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## **DOMINATED INDIVIDUALS' TACTICS TO DISRUPT BEING OTHERED IN NEO-COLONIAL NOVELS OF BAUTISTA AND WA THIONG'O**

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### **Abstract**

Dominated subjects or those Othered in many societies are among the most misrepresented class of people. Such misrepresentation has popularised their being imagined in literature and other fields of study as almost always despondent and meek individuals. In this context, this paper interrogates Western archetypal images on Others as passive recipients of domination. Applying De Certeau's concept of "tactics", this paper investigated how tactics of dominated subjects become immediate yet temporary solution among Others to disturb the everyday practices of Othering. Lualhati Bautista's *Gapo* and Ngugi Wa Thiong'o's *Matigari* were scrutinised through discourse analysis and both revealed that "everyday" tactics are used by Othered characters to grapple with, respond to and, later on, overcome society's exclusionary practices. Set in the after colonial environs, the novels portray Othered characters as capable of resistance and agency despite their political, economic and/or cultural marginalisation. Such use of tactics as means of resistance are however temporary and, ultimately, cannot solve their being dominated. Nonetheless, the counter-discourse this frame of thought offers as well as how tactics provides space and how space simultaneously allows the production of tactics can provide us a more nuanced understanding of resistance and the lived experiences of Others.

Keywords: tactics, resistance, neo-colonialism, postcolonialism, novel

### **Introduction**

Within the concept of neo-colonialism, how we devise dominated individuals in the image of the Western cultural centre speaks of the enduring influence of Western colonialism to its former colonies. In this landscape, neo-colonialist discourses have supremacy over the country's political, economic and/or cultural climate. With such immense influence, Westerners (residents or expats) who are staying in the postcolonial country have the tendency to take advantage, or exploit, of their position at the expense of natives. Since the country remains predominantly Western-centric, other natives, despite their country's independence, are still resorting to assimilation and to, what Homi K. Bhaba theorised, "mimicry" to improve their ways of living at the same time avoiding possible conflict with the

Western discourse (Bhaba, 1994, p. 85). In return, they become collaborators thus complicit to the enduring Western attitudes and their own inferiority. On the contrary, dominated individuals are relegated to culturally useless, nobody, and or despised identities (Bullis & Bach, 1996, in Bach, 2005; Liu & Self, 2019; Udah & Singh, 2019). Because they have a significantly reduced access to knowledge and power, they are almost always represented and imagined in literature and other fields of study as meek and despondent individuals who are incapable of agency, choice and, ultimately, resistance.

But are they really without agency and incapacitated to schemes that could overcome their daily inequalities? Can they not create spaces to express their opinions and disagreements despite being dominated? These are questions that I look into as I analyse everyday tactics among dominated individuals to see how practices of Othering “shape experiences of everyday life and how social actors [dominated individuals] are not passively subjected to the essentializing Othering processes” (Bendixsen, 2013, p. 120). As Udah and Singh (2019) advocate, questioning, challenging and rejecting negative representations and stereotypes of the Other is at the forefront in scrutinising the effects of Othering practices in the society.

In this backdrop is where I attempt to argue that dominated individuals have agency, are capable of creating safe spaces, and are active resisters when confronted by perpetrators of Othering. Using Michel De Certeau’s (1984) concept of tactics in *The Practice of Everyday Life* (1984) and postcolonial ideas on Othering, Lualhati Bautista’s *Gapo* and Ngugi Wa Thiong’o’s *Matigari* are analysed to reveal the everyday tactics employed by “dominated” characters. The setting of these novels depicts a neo-colonial milieu and their characters incorporate a strong stance toward resisting neo-colonial practices. Firstly, I will identify the characters and the context of their domination. A discussion on the character’s tactics will be provided displaying how dominated individuals employ such schemes and can disrupt Othering practices. By examining these tactics, this paper attempts to respond to the ongoing demand of resistance literature from the perspective of the periphery.

