational. His reactions to Trina, early in the novel, are sometimes discussed in terms of instinct. At first, McTeague instinctively distrusts her because he recognises that she is a woman; therefore, she is different. His near rape of the anaesthetised Trina and the arousal of his sexual desire are, of course, instinctual. Pizer (1977) explains that the importance of the instinctive sexuality is that it forces Trina and McTeague to marry. This marriage lacks the strength necessary to survive the pressures of outside occurrences and the idiosyncrasies of the two characters themselves. Norris discusses the marriage as a product of instinct and chance:

> *Their undoing had already begun. Yet neither of them was to blame. From the first they had not sought each other. Chance had brought them face to face, and mysterious instincts as ungovernable as the winds of heaven were at work knitting their lives together. Neither of them had asked that this thing should be—that their destinies, their very souls, should be the sport of chance ... they were allowed no voice in the matter* (p. 74).

The supremacy of instinct over reason becomes ever more pronounced in McTeague after he kills Trina. Instinctively he decides to flee. Once he leaves San Francisco, his instincts help him find the right trails to return to Placer County. After his arrival there, he throws off the San Francisco experience and resumes his boyhood life as a miner:

> *Straight as a homing pigeon, and following a blind and unreasoned instinct, McTeague had returned to the Big Dipper mine. Within a week's time it seemed to him as though he had never been away. He picked up his life again exactly where he had left it the day when his mother had sent him away with the travelling dentist, the charlatan who had set up his tent by the bunkhouse* (pp. 296-297).

Like a wounded animal, McTeague returns to his home grounds to die.

The animal in McTeague develops an instinct for danger; he acquires a sixth sense which forewarns him whenever the posse is near:

> *What strange sixth sense stirred in McTeague at this time? What animal cunning, what brute instinct clamored for recognition and obedience? What lower faculty was it that roused his suspicion, that drove him out into the night a score of times between dark and dawn, his head in the air, his eyes and ears keenly alert?* (p. 300)

This sixth sense is so powerful that it drives McTeague away from a gold discovery worth a million dollars:

> *It was warning him again, that strange sixth sense, that obscure brute instinct. It was aroused again and clamoring to be obeyed. Here, in these desolate barren hills, twenty miles from the nearest human being, it stirred and woke and roweled him to be moving on. It had goaded him to flight from the Big Dipper mine, and he had obeyed. But now it was different; now he had suddenly become rich; he had lighted on a treasure — a treasure far more valuable than the Big Dipper mine itself. How was he to leave that? He could not move on now. He turned about in his blankets. No, he would not move on. ... He threw off the blankets ... For half an hour he waited, watching and listening in vain. But as he returned to camp, and prepared to roll his blankets about him, the strange impulse rose in him again abruptly, never so strong, never so insistent. It seemed as though he were bitted and ridden; as if some unseen hand were turning him toward the east; some unseen heel spurring him to precipitate and instant flight* (pp. 316 - 317).

This instinct does force him to flee and to continue to move away from danger until he becomes so exhausted that the better-equipped, more thoughtful Marcus catches him.

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Norris clearly utilises the Lombrosan reversion to a lower state of evolution in *McTeague*. Norris' creative talent enables him to project Lombrosan criminology into a novel so successfully that the protagonist retains sympathetic appeal even in his repulsiveness, even when described in terms of animal imagery. Pizer (1966) indicates the Lombrosan nature of McTeague:

> *The result of this variety of influences impinging on the conception of McTeague is that though he is not a literal portrait of a Lombrosan born criminal, he does have sufficient characteristics of that type to indicate that Norris was loosely drawing upon contemporary ideas involving degeneracy and atavistic criminality. McTeague lacks many of the explicit stigmata listed by Lombroso, such as epilepsy and tattooing. McTeague's characteristics are rather those which indicate Norris' imaginative response to the dramatic possibilities inherent in the idea of alcoholic degeneracy resulting in atavistic criminality, particularly those characteristics which immediately suggest atavism, such as physical size and strength and mental slowness. So McTeague's father has died of acute alcoholism, and McTeague himself is huge, strong, stupid, and crude. Moreover, he has the protruding jaw, square head, and alcoholic intolerance of the Lombrosan criminal* (p. 60).

Norris' imaginative response to a scientific theory appears in the form of a man whose brutality and criminality take control of him which eventually destroys him. In terms of physique and conduct, he is no more than an animal.

Indeed, there is an extensive portrayal of animal imagery in *McTeague*, and often it occurs where characters are being metaphorically hustled up and down the evolutionary ladder, between the animal and the human levels. For instance, there is a memorable moment in the book when, before she is married to McTeague, Trina reclines prettily in the dentist's chair. She is under ether, and McTeague's emotions are described hence: "Suddenly the animal in the man stirred and woke; the evil instincts that in him were so close to the surface leaped to life, shouting and clamouring" (p. 27).

An animal is a predator for survival; so, although McTeague for instance, becomes a hunted animal after his murder of Trina at the end of the novel, he kills his pursuer, Marcus. Also, when being pursued in the desert, McTeague "was thirsty and drank a little from his canteen" (p. 327) to enable him survive the terrible heat of the desert. Hence, "McTeague had told himself that the heat upon the lower slopes of the Panamint had been dreadful; here in Death Valley it became a thing of terror. There was no longer any shadow but his own. He was scorched and parched from head to heel" (p. 327).

In fact, McTeague is portrayed in the novel by Norris as an animal from the jungle. After he has been bitten by Marcus during a fight, his screaming is described not as that of a human being but as that of a hurt beast and a wounded elephant from the jungle:

> *Then followed a terrible scene. The brute that in McTeague lay so close to the surface leaped instantly to life, monstrous, not to be resisted. He sprang to his feet with a shrill and meaningless clamor, totally unlike the ordinary bass of his speaking tones. It was the hideous yelling of a hurt beast, the squealing of a wounded elephant. He framed no words; in the rush of high-pitched sound that issued from his wide open mouth there was nothing articulate. It was something no longer human; it was rather an echo from the jungle* (p. 182).

Besides, throughout the novel, McTeague is directly and continuously associated with animals such as "bull" (p. 8; 28), elephant with "elephantine sentiment" (p. 26), "anaconda" (p. 50), cat or dog as "he pawed at his cheeks with both hands" (p. 50), bear as he gives Trina "a bearlike embrace" (p. 75) and Trina referring to him as "Old bear" (p. 108), snake as he spits words "as a snake spits its venom" (p. 182), and horse as he is "docile and obedient as a big cart horse" (p. 7; 224).

Generally, McTeague is a metaphor of a wild animal from the jungle: "His head was square-cut, angular; the jaw salient, like that of the carnivore" (p. 7). McTeague is an animal possessed by "bestial fury" (p. 184). He also walks "back and forth with the restlessness of a caged brute" (p. 235) when he loses his job as a dentist. Even the comforts McTeague enjoys are described as those of animals: "The little animal comforts which for him constituted the enjoyment of life were ministered to at every turn, or when they were interfered with — as in the case of his Sunday afternoon's nap and beer — some agreeable substitute was found" (p. 150).

Aside McTeague, other characters such as Trina, Marcus and Zerkow also become animals when they are metaphorically pushed up and down the evolutionary ladder, between the animal and the human levels. For instance, Trina descends to the level of an animal when her husband, McTeague loses his job as a dentist. She becomes so much obsessed with money and moves from union to self-interest and isolates herself. Trina is highly driven by the instinct of hoarding, and she develops strong passion for money for the money's sake:

> *She took a ten-dollar piece from the heap and put the rest away. Then she paused, "No, not the gold piece," she said to herself. "It's too pretty... It was a lamentable sight. Trina looked longingly at the ten broad pieces in her hand. Then suddenly all her intuitive desire of saving, her instinct of hoarding, her love of money for the money's sake, rose strong within her"* (p. 164).

Here, Trina's instinct of hoarding, her love of money for the money's sake is so strong that: "One evening she had even spread all the gold pieces between the sheets, and had then gone to bed, stripping herself, and had slept all night upon the money, taking a strange and ecstatic pleasure in the touch of the smooth flat pieces the length of her entire body" (p. 277). In fact, Trina totally degenerates to the level of an animal; thus, she metaphorically becomes a harassed cat; a wild animal for that matter, as she fights McTeague: She "...fought for her miserable life with the exasperation and strength of a harassed cat and with such energy and such wild, unnatural force that even McTeague for the moment drew back from her" (p. 288).

Again, although nice at the beginning of the story, Marcus descends to the status of an animal by reporting McTeague to the authorities at the City Hall. Even during the fight between him and McTeague, Marcus metaphorically becomes a snake and bites McTeague: '"God damn you! Get off me,' he cried under his breath, spitting the words as a snake spits its venom... With the oath Marcus had twisted his head and had bitten through the lobe of the dentist's ear. There was a sudden flash of bright-red blood" (p. 182).

Likewise, a character like Zerkow cannot be overlooked in this discussion because he is equally a born animal: "He had the thin, eager, catlike lips of the covetous..." (p. 37). As he is eager to listen to the story about "gold dishes" from Maria, he craves with "...his bloodless lower lip moving against the upper, his claw-like fingers feeling about his mouth and chin... It was as if some hungry beast of prey had scented a quarry"' (p. 39). Above all, Zerkow confirms his animal nature when he descends to the level of an animal by murdering Maria as he is possessed by "a pitiless greed that checked at no tale of treasure, however preposterous" (p. 41). Here, Zerkow completely loses his spirit of reason. He is only driven by instinct; therefore, he is no more than an animal.

Conclusion

This study has successfully established the hypotheses that everyone is both human and animal, and that the animal metaphor manifests to form an image pattern in Frank Norris' *McTeague.* The study has also established that Joseph Le Conte's theory of Evolution and Cesare Lombroso's theory of criminology influenced the writing of *McTeague.* The study also established that the animal metaphor is central to *McTeague* and it forms an image pattern in the novel. The study has further ascertained that the animal instinct is there in every human. This upholds the observation of Hart and Long Jr. (2011) that "...humans are animals" (p. 52). As far as things are normal, the animal instinct in man is

suppressed and only comes out when things are not normal as we see in the cases of McTeague, Trina, Marcus and Zerkow in Frank Norris' *McTeague*. Obviously, all these characters are metaphorical animals that constitute an image pattern in the novel. They are not far from what Lonngren (2015) describes as "literary animals" (p. 173).

From another perspective, one can conclude that it is normal for people to be stripped of their civility in times of abnormality because the animal instinct is an integral part of every human. This implies that one must be very conscious of one's own animal instinct and endeavour to control it.

It is therefore recommended that all individuals strive hard to devise the appropriate means of controlling this animal instinct when faced with instinctual forces. Future researchers should also investigate how best the animal in man can be tamed in abnormal times. This would help to prevent the accompanying brutalities and criminalities that arise whenever this animal surfaces in man.

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