### ***Othering and tactics***

Othering occurs when a dominant group chooses who is “in” or “out” in the society based on certain characteristics that correspond to the dominant group’s identity. As a process, it accommodates individuals or groups who belong to an in-group that produce and sustain “rhetorical and physical distance between themselves and an out-group” (McAllum & Zahra, 2017, p. 2). It simply means that the dominant group is defining itself (Kitzinger & Wilkinson, cited in Traustadóttir, 2001). On the act of defining the Self, Othering marks and determines those perceived to be different from the Self called the Other (Weis, 1995, in Udah & Singh, 2019). Thus, Canales (2000) elucidates that Othering is a power that includes and excludes (in Udah & Singh, 2019). According to Powel and Menendian (2016), Othering discloses a set of shared conditions and processes that proliferate group-based marginality and disparity (in Baak, 2018). It intersects with other terms in social sciences, such as “stereotyping, prejudice, and discrimination” (Celik, Bilali & Iqbal, 2016, p. 2) that, in basic practice, set one apart from the other.

In the experience of Othered persons, they are perceived as unacceptable failing to meet recognised socio-cultural and normative ideals (Bendixsen, 2013). As Udah (2017) speaks of Africans in South East Queensland, their Otherness is constantly

secured by physical appearance, skin colour, ways of speaking, and ways of dressing or of doing (in Baak, 2018). Because they are demoted as “cultural inferiors” (Khrebtan-Hörhager & Avant-Mier, 2017, p. 3), being in such circumstance partakes experiences of “marginalisation, decreased opportunities, and exclusion” (Murtagh, 2017, p. 4). Following these concepts, it is not hard to see how scholars have considered Othering as an essentialising practice that submits Othered individuals to images of degradation, mystification, romanticism, and exoticism (Inokuchi & Nozaki, 2005). While Othering is now widely criticised in cultural studies, it continues to persist, say Celik et al. (2016), that is created and reinforced by “institutions, norms, and practices” (p. 22).

Scholars however have made progress in understanding the lived experiences of dominated individuals and have developed different lenses to interpret their means of resistance. For one is De Certeau’s conceptualisation of “tactics” from *The Practice of Everyday Life* (1984) that will be my basis on identifying various means of resistance, or tactics, among dominated individuals. A tactic, he says, “is a calculated action determined by the absence of the proper locus” performed by the weak, or dominated individuals (p. 37). The absence of locus means that tactics work on a territory controlled by foreign power or, as Friday (2011) puts it, outside forces. Without an organised territory, tactics rely on time by taking advantage of surprises, tricks and opportunities (De Certeau, 1984). These tactics include “dwelling, moving about, speaking, reading, shopping, and cooking” that can be ingenious ruses to subvert the opponent (De Certeau, 1984, p. 40). Bendixsen (2013) views these as dominated individuals’ expression of “autonomy by using tactics that contest oppressive forces, such as Othering processes” (p. 125).

In Frisina’s (2010) study on young Muslims in Italy, she provides two types of daily tactics: visibility and individual promotion. As the word visibility denotes, Young Italian Muslims use visibility tactics “to generate a regime of visibility” to be recognised (p. 560). In the public eye, they display themselves as respectable Muslims as a way to give a positive image to their religion. On the other hand, Muslims who have discursive abilities use individual promotion tactics. Being experts at speaking, these Muslims are publicly identified in Italy as teachers of Islam and the Muslim community. These young Italian Muslims call themselves “progressive Muslims” which, according to Safi (2003), means “continuing beyond the course charted by liberal Islam...concentrating questions of social justice...and of pluralism outside and inside the Umma (the Islamic community)” (in Frisina, 2010, p. 568). However, tactics have limitations, “what it wins it cannot keep” (De Certeau, 1984, p. 37). Hence, tactics of visibility and individual promotion are not redemptive and do not question the dominant system (Frisina, 2010).

Similar to Frisina’s study is Bendixsen’s (2013) analysis on young Muslims’ tactics in Germany. Bendixsen considers how the youth employ everyday tactics or manners of resistance in everyday situations. She enumerates tactics used by young Muslims like joking, rehearsal, normalisation and corrective practises. Firstly, joking tactic is performed using wit, jokes, satire, and irony against Othering practices faced in the streets. Second is rehearsal tactic that is made by teaching young women to learn ways to deal with Othering. In religiously oriented meetings, leaders would have a simulation or role-plays for young women to practise reacting towards Othering situations. Thirdly, normalisation tactic makes methods that offer similar attitudes between Muslim Germans and other Germans. Watching similar

TV shows, retaining German name (for converts) instead of changing to Muslim name, and/or dressing fashionably are a few samples of normalisation tactic that young German Muslims do to share belongingness with the dominant German culture.

In Utas' (2005) study on tactics, he discusses tactics of young women in the Liberian War Zone. While Utas (2005) do not portray women as essentially victims in the warfare, he states that women are at a disadvantage. In such environ, women perform tactics called social navigation such as victimcy, girl friending, and soldiering to survive the war. In doing victimcy for rape, women present themselves as victims despite consensual sex to successfully establish themselves as legitimate recipients of humanitarian aid and to free from social blame. Girl friending, on the other hand, is done by having relationships with multiple high-ranking soldiers to give themselves and their family protection from violence and economic stability. Because provisions are scarce, women dress up as soldiers where they take up arms and fight to take advantage of the war loots. This tactic is called soldiering. Ratcliffe (2000) considers eavesdropping a tactic. She calls it rhetorical eavesdropping which is used to pay attention to the "discourses of others, for hearing over the edges of our own knowing, for thinking what is commonly unthinkable within our own logics" (p. 90-91).

There are only a few tactics that dominated individuals make and do to survive in their daily struggles of Othering. As can be observed, tactics employed can vary from different people depending on the political, economic and/or cultural realities that dominated individuals are in. Also, tactics are only immediate benefits to everyday situations thus they are not solutions to systemic issues. And, by doing tactics, dominated individuals merely rely on luck that is not a guarantee to subvert the enemy. It is in this framework that I attempt to analyse the tactics of dominated individuals in the context of neo-colonialism. How these individuals grapple with, respond to and, later on, overcome society's exclusionary practices in everyday life.

## **Method**

Applying De Certeau's (1984) concept of tactic along with other proponents mentioned above, I investigated Lualhati Bautista's *Gapo* and Ngugi Wa Thiong'o's *Matigari* to reveal the everyday tactics among dominated characters in these novels. Firstly, I will provide the dominated characters who perform tactics using discourse analysis and the postcolonial concept of Othering to identify Othered characters. Simultaneously, I will discuss how they become society's dominated individuals through Othering practices based on race, class, and profession. A discussion on character's tactics will follow, displaying how dominated individuals employ these tactics and how these tactics can disrupt Othering practices. By examining these tactics, this paper attempts to respond to the ongoing demand of resistance literature from the perspective of the weak.

## **Findings and Discussion**

### ***Lualhati Bautista's Gapo***

In the novel *Gapo*, Bautista chose Olongapo City as the perfect archetypal setting of neo-colonialism in the Philippines for the city used to cater in its shore the U.S. naval base. Since this society heralds (white) American ideals, Filipinos have become Othered thus dominated individuals, the more to those who shun

American standards of living. In this community, some Filipino characters have to deal with cultural assimilation and subjugation so their living conditions can perk up. Such is how prostitutes and waiters in the bar give more priority to American than Filipino customers since Americans pay more handsomely and known for giving dollar tips. Consequently, services are given to Americans with urgency and eagerness. In this outlook, prostitutes and waiters have helped progress the practise of Othering. Conversely, dominated individuals are finding ways to counter their being Othered and its perpetrators. *Gapo's* tactics made by the novel's characters are (1) pestering, (2) mockery, (3) ridicule, (4) informing, and (5) language.

First is Modesto who works in the American Naval Base. In the beginning, Bautista conceals Modesto's real identity. As a Filipino husband, Modesto embodies a traditional machismo conception of a father. He is the source of the family's livelihood and a heavy drinker. In front of his son, Modesto likes to display himself as a well-respected employee at work. Eventually, Bautista reveals his real identity when his son, Jun, witnessed a white man Johnson call Modesto "yardbird" – an insult for Filipinos that means extremely hungry. While eating at the kitchen table, Modesto feels naked as Jun recounts this happening to him. This disclosure sheds light on Modesto's nightly excessive drinking at the red-light district.

Discussing Modesto's tactics, Modesto practises "pestering" and "mockery" to Americans in places where he can resist without possible retaliation. A place can be a space among dominated individuals when processes of Othering can be combated either partially or completely depending on the "distribution of different kinds of resources or capital" (quoted from Bourdieu, in Dube, 2017, p. 396). Bourdieu enumerates economic capital (wealth), cultural capital (education), and symbolic capital (prestige) as forms of resources (in Dube, 2017). In this paper, however, I expand his typology by considering place as resource. For instance, at a bar largely occupied by Filipinos and black Americans, a white American is enjoying the company of Rosalie (hostess/waitress) on his table while Modesto and Mike are drinking beer on another. To pester the white American, Modesto calls Rosalie to get something for their table. Seeing the American's annoyance, Modesto feels better so he repeatedly summons Rosalie to their table.

In the same situation, Modesto notices Rosalie throwing meaningful glances to Mike. Modesto capitalises this opportunity to "pester" yet again the white man. Modesto engages Rosalie in a talk and invites her in their table. Not for long, the white man grows impatient that he calls out Rosalie loudly. Soon, a black man yells "SHUT UP!" (Bautista, 1988, p. 59) that got the white man's friend terrified. Recognising they are outnumbered, the white men choose to leave the bar. Soon after, Filipinos and black Americans have a laugh (mockery). Modesto then says "*Sabi na sa 'yo, hindi kakasa 'yon! Kampi-kampi 'ata tayo rito*" (Told you, he won't fight back. We've got allies here) (Bautista, 1988, p. 61). The mockery implies that pestering Americans makes Modesto (and Black Americans) feel good about himself. The scene also further demonstrates how dominated individuals (Filipinos and Black Americans), despite race, support one another when confronted with the same enemy. As the US largely adheres to Eurocentric ideals, the novel casually enlightens us about black and white Americans' great divide. Even in Olongapo, blacks and whites live separately and differently. There, the blacks share similar sentiments with Filipinos. In this scene, pestering and mockery

are tactics that help dominated individuals make themselves feel good about their identity.

Mike is the second character who is a constant critic to white Americans and their culture. Normally, in a neo-colonial landscape, being white is a privilege as a lingering impact of Western aesthetics. While women laud him for being attractive, Mike however finds his whiteness a demerit. Left behind by his white father, Mike is desperately searching for a paternal love that turns into hate against (white) Americans who deceptively promise Filipino women with fortune and marriage. As a result, Mike finds comfort, shares sentiments, and seeks belongingness among Filipinos. However, when Filipinos question his claim to Filipinohood, he gets conflicted with his identity and cannot come into terms with what Homi K. Bhaba (1994) calls hybridity. For instance, when someone calls him American or white, Michael feels “radically alien” (Bron in Baak, 2018). It is reminiscent of Liu and Self’s (2019) analysis on the perception of American expatriates feeling an outsider being called *laowai* (foreigner) while staying in China. Thus, in essentialising Filipinoness, Mike becomes an outsider characterised as “problematic units of the nation” (Yilmazok, 2018, p. 2). Despite rejection, Mike still asserts his Filipinoness. Kabir (2016) makes of this as the fluid process of identity taking place that “may depend on the family one is born into, the culture and religion one belongs to, one’s community and one’s life experiences” (p. 528). Even so, at times, he is left to deal with being nationless having abandoned his affinity to America. In this position, Mike utilises the tactics ridicule, informing, and language.

Mike’s criticisms are mostly directed to American sympathisers such as Magda, a prostitute, who is a fervent American worshipper. Magda wants Mike out in their shared apartment so she can bring her American customers easily. To convince Mike to leave, one day Magda brings Sam, a white man, in the apartment. She intends to be seen naked with a white man in the living room. As observed, Magda plays to be a perpetuator of Othering bringing a white man whom Mike hates. As soon Mike arrives, he pounds on the floor as he walks towards his bedroom and bangs the door after. As a result, Sam grows furious thinking that Magda is using him to make her boyfriend jealous. “Lemme go, dammit! I don’t wanna have nothin’ to do with you no moh!” (Bautista, 1988, p. 21). In a moment, Magda helplessly pleads for him to stay but Sam still leaves the house. In this scene, what Mike performs is the tactic of “ridicule” to agitate Sam and Magda. Sam’s anger and Magda’s desperation are validation of the effectiveness of the tactic. In the words of Bendixsen (2013), tactics are capable of interrupting, disturbing and preventing a dominated individual from being subjected to Othering discourses.

Another scene where Mike dislocates a symbol of American culture occurs in his conversation with Magda about cuisine. Magda pridefully convinces Mike to take her imported corn beef (American symbol) however Mike declines with a grin. Embarrassed, Magda heightens her Othering through sarcasm. “*Sabagay, meron ka pang de boteng bagoong diyen. Mumurahin at gawang Pinoy!*” (Well, you still got your fermented fish in a jar. Cheap and Filipino-made!) (Bautista, 1988, p. 45). At that strike, Mike begins relaying the news about US being criticised for exporting defective food. Subsequently, Magda feels her stomach rumble and throws up what she had eaten. Mike further expresses his distrust to American food and, instead, promotes the Filipino *bagoong*. Apparently, Bautista creatively employs cuisine to serve as markers of identity for food can be indicative to cultures and communities.

And, so, Bautista chose the Filipino *bagoong* to contrast with the American corn beef as symbols of countries in rivalry. Houston (2007) explains this as the attempts among postcolonial authors to express local identities as a substitute to colonial ideals.

How Mike dislocates this Othering is through the tactic of “informing” drawing facts from the news as counter-discourse. Not only did he convince Magda that US export foods are unsafe, similarly Mike advertises Filipino cuisine. As seen, Mike attempts to dissuade Magda’s delusional American worshipping. Every time Magda attempts to Other Mike, he immediately responds negatively. Moreover, the situation shows how the tactic of informing dislocates Magda’s Othering. But regardless of the positive result, the situation has drawback because it is dependent on luck. The vomiting could not have happened without the writer’s intervention. Thus, it would have decreased the impact of the tactic and Magda would not have believed Mike’s information.

Progressing to Mike’s resistance, Mike absentmindedly reaches to Black Men’s Row, a place for black Americans in Olongapo, and tactics of “informing” and “language” save him from the possibility of death. These tactics transpire when Mike helps an old black man who becomes alarmed after seeing Mike’s complexion. Another black man is approaching asking why Mike is helping. According to Uptin, Wright, and Harwood (in Baak, 2018, p. 4), “skin colour or visible difference” can be basis of Othering thus leaves Mike an immediate target to blacks’ hatred. Yet, through informing and language tactics, Mike pacifies the possible hostility. “It’s all right, friends... I am not an American. Pilipino ako!” (I am Filipino) (Bautista, 1988, p. 119). In consequence, the black man leaves Mike alive. As evidenced, the amalgamation of tactics spares Mike’s life. It acknowledges how languages shape human identities and validates the importance of native languages as identity markers. As Owen (2011) expresses in his study of Canada’s aborigines and the role of their language, “heritage language is highly symbolic of the Aboriginal identities” (p. 5). Hence, shifting to Tagalog legitimises Mike’s claim to Filipinohood. This scene further affirms that the performance of tactics mitigates a dangerous place. Through his skin colour, Black Men’s Row is clearly antagonistic for Mike, although he transforms the place into his space. As De Certeau (1984) puts it, “tactics do not obey the law of the place, for they are not defined or identified by it” (p. 29).

### ***Ngugi Wa Thiong’o’s Matigari***

In *Matigari*, Wa Thiong’o depicts a corrupt and authoritarian society and, although independent, western residents have relative influence over the country. The government’s preference towards Western capitalists and indifference to factory workers expose the economic and political realities between the powerful and the powerless. And so, like in *Gapo*, assimilation and subjugation are everyday experiences of the people. Nevertheless, Othered characters find ways to cope with their situation and emerge to confront these inequalities. The tactics performed in this novel are (1) menacing, (2) defaming, (3) scolding, (4) informing, and (5) arson.

Muriuki lives an orphan life along with other boys in the vehicle cemetery (home), a dumpsite for junk cars. In order to survive, they scavenge for provisions from the garbage yard but, to do so, they have to pay fine before the police allows them to. At times, adults accuse orphans of thievery just so they can take their rummages as their own. To simply put, these orphans are the most Othered in the

society. How orphans respond to society's othering is what I call "menacing" tactic. By pelting stones or beating adults up, the orphans realise that they can threaten adults. An instance is when Matigari unknowingly enters their village and the orphans, as a preventive measure, throw stones at him believing that Matigari would also take their gains. This tactic of "menacing" harmonises De Certeau's effect of tactic that is to "create surprises within the spaces" (cited in Round, Williams & Rodgers, 2008, p. 174). The scene displays the orphans defending their gains from outsiders. With similar experiences as orphan, they work together for the group's protection and, in doing so, overcome society's Othering. As observed, menacing converts the place into a space for security and belongingness. Apart from the village, the orphans can also go to other places and feel safe provided that they go out in groups. As proof to the tactic's feat, Muriuki says that scavenge-grabbing adults are "Not so much now" since they have learned to deal with them (Wa Thiong'o, 1989, p. 13). It further subscribes to Kerkvliet's (1990/2013) third dimension of everyday resistance, or tactic, that is to produce "immediate benefit, including material gains, to the resisters" (quoted by Santiago, 2015, p. 143).

The second character is Guthera, a prostitute woman from a poor family. Like many societies, the novel portrays prostitutes as society's untouchable. Apart from that, women in this fictional society are constructed as cornerstones of the home. Thus, Guthera is an easy target for bullying, discrimination and violence like how the police officers abuse her. She nevertheless deems necessary to find means to grapple with her circumstance. One time, Guthera enters a restaurant to hide from the police officers wanting her service. Seeing the police approach the restaurant, Guthera goes out but not before she exposes the officer's depravity.

"It's just that one of the cops is after me. He keeps on following me like I am a bitch on heat. He ought to be ashamed of himself, whistling at me like that in order to make me stop. Who is going to stop to let cops chat her up, and in broad daylight? Definitely not Guthera!" (Wa Thiong'o, 1989, p. 28)

What Guthera makes is a tactic of "defaming" the enemy. Guthera reveals how the officer takes advantage of his authority for his self-interest. However, Guthera finds the chance to defame the officers and makes herself feel good. Without personally resisting, Guthera succeeds on reacting to the police officer's potential Othering.

Another dominated individual whose tactics disrupt Othering processes is Matigari ma Njiruungi. He had worked as a slave for Settler Williams, a white colonialist before he turned a patriot who took arms against white colonial government in their country. After the war, Matigari plants to reclaim his house where Settler Williams used to occupy. Shortly, he finds out that Johnny Boy now owns the house – son of Settler Williams' cook who was then his accomplice. He realises that little has changed in his country. In a neo-colonial developing country, a poor black man like Matigari, homeless with worn-out clothes, is Othered in the society. Within this narrative, the society considers Matigari a "cipher, or nonperson" (Bullis & Bach in Bach, 2005, p. 259). As the lead character, Wa Thiong'o humanises Matigari's character with more tactics than others. These tactics include "scolding", "informing", and "arson".

The first situation involves Guthera, the prostitute woman, and two police officers. Because Guthera has declined a sexual favour to one of the officers, he terrorises Guthera with his growling patrol dog. As the crowd seems thrilled at

Guthera's predicament, Matigari arrives in the area. Dumbfounded, Matigari berates the crowd at their inhumanity. "Are you going to let our children be made to eat while you stand around nodding in approval?" (Wa Thiong'o, 1989, p. 31) says Matigari. Then, Matigari tells the policeman to leave her alone, pointing his finger at them. "Why don't you admit that it's because she won't open her legs for you that you are harassing her?" (Wa Thiong'o, 1989, p. 31). Matigari defames him publicly. What Matigari does here is the tactic of "scolding". Surprised that someone actually has confidence to protest, the officers and the crowd leave wondering about Matigari's identity. As tactics rely on "surprise, trickery, and chance encounters" (Friday, 2011, p. 173), Matigari subverts them when officers are caught off guard. Coupled with confidence and ridicule, scolding becomes an effective tactic to stop the police officer from harassing Guthera further. With the harassment of police officers and the crowd, the place is primarily antagonistic and might not be a good place to get involved into an argument. Despite that, Matigari turns the place into his favour. Eventually, Guthera is saved from further violence.

Like Mike in *Gapo*, Matigari uses "informing" tactic. Matigari arrives gleeful at the gate of his house. As he enters, a young black man named Johnny Boy suddenly stops him. From there, Matigari narrates the history of the house how Settler Williams took everything from him. As his story continues, Johnny Boy gets annoyed when Matigari elaborates how a cook kept him from shooting Settler Williams. Unaware that he is talking to the cook's son, Matigari calls the man "fat as a pig; no, like a hippo" (Wa Thiong'o, 1989, p. 47). At that, Johnny Boy whips Matigari twice for insulting his father. Despite that, he stands up and continues his narration. Seeing that, Johnny Boy turns speechless and immobile. Interpreting the situation, what tactic Matigari performs here is "informing" with the use of history. As observed in Johnny Boy's annoyance, the tactic of informing has achieved on challenging his Othering. Furthermore, the performance of the tactic has afforded space to Matigari. In fact, had the police officers not arrived who arrest him, Matigari could have entered the house with a stunned Johnny Boy.

The next time Matigari confronts Othering happens near the novel's ending. Surrounded by massive security, Matigari is inside his house while spectators from the country are cheering for him. An officer urges Matigari to surrender but Matigari bursts out the windows with fire, burning the house. The crowd starts looting from the house while singing merrily with lyrics "It's burning/Yes, Bad Boy's house is burning" (Wa Thiong'o, 1989, p. 166). Helping Matigari, the orphans encourage the crowd to burn other properties. With that, the crowd start setting the coffee, tea, and cars on fire, causing panic to the soldiers and policemen. What Matigari produces here is the tactic of "arson". According to Scott and Kerkvliet, arson is a manner of resistance of the weak, or dominated individuals (cited in Santiago, 2015). In this scene, Matigari becomes the crowd's motivation to join in his resistance. The once fearful start to sing songs of resistance and burn the property of oppressors and traitors. Matigari employs the tactic to create a diversion. He succeeds on pulling this trick having been able to escape the house. As De Certeau (1984) explains, tactic is an "art of pulling tricks" that seizes opportunities (p. 37). However, the ending reveals that Matigari, along with Guthera, gets shot by soldiers chasing them. Their death simply confirms the transitory element of tactics as everyday resistance has "no formal organization, no

formal leaders, no manifestoes, no dues, no name, and no banner” and so they are “rarely accorded any social significance” (Scott, 1985, p. 35).

### Conclusion

Examining dominated individuals’ everyday tactics immerses us with a knowledge of how Othering processes impact their everyday experiences, their coping mechanisms, and their triumphs on overcoming such inequalities. Tactics of the weak can provide us with a lens to interpret their experiences of domination away from the common, mostly insufficient and western-centric viewpoint of dominated individuals. Based on the analysis, the paper reveals that popular representation among dominated individuals as being meek and despondent are insufficient in capturing their experiences of domination. The paper further shows that they have means of resistance that are employed in daily confrontations of Othering practices. Likewise, tactics are an avenue with which they can express their opinion and disagreement. However, tactics, as illustrated, must not be thought to solve systemic issues of domination as they are only transitory solutions and offer immediate benefits to everyday practices of Othering.

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